

Dogmatics Notes



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Introduction / (Prolegomena)

Intro I Dogmatics is a branch of theology.

Intro I, 1. Theology is traditionally divided into:

- a) **Biblical Theology:** Exegesis, Isagogics, Hermeneutics
- b) **Historical Theology:** Church History, Symbolics
- c) **Practical Theology:** Homiletics, Catechetics, Pastoral Theology
- d) **Systematic Theology:** Dogmatics, Ethics

Intro I, 2. Dogmatics as we teach it at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary involves all four of the branches of theology. It is taught primarily as topical exegesis with elements of church history, symbolics, and practical theology.

Intro I, 3. Theology proper is a practical attitude, aptitude, or skill of the mind and heart.

a) **Its aim is to build the spiritual life of the theologian and of the flock he serves.**

Philippians 3:7-11 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ¹⁷ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾦ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρισμένος.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

b) **Theology is not just to be learned but to be experienced.**

Psalms 34:8 Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

c) **In the strict sense, theology is an art to be practiced (*habitus practicus*).**

1) **In general, theology is an aptitude or art.**

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

οὐχ ὅτι ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν ἱκανοί ἐσμεν λογίσασθαί τι ὡς ἐξ ἑαυτῶν, ἀλλ' ἡ ἱκανότης ἡμῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ⁶ὃς καὶ ἰκάνωσεν ἡμᾶς διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης

Hebrews 5:13-14 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

τῶν διὰ τὴν ἔξιν τὰ αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα ἐχόντων πρὸς διάκρισιν καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ.

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

2) **Specifically, theology is an aptitude rooted in the new life of faith.**

1 Corinthians 12:1-6 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. ²You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. ³Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. ⁴There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain

3) The theologian is a man of God. (In the Bible the term “theologian” occurs only in the heading added to some manuscripts of Revelation.)

Timothy 6:11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Luther: No man can make a Doctor of Holy Scripture except the Holy Spirit from heaven (*LW* 44:205).

4) The ultimate purpose of theology is the salvation of souls.

1 Timothy 4:16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

1 Corinthians 9:22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

James 5:20 Remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Calov: In an absolute sense the ultimate aim of theology is the glory of God. In a relative sense the ultimate aim is the salvation of man. The intermediate aim is both internal, namely, to lead men to faith and salvation, and external, namely, saving faith (*Theo. Pos., de nat. theol.*, IX, thes. IV).

d) In a looser sense also the science of theological truths may be called theology.

1) Theology in this sense not only describes the state of a Christian, but is able to produce it.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

2) There are two senses of the term “theology”.

Quenstedt: Finally, the term theology is used either 1) οὐσιωδῶς, that is, essentially, absolutely, and in reference to an aptitude, for knowledge which is found in the mind and which is inherent in the soul of man, or in so far as it is an aptitude of the soul; or 2) συμβεβηκῶς, that is, “accidentally,” relatively, or in reference to a system, in so far as it is a doctrine or discipline which is taught and learned or contained in books. The former use of the word is primary; the latter is secondary. For theology is first of all or principally called a theological aptitude. But secondly, and in a less important way, it is a doctrine or a discussion, or even a book or system which presents theology (*Theologia didactico-polemico sive systema theologicum (TDP)*, thes. XXIX, p 11).

Calov: The remote genus [the broadest classification] of theology is aptitude (*habitus*) (He 5:14). The nearer genus [narrower classification] is practical aptitude (*habitus practicus*) (Jn 5:34; Ro 15:4; 2 Tm 3:15), because the aim of the theologian and theology is not bare knowledge but an activity, namely, leading men to salvation. Therefore, it is not a theoretical aptitude consisting in pure thought (*Theo. Pos., de nat. theol.* V).

Gerhard: By means of my study of theology, I am able to gather that, as is true in medicine, the best theology is practical doctrine, and, in like manner, I am able to perceive that those who contend that the end of theology is speculation (namely, a number of those among the scholastics) are in no way correct in so thinking. Although, indeed, not only practical application but also believing and hoping are proposed in this heavenly philosophy, that fact, nevertheless, does make that which is said in theology to be less practical or unimportant, for a physician also is occupied with theory of some sorts, yet medicine is not, for that reason, a theoretical discipline, since the theory itself flows from practical concerns.... And if theology is practical doctrine, then the goal of theology will certainly not be bare knowledge and subtle theory, but rather practical. “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them,” the Savior said to the disciples (John 13:17) (*Sacred Meditations, Dedic.*).

3) Can the unregenerate be theologians?

A hypocrite may speak theological truths, or a false teacher may teach what the world would call “theology,” but this is not theology in the proper sense.

Augsburg Confession, VIII, 2: Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, even if they are administered by evil men.

Musaeus (d. 1681): But this is not properly called theology and differs from that which is properly called theology by as much as a human belief or opinion, formed in the mind from outward motives concerning the truth of divine revelation, differs from God-given faith (*Intro.*, p 191).

Norman Madson: If there be anything from which we should recoil with holy horror it is the thought of having men in our pulpits, *Seelsorgers* at the sickbed, teachers in our seminaries, officials in positions of trust in our church, who know not the Lord (*Preaching to Preachers*, p 67).

e) **The fruit produced by theology is religion.**

1) **Religion denotes union and communion with God.**

Note 1: The etymology of the word "religion" is uncertain: *religare*, "fasten," "tie," that is, religion as duty (so Lactantius, Augustine); or *religere*, "collect," "study," that is, religion as a discipline or study (so Cicero). (See Pieper, I, 7).

Note 2: Hoenecke and Pieper use the terms "theology," "dogmatics," and "religion" differently. Hoenecke uses "theology" of the aptitude and knowledge of every Christian and "dogmatics" for the aptitude and knowledge of the theologian. "Religion" is what theology and dogmatics produce in the Christian. Pieper uses "religion" for the theological knowledge and aptitude of lay people, and "theology" for the theological knowledge and aptitude of theologians. The notes follow Hoenecke's terminology here.

1 John 1:3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

2) **There is only one true religion, the Christian.**

-a) **Only the Christian religion establishes complete union with God through faith in Christ Jesus.**

John 17:23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Augustine: You made us, O Lord, for yourself and our heart is restless until it rests in you (*Confessions*, 1:1).

-b) **All other attempts at attaining union with God by merit of works or character lead only to a greater separation.**

Ephesians 2:11-12 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

Quenstedt: The Christian religion is the way of worshipping the true God prescribed in the Word. By it man, who has been separated from God through sin, is led to God through faith in Christ, who is both God and man, in order that he may be reunited with God and find delight in him eternally. The term "religion" is used either in an improper and incorrect sense, or in a proper sense. In an improper sense it is used for false religion, for example, the heathen, Mohammedan, or Jewish religion. In its proper sense it signifies the true way of worshipping God. This is either the way he was worshiped in paradise, which took place in the state of perfection and by which man, who had been created in the image of God, was bound to God, or it is the Christian way, which obtains after the Fall, and which is called Christian because we are led to salvation through Christ alone (*TDP*, nota II, III, p 20).

Calov: The sacred rites of the heathen, throughout almost the whole world, were full of cruelty. The mysteries of Ceres and Bacchus abounded in obscenity. How profane and unworthy of God Mohammedanism is, the Koran can testify. The Christian religion requires an absolutely holy worship of God, holy trust in Him, and all that is most worthy of God; and of like nature are the duties towards our neighbor which it enjoins. Mohammedanism was born in war, breathes nothing but war, is propagated by war, while Christianity prohibits every injury, and wishes good to all. Many of the most eminent Greek philosophers praised a sharing of women, and even did not disapprove of sodomy, which was commended by the example of the gods. But the Christian religion teaches that marriage must be held most holy (*Syst.* 1:152ff.).

Vatican II, in opposition to the scriptural doctrine: Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does divine Providence deny help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to His grace (*Documents*, p 35).

3) **As synonyms for religion (Greek) we find:**

-a) **εὐσέβεια (piety, godliness)**

1 Timothy 2:2 that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness (εὐσέβεια) and holiness.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness (εὐσέβεια) is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

1 Timothy 4:8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness (εὐσέβεια) has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 Timothy 6:11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness (εὐσέβεια), faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

2 Timothy 3: 5 ...having a form of godliness (εὐσέβεια) but denying its power.

-b) θρησκεία (worship)

Acts 26:5 They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion (θρησκεία), I lived as a Pharisee.

Colossians 2:18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship (θρησκεία) of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

James 1:26,27 If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion (θρησκεία) is worthless. ²⁷ Religion (θρησκεία) that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

-c) λατρεία (service, form of worship; parallel to λειτουργία)

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service (λατρεία) to God.

Romans 9:4 ... the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship (λατρεία) and the promises.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship (λατρεία).

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship (προσκυνήσεις) the Lord your God, and serve (λατρεύσεις) him only.'"

-d) δεισιδαιμονία (religion, cult, superstition)

Acts 17:22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious" (δεισιδαιμονία). NIV
Acts 17:22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious (δεισιδαιμονία). KJV

Acts 25:19 Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion (δεισιδαιμονία) and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive.

An interesting resource on Greek synonym studies is Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*. See pages 172-180.

4) We are dealing with "religion" whenever the relation to God is employed as a motive.

"Honesty is the best policy"—no appeal to religion;
but a promise "to do my duty to God" has the religious element.

In the past it was generally believed that to be religious one had to believe in gods or a god.

Cicero: Religion is worship of the gods.... Each state has its own gods (*Pro Flacco*, 69).

Livy: no fear of God, no oath—no religion (*Ab Urbe Condita*, Liber XXI, 4)

Today, under the influence of humanism many believe that a person can be religious without a god.

Intro I, 4. Dogmatics in the strict sense is an aptitude and readiness.

a) Dogmatics is an aptitude to teach and substantiate the doctrines of Scripture.

1) This aptitude is required of theologians.

1 Timothy 3:2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach (διδασκτικόν).

2 Timothy 2:2,24 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others (ίκανοὶ ἔσονται καὶ ἑτέρους διδάξαι). ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach (διδασκτικόν), not resentful.

2) The Bible states the following truths for teachers and learners.

-a) God gives teachers.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Ephesians 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

1 Timothy 2:7 And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.

2 Timothy 1:11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.

-b) God admonishes teachers.

James 3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

2 Timothy 4:2,3 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. ³ For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

Titus 2:2,3,7,10 You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. ³Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. ⁷ In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness... ¹⁰ ... to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

1 Timothy 4:6, 11, 16 If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. ¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

-c) God admonishes those taught.

1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

Hebrews 13:7,17 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. ¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

-d) God warns against false teachers.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

b) Dogmatics is an aptitude to defend the teachings of Scripture against error.

Titus 1:9-14 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. ¹⁰For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. ¹¹ They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for the sake of dishonest gain. ¹² Even one of their own prophets has said, "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." ¹³ This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith ¹⁴ and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth.

1 Timothy 1:3-7 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer ⁴ nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work—which is by faith. ⁵ The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. ⁶Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. ⁷ They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

c) Dogmatics is an aptitude to suffer for the teachings of Scripture.

Matthew 24:9 Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.

1 Corinthians 1:23 We preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.

2 Timothy 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

2 Timothy 2:1,3,8,9,12 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ³ Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, ⁹ for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. ¹² If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us.

2 Timothy 3:10-13 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹ persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹² In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

d) Dogmatics is a readiness to confine oneself to and to be content with Scripture alone as the divine authority.

Isaiah 8:19-20 When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

Jeremiah 20:7-13 O LORD, you deceived me, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. ⁸ Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. ⁹ But if I say, "I will not mention him or speak any more in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot. ¹⁰ I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side! Report him! Let's report him!" All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him." ¹¹ But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹² O LORD Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. ¹³ Sing to the LORD! Give praise to the LORD! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked.

Luke 16:29 Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them."

Intro I, 5. The term "dogmatics" is taken also in an looser sense, as denoting the sum total of Christian doctrines.

2 Timothy 1:13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Opponents of the biblical teaching of a *corpus doctrinae*:

Karl Barth (d. 1968): Dogmatics is a science.... I propose that by science we understand an attempt at comprehension and exposition, at investigation and instruction, which is related to a definite object and sphere of activity. No act of man can claim to be more than an attempt, not even science. By describing it as an attempt, we are simply stating its nature as preliminary and limited (*Dogmatics in Outline*, p 9). Christian dogmatics will always be a thinking, an investigation and exposition which are relative and liable to error (*Ibid.*, p 11).

Ted Peters (ELCA): One can identify the modern theologian as a person who is willing to jump off the island and attempt to swim amid the currents of modern consciousness. He or she is aware of the risks of leaving the dry land of biblical naiveté behind, but hopes that farther out at sea another island of meaning will appear. If none does appear, then perhaps with strong faith one can simply learn to enjoy the unending swim" (*God—the World's Future, Systematic Theology for a Postmodern Era*, p 5).

Carl Braaten: Dogmatics is one of the traditional disciplines of Christian theology. Its special task is the critical interpretation of the doctrines of the church's faith in light of our knowledge of Christian origins and the challenge of the contemporary situation.... [Dogmatics] has its own special way of serving, not by repeating the doctrines of the past, but by a critical interpretation of the received doctrines in light of our biblical knowledge and our present engagement with the modern world. This means that dogmatics is done not so much to defend the church as it is, but to criticize it (*Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 5, 7).

Passages that refute such theologians:

John 8:31-32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

2 Timothy 3:7 ...always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.

2 Peter 2:19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

Intro II

The source of dogmatics as a corpus of doctrine is Scripture.

Intro II, 1. The substance is taken from Scripture only.

Deuteronomy 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Deuteronomy 12:32 See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it.

Revelation 22:18-19 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Matthew 23:8 But you are not to be called "Rabbi," for you have only one Master and you are all brothers.

Opposition to the scriptural view:

Paul Tillich (d. 1965) adds such sources as existential experience, church history, denominational tradition, the history of religion, and culture and says: In dealing with the question of the sources of systematic theology, we must reject the assertion of neo-orthodox biblicism that the Bible is the *only* source (S.T., I, p 34).

Herbert Chilstrom (first bishop of the ELCA): The prescriptive method [of using Scripture] is based on the assumption that Scripture is used to discover final answers to questions. Thus, when confronted with a particularly thorny issue, one could go to Scripture, study carefully every text that addresses the issue and come up with a conclusive response. Scripture as "norm" means Scripture as answer book. I suspect that most of us in the LCA come at these matters from the descriptive method. We see Scripture as no less important. ... But for us "norm" means "guide" rather than "rule." Having informed ourselves of what Scripture has to say, we go on to ask questions about other ways in which God may be trying to enlighten us (*The Lutheran*, March 21, 1984).

Clark Pinnock: [I] consult a quadrilateral of sources in the attempt to be bi-polar: the Bible, tradition, reason, and experience. To be more precise, I adhere to the rule of Scripture within a trilateral hermeneutic.... I hold the Bible to be the primary norm for theology in the midst of the other sources.... Moving to the second source, tradition is important, because theology ought not to be biblical in an isolated way. Scripture may be *prima*, but it is not *sola* because tradition plays a role in interpretation.... Third, reason has a role to play in theology; and helping us say what we want to say. Serious theologians value coherence and intelligibility in their work.... Fourth, with respect to experience, theology should be concerned about existential fit and practical adequacy of a theological model to meet the demands of life (*Most Moved Mover*, p 19-23).

Intro II, 2. The manner of presentation must be in harmony with the Scriptures.

a) **Methodus est arbitraria.** The method is not prescribed. Some methods are:

1) **Loci**—dealing with all the passages on a given subject, chapter by chapter

2) **Synthetic**—chapters arranged from causes to the effects

Analytic—chapters arranged from effects to causes

3) **Federal**—arranged by various covenants or dispensations:

Covenant of works (before the fall)

Covenant of grace (after the fall):

Stage of conscience (till Moses)

Stage of Law (till Christ)

Stage of true grace (till the end)

4) **Historical-expository**—using Bible history as the framework

5) **The outline of the Augsburg Confession (Regin Prenter, *Creation and Redemption*)**

6) **Causal**—discussing doctrines in relation to various levels of causation:

-*Causa efficiens, causa movens (interna, externa)*—the agent that produces the action or change

-*Causa materialis*—the material on which the agent operates

-*subjectum quod*—the subject which acts, e.g., Christ suffers.

-*subjectum quo*—the aspect by which the subject acts, e.g.,

the nature according to which Christ acts, Christ suffers according to his human nature.

- objectum: materia*—the underlying corporeal substratum
 - materia circa quam*—material concerning which
 - materia ex qua*—material from which
 - Causa formalis*—the essence which determines what the thing is
 - Causa finalis*—the ultimate purpose
 - Causa instrumentalis*—a secondary instrument or means used to bring about an effect, e.g., faith.
- See, Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*.

b) The content, however, is not arbitrary.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Titus 2:1 You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.

c) Also in the strict sense of the term, dogmatics as an aptitude is dependent on a new birth and has its origin in Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16,17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

The History of Lutheran Dogmatics

For an overview, read *A Brief Summary of the History of Lutheran Dogmatics* by Geoff Kieta or *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism I* (p. 27-254) by Robert Preus. Here we simply list the chief dogmaticians of the classical age of Lutheran dogmatic writing who are cited frequently in these notes. Appendices at the end of Hoenecke and Schmid also list these men and their works. A fuller bibliography of the cited works of these men and of English translations of their works is appended to these notes.

The chief theologian of Lutheranism, was, of course, Martin Luther, but he did not write a complete dogmatics.

Early Lutheran Dogmaticians

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| 1. Melancthon, Philip 1497–1560 | <i>Loci communes rerum theologicarum seu hypotyposes theologiae</i> , 1521 (English—Baker) |
| 2. Chemnitz, Martin 1522–1586 | <i>Loci theologici</i> , 1586, publ. by Polycarp Leyser 1591 (English—Preus)
<i>Examen concilii tridentini</i> , 1565 (English—Kramer)
<i>De duabus naturis</i> , 1578 (English—Preus)
<i>De coena domini</i> , 1578-1590 (English—Preus) |
| 3. Heerbrand, Jakob 1521–1600 | <i>Compendium theologiae</i> , 1573 |
| 4. Chytraeus, David 1531–1600 | <i>De Sacrificis</i> , 1569 (English—Montgomery) |
| 5. Hafenreffer, Matthias 1561–1619 | <i>Loci theologici</i> , 1600 |
| 6. Hutter, Leonhard 1563–1616 | <i>Compendium locorum theologicorum</i> , 1610 |
| 7. Meisner, Balthasar 1587–1626 | <i>Anthropologia sacra</i> , 1612 |
| 8. Gerhard, Johann 1582–1637 | <i>Loci Theologici</i> , 1610–1622 (20 vol.)
<i>Diaskepsis theologica</i> , 1626
<i>Epitome credendorum</i> , 1625 |
| 9. Hunnius, Nikolaus 1585–1643 | <i>Universae theologiae systema</i> , 1633 (2 vol.) |
| 10. Brochmand, Jasper 1585–1652 | <i>Breviarium theologiae</i> , 1640 |
| 11. Hulsemann, Johann 1602–1661 | <i>Medullae theologiae</i> , 1645 |
| 12. Friedlieb, Ph. H. 1603–1663 | <i>Hodosophia Christiana sive theologia positiva</i> , 1649 |
| 13. Dannhauer, Konrad 1603–1666 | <i>Theologia positiva acroamatica</i> |
| 14. Koenig, J. Friedrich 1619–1664 | <i>Systema locorum theologicorum</i> , 1655–1677 (12 vol.) |
| 15. Calov, Abraham 1612–1686 | <i>Introductio in theologiam</i> , 1679 |
| 16. Musaeus, Johann 1613–1681 | <i>Theologia didactico-polemica sive Systema theologiae</i> , 1685 |
| 17. Quenstedt, Johann Andreas 1617–1688 | <i>Compendium theologiae positivae</i> , 1686 (Walther Edition) |
| 18. Baier, Wilhelm 1647–1695 | <i>Breviculus theologicus</i> , 1688 |
| 19. Schertzer, Joh. Ad. 1628–1683 | <i>Examen theologicum acroamaticum universam theologiam theticopolemicum complectens</i> , 1707 |
| 20. Hollaz, David 1648–1713 | |

After a two-century decline under the influence of Pietism and Rationalism, Lutheran dogmatics was revived by C. F. W. Walther, Adolf Hoenecke, and Franz Pieper in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Intro II, 3. Scripture is the only source of dogmatics.

Zechariah 8:2 This is what the LORD Almighty says (יְהוָה אֱמֹר): "I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her."

Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered, "It is written (γέγραπται): 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

a) It is a prerogative of Scripture to propose and define articles of faith.

N.B. An article of faith is a truth or doctrine revealed by God in the Holy Scriptures to be received in faith. While every statement of Scripture must be accepted as absolute truth, not every statement is an article of faith. Every article of faith stands in some relation to our salvation, some in direct, some in a more remote relation.

Joshua 23:6 Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

Luke 16:29 Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them."

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Acts 17:11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 26:22 But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen.

1 Corinthians 2:4,13 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power. ¹³ This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες.

Galatians 1:8-9 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again, : If anyone is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.

Smalcald Articles II, II, 15: For it will not do to frame articles of faith from the works or words of the holy Fathers; otherwise their kind of fare, of garments, of house, etc., would have to become an article of faith, as was done with relics. The rule is: The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel.

Formula of Concord, Intro., 1-2: We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone, as it is written Ps. 119, 105: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. And St. Paul: Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed, Gal. 1, 8.

Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses, which are to show in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this pure doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved.

b) This is so because Scripture is the only Word of God we have.

Calov: The genus of Scripture is the Word of God because not only what God speaks but also what is written by God through the penmen of God is the Word of God, and it is the same Word, which was and is in God, which we call ἐνδιάθετον (immanent in God) and which has been proclaimed or reduced to writing in the Scriptures, which is called προφορικόν (emanent from God, i.e., revealed by him) (*Theol. posit.*, proleg., IV, 169, p 23).

Augustine: In these matters, which are openly stated in the Scriptures, are found all things necessary for faith and life, namely, hope and love. If anyone says anything else concerning Christ, or his church, or anything else which has to do with our faith and life, I do not say, "if we," but what Paul adds (Ga 1:8–9), "if an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one you received in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, let him be eternally condemned." Let our writings be set aside and the Book of God come to the center of the stage (*De Doctrina Christiana*, II, 9, v).

Augustine: In the church it is not "I say this, you say this, he says this" that counts but, "Thus says the Lord" (*Contra literas Petilianus*, III, 6, v).

Athanasius: The holy and divinely inspired Scriptures are sufficient for all instruction in the truth (*Contagentes*, v).

J.P. Meyer: The fact that the Scriptures are the only fountain of doctrine is underscored by the demand of God that every teacher must submit to its judgment without reservation. The Scriptures provide the absolute standard by which all doctrines must be gauged (Ac 26:22; 17:11; Is 8:20; 1 Tm 6:4) (*WLQ*, Jan 1948, p 16).

Opposition to the scriptural view:

Braaten: The ultimate authority of Christian theology is not the biblical canon as such, but the gospel of Jesus Christ to which the Scriptures bear witness—the "canon within the canon" (*CD*, I, 61). Biblicism holds to an infallible Bible that can be the absolute authority in matters of belief and morals.... Fundamentalist biblicism is rejected by most theologians and is out of favor in most of the seminaries that train clergy for the parish ministry. They reject biblicism not merely because historical science has disclosed errors and contradictions in the biblical writings, but rather because the authority of the Bible is elevated at the expense of the authority of Christ and his gospel (*CD*, I, 74f).

Intro II, 4. The following sources must be avoided.

a) No individual (or group) may define new articles of faith.

1) The pope claims this authority.

-a) The pope's claims:

Boniface VIII; *Unam Sanctam* (1302): Moreover, we declare, state, define and pronounce that for every human being subjection to the Roman pontiff is by all means necessary for salvation.

Vatican I (1870): We teach and define this to be a divinely revealed doctrine: the Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* (that is, when functioning in his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians by his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith and morals which is to be held by the whole church) through the divine assistance promised to him in the blessed Peter he possesses that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wanted his church to be endowed in defining a doctrine concerning faith and morals (Session IV, 4).

Vatican II: All this teaching about the institution, the perpetuity, the force and reason for the sacred primacy of the Roman Pontiff and of his infallible teaching authority, this sacred Synod again proposes to be firmly believed by all the faithful ("The Church," Chap. III, 18).

— The task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ ("Divine Revelation," Chap. II, 10).

This teaching is affirmed by the 1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 816-818.

-b) Refutation of the pope's claims:

Matthew 23:8-10 But you are not to be called "Rabbi," for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹ And do not call anyone on earth "father," for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰ Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ.

Galatians 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

Matthew 18:18-20 I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Formula of Concord, Intro., 1: We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone.

2) Church conventions may not decree new doctrines, but may formulate joint confessions of their faith on the basis of Scripture.

b) Articles of faith may not be derived from other sources in the church.

1) Articles of faith may not be drawn from tradition as Rome and Eastern Orthodoxy do.

Council of Trent (1545-1563): The Synod accepts and venerates all the books both of the Old and New Testament ... and no less with equal feelings of piety and reverence the traditions, both those that pertain to faith and life, as either handed down from Christ by word of mouth or dictated by the Holy Spirit and preserved by continuous succession in the Catholic Church (Sess. IV).

Vatican II (1962-1965): It is not from sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of devotion and reverence ("Divine Revelation," Chap. II, par. 9). Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church (Par. 10).

This teaching is affirmed by the 1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 82.

Note: In Roman Catholicism tradition is tied very closely to the teaching authority of the pope and hierarchy; tradition is relatively objective. In Orthodoxy tradition is more subjective. It is a charismatic activity of the Holy Spirit. The two churches are agreed, however, in rejecting the *sola scriptura*.

Basil (d. 379): Concerning the teachings of the church, we have received some from written sources, while others have been given to us secretly, through apostolic tradition. Both sources have equal force in true religion. No one would deny either source—no one, at any rate, who is even slightly familiar with the ordinance of the Church. If we attacked unwritten customs, claiming them to be of little importance, we would fatally mutilate the Gospel, no matter what our intentions—or rather, we would reduce the Gospel teachings to bare words (*On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66).

Vladimir Lossky: Tradition is not the content of revelation, but the light that reveals it; it is not the word, but the living breath which makes the words heard at the same time as the silence from which it came; it is not the truth, but a communication of the Spirit of truth, outside which the truth cannot be received....The pure notion of tradition can then be defined by saying that it is the life of the Holy Spirit in the church, communicating to each member of the body of Christ the faculty of hearing, of receiving, of knowing the truth in the light which belongs to it, and not according to the light of human reason. This is true gnosis, owed to an action of the divine light ("Tradition and Traditions," in Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Theology*, p 133-134).

John Meyendorff: The Orthodox East has never been obsessed with a search for objective, clear, formally definable criteria of truth, such as either the papal authority or the Reformed notion of *sola scriptura* (*Orthodox Church*, p 99-101).

Daniel B. Clendenin: It is the Orthodox view that the Christian faith and experience can in no way be compatible with the notion of 'Sola Scriptura,' and the explicit rejection of all authority except Scripture. The Bible is not a thing-in-itself that can be isolated or separated from the context of the church and tradition...It is precisely this view of the self-sufficiency of Scripture, elevated above the church, that Orthodoxy considers to be what Florovsky calls 'the sin of the Reformation,' the consequences of which are arbitrary, subjective, and individualistic interpretations of the gospel" (*Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective*, p 104, 105).

Passages that oppose this view:

Matthew 15:1-9 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, ²"Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!" ³Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? ⁴For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' ⁵But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,' ⁶he is not to 'honor his father' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. ⁷You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ⁸'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.'"

2) Nor may new revelations be expected as in Islam, Society of Friends (Quakers), Christian Science, Latter Day Saints, etc.

Quran: This [Quran] is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off evil.... And if you are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto Our slave [Muhammad], then produce a surah of the like thereof, and call your witness beside Allah if you are truthful. And if you do it not - and you can never do it -then guard yourselves against the Fire prepared for disbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones (*al-Baqarah* 2:2, 23-24).

George Fox: Not Scriptures but the Spirit; not Christ for us but Christ in us; not steeple houses and bells, not sacraments and dogmas, but the inner light (Meusel, *Kirchliches Handlexikon*, II, 581).

Mary Baker Eddy: As I was only a scribe echoing the harmonies of heaven in divine metaphysics, I cannot be super modest in my estimate of the Christian Science textbook (*Christian Science Journal*, Jan, 1901).

The Book of Mormon: And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son Moroni, behold I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites. And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ that I deliver these records into the hands of my son.... I cannot write the hundredth part of the things of my people. But behold, I shall take these plates, which contain these prophesyings and revelations, and put them with the remainder of my record, for they are choice unto me; and I know they will be choice unto my brethren (*Words of Mormon*, 1 1-6).

Joseph Smith: Take away the book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p 71).

Doctrines and Covenants: These four volumes of scripture [KJV, Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, and Doctrines and Covenants] are the standards, the measuring rods, the gauges by which all things are judged. Since they are the will, mind, word, and voice of the Lord (68:4).

Karl Barth, et al., who place the continued testimony of the Spirit in the Church on a level with God's Word in Scripture: The astonishing statement that the Bible is [God's] word has been called an axiom. But it is such only in its logical form.... It expresses rather the self-evidenced revelation which God gives simultaneously to his Biblical witnesses and to those who accept their witness. It expresses obedience to the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum*, to the spirit of God in which the human spirit of the writer and the reader become one in adoration. (*The Word of God and the Word of Man*, p 244)—Reformed doctrine, in order to be itself at all, needs the free winds wherein the word of God is recognized in Scripture and Spirit (Ibid., p 247).

Barth regards the Bible not as God's revelation, but as a mere human witness to revelation: "the witness, which as such is not revelation, but only—and this is the limitation—the witness to it" (*CD*, I, 2:243).

Vatican II, "Divine Revelation," Chap. II, 8: This tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit.... For, as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.

Passages that oppose these views:

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, ²and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," ³you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. ⁵That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

Luke 16:29 Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them."

John 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 1:1-2 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Revelation 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

Smalcald Articles III, VIII, 3–6. And in those things which concern the spoken, outward Word, we must firmly hold that God grants His Spirit or grace to no one, except through or with the preceding outward Word, in order that we may thus be protected against the enthusiasts, *i.e.*, spirits who boast that they have the Spirit without and before the Word, and accordingly judge Scripture or the spoken Word, and explain and stretch it at their pleasure, as Muenzer did, and many still do at the present day, who wish to be acute judges between the Spirit and the letter, and yet know not what they say or declare. For indeed the Papacy also is nothing but sheer enthusiasm, by which the Pope boasts that all rights exist in the shrine of his heart, and whatever he decides and commands with [in] his church is spirit and right, even though it is above and contrary to Scripture and the spoken Word. All this is the old devil and old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts, and led them from the outward Word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit, and nevertheless he accomplished this through other outward words. Just as also our enthusiasts at the present day condemn the outward Word, and nevertheless they themselves are not silent, but they fill the world with their pratings and writings, as though, indeed, the Spirit could not come through the writings and spoken word of the apostles, but first through their writings and words he must come. Why then do not they also omit their own sermons and writings, until the Spirit himself come to men, without their writings and before them, as they boast that he has come into them without the preaching of the Scriptures? But of these matters there is not time now to dispute at greater length; we have elsewhere sufficiently urged this subject.

3) Neither natural nor illumined reason is a source or standard of doctrine.

-a) Natural reason is not a fit organ even for receiving the divine truths.

1 Corinthians 1:20,21 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Ephesians 4:17,18 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

Jude 1:10 Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand; and what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals—these are the very things that destroy them.

Formula of Concord, T.D., II 9: For, first, although man's reason or natural intellect indeed has still a dim spark of the knowledge that there is a God, as also of the doctrine of the Law, Rom. 1, 19ff, yet it is so ignorant, blind, and perverted that when even the most ingenious and learned men upon earth read or hear the Gospel of the Son of God and the promise of eternal salvation, they cannot from their own powers perceive, apprehend, understand, or believe and regard it as true, but the more diligence and earnestness they employ, wishing to comprehend these spiritual things with their reason, the less they understand or believe, and before they become enlightened and are taught by the Holy Spirit, they regard all this only as foolishness or fictions.

-b) Christian faith is, indeed, a profound experience, and self-inspection will by illumined reason discover divine facts.

-1) Scripture presents self-examination as a valid discipline.

Romans 7:17-23 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

Galatians 6:4 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else.

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

-2) Yet such self-observation is not the basis of sound theology.

1 Corinthians 4:4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

1 John 3:19-20 This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. NIV

1 John 3:19-20 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. KJV

2 Corinthians 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

Opposition to the scriptural view:

Tillich—Experience as the inspiring presence of the Spirit is the ultimate source of theology (S.T., I, 51).

So also Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard.

-c) Only deductive or analytical conclusions—not inductive—are legitimate, and even these in a limited sense. Legitimate conclusions are only those

-1) which do not violate the laws of logic

-2) which do not in the slightest contradict what Scripture says

-3) whose premises are drawn from Scripture itself

-4) which are implicit in the Scriptures.

Note: A valid deductive conclusion is: God so loved the world; I am part of the world; God loves me. A flawed inductive conclusion is: Jesus told the rich young ruler “Sell everything.” Jesus wants me to sell everything.

Intro II, 5. For Lutheran dogmatics the Book of Concord (1580) constitutes a secondary source of doctrine, not a second source.

Confession is natural for a Christian.

Psalms 116:10 I believed, therefore I spoke, “I am greatly afflicted.”

Psalms 116:10 I believed, therefore have I spoken. I was greatly afflicted. KJV

2 Corinthians 4:13 It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak.

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Romans 10:10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Hebrews 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.

1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

a) Scripture is the *principium doctrinae* and *norma normans* (the ruling rule). Our symbolical books are the *norma normata* (the ruled rule).

Formula of Concord, Intro., 1, 2, 7, 8: We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone, as it is written Ps. 119, 105: Thy Word

is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. And St. Paul: Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed, Gal. 1, 8. 2] Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses, which are to show in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this pure doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved. 7] In this way the distinction between the Holy Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament and all other writings is preserved, and the Holy Scriptures alone remain the only judge, rule, and standard, according to which, as the only test-stone, all dogmas shall and must be discerned and judged, as to whether they are good or evil, right or wrong. 8] But the other symbols and writings cited are not judges, as are the Holy Scriptures, but only a testimony and declaration of the faith, as to how at any time the Holy Scriptures have been understood and explained in the articles in controversy in the Church of God by those then living, and by what arguments the dogmas conflicting with the Holy Scripture were rejected and condemned.

Cf. also S.D., Rule and Norm, 850–852,3–7. Preface to Book of Concord, Trig. p 22.

b) We subscribe to the symbolical books *quia*, not *quatenus* (“because,” not “in so far as” they agree with Scripture).

1) This subscription presupposes a thorough examination of the Confessions and Scripture.

Formula of Concord, T.D., Intro., 5/3: In the third place, since in these last times God, out of special grace, has brought the truth of His Word to light again from the darkness of the Papacy through the faithful service of the precious man of God, Dr. Luther, and since this doctrine has been collected from, and according to, God’s Word into the articles and chapters of the Augsburg Confession against the corruptions of the Papacy and also of other sects, we confess also *the First, Unaltered Augsburg Confession* as our symbol for this time, not because it was composed by our theologians, but because it has been taken from God’s Word and is founded firmly and well therein, precisely in the form in which it was committed to writing, in the year 1530, and presented to the Emperor Charles V at Augsburg by some Christian Electors, Princes, and Estates of the Roman Empire as a common confession of the reformed churches, whereby our reformed churches are distinguished from the Papists and other repudiated and condemned sects and heresies, after the custom and usage of the early Church, whereby succeeding councils, Christian bishops and teachers appealed to the Nicene Creed, and publicly declared that they embraced it.

Formula of Concord, T.D., Intro., 13/6 As we lay down God’s Word, the eternal truth, as the foundation, so we introduce and quote also these writings as a witness of the truth and as the unanimously received correct understanding of our predecessors who have steadfastly held to the pure doctrine.

In opposition to such *quia* subscription:

Carl Braaten: Lutheran churches have stressed the confessional principle more than the Reformed and Radical Protestant branches of the Reformation. Yet the confessional principle has been a constant source of controversy in world Lutheranism, not least in the United States. The right wing appeals to the confessional principle to exclude all new developments in modern theology. Committed to a theology of repristination, it lifts up the *Book of Concord*, sometimes coupled with seventeenth-century scholasticism, as the golden age, the once-for-all model of what theology must be. Here doctrines become laws, creating a climate of doctrinal legalism in the church, snuffing out the freedom which is the church’s birthright from the gospel (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 1, p 51).

2) A *quatenus* subscription is really no subscription.

Johann Georg Walch (d. 1775): What must be held concerning a subscription with restriction? ... It must be evident that a formula of this kind, if it is admitted, does not hinder anyone from being able to subscribe to the Koran or the Racovian Catechism. 1) A subscription with restriction (*quatenus*) clearly opposes the very nature of this oath. Whoever takes an oath with restriction really offers no binding oath; in so far as the symbolical books are concerned he promises nothing. 2) A subscription with restriction opposes the purpose of the oath both on the part of the magistrate who demands it as well as the one who is to be obligated by its binding force. Therefore, whoever takes a conditional oath grants himself a license to desert without fear, as he pleases, the doctrine presented in the Symbols (*Intro.*, II, cap. II, 11).

Note: “Historical” subscription, is a modern form of *quatenus*.

The Confessions oppose *quatenus* subscription:

Formula of Concord, Th.D., XII. 39, 40: These and like articles, one and all, with what pertains to them and follows from them, we reject and condemn as wrong, false, heretical, and contrary to the Word of God, the three Creeds, the Augsburg, Confession and Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and the Catechisms of Luther. Of these articles all godly Christians should and ought to beware, as much as the welfare and salvation of their souls is dear to them.

40] Since now, in the sight of God and of the entire Church of Christ, we wish to testify to those now living and those who shall come after us that this declaration herewith presented concerning all the controverted articles aforementioned and explained, and no other, is our faith, doctrine, and confession, in which we are also willing, by God’s grace, to appear with intrepid hearts before the

judgment-seat of Jesus Christ, and give an account of it; and that we will neither privately nor publicly speak or write anything contrary to it, but, by the help of God's grace, intend to abide thereby: therefore, after mature deliberation, we have, in God's fear and with the invocation of His name, attached our signatures with our own hands.

3) Our subscription to our symbolical books is restricted to the doctrines contained in them.

-a) It includes

- formal declarations of faith as well as doctrines mentioned incidentally (as the doctrine of creation is in Formula of Concord I, 3/2, and the inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture are in Large Catechism, Baptism, par. 57 and Sac. Altar, par. 76.)
- doctrines introduced in dogmatical deductions (A.C. XX, 9–10).
- the rejection of error (F.C. I , 11/1 etc.; A.C. I, 5).

-b) All things pertaining to the manner of presentation, as figures of speech, method of deduction, historical, archeological, scientific remarks, use of proof texts, etc., are not included.

- FC, TD, XI: Matthew 22:14 is incorrectly cited as Matthew 20:16.
- SA, II, IV: Luther incorrectly refers to Revelation 10:3 as coming from Revelation 12.
- FC, I 15/5 says “when a magnet is smeared with garlic-juice, its natural power is not thereby removed, but only impeded.” We don't subscribe to the idea the garlic juice weakens magnets. In fact, this is part of a statement of Strigel which the confessors are rejecting.
- FC, TD, IV 8 cites Romans 14:23, “Whatever is not of faith is sin,” in support of the teaching that only a Christian motivated by faith can do good works pleasing to God.” The context of Romans 14:23 makes it clear that “faith” in this passage does not refer to saving faith in Christ but to confidence that a specific action is in accord with God's law.
- In subscribing to the confessions we do not limit ourselves to using their terminology. We don't usually call our service “the mass.”

See, J. Brug, “Why Bible-Believing Lutherans Subscribe to the Book Of Concord” WLS Essay File.

Intro III Dogmatics offers a systematic statement of the various articles of faith scattered throughout the Scriptures.

Intro III, 1. Dogmatics is not systematic in the sense that we can reduce the doctrines of Scripture to a strict system.

- a) It does not develop all doctrines from one central truth.**
 - 1) There is a central truth—justification by grace through faith.**
 - 2) But this is not offered for speculative development.**
- b) It does not attempt to harmonize the articles of faith, e.g., universal grace with the decree of election; salvation *sola gratia Dei* with damnation *sola culpa hominis*.**
- c) It does not point out the relation of every article to the central doctrine of Scripture, e.g., time and manner of creation.**
- d) It does not omit any article because its relation to the central doctrine may not be clear, e.g., angels.**
- e) Nor does it invent auxiliary doctrines to bridge any apparent gaps, e.g., using *intuitu fidei* election or natural and malicious resistance as answers to the question, “Why are some saved and not others?”**
- f) It does not distinguish varying theologies in Scripture, such as Johannine, Petrine, or Pauline theology, after the fashion of the historical-critical movement.**

Opposition to the scriptural view:

Emil Brunner (d. 1966): There is a Synoptic, a Pauline, and a Johannine type of doctrine; each differs considerably from the other, and no theological art reduces them to the same common denominator (*Revelation and Reason*, p 129; cf. p 152, 288).

Braaten: Critical attention to what the texts actually say has exploded the notion that one orthodox dogmatics can be mined out of Scripture. There are different theological tendencies and teachings in the various texts. Ecumenically this has led to the practical conclusion that the traditional demand for a complete consensus of doctrine may be wrongheaded, if even the Scriptures fail to contain such a consensus. (*CD*, I, p 77)

Clark Pinnock: Among other hermeneutical presuppositions, I accept diversity among the biblical witnesses and recognize the dialogical character of the Bible. Being open to its overall drift, I try to enter into the struggle for the truth that is going on there. The Bible does not speak with a single voice; there is a dialogue

among the different voices. The writings contain a long and complex search for the mind of God and in this struggle various points of view compete and interact (*Most Moved Mover*, p 21).

Intro III, 2. Dogmatics is a system in the sense that:

- a) It gathers all statements of Scripture regarding any one doctrine.
- b) It clearly limits the articles of faith over against one another, and defines their relation to one another in so far as Scripture indicates the relation, e.g., justification to sanctification
- c) It groups the articles of faith together according to certain view points.

Intro III, 3. It may point out the varying importance of the several articles of faith regarding their proximity to, or remoteness from, the central truth.

- a) For an example, see Quenstedt's classification:
 - 1) **Articuli fundamentales:** Fundamental articles serve as the foundation of faith.
 - a) **Primarii:** Of primary importance as foundations of faith.
 - 1) **Constitutivi:** Necessary to the essence of saving faith.
e.g., *omnium fundamentalissimus*: justification.
e.g., sin and guilt, the person of Christ, the work of Christ.
 - 2) **Conservativi:** Of greatest importance for preserving faith.
e.g., election by grace, inspiration.
 - b) **Secundarii:** Of very great importance for faith.
e.g., sacraments.
 - 2) **Articuli non fundamentales:** Non-fundamental articles are less critical to faith, but we have no right to dismiss any of them, e.g., Antichrist, angels.
- b) This difference in importance does not grant any license to dispense with any doctrine.
 - 1) **We may not omit any doctrine or deviate from Scripture.**
Deuteronomy 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Matthew 5:18-19 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹ Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 28:20 ...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

2 Timothy 1:13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Titus 2:1 You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

Opposition to the scriptural view:

The ALC's Sandusky Resolution (1938): it is "neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines."

The ALC's Friendly Invitation to the LCMS (1947): "an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion." See Wolf, *Documents of Lutheran Unity*, p 162.

Wayne Grudem: In connection with this idea it is appropriate to ask what the difference is between a “major doctrine” and a “minor doctrine.” Christians often say they want to seek agreement in the church on major doctrines but also to allow for differences on minor doctrines. I have found the following guideline useful:

A major doctrine is one that has a significant impact on our thinking about other doctrines, or that has a significant impact on how we live the Christian life. A minor doctrine is one that has very little impact on how we think about other doctrines, and very little impact on how we live the Christian life.

By this standard doctrines such as the authority of the Bible, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, justification by faith, and many others would rightly be considered major doctrines. People who disagree with the historic evangelical understanding of any of these doctrines will have wide areas of difference with evangelical Christians who affirm these doctrines. By contrast, it seems to me that differences over forms of church government or some details about the Lord’s Supper or the timing of the great tribulation concern minor doctrines. Christians who differ over these things can agree on perhaps every other area of doctrine, can live Christian lives that differ in no important way, and can have genuine fellowship with one another. Of course, we may find doctrines that fall somewhere between “major” and “minor” according to this standard. For example, Christians may differ over the degree of significance that should attach to the doctrine of baptism or the millennium or the extent of the atonement. That is only natural, because many doctrines have *some* influence on other doctrines or on life, but we may differ over whether we think it to be a “significant” influence. (*Systematic Theology*, p 29-30)

Grudem: Before beginning our discussion of baptism we must recognize that there has been historically, and is today, a strong difference of viewpoint among evangelical Christians on this subject. The position advocated in this book is that baptism is not a “major” doctrine that should be the basis of division among genuine Christians, but it is nonetheless a matter of importance for church life, and it is appropriate that we give it full consideration. The position advocated in this chapter is “Baptistic”-namely, that baptism appropriately administered only to those who give a believable profession of faith in Jesus Christ (*Systematic Theology*, p 967).

2) We may not be lax in matters of church fellowship.

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

Note: there may be a “felicitous inconsistency” between a person’s public error and his personal faith. The basic question in fellowship matters is one’s attitude toward Scripture. In regard to salvation it is one’s attitude toward Christ.

3) We may not treat doctrines as “open questions” simply because they have not been treated in the Confessions or some people in the church cannot agree concerning them.

Note: “Open questions” are those questions which may be suggested by Scripture but which are not answered there (e.g., what day were angels created?). Any matter that Scripture does not decide we dare not try to decide ecclesiastically. Cf. Dt 4:2; 12:32; 1 Pe 4:11.

“Adiaphora” are actions or practices which are neither commanded or forbidden by Scripture (examples, drinking wine, baptism by immersion).

“Exegetical questions” are debates about which scriptural doctrine a specific passage refers to.

Iowa Synod (1859): Open Question: a question on which no symbolical decision yet has been made in the Confessional Books of our church and in which, therefore, both views must be allowed to stand side by side in the church (*Quelle und Dokumente*, p 263).

Among such open questions or exegetical discussions the Iowa Synod included church and ministry, Sunday as a sabbath, the Antichrist, and millennialism.

Intro IV Since the central truth of Scripture and its aim are the salvation of sinners, all articles of faith may be conveniently grouped under the following heads:

- A. The doctrine of God, the author of salvation (*Theology*).
- B. The doctrine of man, the object of salvation (*Anthropology*).
- C. The doctrine of Christ, the mediator of salvation (*Christology*).
- D. The doctrine of the personal appropriation of objective salvation by the sinner (*Soteriology*).
- E. The doctrine of the ultimate consummation of salvation (*Eschatology*).

A. THEOLOGY

A1. Revelation of God

A1, I God, who plans and executes the salvation of sinners, reveals himself in Scripture.

A1, I, 1. Scripture nowhere attempts to prove the existence of God.

a) It simply proceeds on the assumption that God is.

1) He is.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created...

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

2) He alone is absolutely, without dependence on any other.

Psalms 86:8 Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord; no deeds can compare with yours.

Psalms 95:3 For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.

Isaiah 43:10,11 "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. ¹¹ I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior."

Jeremiah 10:10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.

3) With these statements of Scripture compare these expressions that depersonalize God. τὸ ὄν (ὁ ὢν), τό μή ὄν, *absolutes Sein, der ganz Andere.*

Scotus Erigena (d. 877): And so God does not know what he is because he is not anything. In fact, he is in a certain sense incomprehensible to himself and to every intellect (*De div. nat.*, II, 28).

J. A. L. Wegscheider (d. 1849): An infinite being cannot be understood and known by a finite nature. The concept of such a being will have to be expressed and vaguely represented by an analogical and symbolical kind of knowledge (*Inst. Ed. VI*, p 209).

Karl Barth (d. 1968): He is not a thing among other things, but *the Wholly Other*, the infinite aggregate of all merely relative others (*The Word of God and the Word of Man*, p 74).

Paul Tillich (d. 1965): The religious word for what is called the ground of being is God (*S.T., I*, p 156). God does not exist. He is being—*itself* beyond essence and existence. Therefore, to argue that God exists is to deny him. (*Ibid*, p 205). It is as atheistic to affirm the existence of God as it is to deny it. God is being-itself, not a being (*Ibid*, p 237).

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi: I am That, Thou art That, All This is That, That alone is, and there is nothing else but That (*The Science of Being and the Art of Living*, p 33).

John Lennon and Paul McCartney: I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together (Song: "I am The Walrus").

Ernest Holmes—Religious Science cult: God is not a person, God is a Presence personified in us (*The Science of the Mind*, p 308).

b) At times it brings the folly of idolatry into bold relief by using the magnificent deeds of God as a foil to set off the glaring impotence of idols and vice versa.

Psalms 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

Isaiah 44:6-20 This is what the LORD says— Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. ⁷Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come— yes, let him foretell what will come. ⁸ Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one. ⁹ All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless. Those who would speak up for them are blind; they are ignorant, to their own shame. ¹⁰ Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit him nothing? ¹¹ He and his kind will be put to shame; craftsmen are nothing but men. Let them all come together and take their stand; they will be brought down to terror and infamy. ¹² The blacksmith takes a tool and works with it in the coals; he shapes an idol with hammers, he forges it with the might of his arm. He gets hungry and loses his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint. ¹³ The carpenter measures with a line and makes an outline with a marker; he roughs it out with chisels and marks it with compasses. He shapes it in the form of man, of man in all his glory, that it may dwell in a shrine. ¹⁴ He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak. He let it grow among the trees of the forest, or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow. ¹⁵ It is man's fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows

down to it. ¹⁶ Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm; I see the fire." ¹⁷ From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, "Save me; you are my god." ¹⁸ They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. ¹⁹ No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?" ²⁰ He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?"

Isaiah 45:21 Declare what is to be, present it—let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me.

Isaiah 46:5-11 To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared? ⁶ Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it. ⁷ They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands. From that spot it cannot move. Though one cries out to it, it does not answer; it cannot save him from his troubles. ⁸ Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. ⁹ Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. ¹⁰ I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. ¹¹ From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do. To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?

Jeremiah 2:11 Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols.

Leviticus 26:1 Do not make idols (עֲלֵלִים = non-entities or "mini-gods") or set up an image or a sacred stone for yourselves, and do not place a carved stone in your land to bow down before it. I am the LORD your God.

A1, I, 2.

a) Scripture does not reveal God's whole nature to us.

a) He is a hidden God (*Deus absconditus*).

Isaiah 45:15 Truly you are a God who hides himself, O God and Savior of Israel.

1 Timothy 6:16 [God] who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Exodus 33:20-23 He said, "You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live." ²¹ Then the LORD said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²² When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

Job 23:8,9 But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. ⁹ When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him.

Job 36:26 How great is God—beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out.

Luther: The *Diatribes* [of Erasmus], however, deceives herself in her ignorance by not making any distinction between God preached and God hidden (*Deus absconditus*), that is, between the Word of God and God Himself. God does many things that he does not disclose to us in his word; he also wills many things which he does not disclose himself as willing in his word (LW 33:140).

Luther: God also does not manifest himself except through his works and word because the meaning of these is understood in some measure. Whatever else belongs essentially to the Divinity cannot be grasped and understood (LW 1:11).

See John Schaller, "The Hidden God," in *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, July 1974, p 185-202, also in *Our Great Heritage*, I, p 439-458.

b) Scripture reveals God sufficiently for our salvation.

Matthew 11:25,27 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁷ All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 14:6-9 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." ⁸ Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." ⁹ Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."

John 17:3,25,26 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ²⁵ Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

c) Scripture reveals God through Jesus Christ.

Matthew 11:27 All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Ephesians 1:9 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.

d) In heaven we shall see God face to face.

1 Corinthians 13:9,10,12 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹² Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

A1, I, 3. The revelation of God becomes ours through faith.

a) Revelation of God does not come through speculation.

Matthew 11:25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

b) Faith is the receiving organ (ὄργανον ληπτικόν).

Ephesians 3:4-12 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.... ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

John 16:13-15 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

John 20:29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Colossians 2:18-19 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. ¹⁹ He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

c) Such faith is a gift of God.

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10,14 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"— ¹⁰but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹⁴ The man without the Spirit does not accept

the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

d) Faith is created and strengthened by the revelation of God.

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

2 Timothy 1:13,14 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

e) The acceptance of the revelation, which is a subjective experience, should be distinguished from the revelation itself, the truths of Scripture, which are objective.

Opposition to the scriptural view:

Brunner: There is therefore no point in setting the objective fact of revelation over against the subjective act of receiving the revelation, because the revelation actually consists in the meeting of two subjects (*Revelation and Reason*, p 33).

A1, I, 4. Besides the revelation of God in Scripture (*notitia Dei revelata*) there is his manifestation in nature (*notitia Dei naturalis*).

a) God's work in nature reveals his majesty and goodness.

1) It is seen in the creation of the universe.

Psalms 19:1-3 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. ² Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. ³ There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

Romans 1:18-21 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God (τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ) is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—(τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἢ τε αἰδῖος αὐτοῦ δύνάμις καὶ θεϊότης) have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

2) It is seen in the preservation of the universe.

Acts 14:17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.

Acts 17:24-28 The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands.

²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring" (γένος).

3) Heathen testify to this.

Aristotle (d. 322 BC): Being invisible to every mortal nature, he is seen from his very works (*De Mundo*, cap. VI).

Cicero (d. 43 BC): You do not see God; nevertheless you recognize God from his works (*Tuscul. Disp.* I, 28).

4) Modern theology's claim that God reveals himself in his mighty acts rather than in the inspired words of Scripture is unscriptural.

G. Ernest Wright (d. 1974) We must study the history of the Chosen People in exactly the same way as we do that of any other people, running the risk of destroying the uniqueness of that history. Unless we are willing to run that risk, truth can never be ours.... Faith was communicated, in other words, through the forms of history, and unless history is taken seriously, one cannot comprehend biblical faith which triumphantly affirms the meaning of history.... In the biblical sense, there is no such thing as a knowledge of God apart, or somehow separated from, the real events of this human scene and from the special responsibilities he has given us within it.... Yet the study of archaeology leads the theologian to a considerable risk. What if one should find out that the biblical events did not occur at

all?...Numerous historical problems have arisen...and in addition there is in the Bible an interpretation of event and of experience which is not subject to historical or archaeological testing (*Biblical Archaeology*, p 27, 17-18).

b) Conscience testifies to the existence of a supreme law-giver and judge.

1) It testifies to the inscribed (natural) law as being of divine origin.

2) It testifies that we are accountable to God for our conduct.

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 2:14,15 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law (*τὰ τοῦ νόμου*), they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law (*τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου*) are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

c) There are the two forms of the natural knowledge of God.

Quenstedt: The natural knowledge of God is twofold; the one is ἐμφυτος or impressed upon the nature and minds of men in their very origin, innate and implanted, by which man knows God from certain principles born within him through certain fragments and remnants of the divine image, as it were, without any research or operation of the mind; and the other is called ἐπίκτητος or acquired, because it is acquired from inborn principles of nature through a process of reasoning and careful contemplation of created things (*TDP*, I, VI, I, XI, p 253).

Calov: The natural knowledge of God is partly inborn, partly acquired. The former is that by which man knows God naturally by reason of the remnants of the aptitude for wisdom implanted in man's mind when he was created. The latter is that by which from a consideration of creation and the universal government of the world by means of logical reasoning he comes to the conclusion that God is the creator, preserver, and ruler of creation (*Theo. pos.*, I, III, p 48).

d) Through the natural knowledge of God no man can be saved.

1) Revealed knowledge of God is the source of eternal life.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

1 Corinthians 2:9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."

2) Natural knowledge will at best lead to a seeking after God or the truth.

-a) Natural knowledge leads man to seek God, but imperfectly.

Acts 17:27 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him (*εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὔροιεν*), though he is not far from each one of us.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Chemnitz: Accurately speaking, the natural knowledge of God is either nothing, or imperfect, or weak. It is nothing, because the whole of philosophy knows nothing about the free promise of the forgiveness of sins.... It is imperfect, because the Gentiles know only bits and pieces of the law, but of the interior acts of worship required by the first table of the law reason knows and believes nothing that is certain.... It is weak, because even though the fact that God exists and that he demands obedience in accord with the distinction between what is morally good and evil is impressed on the minds of men, nevertheless agreement is not only weak but is often driven out by horrendous doubts (*Loci*, I, *de deo*, I, II, p 20).

-b) Natural knowledge convicts man of his damnability.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Romans 2:1 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.

Romans 2:12,16 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹⁶This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

Quenstedt: For the apostle indicates what, on account of the abuse and neglect of men, incidentally follows from this knowledge, namely, that they are without excuse; and he wishes to convict all Gentiles because they did not glorify God as God, although the knowledge of God (i.e., the fact that he exists) was manifest in them.... For although that natural knowledge is not sufficient for a perfect knowledge of God, nor by itself efficacious for conversion, it is,

nevertheless, sufficient to convict men of impiety, namely, that they did not even do that which that knowledge dictated, but rather abused it (*TDP*, I, VI, III, obs. 5, p 251).

Hollaz: There can be atheists in theory only, not by nature, but by a just withdrawal of God and a blinding by the devil, not through a total eradication of the light of nature in so far as they have it, but through suffocation of it in so far as the use and exercise of it are concerned; not through the whole length of one's life and permanently, but only through a certain passing seizure for a certain length of time. For the law of nature does not permit the fixed and firm opinion that there is no God to inhere in anyone. For although the mind of an ungodly man is drugged as it were in a stupor so that he does not think about God, nevertheless there can be no one in whom conscience does not finally assert itself and at least at the time of death accuse him of having neglected God (*Exam.*, p 194).

-c) Natural knowledge furnishes a point of contact for the Word.

Luther: But if the natural law were not written and given into man's heart by God, one would have to preach for a long time, before the consciences would be stricken. One would have to preach a hundred thousand years to a donkey, a horse, an ox, or a cow, before they would perceive the law although they have ears, eyes, and a heart as man has; they can hear it, but it does not enter into the heart. Why? Where is the defect? The soul is not fashioned and created in such a manner that it can receive such things. But when man is confronted with the Law, he says immediately, Yes, it is so, I cannot deny it. It would not be possible to persuade him of this so easily if it were not previously written in his heart (*St. L.*, III, 1053).

-d) Natural knowledge provides a basis for civic righteousness.

Apology, IV, 22-24: For God wishes those who are gross sinners to be restrained by civil discipline, and to maintain this, He has given laws, letters, doctrine, magistrates, penalties. And this righteousness reason, by its own strength, can, to a certain extent, work, although it is often overcome by natural weakness, and by the devil impelling it to manifest crimes. Now, although we cheerfully assign this righteousness of reason the praises that are due it (for this corrupt nature has no greater good and Aristotle says aright: "Neither the evening star nor the morning star is more beautiful than righteousness," and God also honors it with bodily rewards), yet it ought not to be praised with reproach to Christ.

-e) Natural knowledge can be used by Christians to glorify the Creator.

3) Examples of overestimating the natural knowledge of God:

Clement of Alexandria (d. 220): Many are the ways to salvation (*Strom.*, cap. I).

Maldonatus (d. 1583): Since the natural law has been preserved, as all confess, the Gentiles were able to be saved, and apart from the written law (*L.* 3, p 292).

Bellarmino (d. 1621): Add the fact that the fathers teach that the Gentiles, although they commonly worshiped a number of gods, nevertheless were able by nature to know the one God, just as the philosophers in fact recognized the one God and from that point of view were, so to speak, Christians naturally (*Disp.*, I, *de Christo*, I I, III, 14, p 139).

Karl Rahner (d. 1984): The Christian will not regard the non-Christian as standing outside the pale of salvation simply because he is not a Christian.... The Christian will see the non-Christian as an anonymous Christian who does not really know what he actually is (*The Church after the Council*, p 56–57).

Edward Schillebeeckx: Perhaps it is better not to give the name "Church" to that portion of mankind that is anonymously Christian and in which the Church is anonymously present (*Concilium*, I, 88).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Those who through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or of his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and moved by his grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of conscience—those too may achieve eternal salvation (Par. 847).

Beware of Universalism (all will be saved), inclusivism and pluralism (there are many ways to salvation).

A1, II Many attempts have been made by philosophers to prove the existence of God.

A1, II, 1. The ontological argument (an *a priori* argument based on being) (Ex 3:14).

a) As presented by Anselm of Canterbury (1100) (*Proslogion*):

**Our mind harbors the concept of a supreme perfect being: God.
This being must exist, otherwise it would not be perfect.**

b) As presented by Descartes (1650)(*Cogito, ergo sum*):

**The concept of a perfect being cannot have originated in me, an imperfect (limited) being.
Hence there must be a God who implanted it.**

- c) To grasp the force of the argument consider this premise: God is a necessary idea.
- 1) Necessary ideas are such as inevitably come to consciousness as the mind develops in its reactions to the world in which we live.
cf the idea of time, space, causality.
 - 2) Necessary ideas must be objectively valid, and the world must actually correspond to them. Otherwise our minds would be so constituted that we were compelled to think falsehoods. Rationality would become irrationality.
 - 3) Man's ideas of, e.g., the beautiful, the true, the good imply the existence somewhere of an absolute standard. Such a standard is conceivable only as existing in an absolutely perfect personal being.
- d) The weakness of the argument. Contra: Aquinas, Kant.
- 1) It is begging the question, arguing in a circle.
 - 2) It is an argument from one sphere (thinking) to another (being).
 - 3) Existence is not an attribute of a thing (so as to form a part of the concept), but the absolute position of that thing.
 - 4) If necessary ideas are absolutely true, then
 - a) What about the validity of axioms of human reason in theology?
cf *Omne corpus verum in loco est.*
Finitum non est capax infiniti.
 - b) What about the fundamental lie of natural reason?
cf the "*opinio legis*," the idea of reward and merit.

A1, II, 2. The historical argument (based on experience).

- a) Presented by Cicero (*e consensu gentium*):
A very strong reason which can be adduced for a belief in the existence of gods seems to be this: that there has never been any race so wild, any human being so brutish, as not to be pervaded by some sort of notion of gods (*Tusc. Disp. 13.30*)
- b) Opposition to the scriptural view: Feuerbach, Marx, Freud
- 1) This is an incomplete induction.
 - 2) The same objections which hold against the ontological argument.
 - 2) People once believed the earth was flat too.

Karl Marx (d. 1883): Man has found in the imaginary reality of heaven where he looked for a superman, only a reflection of his own self....The foundation of irreligious criticism is this: man makes religion; religion does not make man. Religion is indeed the self-consciousness and self-awareness of man who either has not yet attained to himself or has already lost himself (*Selected Writings*, p 63).

John Lennon (d. 1980): Imagine there's no heaven. It's easy if you try.
No hell below us, above us only sky.
Imagine all the people living for today.
Imagine there's no countries; it isn't hard to do;
Nothing to kill or die for, and no religion too.
Imagine all the people living life in peace.
You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.
I hope some day you will join us,
and the world will live as one. (Song "Imagine")

Sigmund Freud (d. 1939): We turn our attention to the psychological origin of religious ideas. These, which are given out as teachings, are not precipitates of experience or end-results of thinking; they are illusions, fulfillments of the oldest strongest and most urgent wishes of mankind. The secret of their strength lies in the strength of those wishes. As we already know, the terrifying impression of helplessness in childhood aroused the need for protection—for protection, through love—which was provided through the father; and the recognition that this helplessness would last throughout life made it necessary to cling to the existence of a father, but this time a more powerful one. Thus the benevolent rule of a divine Providence allays our fear of the dangers of life (*The Future of an Illusion*, p 30).

A1, II, 3. The cosmological argument (based on observation of the world) (He 3:4).

- a) Introduced by Plato and Aristotle: *primum movens*, πρῶτον κινουῦν
Developed by the church fathers and by Aquinas in the Five Ways (*Summa*, I, 2.3).
- Everything in this world has an adequate cause.
 - Nothing causes itself.
 - An eternal series of causes is impossible
 - Hence we must ultimately reach a prime cause of everything: God.

Aristotle: There is something which always moves that which is moved, and the “prime mover” is itself unmoved (*Metaphysics*, II, ii, 1). It is obvious that there is some first principle, and that the causes of all things are not infinitely many, either in a direct sequence or in kind (IV, viii, 8).

Jacob Carpov (d. 1786): The universe is also able to not exist. The universe is a contingent entity. Since it is contingent, it does not have a reason for its own existence in itself. But a series of causes reaching to infinity is not possible, since this would be absurd—that one thing has its reason for existence in another thing beyond itself, and this thing has its reason for existence in another, and so on and on; and since, nevertheless, nothing exists without reason, therefore, that being which is essentially different from the world and has the reason for its own existence in itself is called the “Being from itself.” Therefore that Being in whom is found a sufficient reason for the whole universe is the “Being from itself.” And because we call this Being God, the existence of God must be admitted (*Theol. rev.* I, 498).

b) Contra:

- 1) **What is the cause of God’s existence? (*Causa sui*?)**
 - 2) **Why must the prime cause be personal?**
 - 3) **Is the law of cause and effect absolute?**
- An adequate cause for all events is a postulate.**

cf Leibniz: *praestablierte Harmonie*.

Stephen Hawking: The idea that space and time may form a closed surface without boundary...has profound implications for the role of God in the affairs of the universe....So long as the universe had a beginning, we could suppose that it had a creator. But if the universe is really completely self-contained, having no boundary or edge, it would have neither beginning nor end: it would simply be. What place then for a creator? (*A Brief History of Time*, p 140).

A1, II, 4. The teleological argument (observation of the world’s goal) (Ps 94:9).

- a) **The physico-theological form. William Paley, *Natural Theology*, 1802. All things unmistakably serve some purpose. Hence there must be a supreme intelligence which arranged nature systematically.**
- b) **The historico-theological form. History evidently takes its course according to certain ethical principles. There must, then, be a supreme being which laid down these principles.**
- c) **The argument from intelligent design**

Richard Dawkins, Professor of Zoology, Oxford University: The more statistically improbable a thing is, the less can we believe that it just happened by blind chance. Superficially the obvious alternative to chance is an intelligent Designer (*New Scientist*, Vol. 94, April 1982, p 130).

Fred Hoyle, Professor of Astronomy, Cambridge University: Once we see, however, that the probability of life originating at random is so utterly minuscule as to make the random concept absurd, it becomes sensible to think that the favourable properties of physics on which life depends are in every respect deliberate. . . . It is therefore almost inevitable that our own measure of intelligence must reflect in a valid way the higher intelligences to our left, even to the extreme idealized limit of God (*Evolution From Space*, p 148.)

Siegfried Müller-Markus: Nearly all the great physicists of the world reject materialism and many believe in God.... It is as if one cannot but help seeing the footprints of God with one’s own eyes in the wonders of the universe and trembling under the breath of God’s Spirit (*Wen Sterne Rufen*, p 84).

d) Contra: David Hume.

- 1) **What is the ultimate aim of nature?**
- 2) **Is suitableness something objective and absolute?**
- 3) **Note the convictions of Monists and Pantheists.**

cf Spinoza (d. 1677): All final causes are “*humana figmenta et deliria*” (Hodge, *ST*, I, 227).

A1, II, 5. The moral argument.

- a) **No man (not even the most debased) can rid himself entirely of conscience and the inscribed (natural) law.
Hence there must be a supreme author of this law.**
- b) **Form given to this argument by Imanuel Kant (d. 1804):
The categorical imperative pays no regard to happiness.
But practical reason demands a compensation for obedience and suffering.
Hence there must be a supreme law giver and judge.**
- c) **Contra:**
 - 1) **Not conclusive: *Postulate*.**
 - 2) **Not Christian: *Opinio legis*.**

A1, II, 6. The value of these arguments is limited.

- a) **Not one leads to a true knowledge of God.**
- b) **They are not very persuasive in an age characterized by extremes of empirical experimentation on the one hand and skepticism and emotionalism on the other.**
- c) **They show, however, that belief in God is not irrational.**

Baier: Indeed, it could appear that among Christians it ought to be assumed rather than proved that there is a God. Nevertheless, because we must earnestly contend not only with atheists but also at times with the doubts of our own minds on account of the corruption of our nature, those things which prove the existence of God ought not be neglected (*Comp.*, I, 4, p 116).

Gerhard: It could seem to someone that that question is an idle one in the church since it is known and admitted by all that there is a God, nor is any nation so barbarous that it denies that there is a God and that he is to be worshiped, although it does not know how he is to be worshiped.... But nevertheless one must maintain that τὸ ὄν or the fact that there is a God must be proved:

1) To refute those who deny that there is a God....

2) To strengthen our faith But this faith must be drawn from the Word of God and strengthened by meditation on it. In grave and serious temptations, Chemnitz says, we are all either Epicureans or Stoics. Therefore the heart must be strengthened by a consideration of the things that are said by philosophers which testify that there is a God and that he carefully administers human affairs.

3) To perfect the natural knowledge of God (*Loc.* III, I, II, IV, 1, p 40).

- d) **The doctrine of God is an article of faith and as such not capable of logical proof.**

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Psalm 14:1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

Johann George Hamann (German pietist, d. 1788): If it is fools who say in their heart, "There is no God," those who try to prove his existence seem to me to be even more foolish (Letter, 1786, in R.G. Smith, *J.G. Hamann*, p 253).

Søren Kierkegaard (d. 1855): If God does not exist, it would be impossible to prove it, and if he does exist, it would be folly to try (*Philosophical Fragments*, p 31).

Joseph Stump (d. 1935): None of these arguments is actually demonstrative or coercive. One who denies that there is a God cannot by means of these arguments be compelled to acknowledge God's existence (In Engelder, *Reason or Revelation*, p 151).

C. F. W. Walther: Only God's Word gives certainty. Whatever is derived from reason can be contested by reason. (Engelder, p 159).

Paul Tillich: The arguments for the existence of God neither are arguments nor are they proof of the existence of God. They are expressions of the *question* of God which is implied in human finitude. This question is their truth; every answer they give is untrue (*ST*, I, p 205).

Tillich re God: There is no evidence for his existence (*ST*, I, p 245).

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (d. 1945): God as a working hypothesis in morals, politics, or science has been surmounted and abolished; and the same thing has happened in philosophy and religion.... For the sake of intellectual honesty, that working hypothesis should be dropped, or as far as possible eliminated (*Letters and Papers from Prison*, p 195ff).

Julian Huxley (d. 1975): The god hypothesis is no longer of any pragmatic value for the interpretation or comprehension of nature, and indeed often stands in the way of better and truer interpretation.... It will soon be as impossible for intelligent, educated man or woman to believe in a god as it is now to believe that the earth is flat, that flies can be spontaneously generated, that disease is a divine punishment, or that death is always due to witchcraft (*Religion Without Revelation*, p 58f, 62).

John A.T. Robinson (d. 1983): God is intellectually superfluous. God is emotionally dispensable. God is morally intolerable (*The New Reformation*, p 107).

- e) **The God of the Proofs is not the God of the Bible. He is at best a "God of the Gaps," a deistic Demiurge.**

John Polkinghorne: The God of the Gaps is dead and with him has died the old-style natural theology of Paley.... No theologian need weep for them, for the God of the Gaps hovering at the periphery of the known world was far from being someone of who it could be said "all understand that he is God." He was...a sort of demiurge, a cause among the other competing causes of the world (*Science and Creation*, p 13).

Siegfried Müller-Markus: The most that a rational theology can accomplish is a *hint* at the probable existence of God. A logical proof is not possible (*Wen Sterne Rufen*, p 490).

A2. Essence of God

A2, I. God, the author of our salvation, is the infinite, absolute Spirit (Jn 4:24).

A2, I, 1. No adequate definition of the unique and incomprehensible God is possible.

- a) A definition in the strict sense is a statement of *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*. God, however, is in a class by himself. Hoenecke's "definition"—God is infinite unlimited spirit, three persons in one God (II, p 50)—is more description than definition.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Exodus 8:10 Moses replied, "It will be as you say, so that you may know there is no one like the LORD our God."

Exodus 15:11 Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you— majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

2 Samuel 7:22 How great you are, O Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears.

Psalms 89:6 For who in the skies above can compare with the LORD?
Who is like the LORD among the heavenly beings?

Isaiah 40:18,25 "To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to? ²⁵ To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.

- b) It is not on the order of a definition proper when Scripture calls God:

- 1) **Life (himself uncreated—the author of life).**

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

John 1:3-4 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

1 John 5:20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Numbers 14:21 Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth...

Joshua 3:10 This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites.

Psalms 42:2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

Psalms 84:2.2 My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Opposition to the scriptural view:

Tillich: Life is the process in which potential being becomes actual being.... But in God there is no distinction between potentiality and actuality. Therefore, we cannot speak of God as living in the proper or non-symbolical sense of the word "life." We must speak of God as living in symbolic terms.... God lives in so far as He is the ground of life (S.T., I:241f).

- 2) **Light (source of wisdom and happiness).**

1 John 1:4,5 We write this to make our joy complete. ⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

John 1:4,5 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

Psalms 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalms 36:9 For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

Micah 7:8 Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light.

3) Love.

1 John 4:8,16 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

c) A description of God may be given.

1) Indeed, this is not an exhaustive description.

Job 11:7 Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?

Job 36:26 How great is God—beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out.

Job 37:23 The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress.

1 Corinthians 2:11,16 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹⁶ "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Timothy 6:16 [God] who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

2) Yet a certain knowledge of God's essence is possible and necessary.

For salvation

Jeremiah 31:34 "No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

For service

Deuteronomy 6:13 Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.

Deuteronomy 10:20 Fear the LORD your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name.

Joshua 24:14 Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

John 4:22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

A2, I, 2. Much may be learned about God's essence from his names.

a) יהוה reveals him as the absolute Being (also the short form יה).

A personal being, not a force; sufficient to himself; dependent on nothing; supreme; infinite; eternal; immutable; faithful; author of all things.

Exodus 3:13-15 Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" ¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM (אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי). This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation."

John 8:58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

Exodus 6:2-3 God also said to Moses, "I am the LORD. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.

Compare Genesis 14:22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to *the LORD*, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, and have taken an oath

Genesis 15:7 He also said to him, "I am *the LORD*, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."

Exodus 6:7 I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.

Exodus 14:4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.

Exodus 33:19 And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

Exodus 34:5-7 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."

וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל רַחוּם וַחֲנוּן אֶרְךָ אֲפִים וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת: נֹצֵר חֶסֶד
לְאַלְפִים נֶשָׂא עֹן וְפָשַׁע וְחַטָּאָה וְנִקְּהָ לֹא יִנְקָה פֶקֶד עֹן אָבוֹת עַל־בְּנִים וְעַל־
בְּנֵי בְנִים עַל־שְׁלִשִׁים וְעַל־רַבְעִים:

Isaiah 41:4 Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD—with the first of them and with the last—I am he.

Isaiah 44:6 This is what the LORD says— Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.

Isaiah 48:12 Listen to me, O Jacob, Israel, whom I have called: I am he; I am the first and I am the last.

Revelation 1:4,8,17 John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne. ⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last."

Revelation 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Psalms 90:1,2 Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. ² Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

- b) **יְיָ designates God as the absolute Master. Note the artificial lengthening of the vowel in the suffix. יְיָ has become of proper name in which the suffix has lost its force, as in the name Madonna.**

Genesis 18:3,27 He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord (יְיָ), do not pass your servant by." ²⁷ Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord (יְיָ), though I am nothing but dust and ashes."

1 Kings 3:10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this.

Job 28:28 And he said to man, "The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding."

Isaiah 8:5,7 The LORD spoke to me again: ⁷ the Lord is about to bring against them the mighty floodwaters of the River—the king of Assyria with all his pomp. It will overflow all its channels, run over all its banks.

Ezekiel 13:9 My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will not belong to the council of my people or be listed in the records of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD (יְיָ הוֹיָה)

- c) **יְיָ (pl. of אֱלֹהִים) seems to indicate majesty and power.**

- 1) **Examples of the singular אֱלֹהִים (This form appears especially in Job and other poetry and in Aramaic).**

Job 12:6 The tents of marauders are undisturbed, and those who provoke God are secure— those who carry their god in their hands.

Job 21:19 It is said, "God stores up a man's punishment for his sons." Let him repay the man

himself, so that he will know it!

Job 27:10 Will he find delight in the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?

Psalm 50:22 Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue.

Isaiah 44:8 Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.

- 2) **The form אֱלֹהִים is a *pluralis magnitudinis*. This use of the plural for the one true God is unique to biblical Hebrew. אֱלֹהִים can also be used as a true plural referring to heathen gods.**

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God (אֱלֹהִים) created the heavens and the earth.

Jeremiah 46:25 The LORD Almighty, the God of Israel (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) says: "I am about to bring punishment on Amon god of Thebes, on Pharaoh, on Egypt and her gods (אֱלֹהֵיהֶּ) and her kings, and on those who rely on Pharaoh.

Deuteronomy 32:39 See now that I myself am He! There is no god (אֱלֹהִים) besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

Exodus 18:11 Now I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly.

- 3) **Metaphorical application of אֱלֹהִים to rulers.**

Exodus 22:8,28 But if the thief is not found, the owner of the house must appear before the judges (הַאֱלֹהִים) to determine whether he has laid his hands on the other man's property. ²⁸ "Do not blaspheme God [or do not revile the judges] or curse the ruler of your people.

Psalm 82:6 I said, "You are 'gods'; you are all sons of the Most High."

Psalm 138:1 I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; before the "gods" I will sing your praise.

Psalm 8:5 You made him a little lower than the *heavenly beings*.

- d) **אֱלֹהִים occurs most frequently coupled with an adjective or genitive. Also in Job and other poetry and as the name of chief god of the Canaanites.**

- 1) **אֱלֹהִים God, god.**

Job 5:8 "But if it were I, I would appeal to God; I would lay my cause before him.

Hosea 11:9 I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I turn and devastate Ephraim. For I am God, and not man—the Holy One among you. I will not come in wrath.

Ezekiel 28:2 Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'In the pride of your heart you say, "I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas." But you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god.'"

- 2) **אֱלֹהֵי הַחַיִּים the living God.**

Joshua 3:10 This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites.

Psalm 42:2/3 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

Psalm 84:2/3 My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

- 3) **אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם God Most High, especially in older texts and poetry. אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם can also appear alone.**

Genesis 14:18-20, 22 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, ¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.

²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. ²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, and have taken an oath.

Psalm 78: 35 They remembered that God was their Rock, that God Most High was their Redeemer.

Psalm 7:17/18 I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

Numbers 24:16 The oracle of one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most

High, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened:

Psalm 9:2/3 I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

Psalm 21:7/8 For the king trusts in the LORD; through the unfailing love of the Most High he will not be shaken.

4) שְׂדֵי אֱלֹהִים translated “God Almighty” but meaning is unknown, perhaps אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה, who is sufficient; especially in older texts and poetry. אֱלֹהֵי can also occur alone.

Genesis 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless.”

Genesis 28:3 May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples.

Genesis 35:11 And God said to him, “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will come from your body.”

Exodus 6:3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.

Ezekiel 10:5 The sound of the wings of the cherubim could be heard as far away as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.

Genesis 49:25 Because of your father’s God, who helps you, because of the Almighty, who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies below, blessings of the breast and womb.

Numbers 24:4 The oracle of one who hears the words of God, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened...

Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

Isaiah 13:6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

Note: In the NIV the translation “Almighty” is used for both אֱלֹהֵי and אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת. אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת means “LORD of armies.” The King James rendering was “LORD of hosts.” The term may refer to regular armies, the angel armies of heaven, and to the armies of stars in the heavens. If God rules all of these, he rules everything.

5) אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם eternal God.

Genesis 21:33 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God.

Isaiah 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

Jeremiah 10:10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.

Daniel 12:7 The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, “It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.”

6) אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהִים God of gods.

Daniel 11:36 The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.

7) אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיָא—אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיָא God of heaven, Lord of heaven (Aramaic).

Daniel 2:44 In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

Daniel 5:23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.

8) This list is not exhaustive. Other terms include: אֱלֹהֵי קִנְיָא—jealous God (Ex 20:5) and אֱלֹהֵי גְבוּרָא—mighty God (Is 9:5).

A2, I, 3.**God in his essence is the absolutely Independent Being (*independentia et aseitas Dei*).**

- a) **This is not to be understood in the positive sense of a continuous self-production out of non-existence (*Causa sui*).**

Luthardt spoke of God's "*Ewige Geburt*" (*Glaubenslehre*, p 126).

Note: "Eternal generation" is an appropriate term of the Son, but not of the Father.

Gerhard: God is Being itself who exists unlimited in every way. God is a pure and most simple essence. In God to be and to will and to know is one and the same thing (Hoenecke II, p 48).

Calov: God is distinguished from other beings not simply through being but through his being actually in the highest sense (Hoenecke II, p 48).

- b) **It is to be understood in the negative sense of not being called into existence by any outside cause.**

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Isaiah 41:4 Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD—with the first of them and with the last—I am he.

Acts 17:25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

Colossians 1:16,17 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Quenstedt: God's existence has its source in his very self, not in a positive sense, through a positive influence, as if he brought himself out of non-existence into existence, but in a negative sense, through the negation of an influence from some one else, because namely, he was not produced by some other entity (*TDP*, I, VIII, I, XVI, p 287).

Luther: [God] has his essence from no one, nor has he beginning or end, but exists from eternity in and of himself, so that of his essence it cannot be said that he "was" or "became," for he never had a beginning, and he cannot begin to become; he has never ended and cannot cease to exist, but of him it must ever be said, "He is" or "He exists," that is, Jehovah (*St. L.*, XX, 2058).

A2, I, 4.**God in his essence is infinite (*infinitas Dei*).**

- a) **That is to say: "The essence and perfections of God have no limits" (Hollaz).**

Job 11:7 Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?

Psalms 145:3 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

1 Kings 8:27 But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!

Isaiah 66:1 This is what the LORD says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?"

Quenstedt: God is infinite not by reason of quantitative extension, since he is independent of all quantitateness, but by reason of his essence and perfection, Ps 145:3. Of his greatness there is no end (*TDP*, I, VIII, II, II, p 284).

- b) **Infinity is implied in independence. A thing limited by another is to that degree dependent.**

- c) **Infinity includes independence:**

- 1) **Independence from time.**

Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says— he who lives forever (עַלְיוֹן), whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Revelation 4:9 The living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever.

Revelation 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he

will reign for ever and ever.”

2) Independence from space.

Psalms 139:7-12 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. ¹¹ If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” ¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

Gerhard: By infinity is meant that God can be limited in respect neither to time, nor to place, nor to anything else but that he by his own nature and essence, actually, without any qualification, of himself and absolutely is infinite (*Loci*, III, CLXII, p 117).

3) Independence from all laws:

-a) From laws of nature: (i.e., cause and effect) cf. miracles.

Isaiah 38:7-8 “This is the LORD’s sign to you that the LORD will do what he has promised: ⁸ I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.” So the sunlight went back the ten steps it had gone down.

-b) From rules of human logic: Consider Christology; the Trinity; conversion and non-conversion; election, etc. This is not to say that God is illogical, but his logic is beyond ours.

Isaiah 55:8-9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. ⁹ “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

-c) From outside standards of morality The moral law is God’s will, not a standard outside of God to which he must conform, but nothing he wills is immoral.

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

d) The infinity of God is not disturbed or annulled by the creation of finite things. He gave up nothing from himself. Nothing was added to him.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Acts 17:28 “For in him we live and move and have our being.” As some of your own poets have said, “We are his offspring.”

A2, I, 5. God is one regarding essence and number (*unitas Dei*).

a) God’s oneness is stated in various ways.

Deuteronomy 4:35 You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD is God; besides him there is no other.

Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Isaiah 41:4 Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD—with the first of them and with the last—I am he.

Isaiah 43:10 “You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.”

1 Corinthians 8:4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.

Galatians 3:20 A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

Ephesians 4:3-6 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Gerhard: God, however, is one in the highest sense. For, in order that something be one in the highest degree, it must be a being in the highest degree and indivisible in the highest degree. God, however, is Being itself, who exists unlimited in all ways. Also, neither actually nor potentially can he be divided. Therefore God is one in the highest sense and degree (*Loci*, I, III, VI, 43, p 106).

Quenstedt: The unity of God is that attribute according to which he is not only undivided in essence but simply and absolutely indivisible and incapable of sharing what he is by any multiplication of himself.... This excludes completely any division or sharing of the divine essence with more individuals of the same type (*TDP*, II, VIII, X, p 285).

b) From the essential unity follows the simplicity of God (*simplicitas Dei*).

Gerhard: The divine essence is most simple, without any composition, admixture, and division, and therefore without any accidents [non-essential attributes] (*Loci*, III, II, 129, p 99).

Calov: From the unity of God follows the simplicity of God, according to which God is devoid of all real composition (*Systema*, II, V, p 284).

- c) **Opposed to numerical unity is *polytheism*. This is not a lower stage of development on the way to monotheism, but a degeneration.**

Romans 1:21-23 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Acts 14:15 Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

- d) **Opposed to the unity of God is *dualism*, which is the assumption of the eternal co-existence with God of an evil principle in opposition to him. (Gnosticism and Zoroastrianism).**

Zoroaster (6th century BC?): The two primeval Spirits who are twins were revealed [to me] in sleep. Their ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving are two: the good and the evil. And between these two [ways] the wise men have rightly chosen, and not the foolish ones. And when these two Spirits met, they established at the origin life and non-life and that at the end the worst existence will be for the followers of Falsehood and for the follower of Truth the Best Thinking (the *Gathas*, Y. 30.3-4).

- e) **Opposed to the essential unity of God is *monism* in every form.**

- 1) ***Pantheism* assumes that God unfolds himself in the world, which in turn is absorbed by the Godhead.**

Scotus Erigena (d. 877): Nature is 1. An uncreated creating being (which is God); 2. A created creating being (which are the productive ideas in God); 3. A non-creating created being (which is matter as such); 4. A being neither created nor creating (which is God as the final aim of the whole process).

Servetus (d. 1553): In a stone God is a stone, in the trunk of a tree he is a tree trunk, and so on in other things (*Epis. VI ad Calvinum*).

- 2) ***Materialism* denies any God outside of multiple matter.**

Lucretius (d. 55 BC?): Nothing from nothing ever yet was born.

Fear holds dominion over mortality
Only because, seeing in land and sky
So much the cause of which they do not know,
Men think Divinities are working there.
Meantime, when once we know from nothing still
Nothing can be created, we shall divine
More clearly what we seek: those elements
From which alone all things created are,
And how accomplished by no tool of Gods
(*The Nature of Things*, Bk 1).

- f) **Evolution of religion maintains that the idea of God is a human construct which progresses from *animism* to *polytheism*, to *henotheism* (*monolatry*), to *monotheism*, to *atheism* (or in the view of some *pantheism*).**

A2, I, 6. God is personality (*spiritualitas Dei*).

- a) **He is a spirit who relates to his creation in a personal way.**

John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

Genesis 1:29 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Matthew 6:26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.

- b) **Opposed to spirituality is *anthropomorphism* and *anthropopathism*.**

- 1) **This is ascribing to God real human form or affections. When Scripture speaks of God anthropomorphically or anthropopathically, this is plainly figurative.**

Isaiah 66:1 This is what the LORD says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.

Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?"

Psalm 34:15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry.

Psalm 94:9 Does he who implanted the ear not hear? Does he who formed the eye not see?

1 Samuel 15:11,29 "I am grieved (יִגְדַל) that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." ²⁹ "He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind (דִּבְרָה!); for he is not a man, that he should change his mind."

Exodus 20:5 I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

Deuteronomy 32:27 I dreaded the taunt of the enemy, lest the adversary misunderstand and say, "Our hand has triumphed; the LORD has not done all this."

Psalm 78:65 Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, as a man wakes from the stupor of wine.

Genesis 8:1 But God remembered Noah.

- 2) **We apply these terms to God not equivocally, not univocally, but analogically, that is, there is enough similarity between the trait in God and in us to allow a comparison to be made, but the trait in God is not exactly the same as it is in us.**

A2, I, 7. It must be remembered that Scripture offers this description of God's nature, not in a vein of theoretical speculation, but with a practical reference to our salvation.

Exodus 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation."

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Psalm 145:3-7 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. ⁴ One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. ⁵ They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. ⁶ They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. ⁷ They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

Isaiah 44:6-8 This is what the LORD says— Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. ⁷ Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come— yes, let him foretell what will come. ⁸ Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.

John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

Acts 17:25 He is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

A3. Attributes of God

A3, I. God's many attributes are to us different manifestations of his saving love.

A3, I, 1. God is love.

a) **He not only has love or loves;**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Ephesians 2:4-5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

b) **He identifies himself with love.**

1 John 4:8,16 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Matthew 9:13 But go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

c) **His love manifests itself supremely in the sacrifice of his Son for our salvation.**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Galatians 1:4 [Christ] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

A3, I, 2. He uses his other attributes in the interest of his love.

a) **Note the eloquent description of human love in 1 Corinthians 13.**

1 Corinthians 13:4,13 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

b) **This love is merely a response to and a reflection of God's love.**

1 John 4:7,11,12,16,19 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us.

c) **The Bible describes God's love.**

Song of Solomon 2:4 He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 8:35-39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 4:9,10 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

d) **It is due to this love of God in Christ that the world still continues.**

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

1 Timothy 2:6 [Christ] gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

A3, II. The attributes of God, which really are not distinct from his essence nor from one another, may conveniently be divided into: *Immanent and Transitive*.

A3, II, 1. The philosophical axiom, “A thing is equal to the sum of its attributes,” does not apply to God.

- a) In a man we commonly distinguish essence and character:
body—but different states of health;
soul: intellect, emotion, volition—but different degrees in different persons.
- b) In philosophy we consider the substance of a thing as the bearer of the attributes.

A3, II, 2. God, being absolutely one in essence as well as in number, cannot be conceived as so constituted. He is *impartibilis, ohne Stücke* (A.C. I, 3).

a) **There is no real difference between his essence and his attributes.**

Quenstedt: The divine attributes do not denote anything superadded to the divine essence, but are only inadequate concepts of an infinitely perfect essence. The divine essence is like an incomprehensible Ocean of all the infinite attributes which the human intellect is not able to exhaust in a single and simple concept, and therefore by means of various concepts, sip by sip as it were, it draws something out of that infinity (*TDP*, I, VIII, II, II, IV, p 297).

Augustine: We may understand God, if we are able, and as much as we are able, as being good without quality, great without quantity, a creator though he lacks nothing, present but in no location, ... in his wholeness everywhere, yet without place... That God is invisible essence beyond the understanding of every creature ... containing all creation within himself like a mathematical point; God is a creating essence, ruling without labor, holding all things together without being burdened (*Trinity*, V, I, 1).

Thomas: His essence is his being. In God to know and to be, to will and to be is one and the same thing (See *S.T. I*, Q. 3, Art. 4).

b) **There is no objective difference between his various attributes.**

1) **Thomasius (d. 1875) claimed an objective difference between**

-a) **Transitive attributes (omnipotence, omniscience)**

-b) **Basic essence (existence, consciousness, will) together with**

-c) **Immanent attributes (eternity, independence).**

2) **He does so in the interest of his false Christology (*kenosis* = emptying).**

A3, II, 3. The attributes are not mere names, as though having nothing in the Godhead corresponding to them.

William of Occam (d. 1349) said the whole distinction is only in the terms (nominalism).

a) **Scripture speaks of God’s attributes, accommodating itself to our limitations.**

1 Corinthians 13:9-12 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹² Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

Quenstedt: If the attributes differ from one another only in the mind, those words “wise,” “just,” “merciful,” when spoken about God, will be synonyms, just as among us “sword” and “saber” are synonyms. But this is absurd. Sword and saber are distinguished by an active thinking process, the divine attributes by a receptive thinking process, which has a basis in fact (*TDP. f.s. II*, X, p 303).

Hollaz: The divine attributes are distinguished from the divine essence and from one another not only in name, nor in reality, but formally, according to our way of thinking about them, not without a definite basis for this distinction (*Exam.*, I, I, q23, p 263).

Hollaz: The attributes of God are called perfections because they most perfectly declare God’s essence (*Exam.*, I, I, 234).

b) **The attributes show us the same God, only always in a different relation. Thus in the same act, for example, in a rain storm, God may appear as possessing:**

1) **Power.**

Job 36:22,27 God is exalted in his power. Who is a teacher like him?

²⁷He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams.

2) **Understanding.**

Job 28:23,26,27 God understands the way to [wisdom] and he alone knows where it dwells. ²⁶

When he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm, ²⁷then he looked at wisdom.

3) **Goodness.**

Acts 14:17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.

4) The dogmaticians comment on this point.

Quenstedt: The divine attributes are the divine essence itself represented to us by means of several inadequate concepts. Thus the infinity of God is the divine essence itself apprehended as lacking all boundaries and limitations. Omnipotence is the divine essence itself apprehended as having no obstacles when he does something. ... One must distinguish between an objective concept, which is the conceived object itself, and a formal concept, which is a quality produced by our mind, representing the thing known by means of an idea or a picture impressed on the mind. ... The essential divine attributes are distinguished, neither from the divine essence nor from one another in reality or because of their nature, as things clearly different or as two or more parts of one and the same thing, or in any other way, but only in our thinking (*TDP*, I, VIII, II, qu III, VII, p 300).

Gerhard: The divine attributes considered in and by themselves are really and most simply one with the divine essence (*Loci*, III, II, CIV, p 84).

Calov: If the essence and attributes were distinguished in reality, they would not be predicated in the abstract about God, who is called truth, life, love in the abstract (*Systema*, II, IV, p 222).

A3, II, 4. Since the attributes of God are not really distinct and independent qualities, no classification can be fully satisfactory.

Some suggested classifications are:

a) Baier (d. 1695):

1) Two classes:

- a) **Negative:** Those which either by virtue of the terms or of their meaning denote a certain negation or an elimination of any of those imperfections which are found in creatures; e.g., immutability, infinity, omnipresence, etc.; unity, simplicity, eternity, etc.
- b) **Positive:** Those which are conceived with reference to perfections which we perceive in the creatures, and by means of them, although in a more eminent degree; e.g., knowledge, holiness, power, life, wisdom, will, justice, truth, goodness, mercy, love, grace, slowness to anger, patience.

2) Yet: Are the first pure negations?

Do the second contain no negation?

Note: this classification is followed by Pieper.

b) Gerhard (d. 1632):

1) Two classes.

- a) **Incommunicabilia (proprietas proprie Deo ascripta).** e.g. *Independentia, aeternitas*, etc.
- b) **Communicabilia (proprietas improprie sive anthropomorphice Deo ascripta).** e.g. *Intellectus, voluntas, iustitia*, etc.

2) Yet

- a) **Scripture, indeed, contains the doctrine of the image of God in man.**
- b) **Is it proper to make man the starting point for a classification of divine attributes?**

c) Calov (d. 1686) has four classes.

- 1) **Of being (*entis*):** *perfectio, unitas, veritas, bonitas*.
- 2) **Of infinity:** *immensitas, aeternitas*.
- 3) **Of spirituality (personality):** *immortalitas, vita; intellectus, voluntas*.
- 4) **Of working (*operativa*):** *omnipraesentia, omniscientia, iustitia*, etc.

d) Franck (d. 1894):

1) Two classes.

- a) **God's absolute being in relation to the world.** e.g., infinity, eternity, etc.
- b) **God's personal being in relation to the world.** e.g., omnipotence, holiness, etc.

2) Yet: Are God's essence and personality really distinct?

e) Luthardt (d. 1902):

1) Two classes.

- a) **Metaphysical, attributes of being.**
- b) **Moral, attributes of personality.**

2) Is not, e.g., God's omnipotence a holy omnipotence?

f) Philippi (d 1882):

1) Three classes.

- a) **Absolute substance.** e.g., eternity, omnipresence, etc.
- b) **Absolute subject.** e.g., omnipotence, omniscience, etc.

- c) Absolute love. e.g., wisdom, justice, goodness, etc.
- 2) Again: Can person and substance be really distinguished in God? —And is not c already contained in b?
- g) Singmaster (d. 1926):
 - 1) Four classes.
 - a) Attributes of personality, e.g., spirituality, life, unity.
 - b) Attributes of absoluteness, e.g., self-existence, eternity, immutability, infinity (omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, wisdom).
 - c) Attributes of holiness.
 - 1) Definition: infinite moral perfection
 - 2) Several aspects: righteousness, justice, purity, majesty.
 - 3) Divine standard.
 - d) Attributes of love.
 - 1) Its nature.
 - 2) Its manifestation.
 - 3) Its form: complacency, benevolence, grace.
 - 2) Logically unsatisfactory. *Principium dividendi?*
- h) Erickson (contemporary Evangelical)
 - 1) Two classes.
 - a) moral attributes which in a human context would relate to righteousness.
 - b) natural attributes which are the non-moral superlatives of God.
 - 2) Two classes.
 - a) attributes of goodness.
 - b) attributes of greatness.

Note: The inconsistencies and problems apparent in all these systems show the futility of trying to pigeon-hole God's attributes.

A3, II, 5. The division into *Immanent* and *Transitive* is convenient.

- a) It considers God as he relates to the world.
 - 1) Without any relation to the world (immanent attributes).
 - 2) In his relation to the world (transitive attributes).
- b) Synonyms:
 - 1) The Immanent are also called: *Intransitive, Quiescent, or Absolute.*
 - 2) The Transitive are called: *Operative, or Relative.*
- c) Quenstedt describes this distinction.

Note: The latter group must not be considered as beginning with the creation of the world.
 Quenstedt: And so immensity differs from omnipresence. The former is an absolute attribute, the latter a relative one ... since it implies not only a nearness of the divine essence, or a presence of God with his creatures, but also a certain activity or an active control. The former is eternal, the latter is not at all eternal, but it began with the creatures (*TDP*, VIII, I, XXIX, p 288).
 Caution: This would imply a change in God's attributes.

Quenstedt: There are two classes of attributes: some describe the divine essence absolutely and in itself without reference to any activity, and they are called immanent, ἀνεργητα, or quiescent, which, namely, are not directed toward some actions, such as immensity, eternity, spirituality, etc. Others describe the divine essence relatively, with respect to an activity, and they are called ενεργητικά or active and extending themselves to the outside of the divine essence, or those which are recognized to be directed toward definite activities, as are power, knowledge, righteousness (*TDP*, VIII, II, IV, p 285).

- d) Even this classification used in our notes is not without problems.

Robert Preus: And so we do the best we can. But actually a simple listing of attributes as Calov does in his *Apodixis* would have probably been preferable to the arrangement which finally won out; for there are some real flaws in it. What are these shortcomings? First is the intrinsic difficulty of the project which makes any rigid classification a severe hardship to follow consistently. For example, certain attributes such as God's presence must be discussed twice, first as an absolute attribute (immensity) and then as an operative attribute (presence)...Second, it is highly questionable whether one should ever speak of ἀνεργητα in the living God.... A third shortcoming we notice is the serious lack of balance in many presentations of the divine attributes (*TPRL*, II, p 62-64).

A3, III. The immanent attributes of God are: Immutability, Eternity, Love, and Perfection.

A3, III, 1. Immutability (*immutabilitas Dei*).

- a) God's essence with all its perfections for ever remains the same, undergoing neither decrease nor increase.

Psalm 102:25-27 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ²⁶ They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. ²⁷ But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Romans 1:23 [They] exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:16 [God] who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Quenstedt: Immutability is the perpetual identity of the divine essence and of all its attributes, negating altogether all change, both physical and moral (*TDP*, s.1, th.20, f. 414).

Baier: Immutability consists in this that God is subject to no mutation, neither according to his essence (by reason of which God is immortal and incorruptible), nor according to his properties, nor according to his position, nor according to his will or purpose (*Comp.*, II, p 19).

b) The decrees of God in every respect (volitional, intellectual, emotional) are not subject to revision.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

1 Samuel 15:29 He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.

Psalms 33:11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

Malachi 3:6 I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

Romans 3:3 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?

Romans 11:29 For God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

c) Some raise objections to God's immutability.

1) "Scripture frequently states that God repented" (ⲓⲛⲓ).

-a) Statement of the fact:

Genesis 6:6 The LORD was *grieved* that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. NIV

Genesis 6:6 And it *repented* the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. KJV

1 Samuel 15:11 "I am *grieved* that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." Samuel was troubled, and he cried out to the LORD all that night. NIV

1 Samuel 15:11 It *repenteth* me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night. KJV

-b) Response to the objection:

-1) In repentance we must distinguish between the affection of grief and the change of conduct.

Gerhard: For he changes his actions but his will itself remains unchanged (*Loc*i, III, II, CLV, p 114).

Pieper: God remains immutable, but there is mutability in the object of His affection (*CD*, I, p 441).

-2) In God even this change of conduct is only apparent.

Acts 15:18 Known to the Lord for ages is his work. (NIV alt)

-3) Passages speaking of God's repentance must be understood anthropopathically.

2) **Objection: “Creation implies a change in God.”**

-a) **Statement of the fact** Genesis 1:1, etc.

-b) **Response to the objection:**

-1) **This was a change in the world, which was called from a state of non-existence into existence.**

Romans 4:17 God, who gives life to the dead and *calls into being that which does not exist* (καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα). NASB

Romans 4:17 God who gives life to the dead and *calls things that are not as though they were*. NIV

Psalms 102:11,12,26,27 My days are like the evening shadow; I wither away like grass.

¹² But you, O LORD, sit enthroned forever; your renown endures through all generations.

²⁶ They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. ²⁷ But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

-2) **By creating space and time and causality and dealing with men according to these forms, God does not himself become subject to them.**

3) **Objection: “Suffering implies a change in God.”**

-a) **The claim:**

Jürgen Moltmann: The Council of Nicea rightly declared, in opposition to Arius, that God was not so changeable as his creature. This is not an absolute statement about God, but a comparative statement. God is not subject to compulsion by what is not divine. This does not mean that God is not free to change himself or to be changed by something else. We cannot deduce from the relative statement of Nicea that God is unchangeable that he is absolutely unchangeable (“The Crucified God” in *New Questions on God*, 1972, p 31).

Clark Pinnock: Given our experience of such evils as the Holocaust and Cambodia, how can one say that God rules over and controls history? What divine purpose can be detected in death camps and killing fields? History itself seems to call the sovereignty of God into question and to require us to rethink it....God does not rule everything according to blueprint. The present situation involves a struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Though much neglected by theology, spiritual warfare is a reality. God is not now in control—we anticipate complete victory over evil only in the future. This orientation to the future allows us to clarify a point about open sovereignty. Up to a point and in certain areas, we can resist God’s will. But the coming of the Lord tells us that not everything can be thwarted by human freedom. The Lord will come; what we do may affect its timing but not its reality. It is something God intends to do and will certainly do. What we decide may affect when but not whether God does it. The apostle says that we both hasten and delay the return of Christ (2 Pet. 3:9,12). If the parousia appears slow in coming, this is because God wants more sinners to repent that God’s house may be full. God delays the coming to give them more time to respond to divine grace (“God’s Sovereignty in Today’s World,” *Theology Today*, Apr 1996, p 15-21).

-b) **Response to the objection:**

Passages speaking of God’s suffering must be understood anthropopathically. Christ’s suffering was by the person according to his human nature. Moltmann’s view is in effect Patripassionism.

4) **Objections of process theology:**

Alfred Whitehead (d. 1947): It is as true to say that God creates the World, as that the World creates God. . . . Neither God, nor the World, reaches static completion. Both are in the grip of the ultimate metaphysical ground, the creative advance into novelty. Either of them, God and the World, is the instrument of novelty for the other (*Process and Reality*, p 528-529).

Ted Peters: God’s relationship to the world is internal to the divine life. God’s relation to the world in redemption and consummation is not merely external, not merely an add-on to a God whose being is intact. God is not a simple monad existing somewhere in eternal isolation who occasionally turns on a celestial television news show to observe what is happening on earth. Rather, God’s involvement in the course of world affairs is so intimate that the character of divinity itself is shaped by it (*God—The World’s Future*, p 112-113).

5) **Objection: “Many prophecies were never fulfilled.”**

-a) **Statement of the fact:**

Isaiah 38:1,5 In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.’” ⁵ Go and say to Hezekiah, “Thus says the Lord, the God of your father David, ‘I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will add fifteen years to your life.’”

Jonah 3:4,10 Then Jonah began to go through the city one day’s walk; and he cried out and said, “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown.” ¹⁰ When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And he did not do it.

-b) Response to the objection:

-1) These were conditional prophecies, with the condition expressed or implied.

Jeremiah 18:7-10 If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, ⁸ and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. ⁹ And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, ¹⁰ and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

2 Kings 20:3 “Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

Jonah 3:5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them.

Matthew 12:41 “The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

-2) In other cases, the prophecies were fulfilled in stages, not all at once, for example, Matthew 24—70 AD and the Last Day; Daniel 11—Antiochus and Anti-Christ; Ezekiel 26—destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander.

6) Objection: “Scripture sometimes speaks of a change in God’s attitude toward a man.”

-a) Statement of the fact:

Job 30:21 You turn on me ruthlessly; with the might of your hand you attack me.

-b) Response: This is not objectively a change in God, but subjectively a change in the man’s mind (conception, feeling, etc.) or a change in God’s course of action as a time of grace comes to an end.

7) Objection: “Does not a strict immutability annul the free personality of God? Compare the Greek and Roman Fate, to which also the gods were subject.”

Response: God is subject to no outside coercion.

In perfect independence he decrees his own immutability.

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

A3, III, 2. Eternity (*aeternitas Dei*).

a) God in his essence, his will, and his actions is independent of any succession of events.

Psalm 90:2,4 Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. ⁴ For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.

Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says— he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

Daniel 4:3 How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation.

Daniel 7:14,27 He was given authority, glory, and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.

Hebrews 1:12 You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

2 Peter 3:8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

Baier: God’s eternity, absolutely so called (for it is not taken here in the sense of a very long time), signifies the permanent existence or duration of God without beginning and end and without any progression and change (*Compendium*, II, p 27).

b) God views all in a never changing absolute present, to which there is no transition from a past, from which there is no transition to a future.

Psalm 2:7 I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; *today* I have become your Father.

Quenstedt: That the present, or the "how" (tò vūv) is not, properly speaking, time, but the beginning of the future and the end of the past, with all of which eternity coexists ... a perpetual now, and that fixed, not in flux (*TDP*, I, VIII, XVII, p 287).

Calov: *Praesentia interminabilis* (*Apodixis, Not. Dei rev.*, IX, p 71).

c) God's eternity is opposed by process theology.

Peters: With classical theists, Christians also say God is eternal. . . . What can eternity mean today? In our own modern and postmodern context, we cannot intelligibly conceive of timelessness ontologically as a static state of being with no succession of events. For us in the modern world, the dynamic of events constitutes reality. An eternal state of existence without the succession of events would constitute eternal death, not the eternal life (*God—the World's Future*, p 94-95).

N. P. Wolterstorff: I hold that God is everlasting rather than eternal. I hold that God is not outside time but that God exists at every time and that there is temporal succession and flow in God's own life (in Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover*, p 97).

d) The decrees of God and their execution are not to be considered as separated in time. Both are one.

Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

Acts 15:16- 18 After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, ¹⁷ that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name," says the Lord, who does these things' ¹⁸ that have been known for ages.

Genesis 1:3,9,11 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁹ And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. ¹¹ Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.

Psalm 33:9,11 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. ¹¹ But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

A3, III, 3. Immanent Love (amor Dei internus, amor absolutus).

a) God's essence is described as love.

1 John 4:8,16 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

b) It may be said that God desires and enjoys companionship with himself; that there is a reciprocal giving and taking within God (John 13-17).

John 17:21-26 ...that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁵ Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

John 15:9-10 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Acts 17:25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

c) It has been objected that self-love is immoral.

1) Gerhard addresses the objection.

Since God is the highest good, therefore he loves himself as the highest good. In man the love of oneself is wicked and damnable because man is not the highest good, but he ought to seek the highest good in God and to cling to him alone. God, however, loves himself, yet not in so far as he is himself but in as much as he is the highest good. For if there were any other greater and more excellent good, then he would love that, not himself, as for instance "Theologia Germanica" treats of this matter at length (*Loc*i, III, II, CCXXIII, p 167).

2) Is love of self in itself immoral? It becomes so when indulged to excess (selfishness).

Mark 12:31 The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these.

1 Corinthians 10:24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

Note: Though Scripture does not condemn all self-love, it does not promote a specific theory of self-esteem as some contemporary counselors do. See *WLQ*, Fall 1995, p 294-295. In the Bible "love" is not mainly esteeming someone, but doing the right thing for that person.

d) The immanent love of God naturally stands in close relation to the Trinity.

1) The Father loves the Son as the express Image of his person.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

Matthew 3:17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Matthew 17: 5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

John 3:35 The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

John 5:20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.

John 17:24, 26 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

2) The Son loves the Father.

John 14:31 The world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

3) The Spirit, proceeding from both, is the Spirit of love.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.

4) On the entire point:

Gerhard: In the deity the Father loves the Son as his own substantial image (Mt 3:17; 17:5; Jn 3:35; 5:20; 17:24). The Son loves the Father since he was born of his heart from eternity (Jn 14:31). The Holy Spirit, who proceeds from both, is the essential love of the Father and of the Son (*Loci*, III, II, CCXXIII, p 167).

A3, III, 4. Perfection, Goodness (*bonitas Dei*).

a) God in his essence as well as in his will is free from any defect.

Matthew 19:17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

Luke 18:19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone."

Psalm 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.

Calov: The goodness of God is that attribute according to which God is essentially good, yes, indeed he is the highest good (*Theol. pos.*, CLXXXII, p 67).

Gerhard: Because nothing is lacking to him, because he stands in need of nothing else outside of himself, because he is in want neither of counsel, nor of aid, nor of wisdom, nor of power in acting, nor is he dependent on someone else either in respect to his existence or to his activity (*Loci*, loc II CCXCI, p 210).

b) The perfection of God may be taken in two senses.

1) A metaphysical sense (*bonitas essentialis, metaphysica*).

Acts 17:25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

Job 22:2 Can a man be of benefit to God? Can even a wise man benefit him?

Psalm 50:12 If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.

Isaiah 40:13,14 Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? ¹⁴

Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding?

2) **A moral sense (*bonitas intrinseca*).**

-a) **The dogmaticians compare these two senses.**

Gerhard: God is not only good in himself, but he also radiates and communicates his goodness outside himself, which, in view of this communication, is called benevolence (*benignitas*) (*Loci*, II, CCXVI, p 164).

J. C. Cotta: When the goodness of God is under discussion, his essential and metaphysical goodness ought to be distinguished from his moral goodness, as it is called. By God's essential goodness is meant his very perfection in so far as, namely, in God one may find all those things which belong to a most perfect Being, Lk 18:19. But by moral goodness the zeal or inclination of the supreme Godhead to confer any and all good things on his creatures is denoted. And this goodness which takes the misery of creatures into consideration we are accustomed otherwise to call the mercy of God (*miser cordia*) (Notes in Gerhard *Loci*, I, II, CCVIII, p 159).

-b) **Moral goodness is closely related to God's holiness and love.**

Calov: To that extent, Calov says quite correctly concerning the "goodness according to which God is essentially good, yes, indeed, the highest good, that it is closely related to holiness, according to which he is essentially holy, yes, he is holiness itself" (*Theo. pos.*, CLXXXII, p 67).

c) **From the perfection of God follow his majesty and bliss.**

1) **Majesty, Glory.**

Acts 7:32 "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look.

Deuteronomy 7:21 Do not be terrified by them, for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a great and awesome God.

Psalm 7:17 I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

Psalm 18:13 The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded.

Psalm 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

Isaiah 2:10,19,22 Go into the rocks, hide in the ground from dread of the LORD and the splendor of his majesty! ¹⁹ Men will flee to caves in the rocks and to holes in the ground from dread of the LORD and the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to shake the earth. ²¹ They will flee to caverns in the rocks and to the overhanging crags from dread of the LORD and the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to shake the earth.

Ezekiel 1:25-28 Then there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads as they stood with lowered wings. ²⁶ Above the expanse over their heads was what looked like a throne of sapphire, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man. ²⁷ I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. ²⁸ Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

Matthew 6:13 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. KJV

Calov: A consequence of the divine perfection is majesty, because he is so perfect that God truly is great (*Theol. pos.*, CLXXIX, p 60).

2) **Serene bliss (*beatitudo*).**

1 Timothy 1:11 ... the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

1 Timothy 6:15 ...which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords

Calov: Another consequence is blessedness by which he is most blessed, nay rather blessedness itself (*Theol. pos.*, CLXXIX).

Gerhard: When, therefore, God is called blessed, it means 1) that he abounds in all good things; 2) that he is free from all evil things; 3) that he is immutably blessed; 4) that essentially and by his own nature he is blessed, yes, is blessedness itself (if blessedness were an accident, it could, of course, be lost); 5) that by himself and through himself he is blessed; moreover, he does not have blessedness as something given him by someone else; 6) that God through his intellect fully recognizes and through his will loves his own perfection and blessedness and quietly and peacefully finds pleasure in it; from this pleasure arises joy, by which God delights in himself as the highest good above all his good works, beyond which none can be called or considered good; 7) that he is self-sufficient, having received no outward good, and lacking nothing good (*Loci*, II, CCCVI, p 206).

- d) The question has been asked:
- 1) Does God decree the good because it is good? Thus Aquinas. Or: Is the good good because God decreed it? Thus Duns Scotus.
 - 2) Neither explanation is adequate by itself.
God is not subject to any idea of Good over and above himself.
God, who is, is perfection. God is not arbitrary and would not declare anything to be good unless it really was good.

A3, IV. The transitive attributes of God are:
Omnipresence, an attribute of essence;
Omniscience and Wisdom, attributes of knowledge;
Love, Holiness, Justice, and Omnipotence, attributes of will.

A3, IV, 1. Omnipresence (*omnipraesentia Dei*).

- a) Note three kinds of presence:
- 1) *Circumspectiva, circumscriptiva* (a body occupies place and space);
 - 2) *Definitiva* (spirits like angels are in a place but fill no physical space);
 - 3) *Impletiva, repletiva* (God fills everything, but he is not confined by place or space).
- b) Closely related to omnipresence are certain other attributes.
- 1) They are spirituality, illocality, immensity (immeasurability), immateriality (*incorporeitas*), invisibility.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- 2) **These attributes are not identical with omnipresence, which is more than a mere independence from space.**

-a) Omnipresence is an active presence.

Amos 9:2-4 Though they dig down to the depths of the grave, from there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to the heavens, from there I will bring them down. ³ Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, there I will hunt them down and seize them. Though they hide from me at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent to bite them. ⁴ Though they are driven into exile by their enemies, there I will command the sword to slay them. I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good.

Acts 7:48,49 However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says: ⁴⁹ "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be?"

-b) Quenstedt uses a faulty expression in this connection.

Quenstedt: And so immensity differs from omnipresence. The former is an absolute attribute, the latter a relative one ... since it implies not only a nearness of the divine essence, or a presence with his creatures, but also a certain activity or an active control. The former is eternal, the latter is not, but it *began* [?] with the creatures (*TDP*, VIII, I, XXIX, p 288).

- c) **God essentially and operatively penetrates each and every thing in the universe.**

Psalm 139:7-10 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Jeremiah 23:23,24 "Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away? ²⁴ Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD.

Acts 17:27,28 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

Decisio Saxonica (1624): Two things are required for a full definition of the presence of God: First, the being there of the infinite and immeasurable God; secondly, the activity of God who is present (quoted in Preus, *Theology of Post Reformation Lutheranism*, II, p85 fn 77).

d) **God's omnipresence is a spiritual omnipresence.**

1) **It must not be conceived as a corporeal expansion or local extension (ubiquity).**

John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

2) **God is not locally circumscribed or inclosed, not even by the universe.**

2 Chronicles 2:6 But who is able to build a temple for him, since the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain him? Who then am I to build a temple for him, except as a place to burn sacrifices before him?

2 Chronicles 6:18 But will God really dwell on earth with men? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!

Gerhard: It is an illocal presence, which cannot be divided into parts, incomprehensible to our reason, efficacious and operative, which contains in itself all things like the tiniest point (*Locī*, III, II, CLXXII, p 122).

Luther: But this is not the way we speak. We say that God is no such extended, long, broad, thick, high, deep being. He is a supernatural, inscrutable being who exists at the same time in every little seed, whole and entire, and yet also in all and above all and outside all created things. There is no need to enclose him here. For a body is much, much too wide for the Godhead; it could contain many thousand Godheads. On the other hand, it is also far, far too narrow to contain one Godhead. Nothing is so small but God is still smaller, nothing so large but God is still larger, nothing is so short but God is still shorter, nothing so long but God is still longer, nothing is so broad but God is still broader, nothing so narrow but God is still narrower, and so on. He is an inexpressible being, above and beyond all that can be described or imagined (*LW* 37:228).

3) **God with his whole majesty is operatively present at every point in the universe (*adessentia, συνουσία—indistantia, ἀδιαστασία*), yet only once in the entire universe.**

Jeremiah 23:23,24 "Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away? 24 Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD.

Gerhard: Because God is everywhere present not by reason of a multiplication of his essence, for he is something wholly whole (ὅλως ὅλον τι), an entity of the highest simplicity, and hence wherever he is, he is in his entirety; neither through a division of his essence ... nor through an extension ... nor by an intermingling (*Locī*, III, II, CLXXII, p 122-123).

4) **It is beyond our conception how a pure spirit can be operative on matter without some organ.**

Cicero: An open and simple mind, joined to nothing by which it is able to perceive, seems to escape the power and conception of our intellect (*De Natura Deorum*, I, XI).

Tertullian uses some awkward expressions: Everything that is, is a corporeal being of its own kind. Nothing is incorporeal except that which does not exist... Who will deny that God is a corporeal being, although God is a spirit? For a spirit is a corporeal being of its own kind in its own likeness. *Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis, nihil est incorporale, nisi quod non est.—Quis negabit, Deum corpus esse, etsi Deus spiritus est? Spiritus enim corpus sui generis in sua effigie* (*De Carne Christi*, cap. XI).

Clark Pinnock: Most people, I suspect, think that God chooses to be associated with a body, while being himself formless. That may be so, but it is also possible that God has a body in some way we cannot imagine and, therefore, that it is natural for God to seek out forms of embodiment. I do not feel obligated to assume that God is a purely spiritual being when his self-revelation does not suggest it (*Most Moved Mover*, p 34).

e) **From *omnipraesentia generalis* may be distinguished:
Praesentia specialis: By grace in the church—with glory in heaven.
Unio Mystica: our bodies are the temple of God.**

Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Psalm 16:11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."

1 Thessalonians 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

John 14:23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

2 Corinthians 6:16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."

Formula of Concord, T.D., III, 65/6. [We reject] that not God dwells in the believers, but only the gifts of God.

Meisner (d. 1626): This very intimate union according to which believers are implanted in Christ as in their Head is not the same thing as God's immensity or His nearness to all creatures or his general presence; nor is it merely a gracious operation. What is it then? I cannot define it, but I firmly believe it. It is Christ's dwelling in us so that we become one body with him. It is a personal relationship and tie and union, and nothing in this life can be considered more dear and sweet, nothing more full of comfort (Preus, *TPRL*, Vol. II, 92; original in Quenstedt, *Systema*, P III, C.10, S.2, Obj 3).

f) **Opposed to omnipresence are the following errors.**

1) **Pantheism substitutes for the operative presence of God his identity with the universe.**

Servetus (d. 1553): In a stone God truly and properly is a stone, in the trunk of a tree he is a tree trunk, and similarly in other things (*Epis VI ad Calvinum*).

2) **Deism, denying the essential presence of God, ascribes to him a presence of knowledge, will, and operation only.**

Jacob Carpov (d. 1786), quoting the deist view: "It cannot happen that God in his entirety is present with any and every being" (*Theol. rev.*, p 764).

Konrad Vorst (d. 1622): Nowhere do we read a written statement that God is an essence simply immeasurable and actually present in its entirety in all places; on the contrary, not a few passages occur here and there which seem to have the contrary sense. From this it is already evident that the immensity or ubiquity of the divine essence can not be conclusively proved from the Scriptures.... It is, to be sure, true that God works all in all; nevertheless, it does not follow that God is in an immediate way there present with his essence wherever he works, since he can work through secondary causes, whether physical or supernatural, just as any king through his ministers. Essentially he resides in that highest of heavens as on a throne or in a palace, but in such a way that with his power he is active also on earth according to his operative might. It seems to be a strange paradox that God is so lacking in quantity that the whole God should be essentially present in any and every thing no matter how small. Clearly, as far as place and local presence are concerned there seems to be no doubt at all that they can be truly and properly ascribed to God (*De Deo et attributis divinis*, p 233).

Lutheran opposition to deism:

Luther: The Scriptures teach us, however, that the right hand of God is not a specific place in which a body must or may be, such as on a golden throne, but is the almighty power of God, which at one and the same time can be nowhere and yet must be everywhere. It cannot be at any one place, I say. For if it were at some specific place, it would have to be there in a circumscribed and determinate manner, as everything which is at one place must be at that place determinately and measurably, so that it cannot meanwhile be at any other place. But the power of God cannot be so determined and measured, for it is uncircumscribed and immeasurable, beyond and above all that is or may be.

On the other hand, it must be essentially present at all places, even in the tiniest tree leaf. The reason is this: It is God who creates, effects, and preserves all things through his almighty power and right hand, as our Creed confesses. For he dispatches no officials or angels when he creates or preserves something but all this is the work of his divine power itself. If he is to create or preserve it, however, he must be present and must make and preserve his creation both in its innermost and outermost aspects. Therefore, indeed, he himself must be present in every single creature in its innermost and outermost being, on all sides, through and through, below and above, before and behind, so that nothing can be more truly present and within all creatures than God himself with his power. For it is he who makes the skin and it is he who makes the bones; it is he who makes the hair on the skin, and it is he who makes the marrow in the bones; it is he who makes every bit of the hair, it is he who makes every bit of the marrow. Indeed, he must make everything, both the parts and the whole. Surely, then, his hand which makes all this must be present; that cannot be lacking (*LW* 37:57ff).

Gerhard: This immensity and essential omnipresence of God is to be understood in this way: That God is present in all things, not only with his power and efficacy, nor only by his sight and knowledge, but also with his whole and individual essence, for he is immeasurable and infinite not only in his power and knowledge but also in his essence (*Loci*, III, CLXXII, p 122).

A3, IV, 2. Omniscience (scientia, intelligentia, omniscientia Dei).

a) **Scripture describes God's omniscience.**

1) **Statement: God in one undivided comprehensive act knows (sees, understands) all things:**

- intuitively (without the necessity of laborious study)
- completely (without omission) and
- perfectly (without error).

1 Samuel 2:3 Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.

Psalms 147:5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

Hebrews 4:13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1 John 3:19, 20 This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. NIV

1 John 3:19,20 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. KJV

Psalms 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Calov: The knowledge of God must be considered to be truly immeasurable and infinite. By virtue of it God from eternity with one act of intuition knows all things which from our point of view are present, past or future (*Apodixis*, 12, p 77).

Calov: The omniscience of God is that by which God knows all things which have been, are, and will be, as well as those which can be and can not be. As far as the way of knowing is concerned, God sees and knows all things with an infinite and immutable knowledge, not only in time, but from eternity; not little by little or successively, but with one simple and timeless act of knowing (*Theol. pos.*, par 196).

2) Caution: God's knowledge of things must not be considered as receptive (i.e. passive).

b) *Docendi causa* the knowledge of God may be distinguished according to its object.

1) God knows himself (*scientia necessaria, naturalis*).

-a) Statement of the fact:

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

1 Corinthians 2:10, 11 But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

-b) Since God is the infinite author of all things, his knowledge of himself really includes every possible knowledge.

Calov: The natural knowledge of God is that by which he knows himself and all possibilities (*Systema*, II, p 497).

2) God knows the creatures, which he himself made, and their ways (*scientia libera*).

Exodus 3:19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him.

Exodus 4:14 Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you."

Job 28:24 For he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.

Job 38:4,33, 37 Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. ³³ Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God's dominion over the earth? ³⁷ Who has the wisdom to count the clouds? Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens?

Job 39:1-2 Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you watch when the doe bears her fawn? ² Do you count the months till they bear? Do you know the time they give birth?

Acts 15:17-18 ...that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things that have been known for ages.

3) God knows all events that might take place: the conditional, the possible; also their limitations: the impossible (*scientia media*).

This is called "middle knowledge," because it lies between *scientia necessaria*, which must be, and

scientia libera which comes about by free choice. It is also called *futuribilium*; *hypotethica*; *de futuro conditionato*.

-a) Statement of the fact:

1 Samuel 23:10-13 David said, "O LORD, God of Israel, your servant has heard definitely that Saul plans to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me. ¹¹ Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O LORD, God of Israel, tell your servant." And the LORD said, "He will." ¹² Again David asked, "Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me and my men to Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will." ¹³ So David and his men, about six hundred in number, left Keilah and kept moving from place to place. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he did not go there.

1 Chronicles 21:9-14 The LORD said to Gad, David's seer, ¹⁰ "Go and tell David, 'This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.'" ¹¹ So Gad went to David and said to him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Take your choice: ¹² three years of famine, three months of being swept away before your enemies, with their swords overtaking you, or three days of the sword of the LORD—days of plague in the land, with the angel of the LORD ravaging every part of Israel.' Now then, decide how I should answer the one who sent me." ¹³ David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men." ¹⁴ So the LORD sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead.

2 Samuel 24:13 So Gad went to David and said to him, "Shall there come upon you three years* of famine in your land? Or three months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you? Or three days of plague in your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should answer the one who sent me." * The Hebrew says seven years.

Compare 2 Samuel 21:1,9 During the reign of David, there was a famine for three successive years; so David sought the face of the LORD. The LORD said, "It is on account of Saul and his blood-stained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death." ⁹ He handed them over to the Gibeonites, who killed and exposed them on a hill before the LORD. All seven of them fell together; they were put to death during the first days of the harvest, just as the barley harvest was beginning.

Jeremiah 38:17-23 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "This is what the LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, your life will be spared and this city will not be burned down; you and your family will live. ¹⁸ But if you will not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be handed over to the Babylonians and they will burn it down; you yourself will not escape from their hands.'" ¹⁹ King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Jews who have gone over to the Babylonians, for the Babylonians may hand me over to them and they will mistreat me." ²⁰ "They will not hand you over," Jeremiah replied. "Obey the LORD by doing what I tell you. Then it will go well with you, and your life will be spared. ²¹ But if you refuse to surrender, this is what the LORD has revealed to me: ²² All the women left in the palace of the king of Judah will be brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon. Those women will say to you: 'They misled you and overcame you—those trusted friends of yours. Your feet are sunk in the mud; your friends have deserted you.' ²³ "All your wives and children will be brought out to the Babylonians. You yourself will not escape from their hands but will be captured by the king of Babylon; and this city will be burned down."

Matthew 11:21,23 Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²³ And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.

Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.

Ezekiel 14:14,16,18,20 Even if these three men—Noah, Daniel and Job—were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD. ¹⁶ as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, even if these three men were in it, they could not save their own sons or daughters. They alone would be saved, but the land would be desolate. ¹⁸ as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, even if these three men were in it, they could not save their own sons or daughters. They alone would be saved. ²⁰ as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness.

-b) Misapplication of *scientia media* may lead to synergism:

Jesuits—*scientia media* of human actions leads to God's decrees.

See: Catholic controversy between the Jesuits, who held to the teaching of Fonseca and Molina who favored *scientia media*, and the Dominicans (Thomists), who opposed it. Popes Sixtus V (1588), Clement VIII (d. 1605), and Paul V (1611) ended the controversy

by banning discussion, though the special tribunal convened by Clement had wanted to condemn Molina.

-c) A denial of *scientia media* leads to determinism or absolute predestination: Calvinists— God’s decrees lead to *scientia*.

Richard Muller: Contingent events are known to God as belonging to the realm of his permissive willing and providential concurrence (*concursum*, q.v.). Against this view, in the attempt to create an area of radically free willing and moral responsibility beyond the control of the divine will, the Jesuit theologians Pedro de Fonseca and Luis Molina proposed a category of middle knowledge, or *scientia media*. The *scientia media* underlies their synergistic theory of salvation and was adopted in the seventeenth century by the Arminians for the same purpose. Middle knowledge is a conditioned and consequent knowledge of future contingents by which God knows of an event because of its occurrence. In other words, it is a knowledge eternally in God consequent on, and causally independent of, events in time. Such events are outside of the divine willing. The effect of such a doctrine upon soteriology is to allow an area of human choice, prior to the effective operation of divine grace, the results of which condition the divine activity or operation *ad extra* God can elect individuals on the basis of his foreknowledge of their freely willed acceptance of the promises given in Christ, and this election will be grounded upon no antecedent willing or operation of God. The acts *ad extra* of the divine will and the *scientia libera* or *scientia voluntaria* will rest, then, in certain instances on a foreknowledge of future contingents which is consequent on and conditioned by the contingents themselves. Both the Lutheran and the Reformed orthodox reject the idea—the Reformed with vehemence. At very best, the *scientia media* limits divine control to the circumstances surrounding an event and provides a certain knowledge of events that lie outside of divine control; at worst it hypothesizes an uncertain knowledge of contingents on the part of God. In either case it limits the sovereignty of grace in the work of salvation (*Dictionary*, p 275).

-d) The correct teaching upholds both God’s foreknowledge and man’s responsibility.

c) According to the mode of knowledge God’s omniscience may be described as:

1) Intuitive (*scientia intuitiva*): not dependent on information.

John 2:25 He did not need man’s testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

Hebrews 4:13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

2) Comprehensive (*scientia simultanea*): not acquired successively.

Isaiah 40:13 Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor?

Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. ¹⁰ I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

3) Clear and distinct (*scientia distinctissima*).

Psalm 139:1-4,11,12 O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. ²You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. ¹¹ If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” ¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

Jeremiah 23:24 “Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” declares the LORD.

Matthew 6:4 ...so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 10:30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

4) Correct and exact (*scientia verissima*).

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

1 Kings 8:39 Then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men).

1 Chronicles 28:9 And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and

understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.

Job 13:9 Would it turn out well if he examined you? Could you deceive him as you might deceive men?

Psalms 90:8 You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.

Isaiah 29:15 Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the LORD, who do their work in darkness and think, "Who sees us? Who will know?"

Jeremiah 17:10 I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.

1 Corinthians 4:4,5 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

Pieper: The old dogmatists put it thus: "God discerns objects not by means of comprehensible characteristics (*per species intelligibiles*), but in their very nature and being. Man looks at things (*adspicit*), God sees through them (*perspicet*) (CD, I, p 448).

d) God's knowledge covers present, past, and future alike.

1) Knowledge of the past (*reminiscentia*).

Psalms 10:11, 14 He says to himself, "God has forgotten; he covers his face and never sees." ¹⁴ But you, O God, do see trouble and grief; you consider it to take it in hand. The victim commits himself to you; you are the helper of the fatherless.

Amos 8:7 The LORD has sworn by the Pride of Jacob: "I will never forget anything they have done."

Matthew 25:35-36,42-43 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

2) Knowledge of the present (*visio*).

2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.

Job 10:14 If I sinned, you would be watching me and would not let my offense go unpunished.

Psalms 11:4 The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them.

Psalms 33:13-15 From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; ¹⁴ from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth— ¹⁵ he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.

Jeremiah 32:19 Great are your purposes and mighty are your deeds. Your eyes are open to all the ways of men; you reward everyone according to his conduct and as his deeds deserve.

3) Knowledge of the future (*praescientia*).

Psalms 139:16 Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Isaiah 41:22,23,26 Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come. ²³ Tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear. ²⁶ Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, "He was right"? No one told of this, no one foretold it, no one heard any words from you.

Isaiah 42:9 See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.

Matthew 17:24-27 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-

drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"²⁵ "Yes, he does," he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?"²⁶ "From others," Peter answered. "Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him.²⁷ "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

Mark 11:2-6 "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here."³ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it,⁵ some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.

John 6:64 "Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him.

John 13:19 I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. Parallel John 14:29.

John 16:4 I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.

4) This is anthropomorphically speaking, since in the eternal God there is no succession of time.

Augustine: What is foreknowledge except a knowledge of future events? What, however, is future in the sight of God, who transcends all concepts of time? For if he has the events themselves in the scope of his knowledge, they are not future as far as he is concerned but present; and by this very fact it can no longer be called foreknowledge but only knowledge (*De divers. quaest. ad Simplic.*, II).

Gerhard: The fact that foreknowledge is ascribed to God occurs with respect to our point of view; for in his sight all those things are present which for us are still future (*Exeges. I. II. Par 243*).

J. Ad. Osiander (d. 1697): Foreknowledge is not said with respect to God, but in respect to things. Just as in God knowledge after the fact has no place, although he knows what happened in the past, so, accurately speaking, foreknowledge cannot be attributed to God under a knowledge of things that are still future in time (*Colleg. Theol. I*, p 290).

e) In spite of all division and classification the knowledge of God remains beyond comprehension.

Psalms 40:5 Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

Psalms 139:6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Isaiah 55:8,9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Romans 11:34 Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?

f) Men have always been troubled by a seeming collision between God's absolute omniscience (*praescientia*) and man's personal responsibility for his own conduct.

1) Attempted solutions which limit God's omniscience include "free will theism" and "openness theism."

F. Socinius (d. 1604): God knows *omnia quae sua natura scibilia sunt*. God knows all things which by their very nature are knowable.... No rational proof, no testimony from Scripture can be brought from which the conclusion is clearly drawn that before they happen God knows the evils that are dependent on the decisions of men before they happen (*Praelect. theol.*, VIII, p 264).

Richard Rothe (d. 1867): God has made a plan for the world, but only in a broad, general outline, because God knows in advance only the significant, important free decisions of man, but not those in every unimportant matter. The things which result from the latter God gets to know about only after they have happened and then fits them into his plan for the world (*Ethik*, I, 42, p 123).

Clark Pinnock: The open view differs from the classical Arminians', however, in its understanding of certain divine attributes. Wesley and Arminius, for example, held to the traditional definitions of unchangeability, eternity, and omniscience, which openness theists think jeopardize genuinely real divine/human relationships. ... According to openness theism, for example, the future is partly settled and partly unsettled, partly determined and partly undetermined, and, therefore, partly unknown even to God, and it holds that God himself has a temporal aspect (*Most Moved Mover*, p 13). No being, not even God, can know in advance precisely what free agents will do, even though he may predict it

with great accuracy. My assumption is, and the Bible seems to share it, that exhaustive foreknowledge would not be possible in a world with real freedom (*Most Moved Mover*, p 100)

Contra: Limiting omniscience is denying it.

Exodus 3:19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him.

Matthew 26:21, 34 And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." 34 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

Formula of Concord., T.D., XI, 6. The foreknowledge of God (*praescientia*) foresees and foreknows also that which is evil; however, not in such a manner as though it were God's gracious will that it should happen; but all that the perverse, wicked will of the devil and of men wills and desires to undertake and do, God sees and knows before; and his *praescientia*, that is, foreknowledge, observes its order also in wicked acts or works, inasmuch as a limit and measure is fixed by God to the evil which God does not will, how far it should go, and how long it should last, when and how he will hinder and punish it; for all of this God the Lord so overrules that it must redound to the glory of the divine name and to the salvation of his elect, and the godless, on that account, must be put to confusion.

Formula of Concord, XI, 3/2. For the foreknowledge of God is nothing else than that God knows all things before they happen, as it is written Dan. 2, 28: There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.

2) Calvinism's attempted solution undercuts man's responsibility.

Calvin seeks to solve the difficulty with his theory of God's absolute decree: God foresees the things which are future for no other reason than that he has decreed that they should happen.

Opposing this view are these facts:

-a) This makes God the author of evil.

-b) Man's decisions and actions become sham.

3) It must be noted that this is not a real problem.

-a) Scripture does not indicate that God is troubled by any discrepancy.

-b) Nor does faith feel constrained by the foreknowledge of God.

It rejoices both:

-1) In the liberty God grants, and

-2) In his unerring knowledge, in which it trusts.

4) The tension can be relieved.

-a) A clear distinction between knowledge and will, certainty and necessity is helpful.

Gerhard: We must distinguish between a *necessitas consequentis* (necessity of the consequent or the specific event), which is also called absolute, preceding, or simple necessity and which arises out of a necessary connection between cause and effect and an intrinsic connection of terms, and a *necessitas consequentiae* (necessity of the consequence or the result), which is called hypothetical, following, concomitant, conditional, or suppositional necessity and which arises from an act of existence from the very position of the effect, because everything that is, from the very fact that it is, must necessarily be. According to this latter kind of necessity with respect to divine foreknowledge those things are necessary which take place from causes that act contingently and freely, and this necessity does not take away freedom but rather presupposes it (*Loci*, I, II, CCLV, p 183 or III, II, CCLV, p 354; H2 p 113).

Muller: 1) *necessitas consequentis*: necessity of the consequent, - i.e., the necessity of something that cannot be other than what it is, which is to say, a simple or absolute necessity. A necessity of the consequent arises out of the connection of necessary causes with the effects that must follow from them.

2) *necessitas consequentiae*: necessity of the consequences; i.e., not an absolute necessity (*necessitas absoluta*, q.v.), but a necessity brought about or conditioned by a previous contingent act or event so that the necessity itself arises out of contingent circumstance; thus, conditional necessity. *Necessitas consequentiae* is also called *necessitas ex suppositione*, necessity on account of supposition, or *necessitas ex hypothesis* necessity on account of hypothesis, or hypothetical necessity, and sometimes *necessitas ex hypothesisi dispositionis*, or necessity on account of a hypothesis of disposition. Each of these latter terms indicates a necessity that arises out of a set of circumstances or out of a disposition or capacity hypothetically rather than absolutely or necessarily conceived; i.e., the conditions that create the necessity are themselves a matter of contingency and are therefore only hypothetically or suppositionally the ground or reason for a necessity. The *necessitas consequentiae* occurs continually in the finite order and, unlike *necessitas absoluta*, is applicable to God in terms of his *potentia ordinata* (q.v.), or ordained power. There is no necessity that God decree what he decrees; but, granting the divine decree, God is bound to his own plan and promises.

Therefore, the fulfillment of the divine plan and the divine promises is necessary, but by a *necessitas consequentiae* (*Dictionary*, p 200).

-b) As little as our memory of a fact necessitates that fact, so little does God's foreknowledge.

Augustine: Just as you by your memory do not compel those things to have been done which happened in the past, so God by his foreknowledge does not compel those things to be done which are future (*De divers. quaest. ad Simplic.*, II [?]). See *City Of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 28 on the topic).

-c) God's foreknowledge includes a knowledge of our free decisions.

Augustine: He is the Cause of all causes, although not of all choices (*City of God*, V, 8). But it does not follow that, though there is for God a certain order of all causes, there must therefore be nothing depending on the free exercise of our own wills, for our wills themselves are included in that order of causes which is certain to God, and is embraced by his foreknowledge, for human wills are also causes of human actions; and he who foreknew all the causes of things would certainly among those causes not have been ignorant of our wills....For, as he is the creator of all natures, so also is he the giver of all powers, though not of all choices (*voluntatum*); for wicked choices are not from him, being contrary to nature, which is from him.... How then does a succession of causes, which is certain in the sight of God who has foreknowledge, have this result that nothing happens in our will [i.e., that nothing is dependent on our decisions], although our decisions have an important place in the very order of causes (*City of God*, V, 9).

Formula of Concord, XI, Ep. 4/3 This foreknowledge extends alike over the godly and the wicked, but it is not the cause of evil, neither of sin, namely, of doing what is wrong, which originally arises from the devil and the wicked, perverse will of man, nor of their ruin, for which they themselves are responsible; but it only regulates it, and fixes a limit to it, how far it should progress and how long it should last, and all this to the end that it should serve his elect for their salvation, notwithstanding that it is evil in itself.

Note: Theoretically, any decision of a man might be, or might have been, different.—Practically, a fact is a fact. The theoretical consideration that it might have been different is of no practical consequence.

-d) Only anthropomorphically speaking may a foreknowledge be ascribed to God, with whom in reality there is an absolute present.

A3, IV, 3. Wisdom (*sapientia Dei*).

a) God is wise.

1) Statement of the fact:

Job 12:13 To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

Isaiah 40:13 Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor?

Quoted as Romans 11:34 Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"

Romans 16:27 To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

2) In wisdom God designs beneficial outcomes.

Proverbs 8:12,19 I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. ¹⁹ My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have know the holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 1 and 2.

3) In wisdom he devises and applies adequate means to attain his end.

Proverbs 16:20 Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

Ecclesiastes 8:5 Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm, and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure.

James 3:17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

4) We find synonyms and antonyms of wisdom.

-a) Synonyms: discretion, understanding, knowledge, insight, ability.

Proverbs 1:1-5 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: ²for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; ³for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; ⁴for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—⁵ let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance.

לְדַעַת חִכְמָה וּמוֹסָר לְהַבִּין אִמְרֵי בִּינָה:³ לְקַחַת מוֹסָר הַשְּׂכֵל צָדִיק²
וּמִשְׁפָּט וּמִיִּשְׂרָיִם:⁴ לְתֵת לַפְתָּאִים עֲרֻמָּה לְנֶעַר דַּעַת וּמִזְמָה:
יִשְׁמַע חֲכָם וְיִסְרֹף לִקַּח וְנִבּוֹן תַּחְבְּלוֹת יִקְנֶה:⁵

Exodus 35:31 He has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability, and knowledge in all kinds of crafts.

Proverbs 16:21 The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction.

Daniel 1:4 ...young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.

-b) Antonyms: foolishness, folly.

Psalm 38:5 My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly.

Proverbs 12:23 A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself, but the heart of fools blurts out folly.

Proverbs 13:16 Every prudent man acts out of knowledge, but a fool exposes his folly.

Proverbs 14:24 The wealth of the wise is their crown, but the folly of fools yields folly.

b) Three spheres of activity for the wisdom of God may be distinguished.

1) Creation and government of the world (1st Article)

Creation

Psalm 104:24 How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Psalm 136:5 ...who by his understanding made the heavens.

Proverbs 3:19,20 By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place;²⁰ by his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

Jeremiah 10:12 But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.

Jeremiah 51:15 He made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.

Proverbs 8:22-31 The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old;²³ I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began.²⁴ When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water;²⁵ before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth,²⁶ before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world.²⁷ I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep,²⁸ when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep,²⁹ when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.³⁰ Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence,³¹ rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind.

Job 28:20, 23-27 "Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell?"²³ God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells,²⁴ for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.²⁵ When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters,²⁶ when he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm,²⁷ then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; he confirmed it and tested it.

Providence

Job 12:13-25 "To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his."¹⁴ What he tears down cannot be rebuilt; the man he imprisons cannot be released.¹⁵ If he holds back the waters, there is drought; if he lets them loose, they devastate the land.¹⁶ To him belong strength and victory; both deceived and deceiver are his.¹⁷ He leads counselors away stripped and makes fools of judges.¹⁸ He takes off the shackles put on by kings and ties a loincloth around their waist.¹⁹ He leads priests away stripped and overthrows men long established.²⁰ He silences the lips of trusted advisers and takes away the discernment of elders.²¹ He pours contempt on nobles and disarms the mighty.²² He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings deep shadows into the light.²³ He makes nations great, and destroys them; he enlarges nations, and disperses them.²⁴ He deprives the leaders of the earth of their reason; he sends them wandering through a trackless waste.²⁵ They grope in darkness with no light; he makes them stagger like drunkards.

Isaiah 28:23-29 Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say. ²⁴ When a farmer plows for planting, does he plow continually? Does he keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil? ²⁵ When he has leveled the surface, does he not sow caraway and scatter cummin? Does he not plant wheat in its place, barley in its plot, and spelt in its field? ²⁶ His God instructs him and teaches him the right way. ²⁷ Caraway is not threshed with a sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over cummin; caraway is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a stick. ²⁸ Grain must be ground to make bread; so one does not go on threshing it forever. Though he drives the wheels of his threshing cart over it, his horses do not grind it. ²⁹ All this also comes from the LORD Almighty, wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom.

Daniel 2:20-23 Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. ²¹ He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. ²² He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him. ²³ I thank and praise you, O God of my fathers: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the dream of the king.

Acts 17:26,27 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

Genesis 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Job 5:12,13 He thwarts the plans of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success. ¹³ He catches the wise in their craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are swept away.

Isaiah 8:10 Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

Isaiah 29:14 Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder; the wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

2) **Salvation (2nd Article)**

Luke 7:33-35 John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, "He has a demon." ³⁴ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, "Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." ³⁵ But wisdom is proved right by all her children.

1 Corinthians 2:6-9 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.

Ephesians 1:7-9 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.

Ephesians 3:10-11 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. .

Romans 11:33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴ "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" ³⁵ "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

3) **Sanctification (3rd Article) cf Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon= Wisdom Literature**

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor.

c) **Scripture describes the depth of God's wisdom.**

1) **God's wisdom is unsearchable.**

Job 28:12-15 But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? ¹³ Man does not comprehend its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living. ¹⁴ The deep says, "It is not in me"; the sea says, "It is not with me." ¹⁵ It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed in silver.

Job 28: 20-23 Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? ²¹ It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air. ²² Destruction and Death say, "Only a rumor of it has reached our ears." ²³ God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells.

Psalm 92:5 How great are your works, O LORD, how profound your thoughts!

Isaiah 40:13 Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor?

Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. ⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

1 Corinthians 1:25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

Colossians 2:3 In [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

2) **Only such men as have learned their wisdom from God begin to appreciate God's wisdom.**

Job 28:28 And he said to man, "The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding."

Psalm 51:6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

Ecclesiastes 2:26 To the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

Daniel 2:21 He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

1 Corinthians 2:14,15 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment.

Matthew 11:25-26 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

d) **A problem which has always baffled human intelligence is: how to harmonize the presence of sin and evil in the world with the wisdom of God (theodicy).**

Milton That to the height of this great argument,
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to man (*Paradise Lost*).

The Alleged Problem: If God is good and wise, he can't be powerful.

If God is powerful, he can't be good and wise.

1) **Wrong solutions have been proposed.**

-a) **Atheism cuts the knot by denying the existence of God, See also so-called "Christian atheism"**

Tillich: It is as atheistic to affirm the existence of God as it is to deny it (*S.T.*, I, 237).

Bonhoeffer observes: Man has learnt to deal with himself in all questions of importance without recourse to the "working hypothesis" called "God." (*Letters and Papers*, p 168). "God" as a working hypothesis, as a stop-gap for our embarrassments, has become superfluous. (*Ibid.*, p 201). If our final judgment must be that the western form of Christianity, too, was only a preliminary stage to a complete absence of religion, what kind of situation emerges for us, for the Church?... Are there religionless Christians?... What is a religionless Christianity? (*Ibid.*, p 140).

-b) Dualism assumes the eternal co-existence of evil with God. Zoroastrianism (Parsees), Manichaeism.

Zoroaster (6th century BC?) taught that from the one god Ahura Mazda two eternal spirits emanated, the good spirit Spenta Mainyu and the bad spirit Angra Mainyu or Ahriman: When these two spirits came together in the beginning, they established Life and Not-Life, and that at the last the Worst Existence shall be to the followers of the Lie, but the Best Thought to him that follows Right (*Yasna*: 30: 3,4).

An Nadim (Moslem historian, 11th century): Mani says he was the Paraclete, whom Jesus of blessed memory previously announced. Mani took elements of his doctrine from the religion of the Magi and Christianity....Mani put at the beginning of the world two eternal principles. Of these, one is Light, the other Darkness (*Catalogue*, quoted in Ayer, *Source Book*, p 254-255).

-c) Fatalism (determinism in every form) makes God responsible for all evil.

Presbyterian: It must be admitted frankly that Calvinists do not claim to have solved completely the problem of evil in its relation to an omnipotent God.... According to Calvinism, God's eternal purpose included the permission of evil acts, in order that God's whole nature might be manifested, and that his righteousness, justice and love might all be fully revealed in his dealings with sinful man. The ultimate responsibility for the permission of the evil acts rests with God, though the immediate responsibility rests upon the created beings who chose to sin. God does not do the evil himself, but he does permit it for his own inscrutable purposes.... Suppose we say that God has foreknowledge of the evil act, but does not include it in his plan and purpose?... If he foreknew the evil act and nevertheless created the man, how can it be denied that he included the evil act in his plan?... Calvinism teaches that God not only knew what he was doing when he created man, but that he had a purpose, even in permitting sin.... Calvinism affirms both terms (man's freedom and God's foreordination), but holds that the only freedom which man has is to act in accordance with his nature (Jan. 17, 1929).

-d) Pessimism holds this world to be the worst conceivable. If pessimists still believe in the existence of God, they deny his wisdom.

- Arthur Schopenhauer (d. 1860) *The World as Will and Idea*, Karl Robert Eduard Von Hartmann (d. 1906) *Philosophy of the Unconscious*; Friedrich Nietzsche (d. 1900) *Beyond Good and Evil*; Albert Camus (d. 1960) *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Jean-Paul Sartre (d. 1981) *Nausea, Being and Nothingness*.
- Greek tragedy, modern art and drama, "theater of the absurd," existentialism, post-modernism
- the Christian under trial (Job, Ecclesiastes, Psalm 73).

Ecclesiastes 1:1-3 The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: ²"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless." ³What does man gain from all his labor at which he toils under the sun?

Sophocles: Not to be born is best of all. But if you are, then hurry hence, for after that there is no better blessing (*Oedipus at Colonus, Third Episode*).

Camus: You have already grasped that Sisyphus is the absurd hero. He is, as much through his passions as through his torture. His scorn of the gods, his hatred of death, and his passion for life won him that unspeakable penalty in which the whole being is exerted toward accomplishing nothing. This is the price that must be paid for the passions of this earth.... If this myth is tragic, that is because its hero is conscious. Where would his torture be, indeed, if at every step the hope of succeeding upheld him? The workman of today works everyday in his life at the same tasks, and his fate is no less absurd. But it is tragic only at the rare moments when it becomes conscious. Sisyphus, proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellious, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition: it is what he thinks of during his descent. The lucidity that was to constitute his torture at the same time crowns his victory. There is no fate that can not be surmounted by scorn (*Myth of Sisyphus*).

Sartre: The existentialist, on the contrary, thinks it is very distressing that God does not exist, because all possibility of finding values in a heaven of ideas disappears with him; there can no longer be an a priori Good, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it. Nowhere is it written that the Good exists, that we must be honest, that we must not lie, because the fact is that we are on a plane where there are only men. Dostoevsky said, "If God did not exist, everything would be possible." That is the very starting point of existentialism. Indeed, everything is permissible if God does not exist, and as a result man is forlorn, because neither within him nor without does he find anything to cling to. ... Man is condemned to be free (*Existentialism and Human Emotions*, p 22-23).

-e) Optimism proceeds on the assumption that this world is the best conceivable (because of God's wisdom, love, and power) and minimizes sin and evil, considering them as mere imperfections.

- Leibniz (d 1716), *Theodicee*
- Christian Science. Religious Science. Unity School of Christianity.

Mary Baker Eddy (d. 1910): Here is found the cardinal point of Christian Science, that matter and evil (including all inharmony, sin, disease, death) are unreal (*Miscellaneous Writings*, p 27).

Note: Theoretically sin may be described as something negative, 1 Jn 3:4 (*in abstracto*)—practically it is something positive, positive enmity against God, Ro 8:7 (*in concreto*).

-f) **Nikolai Berdyaev (d. 1948) posits a pre-cosmic freedom to which even God is subject (*Destiny of Man*).**

Contra: this denies the independence and infinity of God.

1 Corinthians 1:19,20 For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?"

2) **People propose inadequate solutions.**

-a) **They appeal to God's dignity.**

-1) **God might have prevented the fall:**

If he had created man without a free will.

If he had by force restrained the will of the first man from sinning.

If he had precluded the temptation.

-2) **But each of these possibilities would have been unworthy of God.**

-3) **Contra: Who are we to say what is worthy of God? Why would it be unworthy of God to do then what he will do in heaven?**

-b) **They lay the blame on man.**

-1) **God, creating man in His own image, endowed him with free self-determination.**

-2) **Thereby he caused only the remote possibility of sinning (by man's abuse of this freedom).**

-3) **Contra: This is evading the issue.**

-c) **They point to human limitations.**

-1) **We must abandon the question**

Because we cannot completely and correctly survey the course of the world's history,

And we cannot fathom the bearing of every detail on the whole.

-2) **Contra: This ignores that the problem has to do with the origin of evil.**

3) **Scripture shows the correct attitude.**

-a) **Scripture declares both:**

-1) **That God is wise, and**

-2) **That sin originated in opposition to his will.**

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

James 1:13-14 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

-b) **Scripture declares:**

-1) **That the fullness of God's wisdom appears in his plan of salvation.**

-2) **That thus also sin and evil must serve his praise and glory.**

Psalms 76:10 Surely your wrath against men brings you praise, and the survivors of your wrath are restrained. *Alternate:* surely the wrath of men brings you praise.

Romans 11:11,32,33 Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

³² For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all. ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

Galatians 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

-3) The best answer is found in Christ.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

A3, IV, 4. Love (amor Dei transitivus).

a) God longs for, and delights in, union and communion with his creatures in order to promote their happiness.

1) The Bible describes the nature of Christian love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8, 13 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹² Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Ephesians 6:23 Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

1 Thessalonians 3:6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.

2) The Bible describes God's love.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 4:16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Quenstedt: The love of God is that whereby he on his part pleasantly joins himself with a lovable object [i.e., one that has been made lovable by God's grace] (*TDP*, I, XXX, p 291).

3) God is not dependent on his creatures for his own happiness. This would annul his perfection.

See Angelus Silesius (real name—Johann Scheffler, a pantheistic Lutheran who returned to Rome, d. 1677). His hymns in *Lutheran Hymnal* are #356, 397, 399, 421; in *CW* 453, 476.

Ich bin als Gott so gross, er ist als ich so klein:
Er kann nicht über mir, ich unter ihm nicht sein.
Ich weiss, dass ohne mich Gott nicht ein Nu kann leben;
Werd ich zu nicht, er muss von Not den Geist aufgeben.

I am as great as God; As small as I is he;
Above me he can't be, Nor lower I than he.
Without me God, I know, Cannot a moment be;
If I should come to naught, He has to die like me.

b) The love of God may be classified according to its objects.

1) Love toward creation in general (*amor universalis; amor complacentiae*).

Psalm 104:10-18,27,28,31 He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. ¹¹ They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. ¹² The birds of the air nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. ¹³ He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work. ¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate— bringing forth food from the earth: ¹⁵ wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart. ¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. ¹⁷ There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the pine trees. ¹⁸ The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the coney. ²⁷ These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. ²⁸ When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things. ³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.

Psalm 136:1-9,25,26 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever. ² Give thanks to the God of gods. His love endures forever. ³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords: His love endures forever. ⁴ to him who alone does great wonders, His love endures forever. ⁵ who by his understanding made the heavens, His love endures forever. ⁶ who spread out the earth upon the waters, His love endures forever. ⁷ who made the great lights— His love endures forever. ⁸ the sun to govern the day, His love endures forever. ⁹ the moon and stars to govern the night; His love endures forever. ²⁵ and who gives food to every creature. His love endures forever. ²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven. His love endures forever.

Psalm 147:9 He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.

Matthew 6:26-30 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

2) Love towards mankind as crown and head of creation (*amor particularis, specialis; amor benevolentiae*).

Matthew 5:43-48 You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." ⁴⁴ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Mark 2:27 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

Acts 14:17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:4,5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 4:9-11 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

3) Love toward the Christians (*amor specialissimus; amor amicitiae*).

Deuteronomy 33:3 Surely it is you who love the people; all the holy ones are in your hand. At your feet they all bow down, and from you receive instruction.

Psalm 147:11 The LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

Psalm 149:4 For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation.

Isaiah 43:1 But now, this is what the LORD says— he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”

Isaiah 49:15,16 Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! ¹⁶ See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.

Jeremiah 31:20,33 Is not Ephraim my dear son, the child in whom I delight? Though I often speak against him, I still remember him. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I have great compassion for him,” declares the LORD. ³³“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Hosea 2:19,20 I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. ²⁰ I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD.

Matthew 7:11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

John 13:1 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

John 14:21,23 “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” ²³ Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

Romans 5:8,9 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

2 Corinthians 6:18 “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty.

1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.

Quenstedt: With the love of pleasure God loves all created things, or rather his own goodness which he has shared with them. With the love of benevolence he loves men in particular, for whose sake he sent his Son into the flesh and delivered him into death—in one word it is termed philanthropy. With the love of friendship, however, he attends upon believers and those who have been received into his grace (*TDP*, I, XXX, p 291).

c) According to the various ways in which God’s love manifests itself under different circumstances Scripture uses various words for love.

- 1) Love, affection, ἀγάπη, אַהֲבָה, amor. This is a deep emotion of affection without regard to the worthiness or unworthiness of the object of one’s love. (This meaning is not inherent in the word ἀγάπη, but derives from the biblical description of God’s love.)**

On the part of God:

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

1 John 4:8,9 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

On the part of man:

1 John 4:17-21 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

1 Samuel 18:3 And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

2) Love, attachment, φιλία, φιλέω. This is the love of friendship.

John 16:27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

John 21:15-17 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me (ἀγαπάς) more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you (φιλώ)." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me (ἀγαπάς)?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you (φιλώ)." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me (φιλείς)?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me (φιλείς)?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you (φιλώ)." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

3) Goodness, χρηστότης, τὸ χρηστόν, БИУ, bonitas, benignitas.

-a) This is love in general.

Psalm 31:19 (20) How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you.

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience (χρηστότητος ἀνοχῆς μακροθυμίας), not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

Romans 11:22 Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

Ephesians 2:7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Titus 3:4 ...when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared...

-b) In particular it refers to God's clemency, his willingness to cancel punishment.

Psalm 25:7 Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD.

Psalm 145:7-9 They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. ⁸ The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. ⁹ The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

-c) It is also ascribed to men (benignitas, suavitas).

2 Corinthians 6:6 in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love (ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ).

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness (ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις).

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμοῦ χρηστότητα ταπεινοφροσύνην πραΰτητα μακροθυμίαν).

4) Kindness, φιλανθρωπία, humanitas. This is God's general love towards mankind.

Titus 3:3-5 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness and love (χρηστότης φιλανθρωπία) of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 27:3 The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs.

Acts 28:2 The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold.

5) **Mercy, compassion, ἔλεος οἰκτιρμός σπλάγγνα** **דִּן**, *misericordia*. **This is love moved by mankind's misery.**

ἔλεος

Luke 1:54,72 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful, ⁷²...to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant.

Ephesians 2:4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy...

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Matthew 9:13 But go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

Matthew 12:7 If you had known what these words mean, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice," you would not have condemned the innocent.

Matthew 23:23 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

οἰκτιρμός

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

2 Corinthians 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.

Hebrews 10:28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

σπλάγγνα

Luke 1:78 ...because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven.

Philippians 2:1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion... (σπλάγγνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί)

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (σπλάγγνα οἰκτιρμοῦ χρηστότητα ταπεινοφροσύνην πραΰτητα μακροθυμίαν).

James 5:11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy (πολύσπλαγγνος καὶ οἰκτίρμων).

דִּן

Deuteronomy 30:3 Then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.

2 Samuel 24:14 David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men."

Nehemiah 9:27 So you handed them over to their enemies, who oppressed them. But when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them, and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hand of their enemies.

Psalms 77:8,9 (9,10) Has his unfailing love (יְדֹוּד) vanished forever? Has his promise (בְּרִית) failed for all time? ⁹ Has God forgotten to be merciful (רַחֲמֵי)? Has he in anger withheld his compassion (יְדֹוּד)?"

Isaiah 49:13 Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.

Jeremiah 12:15 But after I uproot them, I will again have compassion and will bring each of them back to his own inheritance and his own country.

Proverbs 12:10 A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel.

6) **ἔλεος, covenanted love, promised love, steadfast love; mercy.**

Note: The NIV interprets ἔλεος as a term for covenant love. Often it simply translates “love.” The King James, more correctly, follows the Septuagint in understanding it as a term for mercy. In frequency and use, though not in meaning, ἔλεος is the functional equivalent of χάρις, that is, ἔλεος is the chief word for God’s saving love in the OT as χάρις is in the NT. ἔλεος may imply God’s faithfulness to his word, but when the author wants to stress such faithfulness, the word ἰσχυρία is usually added. ἔλεος and ἰσχυρία are very common word pair in the Old Testament, serving as a hendiadys of sorts. On ἔλεος see Paul Peters, “The Old Testament Covenant Word *Chesed*,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 50-3 to Vol. 51-4, 1953-1954.

Psalm 89:1,2: I will sing of the LORD’s great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. ² I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

Psalm 103:10,11 He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him.

Note: When ἔλεος means “disgrace, it is probably a homonym unrelated to mercy (cf. Lv 20:17; Pr 14:34).

7) **Grace, χάρις, ἰσχυρία, gratia. This is God’s unearned love in its efforts to save man from sin and its effects.**

Acts 15:11 No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.

Romans 3:24 [All] are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

Romans 11:6 And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Ephesians 1:6,7 ...to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.

Ephesians 2:8,9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Proverbs 14:21 He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.

Proverbs 14:31 He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

8) **Forbearance, longsuffering, ἀνοχή, μακροθυμία, ἡμεροσύνεσις, ἡμεροσύνεσις, longanimitas, patientia, sustentatio. This is God’s love as it postpones punishment and extends the time of grace. (Once: God of ὑπομονή, Ro 15:5 coll. 4)**

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance (τοῦ πλοῦτου τῆς χρηστότητος αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀνοχῆς καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας).

Romans 3:25,26 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 9:22 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction?

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Romans 15:4,5 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus.

Exodus 34:6,7 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."

Numbers 14:18 The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.

Nehemiah 9:16–21 But they, our forefathers, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and did not obey your commands. ¹⁷ They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them, ¹⁸ even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, 'This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,' or when they committed awful blasphemies. ¹⁹ "Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. ²⁰ You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. ²¹ For forty years you sustained them in the desert; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

Psalms 86:14-16 The arrogant are attacking me, O God; a band of ruthless men seeks my life—men without regard for you. ¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. ¹⁶ Turn to me and have mercy on me; grant your strength to your servant and save the son of your maidservant.

Psalms 103:8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

Psalms 145:8 The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

Jonah 4:2 He prayed to the LORD, "O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity."

d) God's love is a holy love, not incompatible with the sternest justice.

Psalms 97:10 Let those who love the LORD hate evil, for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Amos 5:15 Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

Romans 12:9; 17,19 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

Tertullian: Goodness, unless it is governed by justice in order that it may be just, will not be goodness, if it is unjust. For nothing which is unjust is good; everything which is just, however, is good (*Adv. Marc.*, Lib. II, Cap. II).

A3, IV, 5. Holiness ὁσιότητα, ἁγιος (*sanctitas Dei*).

a) God in sublime awesomeness loves the ethically good and hates the evil.

1) Such is the holiness demanded of men.

-a) Separation from the vile (both cultic and ethical).

Exodus 22:31 You are to be my holy people. So do not eat the meat of an animal torn by wild beasts; throw it to the dogs.

2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Ephesians 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Ephesians 5:27 ...and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

2 Timothy 2:21 If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

-b) Love of good, hatred of the evil.

Amos 5:14,15 Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. ¹⁵ Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

2) Man's holiness is to be patterned after God's.

Leviticus 11:44,45 I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves about on the ground. ⁴⁵ I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

Leviticus 19:2 Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

Leviticus 20:26 You are to be holy to me because I, the LORD, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own.

1 Peter 1:15,16 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

3) God is holy and sublime.

Isaiah 6:1-8 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." ⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Compare: John 12:41 Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.

Exodus 15:11 "Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you— majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?"

Joshua 24:19 Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins."

Psalms 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.

Revelation 15:4 Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."

Quenstedt: The holiness of God is the highest purity in God, a purity free from every spot and blemish whatsoever; demanding from his creatures the cleanness and purity which they owe; or it is that purity by which God is pure, clean and holy in the highest degree, and is the author of all purity and holiness in his creatures (*TDP*, I, XXXIV, p 292).

b) God's holiness is a transitive attribute.

1) God's holiness destroys unholy things.

Psalms 5:4-6 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell. ⁵ The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong. ⁶ You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors.

Psalms 7:11,12 God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day. ¹² If he does not relent, he will sharpen his sword; he will bend and string his bow.

Psalm 11:5 The LORD examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence his soul hates.

Psalm 45:7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

Isaiah 10:17 The Light of Israel will become a fire, their Holy One a flame; in a single day it will burn and consume his thorns and his briars.

Ezekiel 38:16-23 In days to come, O Gog, I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. ¹⁷ This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Are you not the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel? At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them. ¹⁸ This is what will happen in that day: When Gog attacks the land of Israel, my hot anger will be aroused, declares the Sovereign LORD. ¹⁹ In my zeal and fiery wrath I declare that at that time there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. ²⁰ The fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, every creature that moves along the ground, and all the people on the face of the earth will tremble at my presence. The mountains will be overturned, the cliffs will crumble and every wall will fall to the ground. ²¹ I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Sovereign LORD. Every man's sword will be against his brother. ²² I will execute judgment upon him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him. ²³ And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel 39:7 I will make known my holy name among my people Israel. I will no longer let my holy name be profaned, and the nations will know that I the LORD am the Holy One in Israel.

Psalm 139:21-22 Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD, and abhor those who rise up against you? ²² I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.

2) According to his holiness God cleanses us from our sin.

Ephesians 5:26,27 ...to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Hebrews 9:13,14 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Numbers 19:2-10 This is a requirement of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect or blemish and that has never been under a yoke. ³ Give it to Eleazar the priest; it is to be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence. ⁴ Then Eleazar the priest is to take some of its blood on his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the Tent of Meeting. ⁵ While he watches, the heifer is to be burned—its hide, flesh, blood and offal. ⁶ The priest is to take some cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool and throw them onto the burning heifer. ⁷ After that, the priest must wash his clothes and bathe himself with water. He may then come into the camp, but he will be ceremonially unclean till evening. ⁸ The man who burns it must also wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he too will be unclean till evening. ⁹ A man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and put them in a ceremonially clean place outside the camp. They shall be kept by the Israelite community for use in the water of cleansing; it is for purification from sin. ¹⁰ The man who gathers up the ashes of the heifer must also wash his clothes, and he too will be unclean till evening. This will be a lasting ordinance both for the Israelites and for the aliens living among them.

Leviticus 22:32 Do not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the LORD, who makes you holy

Deuteronomy 28:9 The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in his ways.

Psalm 98:1-3 Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. ² The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. ³ He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Psalm 111:9 He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever— holy and awesome is his name.

Isaiah 6:5-7 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." ⁶ Then one of the

seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

Isaiah 52:10 The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

Ezekiel 36:21-38 I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. ²² Therefore say to the house of Israel, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. ²³ I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. ²⁴ For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. ²⁸ You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. ³⁰ I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. ³¹ Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices. ³² I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, O house of Israel! ³³ This is what the Sovereign LORD says: On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt. ³⁴ The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it. ³⁵ They will say, 'This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited.' ³⁶ Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it. ³⁷ This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Once again I will yield to the plea of the house of Israel and do this for them: I will make their people as numerous as sheep, ³⁸ as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts. So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel 37:28 Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.

3) God's holiness may in a certain sense be distinguished as *iusitia interna* from his justice, *iusitia externa*.

J. F. Buddeus (d. 1729): When God is thought of as loving himself with a most pure love so that at the same time he is considered as removed, isolated, separated from all imperfection, that love is called holiness (*Inst. theol. dog.*, II, 46, p 263).

c) For us the law of God is the standard of holiness.

1) Since God is the *Summum Bonum*, he is under no law or idea of good.

Baier: God, who does not have the law as something he has received from a higher being, is a law unto himself (*Compendium*, I, I, XIII, p 137).

This is implied in his perfection.

Baier: We speak of holiness and it implies correctness of the divine will, by which he wishes everything that is correct and right, in a way which conforms to his eternal law (*Compendium*, I, I, XIII, p 136).

2) For us whatever God commands in his law is good; what he forbids is evil.

Romans 7:12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

2 Peter 2:21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

Deuteronomy 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

3) For us whatever God did not forbid is not in itself evil, what he did not command is not good.

Matthew 15:9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

d) As a special manifestation of God's holiness Scripture emphasizes his truthfulness.

1) Truthfulness is ascribed to God. Whatever God speaks is truth.

2 Samuel 7:28 O Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your words are trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant.

Psalm 33:4 For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.

Psalm 146:6 ...the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— the LORD, who remains faithful forever.

Isaiah 25:1 O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done marvelous things, things planned long ago.

John 3:33 The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful.

John 7:28 Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him."

Romans 3:4 Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."

Titus 1:2 ...a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time.

Hebrews 6:18 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

Revelation 3:14 To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

Revelation 19:9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

2) Truthfulness is closely related to holiness.

Psalm 19: 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

Psalm 89:35 Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness— and I will not lie to David.

Psalm 105:42 For he remembered his holy promise given to his servant Abraham.

Amos 4:2 The Sovereign LORD has sworn by his holiness: "The time will surely come when you will be taken away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks."

Revelation 3:7 To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

Revelation 6:10 They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

Revelation 15:3 [They] sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages."

3) Truthfulness is also closely related to:

-a) God's immutability. Immutability of decree presupposes and implies truthfulness.

Genesis 22:16 I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son...

Jeremiah 51:14 The LORD Almighty has sworn by himself: I will surely fill you with men, as with a swarm of locusts, and they will shout in triumph over you.

Ezekiel 12:25 But I the LORD will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious house, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Hebrews 6:17,18 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. ¹⁸ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

-b) God's love. Love naturally leads to truthfulness. The greatest truth God has revealed is his saving love.

Genesis 24:27 Praise be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master..

Psalms 25:10 All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.

Psalms 31:5 Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth.

Psalms 36:5 Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.

Psalms 40:10,11 I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly. ¹¹ Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me.

Psalms 43:3 Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.

Psalms 89:1,2,14,24,33,49 I will sing of the LORD's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. ² I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself. ¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you. ²⁴ My faithful love will be with him, and through my name his horn will be exalted. ³³ but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. ⁴⁹ O Lord, where is your former great love, which in your faithfulness you swore to David?

Psalms 100:5 For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

A3, IV, 6. Justice and righteousness (*iustitia Dei*).

a) God's righteousness is proclaimed as law: *iustitia legalis* or *iustitia activa*. God adequately rewards the good he demands and punishes the evil.

1) Righteousness is ascribed to God in many passages.

Exodus 9:27 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. "This time I have sinned," he said to them. "The LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong."

Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

Ezra 9:15 O LORD, God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.

Nehemiah 9:33 In all that has happened to us, you have been just; you have acted faithfully, while we did wrong.

Job 8:3 Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right?

Psalms 11:7 For the LORD is righteous, he loves justice; upright men will see his face.

Psalms 48:10 Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness.

Psalms 97:2 Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

Daniel 9:7 Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you.

Zephaniah 3:5 The LORD within her is righteous; he does no wrong. Morning by morning he dispenses his justice, and every new day he does not fail, yet the unrighteous know no shame.

2) Righteousness is closely related to holiness (*iustitia interna* and *externa*). Righteousness is applied holiness.

Psalms 145:17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.

Isaiah 5:16 But the LORD Almighty will be exalted by his justice, and the holy God will show himself holy by his righteousness.

3) God's justice is legislative or directive. God is the law-giver.

Exodus 15:26 He said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."

Deuteronomy 4:8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

Deuteronomy 6:1-3 These are the commands, decrees and laws (הַמִּצְוֹת הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים) the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, ² so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. ³ Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you.

Deuteronomy 7:9-11 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. ¹⁰ But those who hate him he will repay to their face by destruction; he will not be slow to repay to their face those who hate him. ¹¹ Therefore, take care to follow the commands, decrees and laws I give you today.

Nehemiah 9:13 You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good.

Psalms 119:137,138,142 Righteous are you, O LORD, and your laws are right. ¹³⁸ The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy. ¹⁴² Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true.

4) God's righteousness is described as retributive or judicial (executiva, i.e., remunerativa; punitiva, vindicativa, ultrix). God is the judge.

-a) Scripture describes God's judicial righteousness.

Genesis 18:25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Psalms 7:9 O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure.

Psalms 51:3-4 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Jeremiah 11:20 But, O LORD Almighty, you who judge righteously and test the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

Ezekiel 18:25 Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear, O house of Israel: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust?

Romans 2:5-13 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done." ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. ⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹¹ For God does not show favoritism. ¹² All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. ⁶ God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy

people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

2 Timothy 4:8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Revelation 16:5-7 Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: “You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged; ⁶ for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve.” ⁷ And I heard the altar respond: “Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments.”

2 Peter 2:13 They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you.

Calov: The righteousness of God is that by which the righteous God is a rewarder of the good and a punisher of the evil (*Systema*, II, p 565).

Quenstedt: The righteousness of God is the highest and immutable rectitude of the divine will, demanding from the rational creature what is right and just (*TDP*, I, VIII, XXXV, p 292).

-b) God's justice is reflected in the justice of human rulers and judges (to some extent also in the laws of nature). See Romans 13.

2 Samuel 23:3 The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God...

2 Chronicles 19:6,7 He told them, “Consider carefully what you do, because you are not judging for man but for the LORD, who is with you whenever you give a verdict. ⁷ Now let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the LORD our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.”

Proverbs 16:10-12 The lips of a king speak as an oracle, and his mouth should not betray justice. ¹¹ Honest scales and balances are from the LORD; all the weights in the bag are of his making. ¹² Kings detest wrongdoing, for a throne is established through righteousness.

Proverbs 29:4 By justice a king gives a country stability, but one who is greedy for bribes tears it down.

Gerhard: Toward his creatures he is just, first of all, dispositively [i.e., in the way he governs and controls all things], in so far as he arranges all his actions, all his *opera ad extra* [i.e., his activities outside the Godhead, his actions toward his creatures] according to the norm of fairness and justice and is the most just governor and ruler of the whole universe; and secondly, he is just distributively [i.e., in the way he distributes things to his creatures], in so far as he repays each creature according to his deeds (*Loci*, II, II, CCXXIX, 5, p 171).

Gerhard: Although both from the naturally implanted distinction between what is just and what is unjust as well as from the punishments accompanying the more serious offenses human reason recognizes in some measure that God is just, which is attested by the statements of the Gentiles concerning the righteousness of God; nevertheless that recognition is imperfect and weak (*Loci*, III, II, CCXXXIII, p 174).

5) God's righteousness is not annulled by cases of apparent injustice.

-a) The problem is stated.

Psalms 73:1-15 Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.² But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.³ For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.⁴ They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong.⁵ They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills.⁶ Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence.⁷ From their callous hearts comes iniquity; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits.⁸ They scoff, and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression.⁹ Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth.¹⁰ Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance.¹¹ They say, “How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?”¹² This is what the wicked are like— always carefree, they increase in wealth.¹³ Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence.¹⁴ All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning.¹⁵ If I had said, “I will speak thus,” I would have betrayed your children.

Job 12:6 The tents of marauders are undisturbed, and those who provoke God are secure— those who carry their god in their hands.

Job 21:7 Why do the wicked live on, growing old and increasing in power?

Ecclesiastes 7:15 In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these: a righteous man perishing in his righteousness, and a wicked man living long in his wickedness.

Jeremiah 12:1-4 You are always righteous, O LORD, when I bring a case before you. Yet I would speak with you about your justice: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease? ² You have planted them, and they have taken root; they grow and bear fruit. You are always on their lips but far from their hearts. ³ Yet you know me, O LORD; you see me and test my thoughts about you. Drag them off like sheep to be butchered! Set them apart for the day of slaughter! ⁴ How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished. Moreover, the people are saying, "He will not see what happens to us."

Ezekiel 18:25 Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear, O house of Israel: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust?

Cf. also the argument of Habbakuk and God's responses

-b) The problem is solved.

Psalms 73:16-28 When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me ¹⁷ till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. ¹⁸ Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. ¹⁹ How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! ²⁰ As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. ²¹ When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, ²² I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. ²³ Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. ²⁴ You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ²⁷ Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. ²⁸ But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.

Ezekiel 18:26-32 If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin, he will die for it; because of the sin he has committed he will die. ²⁷ But if a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life. ²⁸ Because he considers all the offenses he has committed and turns away from them, he will surely live; he will not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is not just." Are my ways unjust, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust? ³⁰ "Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³¹ Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!

Romans 9:22 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction?

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

6) The punishments which the justice of God inflicts may be natural or imposed.

-a) Some appear to be the natural result of the sin committed (*poenae naturales*) e.g., sexually transmitted diseases, the effects of substance abuse, a violent death, etc.

Romans 1:24, 27 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁷ Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty of their perversion.

Matthew 26:52 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.

Galatians 6:7-8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

-b) Some have been imposed directly by God, without a natural cause-and-effect relationship between the sin and the punishment (*poenae positivae*).

e.g., The judgment on Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), smiting of Herod (Acts 12), etc.

-c) We must beware of judging that a specific tragedy is a result of a specific sin, as Job's friends did.

Luke 13:1-5 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? ³ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

John 9:1-3 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.

b) People have found difficulty in harmonizing God's love with his punitive righteousness.

- 1) Since all attributes are in reality the same, presenting God as viewed in different relations, any contradiction can be only apparent.**
- 2) Sin is enmity against God, an attempted negation of him. God cannot love himself as *Summum Bonum* and at the same time desire his own annihilation or destruction of his blessings.**
- 3) Consider the nature of Christian love, which is patterned after God's love.**

Matthew 5:44-48 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Luke 6:36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

-a) Christian love is described as holy love, which opposes evil.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

1 Thessalonians 5:21,22 Test everything. Hold on to the good. ²² Avoid every kind of evil.

1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

-b) Christian love does not prevent them from praying for the destruction of confirmed representatives of sin and evil (imprecatory psalms and prayers).

-1) Examples of prayers against evil doers:

Psalm 58:1,2, 6-11 Do you rulers indeed speak justly? Do you judge uprightly among men? ² No, in your heart you devise injustice, and your hands mete out violence on the earth. ⁶ Break the teeth in their mouths, O God; tear out, O LORD, the fangs of the lions! ⁷ Let them vanish like water that flows away; when they draw the bow, let their arrows be blunted. ⁸ Like a slug melting away as it moves along, like a stillborn child, may they not see the sun. ⁹ Before your pots can feel the heat of the thorns— whether they be green or dry—the wicked will be swept away. ¹⁰ The righteous will be glad when they are avenged, when they bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked. ¹¹ Then men will say, "Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth."

Psalm 59:5,13 O LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, rouse yourself to punish all the nations; show no mercy to wicked traitors. ¹³ Consume them in wrath, consume them till they are no more. Then it will be known to the ends of the earth that God rules over Jacob.

Psalm 79:6-7 Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the kingdoms that do not call on your name; ⁷ for they have devoured Jacob and destroyed his homeland.

Psalm 83: 13-18 Make them like tumbleweed, O my God, like chaff before the wind. ¹⁴ As fire consumes the forest or a flame sets the mountains ablaze, ¹⁵ so pursue them with your tempest and terrify them with your storm. ¹⁶ Cover their faces with shame so that men will seek your name, O LORD. ¹⁷ May they ever be ashamed and dismayed; may they perish in disgrace. ¹⁸ Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD— that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

Psalm 137:7-9 Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. "Tear it down," they cried, "tear it down to its foundations!" ⁸ O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is he who repays you for what you have done to us— ⁹ he who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks.

Jeremiah 12:3 Yet you know me, O LORD; you see me and test my thoughts about you. Drag them off like sheep to be butchered! Set them apart for the day of slaughter!

-2) That such prayers are not “a lower standard of morality in the OT” is evident from these passages:

Luke 10:10-16 But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ “Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.” ¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town. ¹³ Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵ And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. ¹⁶ He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.

Galatians 1:8,9 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

Revelation 6:10 They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”

Luther: All who pray, curse. For instance, when I say, “Hallowed be your name,” I curse Erasmus and all who hold views contrary to the Word (“Table Talk,” WLS #3518; SL 22, 526, 25).

Luther: I cannot pray without cursing at the same time. If I say, “Hallowed be your name,” I must thereby say: “May the names of the papists and all who blaspheme your name be accursed, condemned, and dishonored.” If I say, “Your kingdom come,” I must thereby say, “May the papacy, together with all kingdoms on earth that are opposed to your kingdom, be accursed condemned and destroyed.” If I say, “Your will be done,” I must thereby say, “May the plans and plots of the papists and of all who strive against your will be accursed, condemned, dishonored, and brought to naught.” Truly, thus my lips and heart pray day in, day out and all who believe in Christ are praying this way with me (“Against the Assassin at Dresden,” WLS #3519; SL 16, 1718).

A. Pieper: It is entirely correct that the beholders are described as gazing with satisfaction upon the decaying and burning carcasses. They are God’s judgments, and they are meant to serve the salvation of his own. And as God himself, in spite of all his gracious compassion, carries out his judgments with divine benevolence, so also the believers view them with satisfaction. The Christian gives his Yes and Amen to the unimaginably horrible torments of hell, because God has so ordered them and has himself revealed them, although human nature revolts against the thought of eternal torment. And so Isaiah closes his book. To this day it is offensive to the Jews, as it is to all the unbelievers, including the unbelieving exegetes. They avenge themselves on Isaiah by scoffing and blaspheming, as they do upon all the Gospel. But it is the Lord himself who summed up the Gospel in the familiar words: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,” Mark 16:16. Isaiah preaches nothing else, and it remains God’s truth till the Day of Judgment (*Isaiah II*, p 706).

Siegbert Becker (d. 1984): There are many who conclude from the Sermon on the Mount that vengeance is not compatible with Christianity. Yet here the saints rejoice over God’s vengeance and praise him for it. It is true that in the Sermon on the Mount as well as in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he told Peter to sheathe his sword, the Savior forbids his church to use force as a weapon against the force used by her enemies. Paul also says that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Co 10:4) and that we are not to avenge ourselves (Ro 12:19). But this does not in any way imply that vengeance is wrong. Rather, when God through the apostle forbids Christians to avenge themselves, he also

promises that he will repay. The exaction of vengeance is a right that belongs to him (Ro 12:19). On earth God begins to carry out vengeance through those whom he ordains to act as his agents in this matter, namely, the secular authorities (Ro 13:1-4). On the day of judgment he will carry it out directly and finally balance all the books. Therefore vengeance exacted by God for the persecution and murder of his Christians is recognized as something perfectly just and right. For this the church can also rightly rejoice and properly thank and praise the Lord and sing her alleluias (*Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song*, p 282).

c) God's justice and righteousness is proclaimed as gospel.

It is represented as the source of our salvation (*iustitia evangelica* or *iustitia passiva*).

1) Also God's punitive justice is the hope of the oppressed.

Psalm 82:3 Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.

Psalm 103:6 The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

Psalm 129:4 But the LORD is righteous; he has cut me free from the cords of the wicked.

Zephaniah 3:8 "Therefore wait for me," declares the LORD, "for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them— all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger. ⁹ Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder."

2) God's justice as faithfulness to himself and faithfulness to his promises is the sure foundation of our redemption and justification (Christ's righteousness is imputed to us).

Romans 1:16,17 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 3:21-26 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. ²⁵ He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Psalm 22:31 They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn— for he has done it.

Psalm 24:5 He will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God his Savior.

Psalm 31:1 In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

Psalm 40:9-11 I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, as you know, O LORD. ¹⁰ I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly. ¹¹ Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me.

Psalm 85:10 Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Psalm 89:13-18 Your arm is endued with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted. ¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you. ¹⁵ Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O LORD. ¹⁶ They rejoice in your name all day long; they exult in your righteousness. ¹⁷ For you are their glory and strength, and by your favor you exalt our horn. ¹⁸ Indeed, our shield belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

Psalm 116:5 The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

Isaiah 1:27 Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness.

Isaiah 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 42:21 It pleased the LORD for the sake of his righteousness to make his law great and glorious.

Isaiah 45:21,23-25 Declare what is to be, present it— let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me.

Isaiah 51:5,6,8 My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm. ⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail. ⁸ For the moth will eat them up like a garment; the worm will devour them like wool. But my righteousness will last forever, my salvation through all generations.

Isaiah 59:16 He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him.

Jeremiah 23:6 In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which *he* will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.

Jeremiah 33:16 In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which *it* will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:29 If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

Revelation 15:3,4 [They] sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. ⁴ Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."

A3, IV, 7. Omnipotence (*omnipotentia Dei*).

a) God in unlimited power can do whatever does not conflict with his perfections. In other words: he can do whatsoever he pleases (Ps 115:3).

1) God is powerful.

1 Chronicles 29:12 Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.

2 Chronicles 25:8 Even if you go and fight courageously in battle, God will overthrow you before the enemy, for God has the power to help or to overthrow.

Job 26:12 By his power he churned up the sea; by his wisdom he cut Rahab to pieces.

Psalms 62:11-12 One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God, are strong, ¹² and that you, O Lord, are loving. Surely you will reward each person according to what he has done.

Psalms 65:6 [You] formed the mountains by your power, having armed yourself with strength.

2) His ability exceeds human ability.

Zechariah 8:6 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "It may seem marvelous to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?" declares the LORD Almighty.

Matthew 19:26 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Luke 18:27 Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

3) His ability surpasses human conception.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...

Psalms 93:4 Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea—the LORD on high is mighty.

Nahum 1:3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty

unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.

Luke 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

4) **His ability is unbounded.**

Genesis 18:14 Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son.

Job 42:2 I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted.

Psalms 33:9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Psalms 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

Psalms 135:6 The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Isaiah 43:13 Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?

Jeremiah 32:17 Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.

Mark 14: 36 "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Luke 1:37 For nothing is impossible with God.

Brochmand: When I attribute omnipotence to God, I am ascribing so great a power to him that he is able to do by far more than any creature can comprehend, to such a degree that whatever he wishes to do he is able to do without labor and effort even though all creatures were to oppose him (*Systema*, I, III, I, III, p 105).

Gerhard: God's power is infinite: 1) in itself and by itself or by its very nature, just as God himself is infinite, whose essential characteristic it is that he is called infinite; 2) with reference to its objects, which not only have already been produced in great variety and countless numbers but also could be made even infinitely different by him, if that should please his wisdom; 3) by reason of his way of doing things, because God never does anything so intensively and effectively that he could not do it in a more intensive and effective way (*Locii*, III, II, CXCVII, p 153, note).

5) **God is called παντοκράτωρ. (This is the Septuagint equivalent of יהוה צבאות Its main use in the New Testament is in the doxologies of Revelation.)**

2 Corinthians 6:18 I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Revelation 4:8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

Revelation 11:17 We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.

Revelation 15:3 [They] sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages."

Revelation 16:7 And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

Revelation 19:6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns."

Revelation 21: 22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Revelation 16:14 They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

Revelation 19:15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

b) God, naturally, will not do anything that would conflict with his perfections.

1) Philosophers state an apparent difficulty.

Pliny (d. 79) denies that God is omnipotent because of the fact that he cannot die or lie or make undone what has been done (*Hist. natur.*, II, VII).

2) Scripture answers the objection.

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

Hebrews 6:18 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

Hollaz: (Omnipotence is) a divine attribute by which God is able to do everything which can be done and which does not imply any imperfection in God (*Exam.*, I, I, 48, p 301).

Schertzer (d. 1683): [Those arguments] are sophistries by which the definition of a thing is annulled. For if God would lie, would die, would sin, he would not be God (since God in his essence is by definition truth, life, holiness); if a creature would have infinite perfection, it would not be a creature; if the past would not have passed, it would not be the past; if tomorrow would exist today, it would not be today (*System. th.*, p 55).

3) The power of God is not properly to be conceived as an instrument of his will.

-a) Gerhard summarizes the issue.

Gerhard: From the simplicity of the divine essence it is manifest that in reality power is not distinguished from will; but the question is whether it may be distinguished logically. Durandus and others affirm this.... But it is more correctly maintained that not even logically is power distinguished from will in God, 1) because Holy Scripture sets the will of God before us as the cause of all things (Ps 115:3; 148:5; Is 46:10); 2) it is in the nature of an imperfection that in a creature endowed with intellect its power to execute its decisions is distinguished from its will, but all imperfection must be removed from God (*Loci*, III, II, CXVIII, p 153).

-b) God's will must not be presented as depending on his knowledge.

See Abelard's argument: God can only do that which he foreknew and decreed from eternity he would at some time do. But only those things which he at some time does did he foreknow and decree that he would do (Hoenecke II, p 155).

-c) God's power operates as *Ordinata* or *Absoluta*.

-1) *Ordinata*. God's power may operate according to certain laws laid down by himself.

Genesis 1:12,14-18 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 8:22 As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

Luke 21:26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies [literally: powers of the heavens] will be shaken.

Matthew 5:44-46 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Cf. also Psalm 104.

-2) *Absoluta*. God's power may operate contrary to the ordinary laws.

Exodus 14:22 The Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

2 Kings 6:6 The man of God asked, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick and threw it there, and made the iron float.

Isaiah 38:8 "I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz." So the sunlight went back the ten steps it had gone down.

Daniel 3:27 The satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.

Matthew 1:25 But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

John 11:43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

Duns Scotus (d. 1308): If God therefore has the power to act according to those right laws previously established by him, one says he is acting according to his ordered power. In view of the fact, however, that he can do much that does not conform to those previously firmly established laws ... his power is called absolute. ... Just as he can act in a different way, so he can also declare a different law to be right. For if it were established by God, it would be right; for a law is right only in so far as it is accepted by the divine will. The absolute power of God can save Judas; the ordered power could save the sinner who dies in mortal sin and never actually is saved. If God would establish other laws according to which everything should take place, then everything would appear to be ordered (i.e., proceeding according to God's established order) (in Rinn und Jüngst, *Dogmengeschichtliches Lesebuch*, p 297).

A4. Will of God

A4, I. God's will is his essence as he is inclined to bring about whatever according to his wisdom is good and to prevent whatever is evil.

A4, I, 1. "Will" may be distinguished as:

a) **The ability to wish, that is, the faculty of the Triune God to purpose and to decree.**

Ephesians 1:5,11 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will (κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ).¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will (κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ).

b) **An act of this faculty, a volition (will, purpose, counsel, pleasure, etc.), that is, an act of wishing.**

1 Samuel 2:25 "If a man sins against another man, God may mediate for him; but if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" His sons, however, did not listen to their father's rebuke, for it was the LORD's will to put them to death.

Psalms 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

Daniel 4:32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

Romans 1:10 I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

Romans 9:19 One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?"

1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God

Galatians 1:4 [Christ] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Ephesians 1:9 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.

Ephesians 3:11 [God acted] according to his eternal purpose (κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων) which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Peter 4:19 So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

c) **The content of a volition (metonymy), i.e., a wish.**

John 6:39-40 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality.

Psalms 40:8 I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Psalms 103:21 Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.

Matthew 6:10 Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 7:21 Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 12:50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

A4, I, 2. The following truths must be borne in mind.

a) **Since God is absolutely One:**

1) **His intellect and will are essentially one; they are not independent faculties of God's mind.**

2) **To distinguish intellect and will is legitimate. It is due to our imperfect mode of conceiving God.**

Anthropomorphically speaking we may say that God's will is moved by certain considerations, e.g., of human conduct, of wisdom, of mercy, of holiness, etc.

b) Since God is infinite, absolute Spirit:

1) Will is not the basic essence of God.

See The Scholastics who taught that God created himself by his will.

Thomasius, in the interest of his kenosis, held that since will is the core of God, God could shed all his attributes except will without ceasing to be God..

2) Nor is will a mere faculty added to the divine essence.

3) Will is the divine essence conceived from this particular angle.

A4, II. The will of God is absolutely free.

A4, II, 1. This follows from God's independence.

a) To God's will must be ascribed absolute spontaneity.

Calov: The principal attribute of God's will is the freedom with which God wills all things outside himself, not from any necessity of his nature (not because his nature requires it), but freely, so that he is able also not to will the same things (*Systema*, II, p 455).

Gerhard: God is an essence acting most freely. Just as intellect is attributed to God, so also will, which is the ability to act freely and (which is) the governing principle of actions (*Locii*, III, II, CCLXV, p 198).

b) Though no external cause is required to set the will of God in motion, yet, anthropomorphically, we may speak of *causae moventes*.

1) *Causae internae*: love, compassion, wrath, grief, etc.

Ephesians 2:4-5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ.

Genesis 6:5-7 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them."

2) *Causae externae*: human conduct, man's condition of misery, etc.

Psalms 31:7 I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul.

Deuteronomy 9:5 It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

c) But God's will is not compulsive, nor can it be manipulated like human will.

A4, II, 2. The independence of God's will is demonstrated by the fact that God deals with us on the basis of mercy which is not motivated by anything in us.

Ephesians 1:9 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.

Exodus 33:19 And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Romans 9:15,18 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁸ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

Romans 11:5,6 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.

A4, II, 3. This freedom assumes different forms according to the nature of the object, the very nature given to the object by the will of God.

a) With reference to irrational creatures God's will is practically identical with his omnipotence.

Psalms 33:6,9 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. ⁹ For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Psalms 135:6 The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.

Romans 8:19-21 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

b) With reference to man's spiritual life God's will is reflected in his commands and promises.

1) It is the will of God to treat man as a personal being with moral responsibility.

Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:16,17 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Deuteronomy 31:19,21 Now write down for yourselves this song and teach it to the Israelites and have them sing it, so that it may be a witness for me against them. ²¹ And when many disasters and difficulties come upon them, this song will testify against them, because it will not be forgotten by their descendants. I know what they are disposed to do, even before I bring them into the land I promised them on oath.

Isaiah 65:2 All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people, who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations.

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

2) Whatever good is found in man (e.g., conversion, faith, love) is due to God.

-a) It is produced entirely by a free creative act of God.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

-b) No credit is due to man.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Romans 9:16 It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:8-10 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

-c) God, however, does not produce the good in man by an act of "irresistible grace", that is, by coercion.

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

Hebrews 3:15 As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion."

Note. This seeming contradiction in the Scripture's doctrine of conversion cannot be solved by human reason.

3) Sin is disobedience to God's will, an abuse of the God-given liberty.

-a) Sin is man's own work.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...

-b) Man now is no longer free, yet he is responsible for his sin.

-1) He is no more free.

Proverbs 5:22 The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast.

John 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."

Romans 6:16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Romans 7:23 But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

2 Peter 2:19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

Romans 8:8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

-2) Yet he is responsible for his sin.

Romans 2:12 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4) Regarding the physical life of man, including also the natural soul life (ψυχή) in the three spheres of intellect, volition, and emotion, God's will is expressed in the laws of nature.

-a) Man's life is subject to the laws of nature.

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (הָאָדָם חַי וְצֶמֶד).

Genesis 8:22 As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

Psalms 104:14 He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate—bringing forth food from the earth.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: ² a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, ³ a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, ⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, ⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, ⁶ a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, ⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, ⁸ a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

Matthew 6:32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

-b) Ordinarily, God does not suspend these laws even when people misuse them for doing evil.

Matthew 5:45 Your Father in heaven...causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

-c) Thus God upholds the natural forces used in the act, but sinners are responsible for the immoral misuse of them.

-1) God cooperates in producing a sinful act *quoad materiam*.

-2) *Quoad formam* man is responsible.

Note: *Materia*: the act as such, physical and mental, e.g., the shooter aims, the gun shoots.

Forma: motive, purpose, etc., the robber shoots the bank teller.

J. Schaller: This is only an apparent solution; it does not solve a thing. It merely emphasizes the scriptural truth that man is personally responsible for the sinful character of

his actions. All we can do is express the truth of that fact, without solving the logical difficulty which that fact brings with it For now [God] has chosen not to give us an insight into this particular mystery of his way of doing things" (*Our Great Heritage*, I, p 450).

Amos 3:6 When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?

Psalm 5:4 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.

Psalm 50:21 These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face.

James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

A4, II, 4. Does not God's will neutralize human freedom?

a) God's will certainly accomplishes its purpose under all circumstances.

Psalm 33:11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

Isaiah 14:27 For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?

Isaiah 46:10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

Jeremiah 4:28 Therefore the earth will mourn and the heavens above grow dark, because I have spoken and will not relent, I have decided and will not turn back.

Daniel 4:35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

b) God knows the evil actions of man in advance.

1) He makes allowance for them in his plans.

Deuteronomy 31:16, 19-21 And the LORD said to Moses: "You are going to rest with your fathers, and these people will soon prostitute themselves to the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them. ¹⁹ Now write down for yourselves this song and teach it to the Israelites and have them sing it, so that it may be a witness for me against them. ²⁰ When I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, the land I promised on oath to their forefathers, and when they eat their fill and thrive, they will turn to other gods and worship them, rejecting me and breaking my covenant. ²¹ And when many disasters and difficulties come upon them, this song will testify against them, because it will not be forgotten by their descendants. I know what they are disposed to do, even before I bring them into the land I promised them on oath."

Luke 22:31-34 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." ³³ But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." ³⁴ Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

2) He turns the evil actions to serve his purposes.

Genesis 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Isaiah 10:5-7,12-15 Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of my anger, in whose hand is the club of my wrath! ⁶ I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. ⁷ But this is not what he intends, this is not what he has in mind; his purpose is to destroy, to put an end to many nations. ¹² When the Lord has finished all his work against Mount Zion and Jerusalem, he will say, "I will punish the king of Assyria for the willful pride of his heart and the haughty look in his eyes. ¹³ For he says: 'By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding. I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their kings. ¹⁴ As one reaches into a nest, so my hand reached for the wealth of the nations; as men gather abandoned eggs, so I gathered all the countries; not one flapped a wing, or opened its mouth to chirp.' ¹⁵ Does the ax raise itself above him who swings it, or the saw boast against him who uses it? As if a rod were to wield him who lifts it up, or a club brandish him who is not wood!"

3) He curbs the evil actions or frustrates them altogether.

Genesis 11:8 So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

Job 5:12 He thwarts the plans of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success.

Psalms 33:10 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

Isaiah 41:11 All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish.

Isaiah 44:25 [The LORD] who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense.

Jeremiah 20:11 But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten.

4) He provokes the hardened.

Psalms 105:25 [The Egyptians] whose hearts he turned to hate his people, to conspire against his servants.

c) God also shapes the purposes of man.

Psalms 33:15 [God] who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do...

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.

d) Yet in all this God deals with man as a being who bears moral responsibility for his choices.

Deuteronomy 11:26 See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse.

Deuteronomy 30:19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

2 Samuel 15:31-34 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness." ³² When David arrived at the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai the Arkite was there to meet him, his robe torn and dust on his head. ³³ David said to him, "If you go with me, you will be a burden to me. ³⁴ But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; I was your father's servant in the past, but now I will be your servant,' then you can help me by frustrating Ahithophel's advice."

Compare 2 Samuel 17:14 Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel." For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

1 Kings 22:20 And the LORD said, "Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?" One suggested this, and another that.

Jeremiah 20:7 O LORD, you deceived me, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me.

Gerhard: Some things God wills absolutely, others conditionally. Those things which God wills absolutely, necessarily occur, but those which he wills conditionally do not take place unless the condition is fulfilled. God's will, therefore, does not preclude in man the freedom of choice (*liberum arbitrium, libertas arbitrii*) in external matters, because it does not exclude but includes the subsidiary causes, among which is the freedom of choice. Nor does it predetermine the human will in any one direction by a certain physical necessity, but it allows it that freedom which is naturally implanted in it. Nor does it bring a certain antecedent and a priori necessity to bear on its choice of action, but by a general cooperation toward producing the result it grants and preserves the power to act (*Locis*, III, II, CCLXXXII, p 206).

Augsburg Confession, XVIII, 1-4 Of free will they teach that man's will has some liberty to choose civil righteousness and to work things subject to reason. But it has no power, without the Holy Spirit, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness; since the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2, 14; but this righteousness is worked in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the Word.

Apology, XVIII, 70-72 Nor, indeed, do we deny liberty to the human will. The human will has liberty in the choice of works and things which reason comprehends by itself. It can to a certain extent render civil righteousness or the righteousness of works; it can speak of God, offer to God a certain service by an outward work, obey magistrates, parents; in the choice of an outward work it can restrain the hands from murder, from adultery, from theft. Since there is left in human nature reason and judgment concerning objects subjected to the senses, choice between these things, the liberty and power to render civil righteousness, are also left. For Scripture calls this the righteousness of the flesh which the carnal nature, *i.e.*, reason, renders by itself, without the Holy Spirit. Although the power of concupiscence is such that men more frequently obey evil dispositions than sound judgment. And the devil, who is efficacious in the godless, as Paul says, Eph. 2, 2, does not cease to incite this feeble nature to various offenses. These are the reasons why even civil righteousness is rare among men, as we see that not even the philosophers themselves, who seem to have aspired after this righteousness, attained it.

Formula of Concord, T.D., II, 74, We reject ... the folly of the Stoics and Manicheans who asserted that everything that happens must so happen, *et hominem coactum omnia facere*, that is, that man does everything from coercion, and that even in outward works the will of man has no freedom or ability to render to a certain extent external righteousness and respectable deportment, and to avoid external sins and vices, or that the will of man is coerced to external wicked deeds, in chastity, robbery, murder, etc.

A4, III. Dogmaticians have divided the will of God in various ways for sake of discussion. These distinctions have very limited usefulness, since in reality God has one undivided will.

A4, III, 1. Voluntas Naturalis et Libera

- a) **Naturalis (necessaria):** God's will which is determined by his nature as the *Summum Bonum*. This will cannot be otherwise; God must be God.
- b) **Libera:** God's will regarding his creatures could be other than it is. It could even have been the very opposite. God did not have to make man or save him.

Matthew 20:15 Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?

Romans 9:20,21 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" ²¹ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?

Gerhard: God wills some things from the necessity of his nature (because his nature requires it), others he wills freely. From the necessity of his nature he wills those things which he wills concerning himself, influenced by nothing outside or inside himself; in this way he wills himself, his own goodness and glory. He freely wills those things which he wills concerning his creatures according to the good pleasure of his will. These he was able both to will and not to will. He wills them, however, without any necessity except that which is presupposed, which is the fact of his own immutability (*Loci*, III, II, CCLXXVI, p 203).

Aquinas: Although God immutably wills all things which he wills, nevertheless from an objective point of view he wills the very variability and mutability of things (In *Our Great Heritage*, I, p 527).

A4, III, 2. Voluntas Libera may be Efficax or Inefficax

- a) **Efficax, Invictam:** the irresistible call to judgment.
- b) **Inefficax:** the resistible call of the gospel.

Note: It would be better not to call this will ineffective. It is the permissive will of God that lets people resist the gospel. The gospel is never without power. In that sense, it is never ineffective.

Augustine: He calls that the effective or invincible and most omnipotent will of God by which he has decided to reward those who do well and to punish sinners. This will, he says, is always carried out. He calls ineffective that will by which he wills that all lead a good life and that no one sins (In Gerhard, *Loci*, III, II, CCLXX-II, p 206).

- c) **A really ineffective will of God would be a contradiction in itself. (Men do evil by an abuse of their God-willed freedom.)**

A4, III, 3. Voluntas (efficax) Absoluta et Conditionata

- a) **Absoluta:** takes effect without any response of the will of the object.

Isaiah 46:10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

- b) **Conditionata:** depends on a response of another will.

Deuteronomy 28:1,2,15,58-62 If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. ² All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: ¹⁵ However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: ⁵⁸ If you do not carefully follow all the words of this law, which are written in this book, and do not revere this glorious and awesome name—the LORD your God—⁵⁹ the LORD will send fearful plagues on you and your descendants, harsh and prolonged disasters, and severe and lingering illnesses. ⁶⁰ He will bring upon you all the diseases of Egypt that you dreaded, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹ The LORD will also bring on you every kind of sickness and disaster not recorded in this Book of the Law, until you are destroyed. ⁶² You who were as numerous as the stars in the sky will be left but few in number, because you did not obey the LORD your God.

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You

always resist the Holy Spirit!

- c) **Yet we cannot say salvation is conditioned on anything we do. Faith, which is a necessary condition for salvation, is worked in us by God.**

A4, III, 4. Voluntas Ordinata et Absoluta

- a) **Ordinata, mediata: God usually works through established means.**

- 1) **In the physical realm: the laws of nature.**
- 2) **In the spiritual realm: the means of grace.**

- b) **Absoluta, extraordinata, immediata, miraculosa: In the physical realm God sometimes works outside these means (miracles).**

Joshua 10:13 So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day.

A4, III, 5. Voluntas Antecedens et Consequens

- a) **Antecedens: God wants all men to be saved and sends a Savior for all. This is not based on anything God sees in man.**

- b) **Consequens: God wills to condemn the persistent unbeliever. This is a consequence of man's sin.**

Gerhard: The antecedent will is that by which God, as our most gracious Father, wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. The consequent will is that by which God, as the most just judge, wills that those who are impenitent and unbelieving to the end be damned (*Loci*, III, II, CCLXXI, p 202).

- c) **Some Lutheran dogmaticians reject this distinction, since there is no before and after for God, and since it was often used in a Pelagian or Synergistic sense. Some, however, see it as having a value versus Calvinism.**

Gerhard: In the eternal and most simple will of God there is no succession nor distinction of the acts of the will (*Loci*, III, II, CCLXXXIII, p 206).

Hoenecke: This whole distinction between *voluntas antecedens et consequens* is completely worthless since a) it doesn't do anything to clarify certain difficult points of dogmatics, and b) it contradicts the right conception of the essence and will of God (*Dogmatik*, II, p 130).

Pieper: The distinction between the antecedent and consequent will has been misused in the interest of synergism since Chrysostom's days. But we must maintain this distinction because it is Scriptural and because Calvinism denies it by ascribing to God in his relation to lost mankind two independent and contradictory wills (*Dogmatics*, I, p 454).

A4, III, 6. Voluntas Arcana et Revelata

- a) **Arcana: much about God's management of our life and the world remains unexplained.**

Job 5:9 He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted.

Job 11:7 33 Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?

Job 37:23 The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress.

Proverbs 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes 8:17 Then I saw all that God has done. No one can comprehend what goes on under the sun. Despite all his efforts to search it out, man cannot discover its meaning. Even if a wise man claims he knows, he cannot really comprehend it.

- b) **Revelata: his plan of salvation is clearly revealed.**

Psalms 103:7 He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel.

Psalms 147:19 He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel.

John 15:15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

Romans 16:25-26 Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him.

1 Corinthians 2:9,10 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"—¹⁰ but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

Ephesians 1:9 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.

Colossians 1:26 ...the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints

c) **The distinction must be rejected if made in the Calvinistic sense:**

1) ***Arcana*: by a secret decree God has ordained certain men to salvation, others to eternal damnation;**

2) ***Revelata*: but his revealed will speaks of universal grace.**

Gerhard: We most emphatically deny, yes, we pronounce that very assumption to be impious and blasphemous, that in those things which concern the matter of salvation a certain secret will which not only differs from the one revealed in the Word but is even contrary to the same must be supposed to exist (*Locj*, III, II, CCLXIX, p 201).

A4, III, 7. Voluntas Signi and Beneplaciti

a) **Calvinists identify:**

1) ***Voluntas beneplaciti* with *voluntas arcana***

2) ***Voluntas signi* with *voluntas revelata***

This makes the revealed will a mere *signum*, i.e., a sham.

b) ***Signi*, the thing God indicates that he wishes for: God acts as if he wants all men to be saved.**

c) ***Beneplaciti*, the thing God really wants: God wants only the elect to be saved.**

Muller: The *voluntas decreti vel beneplaciti*, the will of the decree or of the (divine) good pleasure, is the ultimate, effective, and absolutely unsearchable will of God which underlies the revealed will of God. It may therefore also be called the *voluntas arcana*, or hidden will, and the *voluntas decernens*, or decisive, deciding will of God. Lutheran orthodoxy use the term with reference to the work of salvation only in the sense that human beings cannot know the ultimate reason in the mind and will of God for the gracious salvation of some rather than others. The Reformed, by contrast, argue a hidden will of God to bestow special saving grace irresistibly upon the elect, a *voluntas decreti sive beneplaciti arcana*, more ultimate than the revealed will of God to offer salvation to all by means of a universal grace. This distinction is denied by the Lutherans as endangering the universal grace (*Dictionary*, p 331-332).

A4, III, 8. Voluntas Efficiens, Approbans, and Permittens

a) ***Efficiens*: The will of God as source of all life and activity.**

b) ***Approbans*: The will of God with reference to the good deeds of man.**

c) ***Permittens*: This is the way God wills sin. He permits it. He does not approve. *Permissio: Non actio, sed suspensio actionis.***

Calov: Furthermore, although God permits sin willingly, not unwillingly, (*volens, non invitus*) nevertheless, his will and permission are concerned with different objects; for his will is with reference to permission, but permission is with reference to sin (*Systema*, II, p 455).

d) **The purpose of this distinction is clear:**

1) **To harmonize the presence of evil with the will of God.**

2) **Yet:**

-a) **God's attitude must never be conceived as passive.**

-b) **Therefore, also *permissio* is a kind of active will.**

A4, III, 9. Voluntas Legalis and Evangelica

a) **Legalis.**

Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5—the moral law as expressed in the Decalogue.

b) **Evangelica.**

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them, "As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?"

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 Timothy 2:4 [God, our Savior] who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

c) **This is a valid distinction, but it does not cover everything.**

A5. Holy Trinity

A5, I. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God. Three distinct persons in the one divine essence, being, or nature are one God.

A5, I, 1. God has one essence, being, substance, *essentia*, *substantia*, φύσις, οὐσία

a) Essence and nature in this connection are concrete nouns.

1) They do not signify that which makes a thing what it is, its character or quality.

2) They signify a substance, a real entity, a thing in itself.

Chemnitz: The church, therefore, by the term “essence” understands not a universal term, as the philosophers speak of the human essence, but the divine essence which actually exists, which is communicable and common to the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and is in each one in its entirety (*Loci, de tribus personis*, II, quarto, p 39).

Gerhard: The essence of men is a universal term (i.e., an abstraction) which does not in itself have an actual existence but is arrived at only by a thinking process and is grasped by the mind. The essence of the Godhead, however, is not something abstract (i.e., existing only in the mind), like a genus or species, but it actually exists, although it is communicable (*Loci*, III, III, II, XLIX, p 239).

Baier: By the term “essence” or οὐσία is understood the divine nature itself, as it is in itself in an absolute way, and which together with its attributes is most simply one and unique (*Comp.*, I, I, XXXIII, p 119).

Gerhard: The word οὐσία when used with reference to God signifies the numerically one and indivisible essence common to the three Persons of the Deity, which is not partially in the three Persons in such a way that a part of it is in the Father, a part in the Son, and a part in the Holy Spirit, but because of its infinity and immateriality it is in its entirety in the Father, in its entirety in the Son, and in its entirety in the Holy Spirit (*Loci*, III, III, II, XLVIII, p 238).

b) Scripture uses the word “essence,” οὐσία, but only in the sense of “property,” not in the theological sense.

Luke 15:12 The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate” (τῆς οὐσίας). So he divided his property (τὸν βίον) between them. (οὐσία = βίος)

c) The word “nature,” φύσις is a synonym of essence.

1) It denotes natural character.

-a) Nature in general.

Romans 1:26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural (παρὰ φύσιν) ones.

Romans 2:14,27 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do *by nature* things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. ²⁷ The one who is not circumcised *physically* and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

Romans 11:21,24 For if God did not spare the *natural* branches, he will not spare you either. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature (κατὰ φύσιν), and contrary to nature (παρὰ φύσιν) were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the *natural* branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

1 Corinthians 11:14 Does not the very *nature* of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him.

Galatians 2:15 We who are Jews *by birth* and not “Gentile sinners”...

Galatians 4:8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who *by nature* are not gods.

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were *by nature* objects of wrath.

James 1:23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his [*natural*] face in a mirror

-b) God's nature.

2 Peter 1:4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine *nature* (φύσις) and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

2) It is used metonymically (abstract for concrete).

James 3:7 All *kinds* (φύσις) of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man.

A5, I, 2. God is three persons (person, *persona*, ὑπόστασις, πρόσωπον).

a) **A person is *quod proprie subsistit*, that is, it has self-consciousness and self-determination.**

Augsburg Confession I, 2-4 There is one Divine Essence which is called and which is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible; and yet there are three Persons, of the same essence and power, who also are co-eternal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And the term "person" they use as the Fathers have used it, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself (*quod proprie subsistit*).

Chemnitz: Peter, Paul, John are three persons, to whom one human nature is common, but they differ very much as to 1) substance, 2) time, 3) will, 4) power, 5) action.... But in the Trinity the Persons are not distinguished in the way one angel is from another, one man from another man, nor do they differ in respect to time, will, power, action, but in the Persons of the Trinity there is co-eternity, one will, one power, one action (*Loci*, III, III, II, XLIX, p 239).

b) **The Greek word ὑπόστασις (*suppositum, fundamentum*) is not used in the meaning of "person" in the New Testament. It means "confidence." In one case it is used in a theological sense, "essence," "being."**

2 Corinthians 9:4 For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so *confident*.

2 Corinthians 11:17 In this self-*confident* boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool.

Hebrews 3:14 We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the *confidence* we had at first.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is *being sure* of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his *being*, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

Note: Here ὑπόστασις means essence or nature, not person. The meaning of *hypostasis* here is the opposite of later church usage. On the *hypostasis/persona* problem see Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, p 223-227.

The main difficulties were that the Latins were using *substantia* for the oneness of God, and the Greeks were using its literal equivalent ὑπόστασις for the three-ness of God.

c) **The word πρόσωπον (*facies, vultus*) is not used in the theological sense in the Bible. In the New Testament it has a range of meanings:**

1) **Face.**

Matthew 6:16-17 When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their *faces* to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,

Matthew 17:2,6 There he was transfigured before them. His *face* shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell *facedown* to the ground, terrified.

2) **Adverbially, it means: before, on, in the presence of, etc. This equals the Hebrew לִפְנֵי**

Malachi 3:1 "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me [before my face]. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

Matthew 11:10 This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you [before your face], who will prepare your way before you."

Luke 2:31 ...which you have prepared in the *sight* of all people

Acts 3:13,20 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him *before* Pilate, though he had decided to let him go.

Acts 5:41 The apostles left the [face of] Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.

2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven *in the sight* of Christ for your sake,

3) It is used metonymically: person (*pars pro toto*).

2 Corinthians 1:11 Then many [faces] will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the *face* of Christ.

Colossians 2:1 I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met *me personally* [my face in the flesh].

4) It is used as an intensive pronoun.

Luke 9:51,53 As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus *resolutely set out* [set his face] for Jerusalem. ⁵³ but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem.

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his *presence*, and there was no place for them.

5) It is applied to inanimate things.

Luke 12:56 Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the *appearance* of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time?

Luke 21:35 For it will come upon all those who live on the *face* of the whole earth.

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole [face of the] earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

6) It means "person" with reference to social, financial, political, etc. standing.

Luke 20:21 So the spies questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not *show partiality* but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth." □□□ [receive the face = λαμβάνειν πρόσωπον]

Galatians 2:6 As for those who seemed to be important—whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not *judge by external appearance*—those men added nothing to my message.

Jude 16 These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and *flatter others* [admire the face] for their own advantage.

7) See also προσωπολημπτέω and its derivatives.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not *show favoritism*."

Romans 2:11 For God does not *show favoritism*.

James 2:1, 9 My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't *show favoritism*.⁹ But if you *show favoritism*, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

A5, I, 3. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is to be found in both the Old Testament and the New Testament

a) In the New Testament we find various kinds of evidence.

1) We find direct enumerations of the three persons.

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

2 Corinthians 13:14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. KJV [There is virtually no support for the inclusion of this reading in the Greek text.]

2) We find reference to the three persons.

Matthew 3:16,17 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

Acts 10:38 God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

1 Corinthians 12:3-6 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. ⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

Ephesians 2:18 For through [Christ] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1 Peter 1:2 [You] who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood.

b) In the Old Testament we find various kinds of evidence.

1) We find references to three persons.

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

Isaiah 42:1 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

Isaiah 63:9,10,14 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence מְלֹאךְ (מְלֹאךְ) saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. ¹⁰ Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit (אֶת־רוּחַ קְדֹשׁוֹ). So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them. ¹⁴ Like cattle that go down to the plain, they were given rest by the Spirit of the LORD. This is how you guided your people to make for yourself a glorious name.

Compare Genesis 1:1-3 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 Samuel 23:2 The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD (בְּדְבַר יְהוָה) were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth (בְּרוּחַ פִּי).

Quenstedt: He already refers to Gn 1:2,3 where mention is made of God speaking, of the Word, etc., and to Ps 33:6 where David designates the Father by the name Jehovah, which in this place is taken in a personal sense and is expressly distinguished from the Word and the Spirit of his mouth (*TDP*, I, I, IX, XIV, IV, p 323).

2) We find reference to two persons.

-a) Father and Son.

Genesis 19:24; Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens.

Psalms 2:2,7 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. ⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

Psalms 45:6,7 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. ⁷ You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

Psalms 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Jeremiah 23:5-6 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.”

Hosea 1:7 Yet I will show love to the house of Judah; and I will save them—not by bow, sword or battle, or by horses and horsemen, but by the LORD their God.

Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

-b) Son and Spirit.

Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.

-c) Lord (God) and Spirit.

Numbers 11:25,29 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again. ²⁹ But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!”

Numbers 24:2 When Balaam looked out and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the Spirit of God came upon him.

1 Samuel 10:6 The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God (רוח־אל) has made me; the breath of the Almighty (נְשַׁמַּת שָׁדַי) gives me life.

Psalms 51:11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

Isaiah 44:1-3 But now listen, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen. ² This is what the LORD says— he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. ³ For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

Joel 2:28 And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

Note: The Jews understood there was a plurality of persons. See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p 79-86.

Matthew 22:43,44; He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, ⁴⁴ ‘The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.’”

John 1:33 I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, “The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.”

John 5:18 For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

Acts 2:16-17 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”

c) It will be noticed that the Old Testament references are less definite than those of the New Testament.

Gerhard: 1.) We do not say that there is the same clarity and obviousness in the testimonies about the Trinity in the Old and New Testament, because a clearer revelation of this mystery was reserved for the New Testament. 2.) Nor do we mean that in a dispute against a stubborn opponent one should begin with the more obscure statements of the Old Testament. But we assert merely that for supporting the doctrine of the Trinity certain testimonies can and should be brought from the Old Testament, since God from the beginning always revealed himself in such a way that the church at all times so recognized, invoked, and

worshiped him—because in one undivided Essence there are three distinct persons (*Exeges.* 1, III, 20; Baier II, 47).

A5, I, 4. Other passages which refer to God in the plural must be viewed in the light of the above passages.

a) Plural Pronouns (free-standing pronouns or those included in the verb form) refer to the one God.

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, in *our* likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of *us*, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Genesis 11:7 Come, let *us* go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for *us*?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

b) The common Hebrew word for the one God is a plural form, אֱלֹהִים. This use of the plural as the regular term for God is unique to biblical Hebrew.

1) As a rule, when אֱלֹהִים is a name of the one God, the verb is singular, also the adjective.

The plural form אֱלֹהִים is usually described as a plural of majesty. It is not intended as a true plural when used of the true God. This is seen in the fact that the noun *'elohim* is consistently used with singular verb forms and with adjectives and pronouns in the singular (*TWBOT*, I, p 93).

2) For examples of plural forms with the name of the true God see the Hebrew text of:
Genesis 20:13; 35:7; Joshua 24:19; 1 Samuel 17:26; 2 Samuel 7:23; Psalm 58:11.

c) Three-fold repetitions refer to the one God.

Numbers 6:23-27; Tell Aaron and his sons, "This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ²⁴ 'The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.' ²⁷ So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

Isaiah 6:3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

A5, I, 5. The references to the special Angel of the Lord (Angel of God, Angel of the Covenant, Angel of his Presence) are an indication of the Trinity.

a) In the New Testament "angel of the Lord" denotes a created angel.

Matthew 1:20,24 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Matthew 2:13 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

Luke 1:11,19 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹⁹ The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news."

Luke 2:9,10 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."

Acts 8:26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza."

Acts 10:3 One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"

Acts 12:7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

b) In the Old Testament during the time of the prophets “angel of the Lord” also denotes a created angel or a human messenger.

2 Samuel 24:16 When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD was grieved because of the calamity and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, “Enough! Withdraw your hand.” The angel of the LORD was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

1 Kings 19:5,7 Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.”⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.”

2 Kings 19:35 That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!

Psalm 34:7/8 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. [?]

Psalm 35:5 May they be like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them away.

Haggai 1:13 Then Haggai, *the LORD’s messenger*, gave this message of the LORD to the people: “I am with you,” declares the LORD.

Malachi 2:7 “For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is *the messenger of the LORD Almighty*.”

c) Before the time of the prophets (and at its close) “Angel of the Lord” (מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה) often denotes the Son of God.

Genesis 16:9,10,13 Then the angel of the LORD told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.”¹⁰ The angel added, “I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count.”¹³ She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

Genesis 21:17,18 God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there.”¹⁸ Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”

Genesis 22:11,12,15-18 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied.¹² “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.”¹⁵ The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time¹⁶ and said, “I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,¹⁷ I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies,¹⁸ and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

Exodus 3:2-6 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.³ So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.”⁵ “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”⁶ Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Judges 6:11-24 The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites.¹² When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.”¹³ “But sir,” Gideon replied, “if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.”¹⁴ The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”¹⁵ “But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”¹⁶ The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.”¹⁷ Gideon replied, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me.”¹⁸ Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you.” And the LORD said, “I will wait until you return.”¹⁹ Gideon went in, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak.²⁰ The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And Gideon did so.²¹ With the tip of the staff that was in his hand, the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared.²² When Gideon realized that

it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, "Ah, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"²³ But the LORD said to him, "Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die."

Judges 13:3-23 The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, "You are sterile and childless, but you are going to conceive and have a son."⁴ Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean,⁵ because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines."⁶ Then the woman went to her husband and told him, "A man of God came to me. He looked like an angel of God, very awesome. I didn't ask him where he came from, and he didn't tell me his name."⁷ But he said to me, 'You will conceive and give birth to a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from birth until the day of his death.'" ⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD: "O Lord, I beg you, let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born."⁹ God heard Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman while she was out in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her. ¹⁰ The woman hurried to tell her husband, "He's here! The man who appeared to me the other day!" ¹¹ Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, "Are you the one who talked to my wife?" "I am," he said. ¹² So Manoah asked him, "When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule for the boy's life and work?" ¹³ The angel of the LORD answered, "Your wife must do all that I have told her. ¹⁴ She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her."¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "We would like you to stay until we prepare a young goat for you."¹⁶ The angel of the LORD replied, "Even though you detain me, I will not eat any of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the LORD." (Manoah did not realize that it was the angel of the LORD.)¹⁷ Then Manoah inquired of the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that we may honor you when your word comes true?" ¹⁸ He replied, "Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding." [or Wonderful]¹⁹ Then Manoah took a young goat, together with the grain offering, and sacrificed it on a rock to the LORD. And the LORD did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched: ²⁰ As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame. Seeing this, Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground. ²¹ When the angel of the LORD did not show himself again to Manoah and his wife, Manoah realized that it was the angel of the LORD. ²² "We are doomed to die!" he said to his wife. "We have seen God!" ²³ But his wife answered, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this."

Zechariah 3:1-4 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. ² The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?"³ Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. ⁴ The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you."

Genesis 28:12-15 He saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. ¹⁴ Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. ¹⁵ I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Genesis 31:11,13 The angel of God said to me in the dream, "Jacob." I answered, "Here I am."¹³ "I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land."

Exodus 13:21 By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.

Compare Exodus 14:19 Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them.

Isaiah 63:9 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Joshua 5:13-6:2 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" ¹⁴ "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?" ¹⁵ The commander of the LORD's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so. ^{6:1} Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. ² Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men".

d) The special Angel of the Lord is clearly distinguished from a created angel.

Exodus 33:2-3, 12-17 "I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ³ Go up to the land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go with you, because you are a stiff-necked people and I might destroy you on the way." ¹² Moses said to the LORD, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.'" ¹³ If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people." ¹⁴ The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." ¹⁵ Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here." ¹⁶ How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" ¹⁷ And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

Compare Isaiah 63:9 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Malachi 3:19 "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

Heinrich Vogel (d 1982): The unity of Scripture would be broken if the central point of Old Testament revelation was a created angel, while that of the New Testament is the incarnation of the God-man. The Angel of the LORD is obviously one of the persons of the Trinity, for in several of these passages He is identified as God, He performs divine acts, receives divine worship, and displays divine attributes. He is not God the Father, who is the person of the Trinity who sends the Angel of the LORD. There are then two remaining possibilities. He is either the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, or the third person, the Holy Spirit. The latter possibility is virtually excluded by the fact that there are many rather direct references in the Old Testament to the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, and that these references are easily recognizable as they designate Him simply as the Spirit of God ("The Angel of the Lord," 1976 essay, p 6. Also *WLQ* 1976, p 105-118).

A5, I, 6. The deity of the Son is attested by various witnesses.

a) Messianic prophecies.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ אֵל גְּבוּר אֲבִיעַד שֶׁר־שָׁלוֹם .

Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. מוֹצְאֵי יוֹם מִקְדָּם מִיְמֵי עוֹלָם

b) John the Baptist.

John 1:27,30,34 He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, "A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me." ³⁴ I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.

c) Angels.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Luke 2:10-14 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

d) Demons.

Matthew 8:29 "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"

Mark 1:24 What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!

Mark 3:11 Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God."

Luke 4:41 Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ.

e) Particularly by the Father.

Matthew 3:17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Matthew 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

John 12:28 "Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

John 5:32,37 There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form.

John 8:18 I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me.

Hebrews 1:5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?

1 John 5:9 We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.

f) **By Jesus himself:**

1) **Jesus claims to be the Father's Son.**

Matthew 11:27 All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Mark 14:61,62 But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" ⁶² "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 4:25-26 The woman said, "I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." ²⁶ Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

John 5:17,18 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." ¹⁸ For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father (πατέρα ἰδίου), making himself equal with God.

John 9:35-38 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸ Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

John 14:9-11 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."

John 17:21 That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

2) **Jesus possesses divine attributes.**

Eternal

John 8:58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Revelation 1:8,17,18 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades."

Powerful

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Present everywhere

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Matthew 28:20 And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Giving life

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

John 10:18 No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

3) Jesus performs divine works.

Miracles

John 10:37,38 Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. ³⁸ But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

John 14:11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

John 15:24 If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father.

Resurrection and Judgment

John 5:21,22 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son.

John 6:39,40 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

4) Jesus receives divine honor.

John 5:23 That all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

g) By the apostles, who ascribe to Christ:

1) Divine names (ὀνοματικῶς).

Matthew 14:33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. μονογενῆς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς

John 1:49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

John 6:69 We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.

John 20:28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you

overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Titus 2:13 We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form. πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς

2) **Divine attributes (ἰδιωματικῶς).**

Eternity

John 1:1,2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2He was with God in the beginning.

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Omniscience

John 2:25 He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

John 21:17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

Omnipotence

1 Peter 3:22 [Christ] has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

3) **Divine works (ἐνεργητικῶς).**

Creation

John 1:3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

Providence

1 Corinthians 8:6 Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Revelation 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."

Resurrection

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Judgment

Acts 10:42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.

Romans 2:16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

4) **Divine honor (λατρευτικῶς).**

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Acts 7:55-56 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶“Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

Ephesians 1:20 ...his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

Philippians 2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Hebrews 1:6 And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

Revelation 5:11-14 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹²In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” ¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” ¹⁴ The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

John Hick: For if Jesus was literally God incarnate, the second person of the holy Trinity living a human life, so that the Christian religion was founded by God-on-earth in person, it is then very hard to escape the traditional view that all mankind must be converted to the Christian faith (*God Has Many Names*, p 19).

A5, I, 7.

Regarding the Holy Spirit, Scripture predicates personality and divinity.

a) Personality—he is not an abstract power or influence emanating from God.

1) He is coordinated with the Father and Son, who are persons.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 13:14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Matthew 12:31,32 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³²Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

John 14:16, 26 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 15:26 “When the *Counselor* comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

Compare 1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have *one who speaks* to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. [Christ also is Paraclete.]

2) Personal activities are ascribed to him.

Romans 8:27 He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.

1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.

Matthew 10:20 For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Luke 12:12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

John 16:7,8, 13 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Acts 8:29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Romans 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

1 Corinthians 2:10 But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

1 John 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

Revelation 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Romans 15:30 I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

Isaiah 63:10 Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.

Acts 5:3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

b) Scripture predicates divinity of the Spirit by ascribing to him:

1) Divine names.

2 Samuel 23:2,3 The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. ³ The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: "When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God..."

Acts 5:3-4 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴ Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

Acts 28:25 They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The *Holy Spirit* spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet:

Compare Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard *the voice of the Lord* saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

2) Divine attributes.

Psalm 139:7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

1 Corinthians 2:10-11 God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Hebrews 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

3) Divine works.

-a) Creation.

Genesis 1:2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Psalm 104:30 When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Psalm 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. [?]

-b) Redemption.

Matthew 3:16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.

Hebrews 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit [?] offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. [or in spirit?]

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared *in a body* [?], was vindicated *by the Spirit* [?], was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Compare 2 Corinthians 13:4 For to be sure, he was crucified *in weakness*, yet he lives *by God's power*. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.

-c) Directing God's ministers.

Nehemiah 9:30 For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you admonished them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you handed them over to the neighboring peoples.

Zechariah 7:12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

Matthew 10:20 For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

John 15:26-27 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

John 20:22-23 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Acts 2:4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 13:2-4 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.⁴ The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 Peter 1:11-12 [The prophets were] trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

-d) Administration of the church.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Acts 15:28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.² You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.³ Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Ephesians 2:22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 4:3,4 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called.

4) Divine honor. It coordinates him with the Father and the Son.

c) Some make attacks on the Holy Spirit.

1) Contemporary attacks on the Holy Spirit usually deny that he is a distinct person. The Spirit is regarded as an impersonal force or influence emanating from God.

Jenson: "Spirit" was the term provided by the whole biblical theology for what comes of such a meeting between God and a special human being of his (CD, I, p 93).

2) Macedonius and the pneumatomachoi, condemned by Constantinople (381), saw the Holy Spirit as a created ministering spirit, differing from the angels only in degree. This was, in effect, an application of Arianism to the Spirit.

A5, II. The relation of the three persons in the one Godhead: they are the same in essence but distinct in subsistence. Their relationship is one of mutual permeation and in-existence.

A5, II, 1. The three persons are the same in essence (*aequalitas, consubstantialitis, ὁμοούσιος, αὐτοούσιος, not ὁμοιούσιος*).

a) The essential equality consists in this that the three persons have but one essence (*unitas essentiae*).

Deuteronomy 6:4; Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

1 Corinthians 8:4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.

Galatians 3:20 A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

b) Each person has the whole essence of God undivided.

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

c) Therefore all divine attributes are equally ascribed to each one of the three persons.

A5, II, 2. The three persons are clearly distinguished as being really distinct and subsisting individually (*distinctio, pluralitas*).

a) This is a plurality of persons (*pluralitas hypostatica, personalis, personarum*).

1) Some passages speak of a relationship of the three persons.

John 14:16,17,23,26,28 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ²³ Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." ²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁸ You heard me say, "I am going away and I am coming back to you." If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

John 16:15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

2) Some passages speak of a relationship between two of the persons.

-a) Father and Son.

John 5:23,32,37 ...that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. ³² There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form.

John 8:49, 54 "I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me." ⁵⁴ Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me."

John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

John 14:13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

Hebrews 1:5,6 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? ⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

-b) Son and Spirit.

Luke 24:49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

John 16:7, 14 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

3) We must avoid false conceptions of the plurality.

-a) The plurality is not *pluralitas accidentalis* (the three persons are not merely names for divine attributes) (dynamic monarchians, Gnostics, mystics).

Hafenreffer: The plurality in the unity of the Godhead is personal or a plurality of persons; for the essence of the Deity is indeed one, but there are several persons. And so in the mystery of the Godhead there is indeed one person and another, but not one thing and another. For one person is that of the Father, another that of the Son, another that of the Holy Spirit, but there is not one essence and another essence, but only the one essence of all the persons (*Loci*, p 48; Schmid, p 98).

Kabbalism: In the teaching of the Kabbalah we thus have to do with one God, who on the one hand has an impersonal aspect, beyond all comprehension, which resides in itself and is unknowable (*En Sof*), but who on the other hand has a personal aspect, in which he reveals his hidden being (the *sephiroth*). The ten sephiroth, the revealed aspects or lights of the hidden deity are often regarded as the faces of God directed toward the world (Laenen, *Jewish*

Mysticism, p 51). Note: Among the *sephiroth* are Wisdom, Intelligences, Mercy, and Majesty.

-b) The plurality is not *pluralitas modalis* (three persons are not simply names for modes of divine operation) (modalistic monarchians).

Quenstedt: A person in God is distinguished in one way from the divine essence, in another way from another person; from the former not in reality, but in thought with a basis in reality; but from the latter in actual reality, although in trying to understand this every function of the human mind comes to a halt (*TDP, I, 414*, note 9; Schmid, p 100).

Ted Peters: There are not three personalities in God, although we certainly might speak of a personality of God. The one God is fully present and active in each and all modes of being and action; yet God is not distinguishable except in one or another of these modes of being and action. One or another of the faces is required to identify the one God" (*God the World's Future*, p 104).

-c) The plurality is not *pluralitas multiplicativa* (the three persons are not parts of the divine essence).

Quenstedt: The true and real distinction of the divine persons does not imply a division or multiplication of the divine essence. For God is not divided into three persons, but the three persons, distinct from one another, share without division that one in number, undivided, and infinite essence in such a way that each person has the same essence without any multiplication or division of it. For in this mystery there is one and another as far as the persons are concerned, but not one and another as far as the essence is concerned (*alius atque alius ὑποστατικῶς, non aliud et aliud οὐσιωδῶς*). And so those three actually distinct persons are and remain identical in essence (ὁνοῦσιοι) (*TDP, s. 1 th 20, f 469*).

Gerhard: We speak of God as triune (*trinum*), but we are prohibited by the Christian religion from speaking of him as threefold (*triplicem*) (III, 254; Schmid, p 96). (But cf. German hymn #609: *O heilige Dreifaltigkeit*).

b) Each person has its own manner of subsistence, its own personal characteristics (*notae internae*).

1) These are represented in Scripture as acts (*actus personales, opera ad intra*).

-a) Regarding the Father we find two *opera ad intra*.

-1) *Generare, begetting*.

Psalm 2:7 I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father" (אֲנִי אֵלֹהִים אֲבִי).
Hebrews 1:5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?

Acts 13:33 He has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: You are my Son; today I have become your Father.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only (μονογενῆς θεός), who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

1 John 5:18 We know that anyone born of God (ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God (ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

John 5:18 For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Quenstedt: This generation of the Son does not take place by derivation or transfusion, nor by an action which begins or ends, but takes place by way of an unceasing emanation, to which nothing similar can be found in the realm of nature. For God the Father has from eternity begotten and ever begets and will never cease to beget his Son. For if the generation of the Son would have an end, it would also have a beginning, and thus would not be eternal. And nevertheless this generation cannot on this account be called imperfect or progressive, for the act of generation in the Father and the Son is considered perfect in respect to the action, perpetual in respect to the activity (*TDP, c. 9, s 1, th 28, f 473; Baier, II 67*).

-2) *Spirare, breathing out*. Note: there is no direct scriptural statement of this term as an eternal relationship.

Matthew 10:20 For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

Compare John 20:22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Hollaz: Spiration is understood not as something external, such as the breathing of Christ on his disciples was, but as something internal and immanent, since it takes place within the bosom of the Deity; not as something transitory and evanescent, as is the breathing of men, but eternal and permanent, because the Holy Spirit proceeds from eternity;... not an accidental but an essential spiration (*Examen*, p 337; Schmid, p 106).

Note. The "sending" in Jn 14:16,26, does not indicate an *opus ad intra* but refers to an act of the Father in his dispensation of grace

-b) Regarding the Son we find one: *spirare*, breathing out.

Romans 8:9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

Galatians 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

Philippians 1:19 For I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.

John 16:14, 15: [The Spirit] will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and by making it know to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

Luke 24:49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Note. This act is ascribed to the Son in conjunction with the Father: they are *unum agens*. *Nicene Creed 7: "Filioque"*—the Western insertion of this word into the Creed was in opposition to Arianism. Church politics clouded the issue, but the Eastern rejection of the *filioque* became a subtle form of subordinationism.

Basil the Great (d. 379): The way of knowing God goes from the one Spirit, through the one Son, to the one Father, and, inversely, essential goodness, natural sanctity, and royal dignity flow *from* the Father, *through* the only Begotten, to the Spirit (*Treatise on the Holy Spirit*, 32.153B).

Vladimir Lossky: It is easy to conceive the difficulties which the distinction between hypostatic existence of the Holy Spirit and eternal manifestation of the divine nature presented to the theologically rude and uneducated minds of Western Christendom of the Carolingian period. It may well be supposed that it was the truth of the eternal manifestation which the first filioquist formulas in Spain and elsewhere before the ninth century were intended to manifest.... Reconciliation will be possible and *filioque* will no longer be an *impedimentum dirimens* at that moment that the West, which has been frozen for so long in dogmatic isolation, ceases to consider Byzantine theology as an absurd innovation and recognizes that it only expressed the truths of tradition, which can be found in less explicit form in the Fathers of the first centuries of the church. Then it will be recognized that what may seem absurd for a theology in which a faith seeks understanding is not so absurd for an understanding open to the full reception of revelation—open to the acquisition of the sense of the Scriptures, whose sacred words long ago were foolishness to the Greek philosophers. The Greeks have ceased to be Greeks in becoming sons of the church. That is why they have been able to give to the Christian faith its imperishable armory. May the Latins in their turn cease to be solely Latins in their theology! Then together we shall confess our catholic faith in the Holy Trinity, who lives and reigns in the eternal light of his glory (*In the Image and Likeness of God*, p 96).

ELCA-Orthodox Dialogue: Orthodox very warmly agree with the Lutherans that the *Filioque* does not belong to the normative Creed as recognized by the Council of Constantinople of AD 879/880, which was accepted unanimously by both the East and West. At the same time Orthodox do not regard the teaching that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as the Father to be one which they can accept. This teaching is opposed to the monarchy of the Father and to the equality of the Spirit to the Father and the Son as a hypostasis or person distinct from both, as expressed by the original Creed. On the other hand, Orthodox may accept the teaching of the “double procession” of the Spirit from the Father and the Son in the patristic sense that the Spirit is sent from the Father through/and the Son in the mystery of our salvation in Christ. The relation of the Son to the Spirit in the context of salvation (*oikonomia*) is not the same with their relation in the eternal Trinity (*theologia*).

-c) Regarding the Spirit we find one: *procedere, proceeding, also called spiration.*

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

Ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ παράκλητος ὃν ἐγὼ πέμψω ὑμῖν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται

Matthew 3:16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

Matthew 12:28 But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Romans 8:11,14 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. ¹⁴ Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

1 Corinthians 2:11,12 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

Hollaz: Passive spiration or the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, i.e., the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit, by which he is brought forth within the bosom of the Deity by the Father and the Son as the common breath of both by a communication of the essence which is one and the same in number (*Examen*, 337).

2) The “*actus personales*” may be expressed as attributes (participles).

-a) The Father is

-1) ἀγέννητος, non-genitus, non-generatur; non-spiratus.

-2) Generans; spirans.

-b) The Son is

-1) γέννητος; *spirans*; □μονογενής, πρωτότοκος, □begotten.

John 1:14,18 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 3:16, 18 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

1 John 4:9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

-2) *Non-spiratus, not breathed out*

-c) The Spirit is

-1) Non-generans; non-generatus, not begotten.

-2) *Spiratus, πνευστός; procedens, breathed, proceeding.*

3) The *opera ad intra* are also expressed as abstract nouns.

-a) ἀγεννησία, generatio activa, paternitas, spiratio activa.

-b) γεννησία, generatio passiva, filiatio, spiratio activa.

-c) ἐκπόρευσις, processio, emissio, spiratio passiva.

Hollaz: : It is called passive spiration not in a physical sense, as if it implied a passive power or imperfection, but in a grammatical sense, because the Holy Spirit is not said to breathe forth but to be breathed forth. Nor are the active and passive spiration two spirations, but it is one and the same spiration, which with reference to the breathing and producing principle is called active spiration, with reference to the final product is called passive. In other respects it is the purest emanation of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son (*Examen*, 337).

- d) **Dogmatic axiom: What “being begotten” is, what “proceeding” actually is, I confess I do not know.**
- c) **The peculiarity (character *hypostaticus*) of each person appears in its particular relation to the world (*notae externae, opera ad extra*).**

1) **Various elements of the divine work are ascribed especially to one person.**

- a) **To the Father the work of creation.**
-b) **To the Son the work of redemption.**
-c) **To the Spirit the work of sanctification.**

2) **A certain order of the persons is to be observed.**

- a) ***Opera ad intra sunt divisa*. Operations within the Trinity are divided. They are not shared by all three persons.**

Quenstedt: Divine actions pertaining to the inner relation of the persons in the Trinity are personal, which are directed toward God himself in such a way that, nevertheless, they do not recognize as the originator of the action the divine essence, inasmuch as this is common to all three persons, but insofar as it is determined by certain characteristics and personal peculiarities. Consequently, these personal activities pertaining to the inner relation are divided, i.e., they are not common to the three persons but peculiar to only one person or two persons. The activities in relation to the outside world are undivided or common (*TDP*, I, p 414).

- b) ***Opera ad extra sunt indivisa aut communia*. Operations outside the Trinity are undivided and shared by the three persons.**

Creation and Preservation

John 1:3,10 Through [Christ] all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Psalms 104:30 When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Sanctification

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Compare Ephesians 5:26 [Christ makes] her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

Hebrews 2:11 Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Gerhard: The activities in relation to the outside world are undivided or common (*Locj*, I, IV, VI, XXXVI, p 199).

- c) ***Yet servato ordine et discrimine personarum, the order and distinction of persons is preserved.***

-1) **The order is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

Matthew 28:19 ...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

John 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

John 16:13-15 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known

to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

Note. In 2 Cor 13:14, Jesus is named in first place as the Mediator.

-2) This is not an order of rank, but of relation.

Quenstedt: From the real difference of the persons arises their order, both in their (personal) subsistence and in their activity. Nevertheless, a distinction must be made between 1) an order of nature, 2) an order of time, 3) an order of rank, and 4) an order of origin and relation. Among the persons of the Godhead there is no order of nature (essence), because they are ὁμοούσιοι (identical in substance), of the same nature and essence; nor is there an order of time, since they are ὁμαιώνιοι co-eternal; nor of rank, since they are ἰσότημοι (equal in glory), of the same honor; but there is among them an order of origin and relation, since the Father is from no one, the Son is from the Father, and the Holy Spirit is from both (*TDP*, I, IX, I, XVII, p 327).

3) Hollaz provides a brief summary of the relationship of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd persons:

Hollaz: God the Father is the first person of the Deity, neither begotten nor proceeding, but from eternity begetting the Son, his own substantial image, and with the Son breathing forth the Holy Spirit; creating, preserving, and governing all things, sending the Son as the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit as the Sanctifier of the human race.

The Son is the second person of the Deity, begotten of the Father from eternity, of the same essence and majesty with the Father, who with the Father from eternity breathes forth the Holy Spirit and in the fullness of time assumed a human nature into his own person in order that he might redeem and save the human race.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Deity, of the same essence with the Father and the Son, who from eternity proceeds from the Father and the Son and is sent by both to sanctify the hearts of men who are to be saved (*Examen*, 301, 305, 329).

A5, II, 3. The relation of the three persons in the Godhead is one of mutual permeation and in-existence (περιχώρησις, *immanentia, inexistencia mutua, immeatio, circumincessio*).

a) There is a mutual permeation.

John 10:38 But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

John 14:10,11,20 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

John 17:21 That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

Colossians 2:9,10 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

John 17:11,22 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:

b) About this in-existence we may say the following:

1) It is beyond conception.

2) It must not be considered as:

-a) Mere intellectual penetration.

-b) Mere harmony of purpose.

-c) A perpetual process or a development. God is immutable.

Quenstedt above on "*generatio*."

A5, II, 4. Two insoluble problems confront us.

a) Personality.

1) The essence of God is spirit and as such is personal.

2) What then is the relation of the personal Godhead to the three persons in God?

3) What about the joint action of Father and Son in sending forth the Spirit?

b) Incarnation.

1) The Godhead is absolutely and indivisibly one.

- 2) If that is the case, then when one person assumed a human nature, did not also the other two?

A5, III. The antitheses to the doctrine of Holy Trinity are of three types:

The unity of essence is overemphasized.
The trinity of persons is overemphasized.
The mutual relation of the persons is misrepresented.

A5, III, 1. Some deny the Trinity (*Unitarianism*).

- a) **Dynamic Monarchianism, Adoptionism (Paul of Samosata, Theodotus the Fuller, Theodotus the Moneychanger, Artemon).** Jesus was not God, but became divine through the infusion of divine power.

Hippolytus: A certain Theodotus...forcibly appropriating his idea of Christ from the Gnostics and from Cerinthus and Ebion, alleges that he appeared somewhat as follows: the Jesus was a man, born of a virgin, according to the counsel of the Father, and that after he had lived in a way common to all men and had become pre-eminently religious, he afterward at his baptism in Jordan received Christ, who came from above and descended upon him. Therefore miraculous powers did not operate within him prior to the manifestation of the Spirit which descended and proclaimed him as the Christ. But some are disposed to think that this man never was God, even at the descent of the Spirit; whereas others maintain that he was made God after the resurrection from the dead (*Refut.* VII, 35, 36).

- b) **Modalistic Monarchianism, Patripassianism (Sabellius, Oneness Sabellian Pentecostals).** Christ is divine, but not a distinct person.

Epiphanius of Constantia (Salamis) (d. 403): Their doctrine is that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one and the same being, in the sense that three names are attached to one substance (*hypostasis*). It is just like the body, soul, and spirit in a human being. The body is as it were the Father; the soul is the Son; while the Spirit is to the Godhead as his spirit is to a human being. Or it is like the sun, being one substance, but having three manifestations: light, heat, and orb itself (*Panarion*, lxii, 1).

The Bible certainly speaks of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but not as three distinct persons....The titles of Father, Son, and Spirit describe God's multiple roles and works.... Father refers to God in family relationship to humanity; Son refers to God in flesh; Spirit refers to God in activity. For example, one man can have three significant relationships or functions—such as administrator, teacher, and counselor—and yet be one person in every sense of the word (*Meet the United Pentecostal Church International*, p 60-61).

- c) **Arianism. "There was a time when he was not."**

Arius: But what we say and think we have both taught and continue to teach: that the Son is not unbegotten, nor part of the unbegotten in any way; nor is he derived from any substance; but that by his own will and counsel he existed before time and ages, fully God, only-begotten, unchangeable. And before he was begotten or created or appointed or established, he did not exist; for he was not unbegotten. We are persecuted because we say, "the Son has a beginning, but God is without beginning" (Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, in Theodoret, *Ecc. Hist.*, I. v. 1-4).

- d) **Jehovah's Witnesses. Jesus is Michael. He existed in pre-human spiritual form, human form, and then again in spiritual form.**

Sincere persons who want to know the true God and serve him find it a bit difficult to love and worship a complicated, freakish-looking, three-headed God (*Let God Be True*, p 102).

- e) **Judaism. The oneness of God.**

"I am the first" for I have no father, and "I am the last" because I have no son, and "besides me there is no God" for I have no brother (*Exodus Rabbah* 29:5).

- f) **Islam. God has no associates.**

Say he is God, One. God the everlasting Refuge, who has not begotten and has not been begotten and equal to him is not any one (*Quran*, 112).

People of the Book, do not transgress the bounds of your religion. Speak nothing but the truth about God. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was no more than God's apostle and His Word which He cast to Mary; a spirit from him. So believe in god and His apostles and do not say: "Three" Forbear, and it shall be better for you. God is but one God. God forbid that He should have a son! (*Quran*: 4:171)

- g) **Deism. One creator, many names.**

Albert Pike: Masonry...around whose altars the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Brahman, the followers of Confucius and Zoroaster can assemble as brethren and unite in prayer to the one God who is above all the Baalim (*Morals and Dogma*, p 226).

- h) **Liberalism. Trinitarian language without a Trinity.**

Jenson: The trinitarian name did not fall from heaven. It was made up by believers for the God with whom we have found ourselves involved. "Father" was Jesus' peculiar address to the particular transcendence over against whom he lived. Just as by this address he qualified himself as "Son" and in the memory of the primal church his acclamation as Son was the beginning of faith. "Spirit" was the term provided by the whole biblical theology for what comes of such a meeting between God and a special human being of his. It is involvement in this structure of Jesus' own event--prayer to the "Father" with the "Son" in the power of and

for “the Spirit”—that is faith’s knowledge of God. Thus, “Father, Son, and Spirit” summarize faith’s apprehension of God. ...But in the event so summarizable “Father, Son, and Spirit” came together also simply as a name for the one therein apprehended, and apparently did so before all analysis of its suitability (CD, I, p 93).

“Father, Son and Spirit” is a slogan for the temporal structure of the church’s apprehension of God and for the proper logic of its proclamation and liturgy (I, 99).

Instead of interpreting Christ’s deity as a separate entity that always was—and proceeding analogously with the Spirit—we should interpret it as a final outcome, and just so as eternal, just so as the bracket around all beginnings and endings. Jesus’ historical life was a sending by the Father, the filial relationship between this man and the transcendence to whom he turned temporally occurred. ... Truly the Trinity is simply the Father and the man Jesus and their Spirit as the Spirit of the believing community (I, 155).

Paul Jewett: We have already addressed the question of the analogical character of theological language, including the language used in the trinitarian name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit....Since this is so, feminine figures could as well be used without altering the substance of our thought about God....Nonetheless, to speak of God as a mother who discloses herself to us in a daughter, though it is a hypothetical way of speaking, is not a heretical way of speaking. Given the realities of salvation history, we grant that it is a way of speaking with no prospects of being other than hypothetical (*God, Creation, and Revelation*, p 323-325).

A5, III, 2. Some deny the Unity.

- a) **Tritheism (Philoponus, 500; Roscellinus, rejected at Soissons, 1092; some Anabaptists).**
- b) **Tetraltheism (Damianus, 601 or 605, Alexandria).**
- c) **Mormonism, Nation of Islam (Black Muslims): bodily gods.**

Brigham Young: How many Gods there are, I do not know. But there never was a time when there were not Gods and worlds, and when men were not passing through the same ordeals we are passing through. That course is from all eternity, and it is and will be to all eternity (*Journal of Discourses*, 7, 333).

Bruce McConkie: The Mormon doctrine of the Trinity is spoken of as follows: “Though each God; in the Godhead is a personage, separate and distinct from each of the others, yet they are ‘one God’...meaning that they are united as one in the attributes of perfection. For instance, each has the fullness of truth, knowledge, charity, power, justice, judgment, mercy, and faith. Accordingly they all think, act, speak, and are alike in all things; and yet they are three separate and distinct entities. Each occupies space and is and can be in but one place at one time, but each has power and influence that is everywhere present. The oneness of the Gods [note the plural] is the same unity that should exist among the saints (John 17; 3 Ne. 28:10-11) (*Mormon Doctrine*, p 319)

Joseph Smith: God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p 345).

Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints teaches that every person experiences a series of “births.” All were born as spirit children of God in a premortal life (Vol 1, “Agency”).

Elijah Muhammed: Allah is all of us. But we have a Supreme One....He is Allah, The One over us all; The Most Supreme One.... Every righteous person is a god. We are all God (*The Final Call*, June 20, 2000, p 19).

A5, III, 3. Subordinationism. This is in substance a form of Unitarianism.

A5, III, 4. Opposed to such errors is the Athanasian Creed, Triglotta, p 31.

A5, IV. Many futile attempts have been made to construct the trinitarian doctrine in a speculative way, or at least to make it more palatable to human reason.

A5, IV, 1. Analogies taken from nature.

- a) **Physical.**
 - 1) **Root, stem, branches= tree.**
 - 2) **Spring, container, overflow= well.**
 - 3) **Form, odor, medicinal power= flower (Luther).**
 - 4) **Substance of the orb, light, heat= sun.**
 - 5) **Steam, water, ice=H₂O.**
- b) **Mathematical. Three sides: triangle.**
- c) **Musical. Three tones: chord**

A5, IV, 2. Analogies from psychology.

- a) **Psychology proper.**

- 1) *Memoria, intellectus, voluntas* (Augustine).
 - 2) *Mens, notitia eius, amor* (Augustine).
 - 3) Subject of love, object of love, love itself.
- b) God (Father) perceiving himself produces his own image (Son), and both are united in mutual love (Spirit) (Melanchthon).
- c) The hidden God (Father) reveals himself (Son), both of these persons being united in the Spirit (Leibniz).

A5, IV, 3. All of these analogies lead to a modalistic conception of the Trinity or to parts in God.

Hafenreffer: Can not this plurality of the unity nevertheless be illustrated at least to some extent by certain analogies or very crude sketches? Nothing can be found in the whole universe of things which expresses the mystery of the Deity who is to be worshiped. For God, the Creator, transcends his creatures by immeasurable degrees of difference.... In all these analogies, however, there are by far greater differences than similarities: for there is nothing in heaven or on earth which can reflect the nature of the infinite God, nor is there any word or concept which can express so great a mystery adequately (*Loci*, 44, 47).

Gerhard: a) The analogies only illustrate, they do not prove. b) There is more dissimilarity in them than similarity. c) They are sought a posteriori, not a priori (after the truth has been learned, not before). They are not the parents of understanding but the offspring. They do not lead to understanding, but they are adduced to represent what has been understood. d) One must use them soberly and cautiously. e) They cannot be used against an opponent; they can only delight a believer (*Loci*, III, III, XXVIII, p 224).

A5, V. The triune God is the author of our salvation.

A5, V, 1. Scripture nowhere offers a theory of the Trinity.

- a) **It emphasizes both the unity and the plurality.**
- 1) **Unity.**
Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
 - 2) **Plurality.**
Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- b) **But Scripture nowhere even remotely hints at the mathematical puzzle which such trinity in an absolute unity presents. An absolute unity precludes plurality, but in the Trinity each distinct person possesses the whole Godhead undivided.**
- c) **It cannot, then, be our task or aim to solve the problem.**
- 1) **Our attitude must be that of a disciple.**
Psalm 131:1 My heart is not proud, O Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or thing too wonderful for me.

Proverbs 8:34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.

Deuteronomy 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

- 2) **We must remember that even our terms essence, person, Trinity, and so on are inadequate.**

Isaiah 40:18,25 "To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to? ²⁵ To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.

Isaiah 46:5 To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?

1 Timothy 6:16 Who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

- 3) **The justification for using such inadequate terms: since Scripture proclaims God's oneness and his threeness, we dare not ignore them.**

Augustine: In short, human speech labors under a great inadequacy. Nevertheless, we speak of three persons, not because that adequately expresses the truth, but so as not to pass over the matter in complete silence. For the ineffable grandeur of the subject cannot be explained by this term (*De trinitate*, 5).

Chemnitz: First of all this offends many, also in ancient times, that the church in speaking about the article of the Trinity was not content with that simple propriety which the Son of God himself used in revealing the doctrine of God and which the Holy Spirit followed in the writings of the prophets and apostles, but introduced into the church foreign terms from the impious schools of the heathen. For there is no doubt whatsoever that those words were generally used in the schools of the philosophers. And with great malice the orthodox Fathers were harassed by the heretics with this specious pretext

that, namely, the church ought not to think otherwise about that inaccessible light of the Deity than the Deity itself, coming forth from the hidden seat of its majesty, revealed about itself.... Therefore the church would have preferred to use that simplicity of speech, so that, just as it believes, so also it speaks, that there is one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But controversies arose with heretics, who were attacking partly the unity of God, partly the Trinity, but so slyly that when they confessed that there is one God, they understood it in such a way that, although there are more gods, nevertheless they are called one just as the heart of the believers is called one (Ac 4:32).... Because, therefore, the heretics were speaking the same language with the church, and nevertheless had a different opinion, and through ambiguous terminology, as Gregory of Nazianz says, secretly spread poison among the inexperienced who suspected nothing evil when they heard those heretics speak with the same words which the church used, the church men tried to find words in Scripture with which they might draw out from their ambush the hiding heretics so that they would not be able to deceive the incautious with ambiguous terms (*Loci, de tribus personis*, p 36).

A5, V, 2. Scripture comforts our hearts with the assurance that the Triune God is interested in one thing: our salvation.

a) This is the theme of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

Genesis 2:4—4:26. Revelation 1.

The Apostles' Creed.

b) This is predicated of each Person individually.

1) Father.

John 3:16 God so loved the world.

2) Son.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

3) Spirit.

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

B. ANTHROPOLOGY

B1. Man's Present Abode

B1, I. The universe was created by God in the beginning to be the home of man.

B1, I, 1. The Creator is God, particularly the Father.

a) **God, the Triune God, is the Creator. Gn 1:1-2:3**

Note: Gn 2:4-25 is not a second account of creation but a chapter of the world's history following creation. References in it to creation must be understood in the light of chapter 1.

Phillip Hefner: A number of scholars have classified the myths of creation in the world's religions. Charles Long, for example, has provided five different categories of such myths: emergence myths, world-parent myths, myths of creation from chaos and from the cosmic egg, creation from nothing, and earth-diver myths. Within the creation-from-nothing classification, he gathers the following: the Australian myth of the Great Father, Hesiod, Rig Veda, the ancient Maya myth from the Popol Vuh, and myths from Polynesia, the Maori, the Tuamotua, the Egyptians, and the Zuni- in addition to the Hebrew myth from Genesis.... Scholars are nearly unanimous that Genesis 1-11 is put together from several literary accounts. The one called "J" begins with Gen 2:4 and continues off and on through chapter 11. The other called "P" begins with the first chapter (Braaten/Jenson, *Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 277-278, 280).

2 Kings 19:15 Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: "O LORD, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth."

Nehemiah 9:6 You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

Psalms 102:25 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Proverbs 3:19 By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place; etc.

Job 38 and 39

b) **Creation is preeminently ascribed to the Father.**

1) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

1 Corinthians 8:6 Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

2) **The Son and Spirit "cooperated" – external works are indivisible (*opera ad extra sunt indivisa aut communia*).**

John 1:3 Through [Christ] all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Genesis 1:2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

Hollaz: The work of creation is ascribed particularly to God the Father in Holy Writ and the Apostles' Creed: a) because of the order of operation; because the Father has it from himself that he acts and creates, the Son of God and the Holy Spirit have it from the Father; b) because God the Father manifested his omnipotence by his most efficacious word of command in the work of creation (Gn 1:3); c) creation is the first divine *opus ad extra* [work outside the Godhead], and therefore it is ascribed to the first person of the Deity through a certain appropriateness. [N.B. This is not mentioned in Scripture.]—The three persons of the Deity are not three associate causes, not three authors of creation, but one cause, one author of creation, one Creator.—Although there are three distinct persons, nevertheless they enter into the work of creation with one force. If they entered into it with different working forces, they would be associate causes (*Examen*, p 352).

B1, I, 2. The existence of the world is due exclusively to a creative act of God.

a) **Creation was an absolutely free act of God.**

Psalms 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.

Revelation 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.

Psalms 50:9-12: I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, ¹⁰ for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. ¹¹ I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. ¹² If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.

Hollaz: Creation is a free divine act because God established this universe without being moved by any necessity, as if he actually needed the service of creatures, since he is absolutely self-sufficient, but freely, so that he would have been able to create or not create, to create either sooner or later, in this way or some other way (*Examen*, p 357).

R. Preus: The free act of creation was willed and decreed by God in eternity and carried out in time. This means that God created time and in his freedom took time to create (*The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, II, p 169).

b) The plan of creation is entirely God's own.

Isaiah 40:12-14 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?¹³ Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor?¹⁴ Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding?

Job 28:20-28 Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell?²¹ It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air.²² Destruction and Death say, "Only a rumor of it has reached our ears."²³ God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells,²⁴ for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.²⁵ When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters,²⁶ when he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm,²⁷ then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; he confirmed it and tested it.²⁸ And he said to man, "The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.

Job 38:4-6 Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone?

c) Previous to the creation there existed no material out of which God might have formed the world.

1) The world was created out of nothing.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Compare Romans 4:17: As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were (τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα).

2) This was an absolute nothing:

Nihil negativum

Not a relative nothing:

Nihil privativum (ὀλὴ ἀμορφος)

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Quenstedt: There is no *materia ex qua* [a philosophical term meaning the material which is used in making something] of creation with reference to the things created on the first day. For the things that were created on the first day were not made from pre-existent or previously created material, but they were made from purely negative nothing [i.e., God used absolutely nothing to begin his work of creation].—When it is said that the works of the first day were created out of nothing, the particle *ex* does not designate the *materia ex qua*, but excludes it. For nothing else is meant by the term *ex nihilo* than the *terminus a quo* [a philosophical term meaning the starting point]; that is, the "nothing" from which all things are said to have been made does not define the material but only the *terminus a quo* and ought to be understood concerning the order of creation, and the particle *ex* could rightly be rendered with *post* (after), as Thomas observes, so that the sense is: after nothing as the *terminus a quo* something was made (*TDP*, I, p 417).

3) This is shown also by the use of the verb אָבַד.

-a) It is applied to God's productive work.

Genesis 1:1,27 In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth.²⁷ So God *created* man in his own image, in the image of God he *created* him; male and female he *created* them.

Genesis 5:1,2 This is the written account of Adam's line. When God *created* man, he made him in the likeness of God.² He *created* them male and female and blessed them. And when they were *created*, he called them "man."

Genesis 6:7 So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have *created*, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them."

Psalms 51:10 *Create* in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light and *create* darkness, I bring prosperity and *create* disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.

Jeremiah 31:22 How long will you wander, O unfaithful daughter? The LORD will *create* a new thing on earth—a woman will surround a man" (אֲנִי יְהוָה אֵלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל).

Amos 4:13 He who forms the mountains, *creates* the wind, and reveals his thoughts to man, he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth—the LORD God Almighty is his name.

-b) It signifies to produce by divine power either out of nothing or out of unsuitable material.

Psalms 33:6,9 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.⁹ For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Psalms 104:29,30 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Isaiah 65:17,18 "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be

remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

Compare Psalm 51:10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Calov: Creation does not consist in an emanation from the essence of God, nor in generation, nor even in a movement or natural change ... but in an external action by which things were produced from nothing by an infinite power (*Systema Locorum Theologicorum*, III, p 899).

d) The “instrument” of creation was the word of God.

Genesis 1:1,3,6,9,11,14,20,24 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁹ And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹¹ Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. ¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ²⁰ And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” ²⁴ And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

John 1:1,3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Chemnitz: One must not dispute, however, with too much curiosity about the difference of the persons in the work of creation, but let us be content with that revelation of the Holy Spirit (Ro 11:36: For *from* him and *through* him and *to* him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.). These facts must not be adduced for an inequality of persons, however, as the Arians blasphemously claim that the Son was merely an instrument of God in creation, as a carpenter uses an ax. For these prepositions (ἐκ, διὰ, εἰς) do not divide the nature, but express the peculiarities of the one unconfused nature (*Loci Theologici*, I, p 115).

e) To this Scripture doctrine of creation is opposed

1) Pantheism: God becomes part of his creation and creation becomes part of God.

Hollaz: God did not create this visible world from his own essence, nor did he pour it (i.e., his essence) out into parts as it were, so that any creature might be called a part of the Deity. (*Examen*, p 356).

Paul Harrison: Scientific pantheism is proud to recognize the Greek and Roman materialism of the Miletans, Heraklitus, Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius as its predecessors. We believe that everything is made up of matter □ energy, and that there is no separate and distinct substance of spirit. But we also have a deep reverence for the cosmos and for nature, which the early materialists shared. Scientific pantheism reveres the universe as the only real divinity. It fuses religion and science, and concern for humans with concern for nature (World Pantheist Movement website).

2) Dualism: Matter is co-eternal with God.

Gerhard: Away with the silly dreams of the Stoics, who imagine that there are two eternal principles, νοῦν and ὕλην, mind or God and matter, which they dream existed in eternal times as a confused chaos and at a certain time was finally given form by the mind (*Loci Theologici*, IV, p 7).

3) Evolution: The world is the result of a process of gradual development by resident forces.

Phillip Hefner: The challenges and contributions of modern science to our theme of creation are enormous. . . . Scientific discovery in the past 150 years has opened up breathtaking vistas for a new understanding of nature (physical, biological, social). The concepts of the creator God and of creation must be related to this new understanding of nature if they are to be credible (Braaten and Jenson, *Christian Dogmatics*, I. p 318).

B1, I, 3. The world was created in the beginning of time.

a) Creation was the first act in time.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Note: Such translations as “in the beginning of God’s creating the world, the earth was without form and empty,” are influenced by the Akkadian *Enuma Elish* myth. But such translations are not supported by any ancient versions nor by the echo of Genesis 1:1 in John 1:1.

Psalm 90:2 Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Psalm 102:25 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Augustine: Without any doubt the world was not made in time but together with time (*De Civit. Dei*, XI, p 6).

Calov: The creation of things was not made from eternity, but in that beginning in which all time began to flow (*Systema Locorum Theologicorum*, III, p 901).

b) Creation itself occupied a space of time (six days, hexameron).

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exodus 31:17 It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the

earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.

Luther: Hilary and Augustine, almost the two greatest lights of the church, hold that the world was created instantaneously and all at the same time, not successively in the course of six days. Moreover, Augustine resorts to extraordinary trifling in his treatment of the six days, which he makes out to be mystical days of knowledge among the angels, not natural ones.... We assert that Moses spoke in the literal sense, not allegorically or figuratively (LW 1:4,5).

c) The six days of creation were normal solar (24-hour) days.

Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. ⁸God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. ²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

1) Note how the word "day" is used in various ways in Genesis 1 & 2:

Daytime: Genesis 1:5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."

24-hour period of time: Genesis 1:5 And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Unspecified period of time: Genesis 2:4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven (NASB).

2) The length of the creation days must be determined in a purely exegetical manner. In the context of Genesis 1, the word "day" means a normal solar day when referring to the six days of creation.

See Genesis 1:5,8, 13, 19, 23, 31 above.

3) It is faulty exegesis to refer to passages like Psalm 90:4 or 2 Peter 3:8 to support the view that the six days of creation could have been longer periods of time. These passages speak of God's attribute of eternity.

Psalm 90:4 For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.

2 Peter 3:8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

4) Note how even some conservative Evangelicals confess uncertainty regarding the days of creation.

Grudem: What shall we conclude about the length of days in Genesis 1? It does not seem at all easy to decide with the information we now have. It is not simply a question of "believing the Bible" or "not believing the Bible," nor is it a question of "giving in to modern science" or "rejecting the clear conclusions of modern science." Even for those who believe in the complete truthfulness of Scripture (such as the present author), and who retain some doubt about the exceptionally long periods of time scientists propose for the age of the earth (such as the present author), the question does not seem to be easy to decide. At present, considerations of the power of God's creative word and the immediacy with which it seems to bring response, the fact that "evening and morning" and the numbering of days still suggest twenty-four-hour days, and the fact that God would seem to have no purpose for delaying creation of man for thousands or even millions of years, seem to me to be strong considerations in favor of the twenty-four-hour day position. But even here there are good arguments on the other side: To the one who lives forever, for whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8), who delights in gradually working out all his purposes over time, perhaps 15 billion years is just the right amount of time to take in preparing the universe for man's arrival and 4.5 billion years in preparing the earth. The evidence of incredible antiquity in the universe would then serve as a vivid reminder of the even more amazing nature of God's eternity, just as the incredible size of the universe causes us to wonder at God's even greater omnipresence and omnipotence. Therefore, with respect to the length of days in Genesis 1, the possibility must be left open that God has chosen not to give us enough information to come to a clear decision on this question, and the real test of faithfulness to him may be the degree to which we can act charitably toward those who in good conscience and full belief in God's Word hold to a different position on this matter (*Systematic Theology*, p 297).

H. Orton Wiley: The Hebrew word *yom* which is translated "day" occurs no less than 1,480 times in the Old Testament, and is translated by something over fifty different words, including such terms as *time, today, age, forever, continually, and perpetually*. With such a flexible use of the original term, it is impossible to either dogmatize or to demand unswerving restriction to only one of those meanings (*Christian Theology*, p 455).

d) There was only one creation in the beginning of time.

1) The present world is not one rebuilt on the ruins of a previous one as dispensationalists suggest on the basis of such passages as Ezekiel 28:13-18.

Genesis 1:2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Compare 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Contra: Scofield Reference Bible (commentary on Isaiah 45:18-- For this is what the LORD says— he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited): This is one of the Scripture passages that suggest the Divine Judgment interpretation of Gen. 1:1-2. This interpretation views the earth as having been created perfect. After an indefinite period of time, possibly in connection with Satan's sin of rebellion against the Most High, judgment fell upon the earth and "it was [became] without form and void." Another indefinite interval elapsed after which "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2) in a re-creation of the earth. Some of the arguments from this viewpoint are: (1) Only the earth, not the universe, is said to have been "without form and void." (2) The face of the earth bears the marks of a catastrophe. (3) The word rendered "was" may also be translated "became," as indicated above—"became" without form and void." (4) The Hebrew expression for "without form and void" (*tohu wabohu*) is used to describe a condition produced by divine judgment in the only other two texts where the two words appear in conjunction (Isa. 34:11; Jer.

4:23). (5) Such a prehistoric divine judgment would throw some light on Satan's fall and the peculiar relation he seems to sustain to the earth. And (6) this interpretation leaves room for an undetermined period of time between the original creation and divine judgment. Adam, created after the events of Gen. 1:1-2, was the first man.

Note. The object of assuming a double creation is to gain the time believed necessary for the many geological changes (volcanic and Neptunian) which evidently have taken place on earth. Uniformitarianism vs catastrophism.

On this gap theory, restitution theory, or restoration theory see WLQ, July, 1962, p 193f.

2) **We may distinguish two or three stages.**

-a) **Creatio prima: the creation of matter.**

Genesis 1:1,2 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

-b) **Creatio secunda: the arrangement of the world in detail.**

Genesis 1:3ff And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Hafenreffer: From these things it appears that in the creation of the world there was a threefold operation of the Maker: 1) First, to be sure, when no material existed beforehand, he created, that is, he produced from nothing, that crude and shapeless corporeal mass which Moses designated by the names of heaven and earth and water. 2) Then, in the first three days he separated these three bodies. 3) Finally, in the next three days he perfected everything with its own decoration (*Compendium Doctrinae Coelestis*, p 72).

Note the following distinctions:

- *Nihil negativum* – absolute nothing
- *Nihil privativum* – relative nothing

These terms are used to indicate that God did not create the world out of any previously existing material (i.e. he created from *nihil negativum*, he brought it into existence from non-existence).

- *Creatio prima*
- *Creatio secunda*

These terms are used to indicate that in the beginning God created the matter (Gen 1:1 – creatio prima) and during the rest of creation he arranged it in order and gave it detail (Gen 1:2ff – creatio secunda).

e) **Objections to the time fixed by Scripture:**

1) **From astronomy.**

Millions of years were required for the light of the most distant galaxies to reach the earth.

Grudem: It is difficult to understand why the evidence of star life cycles and the expansion of the universe would make the universe appear to be 15 billion years old if it were not. It is possible, but it seems unlikely, almost as if God's only purpose in giving these uniform apparent ages was to mislead us rather than simply to have a mature, functioning universe in place. So the old earth advocates seem to me to have a greater weight of scientific evidence on their side, and it seems that the weight of evidence is increasing yearly (*Systematic Theology*, p 307). Although our conclusions are tentative, at this point in our understanding, Scripture seems to be more easily understood to suggest (but not to require) a young earth view, while the observable facts of creation seem increasingly to favor an old earth view. Both views are possible, but neither one is certain" (p. 308).

2) **From geology.**

The stages of development, traces of which are found in the earth's surface, each have required millions of years.

Millard Erickson: The age of the creation is one point where there is conflict between science and the Bible. On one hand, the biblical statement seems quite straightforward. God created the earth in six days. Since the word used in Genesis is the common term $\Delta\iota'$ (*yom*), it is presumed that these were twenty-four-hour periods of time. Attempts have been made to calculate the time of creation by using the ages given in the biblical genealogies. Archbishop James Ussher arrived at a date of 4004 B.C. for the creation. On these terms the creation is no more than about six thousand years old. Ussher's conclusion was satisfactory before the development of modern geology, which is only a rather recent development. William Smith, the founder of stratigraphical geology, died in 1839; and Charles Lyell, the systematizer of geological learning, died in 1875. Thus, geology of the type that we know today came of age only in the nineteenth century. When it did, however, serious problems arose for the traditional dating of creation. A number of methods have been developed for dating the earth, many of them relating to the characteristics of radioactive materials. Out of these methods came a consensus that the earth is several billion years old, perhaps five or six billion or even more (*Christian Theology*, p 405, 406).

3) **Response to the objections:**

Was God, who fixed the laws of nature, which are gradual processes for the preservation of the world, bound by them in creation? Also remember the creation of the world with the appearance of age, the curse on the world, and the effects of the Flood.

B1, I, 4. What God created in the beginning is called:

a) **Heaven and earth.**

Genesis 1:1; 2:4 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

^{2,4} This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

b) **The world (κόσμος).**

Matthew 13:35 So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

Matthew 24:21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.

Matthew 25:34 Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."

John 17:5,24 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. ²⁴ Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

c) **All things (τὰ πάντα: the universe; das All).**

1 Corinthians 8:6 Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom *all things* came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

Ephesians 3:9 And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created *all things*.

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill *the whole universe*.

Colossians 1:16 For by him *all things* were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; *all things* were created by him and for him.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining *all things* by his powerful word.

Hebrews 2:10 In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom *everything* exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Revelation 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created *all things*, and by your will they were created and have their being.

d) **Creation (κτίσις).**

Mark 10:6 But at the beginning of creation God "made them male and female."

Mark 13:19 Because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

2 Peter 3:4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

Revelation 3:14 To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

e) **Worlds, universe (αἰῶνες) Note: This is a peculiar use of the author of Hebrews, apparently based on the late use of the Hebrew word עֲוֹלָם.**

Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

B1, I, 5. The world was created to be the home of man.

a) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

Genesis 1:26,28,29 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

Psalms 115:16 The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to man.

Isaiah 45:12,18 It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts. ¹⁸ For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other."

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

b) **The vast mechanism of the universe was called into being in order to serve the earth and man.**

Genesis 1:14-18 ¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.

Note. The astronomy of the Bible is anthropocentric in its purpose. It does not necessarily follow that the universe is geocentric in its physical arrangement.

c) **When the world left its Creator's hand it was perfect in every detail.**

1) **It was perfectly adapted for its purpose.**

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was

morning—the sixth day.

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ²By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Psalms 104:31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.

2) The world proclaimed the glory of the loving God.

Psalms 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Psalms 97:6 The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory.

Psalms 148:1-14 Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above. ²Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars. ⁴Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. ⁶He set them in place for ever and ever; he gave a decree that will never pass away. ⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, ⁸lightning and hail, snow and all clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, ⁹you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, ¹⁰wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, ¹¹kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, ¹²young men and maidens, old men and children. ¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens. ¹⁴He has raised up for his people a horn, the praise of all his saints, of Israel, the people close to his heart. Praise the LORD.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Revelation 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.

d) Being man's abode, the earth shares man's fate.

Genesis 3:17-19 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Isaiah 34:4 All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree.

Luke 21:25-26 There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

Romans 8:20,22,23 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

Isaiah 66:22 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure."

2 Peter 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

B1, I, 6. For a summary definition of creation, note the following:

Gerhard: Creation is an act of the one and only God, an undivided work of the three persons of the Deity, by which the Father through the co-eternal Son in the co-eternal Holy Spirit, of his free will on six distinct days created all things visible and invisible, not out of some material co-existing with them from eternity, but out of nothing, for the glory of his name and the use of man. And all things which God made are very good (*Loci Theologici*, IV, p 51).

B1, II. Having created the abode of man, God provides also for its maintenance, and for man's subsistence (*providentia*).

B1, II, 1. The Lutheran dogmatists often spoke about providence in a broad and a narrow sense. The broad sense included foreknowledge, decree, and execution. The narrow sense was just execution.

Brochmand: God's providence is his activity of knowing and seeing all things. In this way he cares for the entire world and every single creature in the world, both great and small; and he attends their movements, actions, and passions, that he might effectively and mercifully advance all things which are good, strictly contain and severely punish all evil, and bring all things to his glory and the salvation of pious men (*Definitiones Articulorum Fidei*, p A4).

Calov: Divine government or providence follows the creation of created things, by which God preserves and rules the whole world. ... Divine providence is an activity of God by which according to his will he freely, wisely, and powerfully preserves and governs all

things and the individual things to the praise of his glory. ... To explain the essence of providence three things are pertinent: 1) πρόγνωσις or foresight, or foreknowledge; 2) πρόθεσις or the arrangement, purpose, or decree of God; 3) διοίκησις or administration (*Systema*, III, art. VI, cap. 1, p 1127).

Baier: Opinions differ inasmuch as some contend that not so much the immanent acts of the divine mind and will as the outward acts themselves of preserving and governing are signified by the term "providence"; others indeed teach that the immanent act is denoted by this term. They believe, moreover, that it pertains to the intellect essentially, to the will consequently; others (believe) vice versa. Nevertheless, it is easily recognized that this whole controversy is not so much about the matter itself as about the terms (*Compendium*, II, caput V, p 161).

Heerbrand: Providence is an activity of God by which he not only discerns all things and foresees things that are in the future as far as we are concerned, but also preserves and governs the whole nature of things which he has created and provides all necessary things for the human race, but especially for his church, and then also for the rest of the creatures (*Compendium Theologiae*, p 87).

Hafenreffer: Providence is the activity of God who knows and sees all things by which without intermission he paternally preserves, cares for, fosters, governs, and controls all things created by him and the course of the whole universe, graciously promoting all good things, but severely checking evil things and wisely directing them to good ends (*Locī*, p 101).

B1, II, 2. In contemporary usage the term "providence" refers only to execution, that is, to God's governance of the world.

a) This governance presupposes foreknowledge (πρόγνωσις, *praescientia, praevisio*).

Isaiah 65:24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

Matthew 6:32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

Ephesians 3:8,9 Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

Hoffmann: And in reference to πρόγνωσις it must be noted indeed partly that it is attributed to God only anthropopathically and with respect to us who live in time and measure things according to earlier and later; but God sees all things as present, as it were, and looks at them in a perpetual, stable, and immutable now (*vūv*) (*Synopsis theol., de provid.*, II, ecthes., p 300).

b) An apparent clash between God's foreknowledge and human freedom of action has been noted above.

Jerome: The foreknowledge of future things does not make immutable what God knows as future. For it is not God's knowledge of future things that makes it necessary that we do that which he foreknew; but that which we are going to do of our own will he knows as future.... It is one thing when I say that with respect to divine foreknowledge something is immutable or will necessarily happen. But it is another thing when I say that a thing is immutable on account of the foreknowledge of God, or, which is the same, that (God's) foreknowledge makes the foreknown things necessary.... In this respect it is rightly said: foreknown things happen in the way they are foreknown, not casually with respect to foreknowledge, as if this makes the foreknown things happen in this way and no other; but only conditionally, in so far as God has foreknown things in no other way than as they will happen from their own proper causes and indeed freely. Now therefore when something happens in this way, it is rightly said that it could not happen in another way with respect to divine foreknowledge; according to the common rule: everything which is, when it is, must then necessarily be (Quoted in Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, p 177-178).

c) It presupposes also a decree (πρόθεσις, *decretum, propositum*).

Isaiah 14:27 For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?

Isaiah 19:12,17 Where are your wise men now? Let them show you and make known what the LORD Almighty has planned against Egypt.¹⁷ And the land of Judah will bring terror to the Egyptians; everyone to whom Judah is mentioned will be terrified, because of what the LORD Almighty is planning against them.

Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

Quenstedt: And so although divine providence presupposes πρόγνωσις or foreknowledge and πρόθεσις or the decree of providing made from eternity, nevertheless it itself properly and essentially consists in διοικήσει or the actual preservation and governing of created things (*TDP*, pars I, cap. XII, sect. I, thes. IV, p 527).

Note. The terms πρόγνωσις and πρόθεσις are used also with reference to God's decree of election.—These two acts, providence and predestination, must not be confused. (cf. Ro 8:28,29; 11:2; Eph 1:11; Am 3:2.)

Hoffmann: Πρόθεσις, decree, however, is taken here not in a special sense concerning God's purpose with respect to our salvation, as it is taken in Rom.8:28; Eph.1:11; for in this way it is considered in the chapter on predestination, but in a general sense, as it includes all things which are subject to God's providence (*Locī*, c., p 301)

Formula of Concord, Ep., XI, 2-5: For the foreknowledge of God is nothing else than that God knows all things before they happen, as it is written Dan 2:28: There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets and makes known to the king Nebuchadrezzar what shall be in the latter days. This foreknowledge extends alike over the godly and the wicked, but it is not the cause of evil, neither of sin, namely, of doing what is wrong, which originally arises from the devil and the wicked, perverse will of man, nor of their ruin that men perish, for which they themselves are responsible; but it only regulates it, and fixes a limit to it and how long it should last, and all this to the end that it should serve his elect for their salvation, notwithstanding that it is evil in itself. The predestination or eternal election of God, however, extends only over the godly, beloved children of God, being a cause of the salvation, which he also provides, as well as disposes what belongs thereto. Upon this predestination of God our salvation is founded so firmly that the gates of hell cannot overcome it. John 10:28;

Matt. 16:18. This predestination of God is not to be investigated in the secret counsel of God, but to be sought in the Word of God, where it is also revealed.

B1, II, 3.

Providence is a work of the Triune God (*opus ad extra*).

a) It is ascribed to God in a general way.

Psalm 36:6-9 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O LORD, you preserve both man and beast. ⁷How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. ⁸They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights. ⁹For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

Jeremiah 10:10,13 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath. ¹³When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar; he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

Acts 17:26-28 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

Psalm 103:20-22 Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. ²¹Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will. ²²Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the LORD, O my soul.

Psalm 145:18-21 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

See also Ps 104:1–35.

b) It is preeminently a work of the Father.

Matthew 6:26,30,32 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

Matthew 10:29-31 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

John 5:17,20 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." ²⁰For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.

c) It is also a work of the Son and the Spirit.

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Psalm 104:29,30 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. ³⁰When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Matthew 12:28 But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

B1, II, 4.

According to the objects a threefold providence may be distinguished.

a) God provides for all of his creatures in general (*providentia universalis*).

Job 12:9,10 Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? ¹⁰In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.

Job 38:41 Who provides food for the raven when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?

Psalm 104:29,30 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. ³⁰When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Psalm 145:9,15,16 The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. ¹⁵The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

Psalm 147:9 He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.

Matthew 6:26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Matthew 10:29,30 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Luke 12:6 Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

Cicero offers a contrary view: The gods take care of the big things, they neglect the little things (*De nat. Deor.*, II, 66; III, 35)

Jerome: It is an absurd detraction of the majesty of God to say that God knows every moment how many gnats are born and how many die; how many bedbugs, fleas, and flies there are on the earth, what number of fish live in the water (Quoted by Quenstedt in Baier, II, p 166).

Quenstedt's response: If it was not unworthy of and improper for God to create even the minutest creatures, much less can it be improper for him to rule what he has created (*TDP*, pars I.c.13.s.2.q.1.f.768).

b) God provides for man in particular (*providentia specialis*).

1) God provides for all people.

Job 10:8-12 "Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? ⁹ Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again? ¹⁰ Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese, ¹¹ clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews? ¹² You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.

Job 14:1,5 Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. ⁵Man's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.

Psalms 139:15,16 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, ¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

2) God provides even for the wicked.

Psalms 73:3-5 For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴ They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. ⁵ They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills.

Matthew 5:45 ...that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

c) Above all, Christians may hope in a very special providence of their heavenly Father (*providentia specialissima*).

Psalms 1:6 For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Psalms 33:18,19 But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, ¹⁹ to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

Psalms 37:25 I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

Psalms 145:18-21 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

See also Ps 91:1–16; Ps 121:1–8

d) Observation is an insufficient source for the doctrine of providence.

Note the Christian's cross.

Gerhard: Those very things which are preserved and ruled by nature are a witness of divine providence. If you wish to be a disciple of nature, you will find that the most vile and least things are taken care of no less than the most noble; that the things they need are given to all to the end of their life; that all things continue to exist in a definite and wonderful order; that those things which act without sense and thought nevertheless reach their goal; that those things which fight with one another are tempered in such a way that, by breaking their powers in turn, they benefit the world by their struggle.—But that knowledge of divine providence sought from the book of nature is weak and imperfect, not because of some fault of nature itself but of our mind. More certain and more perfect, however, is that knowledge of providence which is sought from the book of Scripture (*Loci Theologici*, IV, p 52).

B1, III. Providence is carried out in three acts:

Preservation – Cooperation – Government.

B1, III, 1. Preservation (*conservatio, providentia conservatrix*).

God keeps and maintains his creatures in their original kind, properties, and virtues.

a) God continues to preserve the world.

1) This is stated positively.

Acts 17:28 "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

Nehemiah 9:6 You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

Joshua 24:17 It was the LORD our God himself who brought us and our fathers up out of Egypt, from that land of slavery, and performed those great signs before our eyes. He protected us on our entire journey and among all the nations through which we traveled.

Psalms 104:27-28 These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. ²⁸ When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

2) **This is stated negatively.**

Psalm 104:29-30 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. ³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Matthew 5:36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

Matthew 6:26,27 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

b) **God's preservation pertains to the kind and the individual.**

1) **God preserves the kind.**

-a) **The creation of "kinds" was an important aspect of creation.**

Genesis 1:11,12,21,24,25 Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²⁴ And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

-b) **God preserves the kind.**

Genesis 6:20 Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. Also Genesis 7:14.

Genesis 8:19 All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds—everything that moves on the earth—came out of the ark, one kind after another.

Acts 17:26,28 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁸ 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

2) **God preserves the individual.**

Psalm 73:23 Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

Psalm 139:1-5,7-10,13 O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. ² You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. ⁵ You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. ⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. ¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

Psalm 146:9 The LORD watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

Matthew 10:29,30 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Parallel Luke 21:18.

c) **Preservation is not negative, a mere "letting" exist, but a positive act of God.**

1) **Preservation involves God's will.**

Psalm 33:9,11,18,19 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. ¹¹ But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. ¹⁸ But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, ¹⁹ to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

2) **Preservation involves God's operation.**

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

3) **Preservation involves penetration of creation.**

Psalm 139:3,5,13 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁵ You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. ¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

Acts 17:28 "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

Hoffmann: For just as God is everywhere by his essence and permeates all things, and intimately penetrates the individual essences of created things; so by this penetration and influx the individual things are sustained and preserved in their being. As the existence of the rays of the sun is dependent on the sun, so also the existence of the creatures is dependent on the preservation of God through a continuous, direct, and positive influx. If this were withdrawn even for a moment, they would not be able to exist. And indeed this influx is not only general but special, or rather particular, by which he preserves each and every thing, not only the classes and species of things, but also the individuals by touching them directly by his own action and not only through the power implanted by him or left in effect (*Synopsis theol.*, loc. X, II, p 302).

Hollaz: Divine preservation is not a merely negative or indirect act, for it does not consist only in this that God does not wish to destroy or annihilate the things he has created, but to leave them by their own strength, in so far as they

are able to thrive and continue from the power given to them through creation; but it is a positive and direct act, by which God in the nature of an efficient cause by a true and real influx flows into the essence of the things which are to be preserved, so that they persist and remain in nature by their own properties and powers (*Examen*, p 441).

d) **Ordinarily God carries out his preservation by natural means.**

1) **God preserves according to natural laws.**

Genesis 1:11,14-18,22 Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth."

Genesis 8:22 As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

2) **God preserves by means of natural causes.**

Genesis 1:29,30 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

Genesis 2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Note also Genesis 3:17-19 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Psalms 104:13,14 He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work. ¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate— bringing forth food from the earth.

Psalms 145:15,16 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶ You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

Psalms 147:8,9 He covers the sky with clouds; he supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills. ⁹ He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.

Acts 14:17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.

3) **Both the laws and the secondary causes are established by God.**

-a) **He establishes them.**

Job 28:25,26 When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters, ²⁶ when he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm...

-b) **He keeps them effective by his word and operative presence.**

Deuteronomy 8:3 He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

Exodus 4:10-12 Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." ¹¹ The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹² Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."

1 Samuel 14:6 Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, "Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised fellows. Perhaps the LORD will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by many or by few."

Note: remember that what we call the "laws of nature" are simply human observations about how things work. They are changing, human constructions, not necessarily equal to the underlying principles God established.

e) **Preservation may be called "*creatio continuata*" or "*creatio continua*".**

1) **This term emphasizes the truth of God's ongoing providence over against the deistic error.**

Acts 17:25,28 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁸ "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

Psalms 104:29-30 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. ³⁰ When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Quenstedt: God preserves all things by a continuation of the action by which he produced things at first. For the preservation of a thing is properly nothing else than its continued production, nor do they differ except by a certain outward terminology (*TDP*, I, p 531).

Hoffmann: This preservation is nothing else than a continued creation (*Synopsis theol.*, I. c., p 302).

Gerhard: Preservation is the continuation of existence.... It is a continuous influx of divine power, as it were, which preserves all things, an influx into all existing things; if it were withdrawn even for a moment, they would not be able to act, indeed, not even to exist (*Loci*, tom. IV, loc. VII, cap. V, LXII, p 83).

Luther: We Christians know that with God creating and preserving are identical (*LW* 4:136).

2) **If improperly stressed, however, it might ultimately lead to pantheism or theistic evolution.**

Heraclitus (d. 475 BC): The universe flows along like a river (as quoted by Hoenecke, *Dogmatik*, II, p 252).

Ted Peters: In light of the big-bang cosmogony and its concept of finite time beginning at $t = 0$, there may be some consonance between natural science and this Christian commitment. In addition, however, non-equilibrium thermodynamics and the theory of evolution clearly indicate epigenetic or ongoing creative activity. Time means new things can appear. It makes sense, then, to speak as well of *creatio continua*. Therefore, we need not have to choose between creation out of nothing and continuing creation. We need both (*God, the World's Future*, p 134).

B1, III, 2. Providence includes cooperation or concurrence (*concursum, providentia cooperatrix*), which can be described as follows: God directly influences and assists every creature in its functions and activities according to its unique nature.

a) **All events in this world are ascribed to two causes.**

1) **Nothing takes place without the will and influence of God.**

Deuteronomy 8:10-11, 17-18: When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. ¹¹Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God.... ¹⁷You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." ¹⁸But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

Joshua 24:17 It was the LORD our God himself who brought us and our fathers up out of Egypt, from that land of slavery, and performed those great signs before our eyes. He protected us on our entire journey and among all the nations through which we traveled.

2 Samuel 8:6 [David] put garrisons in the Aramean kingdom of Damascus, and the Arameans became subject to him and brought tribute. The LORD gave David victory wherever he went.

Job 10:8 Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me?

Amos 3:6 When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?

Acts 17:28 "For in him we live and move and have our being." As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

Philippians 2:13 For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

2) **A relatively independent virtue and influence is ascribed to the so-called "secondary causes" (*causae secundae*).**

Genesis 1:22,28,29 God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

Proverbs 28:19 He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty. Parallel: Proverbs 12:1

Ecclesiastes 1:5-7 The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. ⁶The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. ⁷All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again.

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

b) **God through a general influence (*influxus generalis*) cooperates with his creatures to produce the result.**

1) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

Psalms 104:14-15 He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate—bringing forth food from the earth: ¹⁵wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart.

Psalms 147:9-10 He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call. ¹⁰His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of a man.

Exodus 4:10-12 Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." ¹¹The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth?"

Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹² Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

1 Samuel 14:6 Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, “Come, let’s go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised fellows. Perhaps the LORD will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by many or by few.”

1 Samuel 17:40,46-50 Then [David] took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.” ⁴⁸ As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. ⁴⁹ Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. ⁵⁰ So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

Psalms 135:7 He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth; he sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

Psalms 148:8 Lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding.

Acts 17:25,26,28 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁸ “For in him we live and move and have our being.” As some of your own poets have said, “We are his offspring.”

Quenstedt: The question here is not whether God gives the power of acting to secondary causes and preserves it, for this way of cooperating attributes no more to God than that he preserves the essence of things and their ability to act which he gave them in the beginning. But this is the question: whether God influences the action of secondary causes directly and along with the action the effect as such according to the need of each one. Divine omnipresence coincides with divine cooperation as far as the thing is concerned (*TDP*, pars I, cap. XIII, sect. II, qu. III, observ. V, p 544).

2) **Such actions are joint actions.**

-a) **The action is produced not by God alone, nor by the creature alone.**

-b) **Not in part by God, in part by the creature.**

-c) **But by a joint action of both.**

Quenstedt: Concerning the cooperation of the primary cause (i.e., God) with secondary causes it must be noted that God not only gives the power to act to secondary causes and preserves it (Durandus, Taurellus, certain papists and Arminians limit the whole cooperation of God to this alone), but that he influences the action and effect of the creature directly, in such a way that the same effect is produced not by God alone, nor by the creature alone, nor partly by God, partly by the creature, but with one and the same efficacy it is produced in its entirety at one and the same time by God and the creature, by God namely as the universal and first cause, by the creature as the particular and secondary cause. Therefore, if God should withdraw his cooperation, the action of the creature would cease, as was apparent in the Babylonian fire (Dn 3:27). ... The influence of God is not in fact one action, the work of the creature another, but the action is one and indivisible, in respect to both and dependent on both, on God as the universal cause, on the creature as the particular cause. ... Just as one and the same writing depends on the hand and the pen, not one part on the hand and another on the pen, but the whole depends on the hand and the whole on the pen, so the cooperation of God is not prior to the particular action of the creature by a priority of causality, since it is in reality entirely one and the same action. And therefore God produces the whole effect, just as the secondary cause also does, because it takes place through the outward action of God, which is intimately included in the action of the creature, yes, is one and the same with it (*TDP*, thes. XV, nota I, p 351).

c) **God cooperates with the creatures according to their peculiar nature.**

1) **God cooperates with secondary causes according to their nature. With free ones he cooperates freely. With necessary ones he cooperates necessarily, with strong ones strongly, etc.**

2) **God cooperates in the outward action (*ad materiale*), not in the essence (i.e., the moral quality) of the action (*ad formale*). The gun works for the police officer and for the murderer, but God does not approve of the action of the murderer.**

-a) **Their individual natures were given to the creatures by God for this very purpose.**

Genesis 1:15,29,30 “And let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ²⁹ Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

Genesis 9:3 Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

Exodus 4:11 The LORD said to him, “Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD?”

Psalms 94:9 Does he who implanted the ear not hear? Does he who formed the eye not see?

-b) **Sometimes God suspends such cooperation.**

Daniel 3:27 And the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.

Psalms 127:1 Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.

Leviticus 26:26 When I cut off your supply of bread, ten women will be able to bake your bread in one oven, and they will dole out the bread by weight. You will eat, but you will not be satisfied.

Isaiah 9:20 On the right they will devour, but still be hungry; on the left they will eat, but not be satisfied. Each will feed on the flesh of his own offspring.

Hosea 4:10 They will eat but not have enough; they will engage in prostitution but not increase, because they have deserted the LORD to give themselves.

Haggai 1:6,10 You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it. ¹⁰Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops.

-c) God cooperates in actions produced by the will of man.

Hutter: "Contingent" is defined as that which, when it happens, is neither impossible nor necessary, but which has a cause which from its own nature could act otherwise, as is the case with the will of man. Or, as others define it, "contingent" is that which could be this way or that way, or which could happen or not happen, and before it happens can be prevented from happening; but when it happens, it has a cause which from its own nature was able to act otherwise and whose opposite would not have been impossible.—The betrayal of Judas with respect to divine providence is called necessary by a necessity of consequence, because God certainly foresaw from eternity that Judas with determined malice and a definite plan would betray Christ. But it was contingent in so far as he would have been able to resist the evil desires of his will and not betray Christ. Because God certainly did not foresee those things otherwise than as they were going to happen from their own causes; therefore they also happen just as God has foreseen them (*Loci com. theol.*, loc. III, de providentia, qu. II. p 229).

Hollaz: Those who teach a "preceding cooperation" are guilty of a contradiction in terms. For if God cooperates, he does not operate in advance. If he works *with*, he does not work beforehand. A pre-motion is an antecedent act. But cooperation does not precede an action but takes place when the action itself is produced (*Examen*, pars I, cap. VI, qu. 18, prob. I, p 486).

d) How does God cooperate to produce a sinful act?

1) God cooperates with his creatures in producing the purely natural (physical or mental) processes (*actiones et effectus qua tales*).

Deuteronomy 32:5,6 They have acted corruptly toward him; to their shame they are no longer his children, but a warped and crooked generation. ⁶Is this the way you repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?

Deuteronomy 32:13-18 [The Lord] made him ride on the heights of the land and fed him with the fruit of the fields. He nourished him with honey from the rock, and with oil from the flinty crag, ¹⁴with curds and milk from herd and flock and with fattened lambs and goats, with choice rams of Bashan and the finest kernels of wheat. You drank the foaming blood of the grape. ¹⁵Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; filled with food, he became heavy and sleek. He abandoned the God who made him and rejected the Rock his Savior. ¹⁶They made him jealous with their foreign gods and angered him with their detestable idols. ¹⁷They sacrificed to demons, which are not God—gods they had not known, gods that recently appeared, gods your fathers did not fear. ¹⁸You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.

Hosea 8:14 Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; Judah has fortified many towns. But I will send fire upon their cities that will consume their fortresses.

Hosea 13:4-9 But I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me. ⁵I cared for you in the desert, in the land of burning heat. ⁶When I fed them, they were satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; then they forgot me. ⁷So I will come upon them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk by the path. ⁸Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip them open. Like a lion I will devour them; a wild animal will tear them apart. ⁹You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against me, against your helper.

Isaiah 7:18-20 In that day the LORD will whistle for flies from the distant streams of Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria. ¹⁹They will all come and settle in the steep ravines and in the crevices in the rocks, on all the thornbushes and at all the water holes. ²⁰In that day the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the River—the king of Assyria—to shave your head and the hair of your legs, and to take off your beards also.

Isaiah 10:5-15 Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of my anger, in whose hand is the club of my wrath! ⁶I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. ⁷But this is not what he intends, this is not what he has in mind; his purpose is to destroy, to put an end to many nations. ⁸"Are not my commanders all kings?" he says. ⁹"Has not Calno fared like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad, and Samaria like Damascus?" ¹⁰As my hand seized the kingdoms of the idols, kingdoms whose images excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria—¹¹shall I not deal with Jerusalem and her images as I dealt with Samaria and her idols?" ¹²When the Lord has finished all his work against Mount Zion and Jerusalem, he will say, "I will punish the king of Assyria for the willful pride of his heart and the haughty look in his eyes." ¹³For he says: "By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding. I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their

kings.¹⁴ As one reaches into a nest, so my hand reached for the wealth of the nations; as men gather abandoned eggs, so I gathered all the countries; not one flapped a wing, or opened its mouth to chirp.”¹⁵ Does the ax raise itself above him who swings it, or the saw boast against him who uses it? As if a rod were to wield him who lifts it up, or a club brandish him who is not wood!

2) **God cooperates with respect to the outward act (*ad materiale*), not with respect to the essence (*ad formale*) of an evil action.**

Psalms 50:16-22 But to the wicked, God says: “What right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips?¹⁷ You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you.”¹⁸ When you see a thief, you join with him; you throw in your lot with adulterers.¹⁹ You use your mouth for evil and harness your tongue to deceive.²⁰ You speak continually against your brother and slander your own mother’s son.²¹ These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face.²² Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue.

3) **God cooperates with the effect, not the defect of an action.**

1 John 3:4-8 Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.⁵ But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.⁶ No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.⁸ He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.

Formula of Concord, Ep., XI 4, 3: This foreknowledge extends alike over the godly and the wicked, but it is not the cause of evil, neither of sin, namely, of doing what is wrong (which originally arises from the devil and the wicked, perverse will of man), nor of their ruin, for which they themselves are responsible; but it only regulates it, and fixes a limit to it how long it should last, and all this to the end that it should serve His elect for their salvation, notwithstanding that it is evil in itself.

Augsburg Confession, XIX: Of the cause of sin they teach that, although God does create and preserve nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked, that is, of the devil and ungodly men, which will, unaided of God, turns itself from God, as Christ says John 8,44: When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own.

e) **God's cooperation is denied by:**

- 1) **Atheism, denying the very existence of God, reduces the universe to a mere mechanism.**
- 2) **Occasionalism (Descartes d. 1650) denies the reciprocal action of mind and matter. This philosophy maintains that God moves the creatures, which simply provide him with an occasion to exercise his power. God takes an act of the will as an occasion to produce a corresponding movement in the body or a given state of the body as an occasion to produce a corresponding mental attitude.**

Described by Quenstedt: The effects of secondary causes are not properly produced by the secondary causes (i.e., by the will of man as such), but they are brought about by God alone in the presence of the secondary things, which themselves do nothing (*TDP*, pars I, cap. XIII, sect. 2, qu. III, antithesis V, p 546).

- 3) **Deism claims that the world is a nicely constructed mechanism, like a clock that has been wound up and now runs on its own. In a general way God keeps it in condition. The individual processes admit of no intervention or alteration.**

S. J. Baumgarten (d. 1842): The general cooperation of God in all actions of created things consists in this that God maintains their powers (*Glaubenslehre*, B. I, Art. 4, Thes. 2, S. 807).

- 4) **Determinism (fatalism) annuls the relative independence of the creature.**

Leyden Synopsis: It follows that there is no freedom of will in creatures which does not have its origin in the first proper cause of all freedom (Hoenecke, *Dogmatik*, II, p 261).

Johann Heinrich Hottinger (1667): God does not cooperate with the human will only with a general and unspecific influence, but with a special and determining influence (*Cursus theolog.*, p 135).

Calvin: He foresees the things that are future for no other reason than that he has decreed that they happen (*Institutes* III, C23, S6).

Quran 6:39: Those who reject our signs are deaf and dumb,— in the midst of darkness profound: whom Allah wills, He leaves to wander; whom he wills, He places on the way that is straight.

f) **Theistic evolution claims *concursum* leaves room for evolution.**

Philip Hefner: It is this notion of *concursum* which enables us to give scholastic foundation to the possibility of God working in and through the evolutionary process—whether it be biological evolution or the psychosocial evolution we call history (Braaten and Jenson, *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. I, p 345, 346).

B1, III, 3. Providence includes government (*gubernatio, providentia gubernatrix*). God controls and directs all events, particularly human actions, so that they serve his purpose, the salvation of man.

a) **God is Ruler and Governor of the world.**

- 1) **God is the Ruler.**

Exodus 15:18 The LORD will reign for ever and ever.

Job 38:33 Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God’s dominion over the earth?

Psalms 29:10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever.

Psalms 93:1-2 The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and is armed with strength. The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.² Your throne was established long ago; you are from all eternity.

Psalms 96:10 Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns.” The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.

Psalm 97:1 The LORD reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice.

Psalm 99:1 The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble; he sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake.

Psalm 145:10-13 All you have made will praise you, O LORD; your saints will extol you. ¹¹ They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, ¹² so that all men may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.

Daniel 2:20-22 Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. ²¹ He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. ²² He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.

2) God's government pertains to the world as a whole.

Deuteronomy 4:39 Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.

1 Chronicles 29:12 Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.

Psalm 47:2 How awesome is the LORD Most High, the great King over all the earth!

Psalm 83:18 Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD—that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

Psalm 135:6 The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Psalm 139:7-10 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Daniel 4:34-35 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. ³⁵ All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands.

3) God is concerned also with the most insignificant things and with the minutest details.

Job 39:5,6 Who let the wild donkey go free? Who untied his ropes? ⁶ I gave him the wasteland as his home, the salt flats as his habitat.

Psalm 50:10,11 For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. ¹¹ I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine.

Psalm 139:2-4 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.

Psalm 147:4,9 He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. ⁹ He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.

Isaiah 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?

Matthew 10:29-31 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Quenstedt: If it was not unworthy of and improper for God to create even the minutest creatures, much less can it be improper for him to rule what he has created (*TDP*, p.l.c.13.s.2.q.1.f.768)

4) God directs the course of nature.

Psalm 135:7 He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth; he sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

Jeremiah 10:12,13 But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. ¹³ When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar; he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

Matthew 5:45 He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

5) God directs the destinies of:

-a) Nations.

Deuteronomy 28:49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand.

Psalm 33:10 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

Isaiah 10:5,6,16 Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of my anger, in whose hand is the club of my wrath! ⁶ I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. ¹³ For he says: "By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding. I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their kings. ¹⁶ Therefore, the Lord, the LORD Almighty, will send a wasting disease upon his sturdy warriors; under his pomp a fire will be kindled like a blazing flame.

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

-b) Individuals.

1 Samuel 2:6,7 The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up. ⁷ The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts.

Psalm 33:13-16 From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; ¹⁴ from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—¹⁵ he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. ¹⁶ No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength.

Psalm 139:15,16 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, ¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Proverbs 16:1,9 To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the reply of the tongue. ⁹ In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

6) In the government of the world God is:

-a) Moved by his goodness (*causa movens* – “moving cause”).

Psalm 33:5 The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

Ps 136:1-26 For his love endures forever.

-b) Guided by his wisdom (*causa dirigens* – “directing cause”).

Nahum 1:7 The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.

Psalm 104:24 How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Proverbs 3:20 By his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

Isaiah 40:13 Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor?

b) God's government does not make man's freedom illusory.

1) Freedom is of two kinds.

-a) “Formal liberty” is the freedom of choice in external actions.

Leviticus 22:18 Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelites and say to them: "If any of you—either an Israelite or an alien living in Israel—presents a gift for a burnt offering to the LORD, either to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering..."

1 Corinthians 7:37,39 But the man who has settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will, and who has made up his mind not to marry the virgin—this man also does the right thing. ³⁹ A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

John 8:33 They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

-b) “Real liberty” is the harmony with God's will.

John 8:32,36 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Romans 6:18,22 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

2) Man's original liberty has been destroyed.

-a) Real liberty has been lost.

John 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."

Romans 6:16,17,19,20 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to

obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. ¹⁹ I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

-b) Formal liberty is limited to a choice between various possible evils and external things.

2 Samuel 17:14 Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel." For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

2 Samuel 24:12 Go and tell David, "This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you."

Deuteronomy 30:19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

Augsburg Confession, XVIII: Of Free Will they teach that man's will has some liberty to choose civil righteousness and to work things subject to reason. But it has no power, without the Holy Spirit, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness; since the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2, 14; but this righteousness is wrought in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the Word.

Augsburg Confession, Ap., XVIII, 70–71: Nor, indeed, do we deny liberty to the human will. The human will has liberty in the choice of works and things which reason comprehends by itself. It can to a certain extent render civil righteousness or the righteousness of works; it can speak of God, offer to God a certain service by an outward work, obey magistrates, parents; in the choice of an outward work it can restrain the hands from murder, from adultery, from theft. Since there is left in human nature reason and judgment concerning objects subjected to the senses, choice between these things, the liberty and power to render civil righteousness, are also left. For Scripture calls this the righteousness of the flesh which the carnal nature, *i.e.*, reason, renders by itself, without the Holy Spirit. Although the power of concupiscence is such that men more frequently obey evil dispositions than sound judgment. And the devil, who is efficacious in the godless, as Paul says, Eph. 2, 2, does not cease to incite this feeble nature to various offenses. These are the reasons why even civil righteousness is rare among men.

Formula of Concord, T. D., II, 53: This Word man can externally hear and read, even though he is not yet converted to God and regenerate; for in these external things, as said above, man even since the Fall has to a certain extent a free will, so that he can go to church and hear or not hear the sermon.

-c) While real freedom is lost, man is still a willing sinner, and therefore is held responsible.

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

3) God's government does not annul this remnant of freedom.

-a) Freedom as such is an attribute of the will.

-b) God's government restricts man in his actions, frustrates his ends and aims.

-c) When God influences man in his decisions, he does not employ force or coercion. Note God's commands, threats, and promises.

Exodus 7:3,4 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt, ⁴ he will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites.

Compare Exodus 8:15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

2 Samuel 15:31 Now David had been told, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness."

Compare 2 Samuel 17:14 Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice of Hushai the Arkite is better than that of Ahithophel." For the LORD had determined to frustrate the good advice of Ahithophel in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

1 Kings 22:20-28 Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. ²⁰ And the LORD said, "Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there? One suggested this, and another that. ²¹ Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.' ²² 'By what means?' the LORD asked. 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,' he said. 'You will succeed in enticing him,' said the LORD. 'Go and do it.'" ²³ So now the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The LORD has decreed disaster for you. ²⁴ Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. "Which way did the spirit from the LORD go when he went from me to speak to you?" he asked. ²⁵ Micaiah replied, "You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room." ²⁶ The king of Israel then ordered, "Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city and to Joash the king's son ²⁷ and say, 'This is what the king says: Put this fellow in prison and give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely.'" ²⁸ Micaiah declared, "If you ever return safely, the LORD has not spoken through me." Then he added, "Mark my words, all you people!"

4) When it comes to the evil decisions of man, God's government may assume any of the following aspects.

-a) God permits it (*permissio*).

-1) God does not prevent, as he well might, all evil decisions and actions by placing insurmountable obstacles in the way.

Psalm 81:11,12 But my people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to me. ¹² So I gave

them over to their stubborn hearts to follow their own devices.

Acts 7:42 But God turned away and gave them over to the worship of the heavenly bodies. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets: "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?"

Acts 14:16 In the past, he let all nations go their own way.

Romans 1:24,25 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Hollaz: Divine permission ... is a negative act consisting in the withholding or suspension of an insurmountable obstacle. God could indeed restrain or coerce the sinner by placing in his way a powerful and invincible obstacle; but the most holy God has most just causes for permitting sin (*Examen*, p 449).

Quenstedt: God indeed permits but he does not will what he has permitted. This happens, not indeed with God being absolutely unwilling, that is, restraining and hindering it from happening, but nevertheless not willing it. The not-hindering of God is not a willing, but a permitting, and at the same time also a not-willing, in so far as the things which he permits seriously displease him (*TDP*, I, p 533).

Gerhard: God does not will sin, and nevertheless he does not prevent it, which is permission itself. But although he permits (it) willingly, not unwillingly, nevertheless permission and will are directed toward different objects: permission refers to the sin itself, will to the useful end which he according to his own wisdom knows how to draw out of the sin (*Loci Theologici*, IV, p 88).

-2) This *permissio* is not indifference.

Psalm 5:4,5 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.⁵ The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong.

Psalm 11:5 The LORD examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence his soul hates.

Proverbs 6:16 There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him.

Zechariah 8:17 "Do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the LORD.

-3) Nor is permission negligence or powerlessness.

Psalm 50:21,22 These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face.²² Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Hollaz: Divine permission is not a pleasant indulgence, as if God plainly does not care when men commit evil acts. Nor is it a relaxation of the law, as though he gives men license to sin; nor is it impotence in God or a lack of knowledge, as if he wills or approves of evil; nor a lack of power, as if he is unable to restrain sin. Nor does it make God an unconcerned spectator of sins (*Examen*, p 449).

-4) Permission is a punishment, a judgment.

Quenstedt: Permission is an act of governing providence by which God does not restrain rational creatures which are inclined to sin by their own will from an evil forbidden by the law by imposing obstacles which the finite agent is not able to overcome or which he does not know how to overcome, but from just causes he allows them to plunge into sins (*TDP*, I, p 533).

-b) God impedes evil actions. He prevents people from carrying them out (*impeditio*).

Genesis 19:11 Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

Genesis 20:6 Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her."

Exodus 14:30 That day the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore.

Numbers 22:12 But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed."

1 Kings 13:4 When King Jeroboam heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, he stretched out his hand from the altar and said, "Seize him!" But the hand he stretched out toward the man shriveled up, so that he could not pull it back.

2 Kings 6:17,18 And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.¹⁸ As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike these people with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked.

2 Kings 7:6 For the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great

army, so that they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!"

Psalm 2:4-5 The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. ⁵ Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath.

Isaiah 37:36 Then the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning—there were all the dead bodies!

Quenstedt: God impedes evil by withdrawing his cooperation, by strengthening weaker things, but restraining stronger things with divine power. Impeding is an act of governing providence by which God restrains the actions of creatures according to his will, so that they do not produce the result which they would otherwise produce either by the natural or free power of the agent (*TDP*, pars I, cap XIII, sect. I, thes. XXI, nota, p 534.)

-c) God directs evil actions (*directio*). He controls and directs all human actions so that they serve his purposes.

-1) God prospers the good works of his children.

Exodus 3:11,12 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" ¹² And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

Leviticus 26:3-13 If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, ⁴I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees of the field their fruit. ⁵Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land. ⁶I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove savage beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. ⁷You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. ⁸Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you. ⁹I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you. ¹⁰You will still be eating last year's harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new. ¹¹I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. ¹²I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. ¹³I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high.

Deuteronomy 20:1 When you go to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and an army greater than yours, do not be afraid of them, because the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt, will be with you.

1 Samuel 9:20 As for the donkeys you lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they have been found. And to whom is all the desire of Israel turned, if not to you and all your father's family?

1 Samuel 10:7 Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.

-2) He frustrates the purposes of the wicked, although permitting the deed.

Genesis 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Acts 4:28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Quenstedt: God has decreed not to hinder but to permit that evil deeds happen.... But he has not decreed that they should do the evil. A distinction must be made between the preparation and impulse of the ungodly, and the directing of even the worst crime to a salutary end. Not the former but the latter must be attributed to God. Direction is an act of governing providence by which God so controls the good actions of creatures that they lead to and are brought to the objective intended by God, but he directs evil actions to a certain end set by him but not seen by sinners and often contrary to their intention (*Loc*i, thes. XXII, nota.)

-3) This is a great consolation against our infirmities.

Matthew 10:19,20 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Romans 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

-d) He determines the limits (*determinatio*), that is, God fixes certain bounds of space, time, degree, etc., which the actions of the wicked may not exceed.

Job 1:12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job 2:6 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

Psalms 7:14-16 He who is pregnant with evil and conceives trouble gives birth to disillusionment. ¹⁵ He who digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit he has made. ¹⁶ The trouble he causes recoils on himself; his violence comes down on his own head.

Psalms 66:7 He rules forever by his power, his eyes watch the nations—let not the rebellious rise up against him.

Psalms 124:1-5 If the LORD had not been on our side—let Israel say—² if the LORD had not been on our side when men attacked us, ³ when their anger flared against us, they would have swallowed us alive; ⁴ the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, ⁵ the raging waters would have swept us away.

Isaiah 8:10 Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

Quenstedt: Determination is an act of governing providence by which God sets certain limits for the powers, actions, and feelings of his creatures within which they are held both as to time as well as to magnitude and degree (*TDP*, I, p 534).

-e) The Confessions deny that God is the cause of sin.

Augsburg Confession, XIX: Of the Cause of Sin they teach that, although God does create and preserve nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked, that is, of the devil and ungodly men; which will, unaided of God, turns itself from God.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. II, 44: For the Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so as to be accomplished, but represses and restrains it so that it must not do what it wishes. But if it does what it wishes, the Holy Spirit and faith are [certainly] not present. For St. John says, 1 John 3, 9: Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin, ... and he cannot sin. And yet it is also the truth when the same St. John says, 1, 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Formula of Concord, T. D., XI, 6,7: The foreknowledge of God (*praescientia*) foresees and foreknows also that which is evil; however, not in such a manner as though it were God's gracious will that it should happen; but all that the perverse, wicked will of the devil and of men wills and desires to undertake and do, God sees and knows before; and His *praescientia*, that is, foreknowledge, observes its order also in wicked acts or works, inasmuch as a limit and measure is fixed by God to the evil which God does not will, how far it should go, and how long it should last, when and how He will hinder and punish it; for all of this God the Lord so overrules that it must redound to the glory of the divine name and to the salvation of His elect, and the godless, on that account, must be put to confusion. However, the beginning and cause of evil is not God's foreknowledge for God does not create and effect or work evil, neither does He help or promote it; but the wicked, perverse will of the devil and of men is the cause of evil, as it is written Hos. 13, 9: O Israel, you have destroyed yourself; but in Me is your help. Also: You are not a God that has pleasure in wickedness. Ps. 5, 4.

B1, IV. Two of the agencies instituted by God in his providence for man demand our special attention: the family and government.

B1, IV, A. Christian Marriage and the Family

B1, IV, A, 1. When God created man and woman, he also instituted marriage as the basic unit of society.

Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25 And God saw that it was *good*. Compare:

Genesis 2:18-24 ¹⁸ The LORD God said, "It is *not good* for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." ¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." ²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

a) God ordained marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Matthew 19:4-6 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' ⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

1) It is God's will that this union should last a lifetime.

1 Corinthians 7:39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

2) Yet marriage is only for this life.

Matthew 22:30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

b) God ordained marriage for society and not exclusively for the church.

1) Marriage is not a sacrament like baptism or the Lord's Supper, which are means of grace.

-a) A sacramental view is held by the Roman Catholic Church.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament (Paragraph 1601).

-b) A sacramental view is held by the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Pomazansky: A mystery (sacrament) is a sacred act which under a visible aspect communicates to the soul of a believer the invisible grace of God. The name of "mystery" has become established in the church as referring to seven rites: Baptism, Chrismation, Communion (the Eucharist), Repentance, Priesthood, Matrimony, and Unction (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 263).

-c) Luther taught marriage was not a sacrament.

Luther: Since marriage and the married estate are worldly matters, it behooves us pastors or ministers of the church not to attempt to order or govern anything connected with it, but to permit every city and land to continue its own use and custom in this connection. ("The Order of Marriage for Common Pastors," *LW* 53, 110-115).

2) God encourages Christians to look for a marriage partner who shares a common faith.

Proverbs 31:10,30 A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. ³⁰ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

3) Yet Scripture does not forbid the marriage of a believer and an unbeliever.

1 Corinthians 7:39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, *but he must belong to the Lord.* NIV

1 Corinthians 7:39 A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, *but let it be in the Lord.* GWN

Greek: Γυνή δεδεσται ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ζῆν ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς· ἐὰν δὲ κοιμηθῆ ὁ ἀνὴρ· ἐλευθέρα ἐστὶν ὃ θέλει γαμηθῆναι, μόνον ἐν κυρίῳ.

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

-a) Scripture does show that the existing marriage of a believer and unbeliever should be maintained.

1 Corinthians 7:12,13 To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³ And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him.

-b) Many Evangelicals believe it is sinful for a believer to marry an unbeliever.

H. Norman Wright: When it comes to a believer and an unbeliever's seeking marriage, the Scriptures clearly forbid the uniting of such a couple (See 2 Cor. 6:14); this would be the standard for refusing to perform the ceremony (*The Premarital Counseling Handbook*, p 30).

Jay Adams: Christians must marry Christians. When they are free to marry, they are not free to marry any and every person; they may marry only believers (*Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*, p 87).

R. C. Sproul: While all men and women may marry, the Christian is called to marry only "in the Lord," Scripture is clear in its prohibition against Christians marrying non-Christians (*Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, p 266).

For an evaluation of this claim see "Exegetical Brief: Does 1 Corinthians 7:39 Forbid a Believer to Marry an Unbeliever?" David J. Valleskey. *WLQ*, Vol. 94, 4 (Fall 1997)

B1, IV, A, 2. God establishes marriage through the consent of the man and woman. (*Consensus facit matrimoniam.*)

Luther: The estate of marriage consists essentially in consent having been freely and previously given to one another (*LW* 44, p 11).

a) This truth is not explicitly stated in Scripture.

1) It is implicit in Genesis 2:24.

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

2) Some point to the example of Rebekah.

Genesis 24:5,58 The servant asked him, "What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? Shall I then take your son back to the country you came from?" ⁵⁸ So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said.

-a) This is a descriptive passage.

-b) Whether Rebekah is consenting to the marriage or to the time of travel is unclear.

b) The marriage consent consists of an unconditional commitment to love and faithfulness. (The word "unconditional" is not used in an absolute sense here. If one partner breaks the marriage bond, the other is no longer bound to the marriage.)

Ephesians 5:22,24,25 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

c) Such consent is to be given freely and publicly.

1) Consent is to be given freely. It cannot be obtained by deception or force or given in drunkenness or insanity. It cannot validly be given by someone already married to another.

Romans 7:2,3 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

2) **Consent is to be given by those who are able to give a valid consent. There are certain restrictions about those who may give such consent, such as government restrictions based on age and relationship.**

-a) **Many Lutherans claim that the restrictions based on consanguinity and affinity in Leviticus 18 are based on the moral law, which is known, in part, through natural knowledge of the law. For a lengthy defense of this position see the German edition of Walther's *Pastorale*, p 204-215.**

Leviticus 18:24: Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled.

1 Corinthians 5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife.

Fritz: Do the marriage laws of the Old Testament, Lev. 18, etc., still hold good in the New Testament? The marriage laws of the Old Testament were not a part of the Old Testament Political (judicial) Law, but of the Moral Law, that declaration of God's will which directs and binds all men of every age and place (*Pastoral Theology*, p 163). (See also Schaller's *Pastorale*, p 79)

Schuetze and Habeck: To what extent does Scripture set up forbidden degrees of consanguinity? Leviticus 18 is most often adduced to determine the exact degrees of consanguinity or affinity that prohibit marriage in the eyes of God. The convenient rule taken from Leviticus 18:6 that relationships up to the second degree prohibits marriage is based on translating **שָׂרָא בְּשָׂרוֹ** "flesh of his flesh" and interpreting that to mean the second degree of consanguinity. However the two Hebrew nouns are joined through the construct state and here have a superlative meaning, best translated simply "nearest of kin," with no degree indicated. It is also to be noted that the New Testament in speaking of marriage nowhere refers to Leviticus 18. The Mosaic code, of which Leviticus 18 is a part, has no direct application to New Testament Christians (*The Shepherd Under Christ*, p 270).

Schaller: The question whether marriage is permitted with the sister of a man's deceased wife (*Schwagererehe*), despite much discussion, seemingly cannot be answered with such conviction that one can bind consciences either to a positive or negative answer (*Pastorale*, p 79).

Leviticus 18:16, 18: Do not have sexual relations with your brother's wife; that would dishonor your brother. ¹⁸Do not take your wife's sister as a rival wife and have sexual relations with her while your wife is living.

Leviticus 20:21: If a man marries his brother's wife, it is an act of impurity; he has dishonored his brother. They will be childless.

Deuteronomy 25:5: If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her.

-b) **The Christian will follow governmental laws that regulate consanguinity in marriage.**

Romans 13:1 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

3) **The nature of marriage as a public contract requires that the consent must be given publicly.**

Charles Sell: Marriage is a socially sanctioned commitment. The practice of living together without making a public declaration of marriage is neither biblically nor socially acceptable. The public nature of marriage is clearly seen in that the man is portrayed as leaving father and mother to marry (Gen. 2:24) (*Family Ministry*, p 80).

Note the confusion that Abraham and Isaac caused when they didn't acknowledge their marriages publicly: Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-18; 26:1-11.

d) **The man and woman leave their former families to establish a new family.**

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

e) **They will continue to love, honor, and care for their parents, even in old age.**

1 Timothy 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.

Proverbs 23:22 Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

B1, IV, A, 3. Engagement is a social custom, which is neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture

a) **Engagement, betrothal, and marriage customs may vary from culture to culture.**

Note: For purposes of this discussion, "engagement" is defined as an agreement to marry or to plan marriage; "betrothal" is an unconditional, witnessed commitment to marriage, and "marriage" is entering upon married life.

Matthew 1:18-21,24,25 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to

divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Lenski: The Jewish betrothal was a solemn promise before witnesses, embodying the essentials of the marriage vow. No further promises followed. In later times it was ratified in writing. By virtue of the betrothal the bridegroom and the bride became husband and wife as is also shown in the next verse where Joseph is called Mary's husband, and in v. 20 where she is called his wife. It is a mistake to regard "husband" and "wife" as proleptic terms denoting the husband and his wife to be. This is reading into the Jewish procedure our modern conception of an engagement. The Jewish betrothal was the marriage itself. But the Jewish custom placed an interval, longer or shorter, between the betrothal and the bringing home of the bride to her husband's house. No religious ceremony and no vows of any kind accompanied this home-bringing although it was made a festive occasion with a procession and a feast following (*Commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel*, p 40).

b) Contemporary engagement is generally not tantamount to betrothal or marriage.

1) Because of its undefined status, engagement may or it may not fulfill the moral requirement for unconditional consent.

Gerhard: Engagements (*sponsalia*) may be contracted with conditions; marriages may not (*Loci*, Book VII, Concerning Marriage, p 100).

2) It does not fulfill the social, legal, or other practical requirements of marriage.

3) Scripture nowhere makes a distinction between being married in the eyes of God and being married in the eyes of man. Even though Christians are in God's Church, they are still in the world and are to fulfill the requirements of both realms. An engaged couple, which is not married in the eyes of the world, is not married in the eyes of God.

2 Corinthians 8:21 For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.

Note: Even Jesus fulfilled the requirements of governmental laws as Matthew 17:24-27 indicates.

Matthew 17:24-27 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" ²⁵ "Yes, he does," he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?" ²⁶ "From others," Peter answered. "Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him. ²⁷ "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

4) Since engaged couples are not married, it is sinful for them to engage in sexual relations prior to marriage.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 "Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything. ¹³ "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food"—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. ¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

Ephesians 5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body [or learn to acquire a wife] in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; ⁶ and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. ⁷ For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. ⁸ Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

c) God instructs us to take our promises seriously, including the promise to marry.

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.

d) Those who break an engagement promise are guilty of sin and should be called to repentance.

Matthew 18:15 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.

B1, IV, A, 4. God established different roles for man and woman at creation. Husband and wife are to reflect these roles in their marriage relationship.

a) Man and woman are equal in status before God.

1) Man and woman were both made in the image of God.

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

2) Man and woman both fell into sin and share the guilt of the fall.

1 Timothy 2:14 It was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

3) Man and woman share equally in the spiritual blessings God gives through Christ.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

b) God gave the husband the role of head and the wife the role of submission.

Ephesians 5:22-24 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

1) These roles were established at creation.

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

1 Corinthians 11:3,8,9 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.⁸ For man did not come from woman, but woman from man;⁹ neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

Timothy 2:13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

2) The New Testament indicates that these roles are a part of God's moral law that applies to all people of all time.

1 Corinthians 11:3 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Corinthians 14:34 Women . . . must be in submission, as the Law says.

3) These roles were not simply a part of the curse that God pronounced at the fall into sin.

See WELS Doctrinal Statement *Man and Woman in God's World*.

-a) Some believe these roles were imposed after the fall and do not apply to Christians who are freed from the curse of the law.

Gilbert Bilezikian: The fall had spawned the twin evils of woman's suffering in labor and man's laboring in suffering. As a result of Satan's work, man was now master over woman, just as the mother-ground was now master over man. For these reasons, it is proper to regard both male dominance and death as being antithetical to God's original intent in creation. Both are the result of sin, itself instigated by Satan. Their origin is satanic (*Beyond Sex Roles: A Guide for the Study of Female Roles in the Bible*, p 56).

Gilbert Bilezikian: The ruler/subject relationship between Adam and Eve began after the fall. It was for Eve the application of the same death principle that made Adam slave to the soil. Because it resulted from the fall, the rule of Adam over Eve is viewed as satanic in origin, no less than death itself (*Beyond Sex Roles: A Guide for the Study of Female Roles in the Bible*, p 58).

-b) Luther can be quoted on both sides of the issue.

Luther: Thus she differs only in sex from the head of the household, inasmuch as she was taken from the flesh of the man. Although this can be said only of Eve, who was created in this manner, nevertheless in Matt. 19:5 Christ applies it to all wives when He says that husband and wife are one flesh. In this way, although your wife has not been made from your bones, nevertheless, because she is your wife, she is the mistress of the house just as you are its master, except that the wife was made subject to the man by the Law which was given after sin (*LW*, Vol. 1, p 137, 138).

Commenting on 1 Timothy 2:13-14: Paul skillfully arranged this example that he might not appear to be speaking of the top of his head. This is the way God has ordained it. The principle role belongs to the man. "Adam was first," etc. The role of greater authority lies in the man rather than in the woman.

"Then Eve" that she should be, etc. Secondarily, this situation stands, not only because of what God intended, but also from the history of Adam and Eve (*LW*, Vol. 28, p 277).

4) As a result of the fall, God indicated that rebellion against these roles would now be a source of pain and conflict.

Genesis 3:16-19 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

5) God applies these roles that were established at creation to marriage when he states that the husband is the head of his wife and the wife is to submit to her husband.

Ephesians 5:22-24 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

c) **Both husband and wife are to use their different roles to serve each other.**

1) **Scripture teaches the broad principle that Christians are to use their roles to serve each others. This broad principle would include the relationship between husband and wife.**

Philippians 2:5-8 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

-a) **Some use Ephesians 5:21 to deny that Scripture establishes roles for husband and wife in marriage.**

Craig Keener: I am not saying that it is necessarily wrong for the man to lead in a household; I am suggesting that it is wrong for him to demand the position of leadership without his wife's consent. Given the educational and vocational status of women in our culture, an egalitarian marriage must be permitted as a viable option (*Paul, Women, and Wives*, p 135).

-b) **Some claim Ephesians 5:21 supports a mutual submission between husbands and wives.**

Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

George W. Knight: In the admonition "submit to one another," the verb (ὑποτάσσω) has as its basic meaning "to subject or subordinate." Here Paul's use of the middle voice focuses on what one does to oneself: one submits oneself to others. The Bauer-Arndt-Gringrich-Danker *Greek-English Lexicon* rightly describes this as "submission in the sense of voluntary yielding in love." This voluntary yielding to others is a characteristic of the Christian community and is urged elsewhere in the New Testament. Compare, e.g., "In humility consider others [ἀλλήλους, the same word as in Ephesians] better than yourselves: (Philippians 2:3). This admonition is based on the example of Jesus (Philippians 2:5), who insisted on a servant mentality in imitation of him: ". . . whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:26-28).

Furthermore, the Apostle Peter, like the Apostle Paul, both urges particular people (younger men) to submit to particular people (elders) and all to submit to one another: "Young men . . . be submissive to (ὑποτάγητε) those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another (ἀλλήλοις again) . . ." (1 Peter 5:4-5). Similarly, Paul urges masters to "Treat your slaves *in the same way*" (τά αὐτά, Ephesians 6:9) as their slaves were to treat them, i.e., "with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart (verse 5). This implies reciprocity between masters and slaves. The exhortation to Christians in Ephesians 5:21 is thus, like these other passages, a general exhortation of mutual submission to "one another" (*Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p 166).

-c) **Others question whether such a usage of ὑποτάσσω can be supported.**

Grudem: This is not a legitimate meaning for the term ὑποτάσσω, which always implies a relationship of submission to an authority (*Systematic Theology*, p 465).

Peter O'Brien: The pronoun "one another" is not always fully reciprocal. Although advocates of the mutual submission interpretation assume that the relationships expressed by the Greek pronoun are always symmetrical (and so must mean "everyone to everyone"), this depends entirely on the context. On occasion, the pronoun does have a fully reciprocal significance. But in other contexts a symmetrical relationship cannot be in view. For example, Revelation 6:4, "so that men should slay *one another*", cannot mean that each killed the other at precisely the same time as he or she was killed. Likewise, Galatians 6:2, "Bear *one another's* burdens", does not signify that "*everyone*" should exchange burdens of *others* who are less able (*The Letter to the Ephesians*, p 403).

2) **As the servant leader, the husband is responsible for providing for his wife and family and protecting them from harm, both in a physical and spiritual sense. He is to do this in a spirit of love.**

Ephesians 5:25-28 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

-a) **This does not mean that the husband must be the sole provider for his wife and family. The wife will assist in providing for the needs of the family.**

1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Proverbs 31:11-31 Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.¹² She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. ¹³She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. ¹⁴She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. ¹⁵She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. ¹⁶She considers a field and buys it; out

of her earnings she plants a vineyard.¹⁷ She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.¹⁸ She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.¹⁹ In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.²⁰ She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.²¹ When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet.²² She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple.²³ Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.²⁵ She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.²⁶ She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.²⁷ She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.²⁸ Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:²⁹ "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."³⁰ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.³¹ Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

-b) The husband's leadership role does not give him the right to dominate his wife and children in a cold, cruel, or careless manner. Nor does he have the right to abdicate his role as head—either actively or passively through laziness and apathy—to his wife.

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

3) As the servant helper, the wife will respect, support, and submit to her husband's leadership role.

Ephesians 5:22,24 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

1 Peter 3:1-6 Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives,² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.³ Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.⁴ Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.⁵ For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands,⁶ like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

Colossians 3:18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Note: A wife steps out of her role in marriage when she refuses to respect her husband as the God-given leader of the family or when she sets herself up as a rival.

4) The wife's role is one of subordination (ὑποτάσσω).

Stephen B. Clark: In terms of the way in which subordination and governance are conducted, it is helpful to notice three main types: 1) Oppression. Oppressive subordination occurs in a relationship that works for the benefit of the ruler and the harm of the subordinate. Conquest normally leads to oppression as the conqueror exploits the conquered. 2) Care-subordination. Care-subordination characterizes a relationship in which the head is dedicated to the care of the subordinate and engages in the relationship for the benefit of the subordinate. The parent-child relationship is the most obvious example of such care-subordination (where parents rear their children well). The master-disciple relationship is also an example of such subordination. 3) Unity-subordination. Unity-subordination occurs in a relationship that is carried on for the sake of a unity or higher cause. This is the kind of subordination that is integral to genuine community. Care-subordination and unity-subordination can often occur in the same relationship. Genesis is primarily concerned with unity-subordination (in this case, unity-subordination which is voluntary). The goal of the marriage relationship as presented in Genesis is oneness, the oneness described as "one flesh." The woman is voluntarily subordinate to the man so that the two might be one and thus be in a position to fulfill the call the Lord gave the human race. This kind of subordination is also the key to the unity which God intended for the whole human race and for the new human race which is the Christian people (*Man and Woman in Christ*, p 41,42).

George W. Knight: The meaning of ὑποτάσσω, used consistently in the charge to wives, is the same as its meaning in verse 21, that is, "submission in the sense of voluntary yielding in love." This is not abandonment of the great New Testament truth also taught by the Apostle Paul that "there is neither . . . male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Rather, it is an appeal to one who is equal by creation and redemption to submit to the authority God has ordained (*Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p 168).

d) These roles complement each other.

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

לֹא-טוֹב הָיְוֹת הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה-לּוֹ עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ

Genesis 2:22,23 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

Quenstedt (via Augustine and Aquinas): The wife was not formed from the head lest she aspire to dominion or be superior as a lord; nor was she made from the feet that she should be a slave or a footstool of man; but she was made from the side that she should be a helper (*TDP*, pars II, cap. I, sec. I, th. IV, p 512).

e) The egalitarian view denies that God gave different roles to husband and wife in marriage.

Note: In contemporary Christian circles the biblical view which recognizes that husband and wife are equal in status before God but have different roles is called the *complementarian* view. The view that husband and wife have no distinct roles is called the *egalitarian* view.

Craig Keener: I am not saying that it is necessarily wrong for the man to lead in a household; I am suggesting that it is wrong for him to demand the position of leadership without his wife's consent. Given the educational and vocational status of women in our culture, an egalitarian marriage must be permitted as a viable option. ... This book is written not to tell any couple which partner, if either, should lead in the home; it is written to argue that those who think they know which partner should always lead on the basis of Scripture have not read Scripture as clearly as they should have (*Paul, Women, and Wives*, p 135, 136).

f) **The egalitarian view argues that Ephesians 5:21 cancels out the roles that Paul teaches in Ephesians 5:22-31.**

Keener: It is clear that the submission of verse 22 cannot be other than the submission of verse 21 from the simple fact that the word "submitting" does not even appear in the Greek text of verse 22: it has to be borrowed from verse 21. It is perfectly legitimate to read verse 22: "Wives, submitting to your husbands," as long as we understand that we must take verse 22 as an example of verse 21's mutual submission. Indeed, one commentator points out that verse 22 might be translated, "for example, wives to your husbands," and this is no doubt its force. Wives should submit to their husbands because Christians should submit to each other (*Paul, Women, and Wives*, p 169).

Keener: As has often been pointed out, Ephesians 5:22-33 advocates mutual submission. The only explicit definition of the wife's submission in the text is that she respect her husband (*Paul, Women, and Wives*, p 174).

g) **Some egalitarians argue that κεφαλή means "source" rather than "head." They use this meaning to deny that God gave different roles to husband and wife. However, this meaning for κεφαλή is not found in classical or koine Greek.**

Grudem: If you ever meet an egalitarian claiming that the word "head" in the Bible doesn't mean "authority" but means "source," you may wonder how to answer. Their purpose in this discussion is to eliminate the idea of authority from verses like, "The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church" (Eph. 5:23). So they claim that the word "head" (the Greek word *kephale*) meant "source" rather than "authority" in the ancient world. Sometimes they quote some ambiguous ancient Greek texts which, they say, show Zeus to be the "source" of all things, or Esau to be the "source" of his clan, or which mention the "head" of a river. For a verse about husbands and wives, even this idea makes no sense (I am not the source of my wife!), but they will usually then suggest a more specific meaning like "source of encouragement" ("The Meaning of "Head" in the Bible," *CBMW News*, Vol 1, No 3, p 8).

h) **As noted above, other egalitarians believe that since these roles were imposed after the fall they do not apply to Christian couples who are freed from the curse God pronounced on man and woman in Eden.**

B1, IV, A, 5. God blesses the marriage relationship.

a) **God blesses husband and wife with companionship.**

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

b) **God blesses husband and wife with sexual happiness.**

Song of Solomon 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth— for your *love* (Τίτ - "lovmaking, passionate love") is more delightful than wine.

1) **God created man and woman as sexual beings with sexual desires.**

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Augsburg Confession, XXIII, 7: Gen. 1:28 teaches that men were created to be fruitful, and that one sex in a proper way should desire the other. For we are speaking not of concupiscence, which is sin, but of that appetite which was to have been in nature in its integrity, which would have existed in nature even if it had remained uncorrupted, which they call physical love. And this love of one sex for the other is truly a divine ordinance.

Augsburg Confession, XXIII, 12: The natural desire of sex for sex is truly a divine right, because it is an ordinance divinely impressed upon nature.

2) **God gave sexual happiness as a blessing to husband and wife at the institution of marriage.**

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

3) **Chastity is a purpose for marriage after the fall.**

1 Corinthians 7:2-5 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.³ The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.⁴ The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.⁵ Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

c) **God blesses husband and wife with children.**

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it."

Genesis 30:1,2 When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!"² Jacob became angry with her and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?"

1) **God may bless a husband and wife with children.**

Psalms 127:3 Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.

Psalm 139:13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

2) **God may delay or withhold this blessing as he sees fit.**

1 Samuel 1:5,19,20 But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the LORD had closed her womb.¹⁹ Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the LORD and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her.²⁰ So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I asked the LORD for him."

d) **Not all these blessings will be found in every marriage in equal measure.**

B1, IV, A, 6. God blesses the husband-wife relationship with the ability to bring children into the world.

Genesis 9:1 Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth."

a) **A purpose of the sexual union is procreation.**

Genesis 4:1,2 Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man."² Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

b) **A purpose of the sexual union is also the consummation of marriage.**

Matthew 19:4,5 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?'"

1) **Sexual union does not establish marriage.**

1 Corinthians 6:16 Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her *in body*? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh."

2) **The sexual union is an expression of the marital union.**

Schuetze and Habeck: In marriage a man and woman forsake the previous intimacy of family life with father and mother, are united or cleave to one another, and thus set up a new family. This cleaving, according to Jesus, is to continue so long as both live. Where this permanent relationship has been established, the two become one flesh through the sexual act. The latter does not establish the marriage bond but is the practice of it (*The Shepherd Under Christ*, p 280).

c) **According to Scripture, family planning and birth control are adiaphora.**

Note: The Roman Catholic Church and, historically, many Lutherans have regarded all birth control as wrong. Yet there are other scriptural principles to consider in this area.

See "Birth Control as Ethical and Pastoral Problem., by H Kirsten, *Our Great Heritage*, II, p 106-124. Originally in *WLQ*, Vol. 65-1, Jan. 1968, p 24-44.

d) **When it comes to family planning, God wants Christian couples to pursue motives that are pleasing to God.**

Proverbs 16:2 All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD.

1) **As with all things, their motives are to glorify God.**

1 Corinthians 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

2) **The Christian couple will remember that children are a blessing from God and be ready to receive them as such.**

Genesis 33:5 Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant."

Psalm 127:3 Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.

Psalm 128:1-6 Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways.² You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours.³ Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table.⁴ Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD.⁵ May the LORD bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem,⁶ and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel.

3) **The husband is to be concerned about the emotional and physical health of his wife.**

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner (σκεύει) and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

1 Thessalonians 4:4 That each of you should learn to control his own body (σκεῦος) in a way that is holy and honorable,

4) **The Christian couple will recognize that they will need to care and provide for their children.**

1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

5) **The Christian couple will not let selfishness or greedy desires for a higher standard of living or personal advancement enter into family planning.**

Hebrews 13:5,6 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."⁶ So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

1 Timothy 6:6-10 But godliness with contentment is great gain.⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.⁹ People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin

and destruction.¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Luke 12:21-31 “This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”²² Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear.²³ Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.²⁴ Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!²⁵ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?²⁶ Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?²⁷ “Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.²⁸ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!²⁹ And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it.³⁰ For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them.³¹ But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

6) The Christian couple will realize that they cannot control the future but will let it in God’s caring hands.

James 4:13-15 Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.”¹⁴ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

e) When it comes to family planning, God wants Christian couples to pursue methods that are pleasing to God.

1) They will recognize that human life begins at conception.

Note: See the section of dogmatics notes on the origin of the soul.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Psalms 139:13-18 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!¹⁸ Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.

Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

2) They will recognize that abortion is the taking of a human life.

Exodus 20:13 “You shall not murder.”

3) They will pursue methods of birth control that are contraceptive and not abortifacient in nature.

Note: By “contraceptive” we mean a method that prevents fertilization and not a method that allows fertilization but interferes with implantation.

B1, IV, A, 7. The Christian couple will be guided by God’s Word when considering reproductive technologies.

a) Like other forms of medicine, reproductive technology must be evaluated in the light of God’s Word and used to his glory.

Matthew 25:36 I was sick and you looked after me.

Matthew 25:40 The King will reply, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”

b) Children are a blessing from God.

Psalms 127:3 Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.

c) While parenting can be burdensome, children are not to be viewed as a burden.

Genesis 3:16,19 To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

d) Children are not a right of marriage. A Christian couple will recognize that sometimes God withholds the blessing children from a marriage.

Deuteronomy 32:39 See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

1 Samuel 1:5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the LORD had closed her womb.

e) Children are not merely a product of medical technology. A Christian couple will recognize that life begins at conception and treat all embryos as living human beings.

Deuteronomy 32:39 See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me.

I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

Psalms 139:13,14 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

f) A Christian couple will seek to manage their financial resources wisely recognizing that they are only managers of all that God places into their care.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

Matthew 25:14 Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.

1 Corinthians 4:2 Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

- g) **A Christian couple will come before the Lord in prayer, asking his help in applying the principles of Scripture and seeking his direction in matters that are not clearly addressed in his Word.**

B1, IV, A, 8. God regulates marriage as a lifelong union.

- a) **God reserves the right to end a marriage through death. Even though spouses are able to break the marriage bond, such action is sinful.**

Matthew 19:6 Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.

1 Corinthians 7:39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

Romans 7:2,3 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage.³ So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

- b) **God condemns divorce as sin.**

Malachi 2:16 "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

Matthew 19:3-8 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?"⁴ "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?'⁶ So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."⁷ "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?"⁸ Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.

- c) **Scripture reveals that marital unfaithfulness (πορνεία) breaks the marriage bond.**

Matthew 19:9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness (πορνεία), and marries another woman commits adultery.

Matthew 5:31,32 "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness (πορνεία), causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

- d) **Scripture reveals that malicious desertion breaks the marriage bond.**

1 Corinthians 7:15 But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

Armin Schuetze: Saint Paul makes mention of desertion in 1 Corinthians 7:15: "But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances." To desert a spouse is an act of unbelief. It is sin. It breaks the marriage bond; the deserted person is no longer bound to the marriage. The one who deserts may or may not be involved in an adulterous relationship with another person. That is not the concern when speaking of desertion. Desertion by itself breaks a marriage. It would take us too far afield here to attempt a full scale study of all questions about desertion. Suffice it to say that not only geographical separation is desertion (*The Counseling Shepherd*, p 232).

Note: For desertion to be malicious it must be 1) unilateral, 2) willful, and 3) permanent.

- e) **In the case of marital unfaithfulness and malicious desertion, the innocent partner may obtain a divorce, which simply recognizes that the marriage bond has already been broken.**

Matthew 19:9 except for marital unfaithfulness

1 Corinthians 7:15 A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances.

- f) **The penitent sinner finds forgiveness also for the sin of divorce through Jesus who died for all sins.**

2 Samuel 12:13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die."

Psalms 32:3-5 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"— and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Psalms 51:1-12 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.² Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.⁶ Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.⁹ Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

- g) **The penitent sinner will also seek to apply appropriate fruits of repentance.**
Luke 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

John 8:11 Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Armin Schuetze: The term "fruit" implies willingness and a degree of spontaneity. Fruit is produced without legal compulsion. Hence we find that Scripture has not set up a code book that specifies the exact form which fruit of repentance must take in the case of every sin. But broad principles can be recognized.

- Fruit of repentance is to desist from the sin for which one repents.
- Fruit of repentance is to restore, if possible, what sin has ruined.
- Fruit of repentance is to amend one's sinful life, to replace evil with good.
- Fruit of repentance is to do all to the glory of God, whether we eat or drink, or work or play (*The Counseling Shepherd*, p 238).

- h) **Annulment is a judgment that there never was a valid marriage, because there was no valid consent. It should not be used as a loophole to try to evade the Scripture's teaching on divorce.**
Kevin Quirk, Judicial Vicar: The Roman Catholic Church presumes that a marriage entered by two baptized persons is a sacrament, and as a sacrament it is indissoluble. This presumption can only be overturned by certain evidence produced by the couple and witnesses in a judicial process. However, the Church does not recognize the authority of civil courts in this matter, since it regards marriage as a sacrament. A civil decree of divorce is, in the mind of the Church, equivalent to a permanent separation from the common life but does not affect the validity or continued existence of the marriage. Since marriage is a sacrament, it is left to the Church to decide whether it is a valid sacrament or not. ... You cannot marry again without an annulment. This is because, following the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Church does not recognize a civil divorce. ... In a nutshell: a civil divorce says you were really and truly married and it didn't work out, so that State lets you out of the contract and out of your promises. An annulment says that on the day you married either you were incapable of marriage or your consent to marry was defective for one of a number of reasons; therefore, the marriage is invalid and did not sacramentally exist, though you both thought that it did. Until you receive an annulment, the Church assumes you and your former spouse meant your vows and that your marriage continues to exist, no matter what the State says. This is because marriage existed in the Garden (i.e., was created by God) and preexisted the State. And the State then does not have the right to divide what God has joined (Web site of the Diocese of Wheeling).

B1, IV, A, 9. God ordained marriage as the basic unit for society. All human alternatives for marriage are contrary to his will.

- a) **Scripture reveals God's original intention for marriage—one man and one woman in a one-flesh relationship. The Bible never explicitly forbids polygamy.**

- 1) **God tolerated polygamy in the Old Testament, even among his people.**

Examples: Jacob (Genesis 29); Esau (Genesis 28); Elkanah (1 Samuel 1); David (2 Samuel 3); Solomon (1 Kings 11)

- 2) **God regulated polygamy in Old Testament Israel.**

Deuteronomy 21:15-17 If a man has two wives, and he loves one but not the other, and both bear him sons but the firstborn is the son of the wife he does not love,¹⁶ when he wills his property to his sons, he must not give the rights of the firstborn to the son of the wife he loves in preference to his actual firstborn, the son of the wife he does not love.¹⁷ He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.

- 3) **Yet God did not condone polygamy.**

Note: God also allowed other sins among his people to go unpunished. Moses murdered a man (Exodus 2:11,12); Abraham and Isaac lied about their wives (Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-18; 26:1-11). See Acts 17:30.

- 4) **Scripture presents Lamech, the first polygamist mentioned in history, as a godless man.**

Genesis 4:19-24 Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah.²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock.²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute.²² Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah.²³ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me.²⁴ If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times."

John Jeske: Lamech, the fifth generation after Cain, introduced polygamy into the human race. By doing so he showed contempt for God's stated purpose for marriage, that a man and a woman glorify God and serve each other by an unconditional commitment of love (*Genesis People's Bible*, p 65).

- 5) **The examples of polygamy in the Old Testament illustrate the problems that such a relationship causes.**

Genesis 30:1-3,9,14,15 When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!"² Jacob became angry with her and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?"³ Then she said, "Here is Bilhah, my maidservant. Sleep with her so that she can bear children for me and that through her I too can build a family."⁹ When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her maidservant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife.¹⁴ During wheat harvest, Reuben went out into the fields and found some mandrake plants, which he brought to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."¹⁵ But she said to her, "Wasn't it enough that you took away my husband? Will you take my son's mandrakes too?" "Very well," Rachel said, "he can sleep with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes."

1 Samuel 1:4-6 Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters.⁵ But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the LORD had closed her womb.⁶ And because the LORD had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her.

6) Scripture teaches that marriage is to be a monogamous relationship with mutual responsibilities.

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

1 Corinthians 7:2-4 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.³ The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.⁴ The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.

Schuetze and Habeck: Marriage as instituted by God at the time of creation was to be a lifelong union of one man and one woman. God created a monogamous relationship. That the original institution is to be understood in this manner becomes evident when Jesus, referring to Genesis 2:24, concludes with the words, "and the two will become one flesh" (Mt 19:5). The marriage relationship involves two people. The fact that God-fearing men like Jacob and David were involved in polygamous marriages and divine disapproval in their cases is not directly evident does not change God's original institution, reaffirmed in the New Testament (*The Shepherd Under Christ*, p 270).

b) Homosexuality is contrary to God's will.

1) Homosexuality violates natural law.

Romans 1:26,27 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

2) Homosexuality violates God's inscribed law.

1 Corinthians 6:9,10 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders (μαλακοὶ οὐτε ἀρσενικοῖται)¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Genesis 18:20,21 Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous²¹ that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know."

Genesis 19:24 Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens.

3) God ordained marriage as a heterosexual relationship.

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

4) The homosexual finds forgiveness for his sin in Christ who died for all sins.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

5) The homosexual finds strength to avoid such sin in Christ who lives in him by faith and strengthens him by the gospel.

John 8:34,36 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

Philippians 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Romans 7:21-25 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law;²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?²⁵ Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

1 Corinthians 6:19,20 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

Romans 6:4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

c) The "live-in" arrangement is contrary to God's will.

John 4:16-18 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband.¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

1) The "live-in" arrangement violates the scriptural principles of marriage because it is not designed to be a lifelong union.

2) The "live-in" arrangement sets aside the scriptural purposes of marriage because it partakes of the blessings of marriage without assuming its responsibilities.

3) The "live-in" arrangement violates the scriptural principle of obedience to the government because it fails to fulfill both the legal and social requirements for marriage.

Gerhard: The blessing of the church is necessary for entering marriage rightly, not because of any special divine precept, nor on account of the nature of marriage (as is if it would not be whole without the blessing of the church), but it is necessary because of requirements of the church and state introduced for the sake of public utility and honesty. The blessing of the church is not necessary for the thing itself (that is, for the essence of marriage) but as a public testimony to all that the marriage was legitimately and honestly contracted (*Loci*, XV, 396).

4) The Christian will not conform to the ways of the unbelieving world but will seek to be the salt and light that he is.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Matthew 5:13-16 You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Cf. "Scriptural Principles as They Pertain to Live-in Arrangements," *WLQ*, 96:4, Fall 1999.

B1, IV, A, 10. God gave man and woman marriage as a blessing.

Large Catechism, The Sixth Commandment, 208: Therefore God has also most richly blessed this estate above all others, and, in addition, has bestowed on it and wrapped up in it everything in the world, to the end that this estate might be well and richly provided for. Married life is therefore no jest or presumption; but it is an excellent thing and a matter of divine seriousness. For it is of the highest importance to Him that persons be raised who may serve the world and promote the knowledge of God, godly living, and all virtues, to fight against wickedness and the devil.

a) Family life promotes the happiness of husband and wife.

Genesis 2:18,22,23 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

Proverbs 17:6 Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.

Proverbs 31:10-31 A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. ¹¹ Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. ¹² She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. ¹³ She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. ¹⁴ She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. ¹⁵ She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. ¹⁶ She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷ She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. ¹⁸ She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. ¹⁹ In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. ²⁰ She opens her arms to the poor

and extends her hands to the needy. ²¹ When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. ²² She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. ²³ Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. ²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. ²⁵ She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. ²⁶ She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. ²⁷ She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. ²⁸ Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ²⁹ "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." ³⁰ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. ³¹ Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

b) Family life provides a positive environment for parents to raise their children in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 6:7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

c) Family life provides a positive environment where parents can apply loving Christian discipline.

Proverbs 13:24 He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.

Proverbs 19:8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers.

Proverbs 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

Proverbs 23:13,14 Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. ¹⁴ Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

d) Family life promotes peace and stability in society.

1 Corinthians 7:2-5 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. ³ The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. ⁴ The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. ⁵ Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

B1, IV, A, 11. It is not God's will that every man or woman gets married.

a) The single state has the blessing and approval of God.

1 Corinthians 7:1,2,7-9,25-28 - Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry.² But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.⁷ I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.⁸ Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am.⁹ But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.²⁵ Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.²⁶ Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for you to remain as you are.²⁷ Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.²⁸ But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

b) In this life we all stand before God as singles.

Galatians 3:26-28 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

c) In the next life we will all stand before God as singles.

Matthew 22:30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

d) The single state is a spiritual gift that can be used to glorify God and serve his church.

1 Corinthians 7:7 I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift (χάρισμα) from God; one has this gift, another has that.

Matthew 19:12 For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.

e) The single state is not a higher state. Scripture does not hold out virginity as the ultimate purity or abstinence as the ultimate act of devotion to God.

Proverbs 18:22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.

1 Timothy 4:3 They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

Matthew 19:12 For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.

f) Singles have gifts that can be used to glorify God and serve his church.

1 Corinthians 7:7 I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift (χάρισμα) from God; one has this gift, another has that.

Matthew 19:12 For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.

g) God wants his church to address the spiritual needs of all members of the body of Christ, including the single members.

Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

h) God reminds all of us, whether single or married, that our main concern in this life is not to be our earthly relationships with each other but our spiritual status with Christ, our heavenly bridegroom.

Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 12:46-50 While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him.⁴⁷ Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."⁴⁸ He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?"⁴⁹ Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers.⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

B1, IV, B. Civil Government.

B1, IV, B, 1. Governmental authority is of divine institution.

Romans 13:1-7 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing.⁷ Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Daniel 2:21,37 He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.³⁷ You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory;

Daniel 4:17,25,32 The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.²⁵ You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

John 19:11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

B1, IV, B, 2. The form of government is a matter of historical development.

1 Peter 2:13,14 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men (πάση ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει): whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

B1, IV, B, 3. The object of government is to make the sin-infested world a comparatively safe and comfortable place in which to live.

a) The government's responsibility is to reward good and punish evil.

Romans 13:4,6 For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

1 Peter 2:14 [Submit yourselves to] governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

1 Timothy 2:2 [Pray] for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

b) In particular the following affairs are mentioned as subject to government regulation.

1) The government is to promote civic righteousness.

Deuteronomy 1:16,17 And I charged your judges at that time: Hear the disputes between your brothers and judge fairly, whether the case is between brother Israelites or between one of them and an alien. ¹⁷ Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it.

Romans 13:3,4 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

2) The government has the right to regulate marriage and divorce.

Matthew 19:7,8 "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" ⁸ Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning."

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 77: There remains the jurisdiction in those cases which, according to canonical law, pertain to the ecclesiastical court, as they call it, and especially in cases of matrimony. This, too, the bishops have only by human right, and that, not a very old one, as appears from the Codex and Novellae of Justinian that decisions concerning marriage at that time belongs to the magistrates.

3) The government has the right to assess taxes and judge in financial and property matters.

Matthew 22:19-21 "Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, ²⁰ and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" ²¹ "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

Romans 13:7 Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Acts 19:24,38 A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. ³⁸ If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges.

Augsburg Confession, Ap., XVI, 59: The gospel forbids private redress in order that no one should interfere with the office of the magistrate, and Christ inculcates this so frequently with the design that the apostles should not think that they ought to seize the governments from those who held otherwise, just as the Jews dreamed concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, but that they might know they ought to teach concerning the spiritual kingdom that it does not change the civil state. Therefore private redress is prohibited not by advice, but by a command, Matt. 5, 39; Rom. 12, 19. Public redress, which is made through the office of the magistrate, is not advised against, but is commanded, and is a work of God, according to Paul, Rom. 13, 1 sqq.

Formula of Concord, Ep., XII, 14: [We reject] that a Christian cannot without injury to conscience use the office of the magistracy against the wicked in matters so requiring, nor that subjects may invoke for their protection and defense the power which the magistrates possess and have received from God. Parallel Formula of Concord, T.D., XII, 19

4) The government also a responsibility to protect body and life.

Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

Exodus 21:22-25 If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. ²³ But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

Formula of Concord, Ep., XII, 16: [We reject] that under the New Testament magistrates cannot, without injury to conscience, inflict capital punishment upon malefactors. Also F.C., T.D., XII, 21

5) The government enforces law and order through means such as fines, imprisonment, and capital punishment.

Exodus 21:22,30 If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows.

³⁰ However, if payment is demanded of him, he may redeem his life by paying whatever is demanded.

Matthew 5:25 Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison.

Genesis 9:6 Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

Romans 13:4 For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

- 6) **The government has the right to wage war and the responsibility to maintain peace and stability in society. The traditional criteria of a just war (or perhaps better, a justified war) are 1) a war waged by a legal authority, 2) for a just cause, 3) as a last resort, 4) with a reasonable probability of success, 5) with proportionate means, 6) with regard for the innocent.**

Psalms 144:1: Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. ²He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me.

Deuteronomy 20:1-4: When you go to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and an army greater than yours, do not be afraid of them, because the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt, will be with you. ²When you are about to go into battle, the priest shall come forward and address the army. ³He shall say: "Hear, O Israel, today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not be terrified or give way to panic before them. ⁴For the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory."

1 Timothy 2:2 [Pray] for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

B1, IV, B, 4. Promoting religion has not been committed to civil government.

- a) **Government officials may, indeed, use their personal influence in the interest of the church (confession).**

Isaiah 49:23 Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD; those who hope in me will not be disappointed.

2 Chronicles 9:7,8 How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! ⁸Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the LORD your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 54: But especially the chief members of the church, kings and princes, ought to guard the interests of the church, and to see to it that errors be removed and consciences be healed, as God expressly exhorts kings, Ps. 2, 10: Be wise, now, therefore, O kings; be instructed, judges of the earth. For it should be the first care of kings and great lords to advance the glory of God. Therefore it would be very shameful for them to lend their influence and power to confirm idolatry and infinite other crimes, and to slaughter saints.

- b) **Government may recognize and use the positive influence of the church to promote peace and stability in society.**

Confer Daniel in Babylon, Cyrus' restoration of the temple, roles of Ezra and Nehemiah.

B1, IV, B, 5. While there are no explicit passages that deal with the subject in depth, the Bible does teach a distinction between the roles of church and state.

Matthew 22: 21 Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

John 18:36 My kingdom is not of this world.

Luke 12:14 Who made me a judge or a divider over you?

Brug: Since there are some areas in life in which both the state and the church have a valid interest, such as marriage, sexual morality, education, and so on, their interests and activities may sometimes overlap. Perhaps it might, therefore, be clearer if we would speak of "avoiding a mixture or confusion of church and state," rather than of a "separation of church and state." It is not possible to demand a total separation of all activities of church and state. One area in which we regularly accept a certain overlap of interests is in the public establishment of a marriage ("The Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms," OGH, II, p 406,407).

Note: In evaluating areas of church/state co-operation we must keep three questions distinct: 1) Is this co-operation forbidden by Scripture? 2) Is this forbidden by the law of the land? 3) Does this lead to dangerous entanglement?

- a) **Scripture indicates that the state and church have distinct roles.**

- 1) **The role of the church is to care for the spiritual welfare of God's people and to reach out to a lost world.**

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.

John 21:15,16 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

2) The role of the state is to maintain peace and stability in society, which also permits the free preaching of the gospel.

1 Timothy 2:1,2 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—²for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

b) Scripture indicates that the state and church have distinct too.

1) The tool of the state is the sword, administered on the basis of human reason. The state uses natural law to curb godlessness and violence.

Romans 13:3-5 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

2) The tool of the church is the sword of the Spirit, administered through the gospel in Word and Sacrament. It applies God's law as a mirror, curb, and a guide for Christian living.

Ephesians 6:17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

B1, IV, B, 6. Scripture addresses a Christian's attitude and actions towards government.

a) The Christian is called upon to pray for the government and its leaders.

1 Timothy 2:1,2 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—²for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

b) The Christian is called upon to obey the government and its leaders and to show them honor and respect.

Romans 13:1,6,7 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ⁶This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷Give everyone what you owe him: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

c) The Christian is called upon to pray against evil including that which the government causes.

Psalms 139:19,21 If only you would slay the wicked, O God! Away from me, you bloodthirsty men! ²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD, and abhor those who rise up against you?

Revelation 6:10 They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

d) The Christian is called upon to speak out against sin and injustice, even if the government is at fault.

Matthew 14:3,4 Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, ⁴for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her."

Psalms 58:1,2 Do you rulers indeed speak justly? Do you judge uprightly among men? ²No, in your heart you devise injustice, and your hands mete out violence on the earth.

e) The Christian is called upon to disobey laws that require him or her to sin. Such disobedience will involve passive resistance and not active rebellion.

Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

Exodus 1:17,20,21 The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. ²⁰So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. ²¹And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

Matthew 26:52 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."

f) The Christian may be called upon to patiently suffer injustice if doing so gives glory to God.

1 Samuel 24 – David and Saul at the cave near Engedi.

Matthew 26:52 – Jesus and Peter in the garden.

Acts 5:41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.

Romans 12:17-19 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

Proverbs 20:22 Do not say, "I'll pay you back for this wrong!" Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you.

1 Peter 2:21-23 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²² “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

g) The Christian may be called upon to seek justice for wrongs if doing so gives glory to God.

John 18:23 “If I said something wrong,” Jesus replied, “testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?”

Acts 16 – Paul and Silas in prison

Acts 24,25 – Paul on trial

h) A Christian may also serve in the capacity of a government official.

2 Kings 5:17-19 Naaman said, “please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD. ¹⁸ But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this.” ¹⁹ “Go in peace,” Elisha said.

Acts 8:36,37 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?”

Acts 17:34 A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

Luke 3:14 Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

Luther: “Temporal Authority, To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed,” *LW* 45,81ff.

Luther: “Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved,” *LW* 46,93ff.

B1, IV, B, 7. The church may be benefited by government.

a) Good government protects it in its peaceful external development.

Romans 13:4,6 For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing.

1 Timothy 2:2 [Pray] for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Acts 9:31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

b) Persecution by bad government may test the spirit of the church.

Matthew 10:16-18 I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.

Acts 4:24-26 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: “Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.”

Romans 8:36,37 As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Philippians 1:12-13 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. ¹³ As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.

B1, IV, B, 8. For confessional statements of the roles of church and state see:

Augsburg Confession, XVI: Of civil affairs they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make an oath when required by the magistrates, to marry a wife, to be given in marriage. They condemn the Anabaptists who forbid these civil offices to Christians. They condemn also those who do not place evangelical perfection in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices, for the gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart. Meanwhile, it does not destroy the state or the family, but very much requires that they be preserved as ordinances of God, and that charity be practiced in such ordinances. Therefore, Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5, 29.

Augsburg Confession, XXVIII, 10-19: Therefore, since the power of the church grants eternal things and is exercised only by the ministry of the Word, it does not interfere with civil government; no more than the art of singing interferes with civil government. For civil government deals with other things than does the Gospel. The civil rulers defend not minds, but bodies and bodily things against manifest injuries, and restrain men with the sword and bodily punishments in order to preserve civil justice and peace. Therefore the power of the church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the church has its own commission to teach the gospel and to administer the sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful

obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth.

Augsburg Confession, Ap., IV, 22: For God wishes those who are carnal gross sinners to be restrained by civil discipline, and to maintain this, he has given laws, letters, doctrine, magistrates, penalties.

Large Catechism, The Fourth Commandment ,141.142: In this commandment belongs a further statement regarding all kinds of obedience to persons in authority who have to command and to govern. For all authority flows and is propagated from the authority of parents. For where a father is unable alone to educate his rebellious and irritable child, he employs a schoolmaster to instruct him; if he be too weak, he enlists the aid of his friends and neighbors; if he departs this life, he delegates and confers his authority and government upon others who are appointed for the purpose. Likewise, he must have domestics, man-servants and maid-servants, under himself for the management of the household, so that all whom we call masters are in the place of parents and must derive their power and authority to govern from them. Hence also they are all called fathers in the Scriptures, as those who in their government perform the functions of a father, and should have a paternal heart toward their subordinates. As also from antiquity the Romans and other nations called the masters and mistresses of the household *patres- et matres- familiae*, that is, housefathers and housemothers. So also they called their national rulers and overlords *patres patriae*, that is, fathers of the entire country, for a great shame to us who would be Christians that we do not likewise call them so, or, at least, do not esteem and honor them as such.

Formula of Concord, Ep., XII, 12–16: [We reject those who hold] 1. That under the New Testament the magistracy is not an estate pleasing to God. 2. That a Christian cannot with a good, inviolate conscience hold or discharge the office of magistrate. 3. That a Christian cannot without injury to conscience use the office of the magistracy against the wicked in matters so requiring, nor that subjects may invoke for their protection and defense the power which the magistrates possess and have received from God. 4. That a Christian cannot with a good conscience take an oath, nor with an oath promise fidelity to the hereditary prince of his country or sovereign. 5. That under the New Testament magistrates cannot, without injury to conscience, inflict capital punishment upon malefactors.

B1, IV, B, 9. Examples of confusion of the roles of the state and religion include the following.

a) Roman Catholicism

Catholic Encyclopedia CD Version: The State, then, exists to help man to temporal happiness the Church, to eternal. Of these two purposes the latter is more ultimate.... It is clear, therefore, that the purpose of the Church is higher in the order of Divine Providence and of righteous human endeavour than that of the State.... In all subject-matter not purely spiritual nor purely temporal, but at the same time both spiritual and temporal in character, both jurisdictions may enter, and so entering give occasion to collision, for which there must be a principle of solution. In case of direct contradiction, making it impossible for both jurisdictions to be exercised, the jurisdiction of the Church prevails, and that of the State is excluded.In analogous fashion every higher court is always judge of its own jurisdiction as against a lower.

b) Liberation theology

Millard J. Erickson defining: Liberation theologies – the salvation of all persons from oppression – is the goal of God's work in history and must therefore be the task of those who believe in him, utilizing every means possible, including political effort and even revolution if necessary (*Christian Theology*, p 909).

c) Islam

Hathout Hassan: In Islam, the rule and role of jama'a "community" is very high, and the political sphere is just one more community where Islam is to be applied to life. But Islam is understood by Muslims to be both *din* and *dawla*, religion and government (*Reading the Muslim Mind*, p 234).

d) Theonomy, Dominion Theology, Christian Reconstructionism.

Greg Bahnsen: The New Testament teaches us that—unless exceptions are revealed elsewhere—every Old Testament commandment is binding, even as the standard of justice for all magistrates (Rom. 13:1-4), including every recompense stipulated for civil offenses in the law of Moses (Heb 2:2). From the New Testament alone we learn that we must take as our operating presumption that any Old Testament penal requirement is binding today on all civil magistrates. The presumption can surely be modified by definite, revealed teaching in the Scripture, but in the absence of such qualifications or changes, any Old Testament penal sanction we have in mind would be morally obligatory for civil rulers (*No Other Standard* p 68).

Gary North: The proper exegetical principle is this: Mosaic law is still to be enforced, by the church or the State or both, unless there is a specific injunction to the contrary in the New Testament (*The Sinai Strategy: Economics and the Ten Commandments*, p 255).

e) Caesaropapism of the Byzantine Empire and European state churches.

Timothy Ware: At the heart of the Christian polity of Byzantium was the Emperor, who was no ordinary ruler, but God's representative on earth. If Byzantium was an icon of the heavenly Jerusalem, then the earthly monarchy of the Emperor was an image or icon of the monarchy of God in heaven; in church men prostrated themselves before the icon of Christ, and in the palace before God's living icon – the Emperor. The labyrinthine palace, the Court with its elaborate ceremonial, the throne room where mechanical lions roared and musical birds sang: these things were designed to make clear the Emperor's status as vice-regent of God. . . . The Emperor had a special place in the Church's worship: he could not of course celebrate the Eucharist, but he received communion 'as priests do', he preached sermons, on certain feasts he censed the altar. The vestments which Orthodox bishops now wear are the vestments once worn by the Emperor in church...The life of Byzantium formed a unified whole, and there was no rigid line of separation between the religious and the secular, between Church and State: the two were seen as parts of a single organism (*The Orthodox Church* , p 48-49).

f) Calvinism

Calvin: The duty of magistrates, its nature, as described by the word of God, and the things in which it consists, I will here indicate in passing. That it extends to both tables of the law, even if Scripture did not teach this, we could learn from profane writers, for no man has discoursed of the duty of magistrates, the enacting of laws, and the common weal, without beginning with religion and divine worship. Thus all have confessed that no polity can be successfully established unless piety be its first care, and that those laws are absurd which disregard the rights of God, and consult only for men.... This rebukes the folly of those who would neglect the care of divine things, and devote themselves merely to the administration of justice among men; as if God had appointed rulers in his own

name to decide earthly controversies, and omitted what was of far greater moment, his own pure worship as prescribed by his law (*Institutes* BK IV, ch. 20, section 9).

g) Some Lutheran dogmaticians

Hutter. The chief duties of the civil magistrate are: (1) to pay attention to both tables of the Decalogue, so far as they pertain to outward discipline, etc (*Loc. Th.*, 279).

Hollaz: The civil magistrate has been ordained for the public good, and his office is fourfold: (1) Ecclesiastical, for kings are the nursing fathers of the Church, and the bishops outside of the temple. (2) Civil... (3)Moral... (4) Natural ...(*Examen*, 1366)

Hollaz: The magistracy is employed with sacred affairs, by carefully observing and performing those things which ought to be believed and done by all men who are to be saved, Ps. 2:10-12, and by directing the church and the Christian religion in their external government (1361). The inner economy and government of sacred things, consisting in the doctrine of the Word, in absolution from sins, and the lawful administration of the sacraments, are peculiar to the ministers of the church. The magistrate cannot claim them for himself without committing crime (*Examen*, 1362).

Baier lists specific duties: The appointing of suitable ministers of the church; the erection and preservation of schools and houses of worship, as well as the providing for the honorable support of ministers; the appointing of visitations and councils; the framing and maintenance of the laws of the church, the controlling of the revenues of the church, and the preservation of church discipline; the trial of heretical ministers, as also of those of bad character, and all other similar persons belonging to the churches and schools, and the compelling them to appear before a court; providing for the punishment of those convicted of heresies or crimes; and the abrogation of heresies that are manifest and have been condemned by the church, and of idolatrous forms of worship, so that the church be cleansed from them (*Compendium*, 809).

B1, IV, B, 10. Luther had a clear understanding of the distinction between church and state.

Luther: After the abolition of the Law the secular emperors, kings, and princes were entrusted with the sword of iron, and the oral sword was assigned to the apostles and us preachers. This distinction must remain intact; and let all who can lend a hand to that end. But if the princes continue to jumble the two, as they are now doing, then may God in his mercy shorten our lives that we may not witness the ensuing disaster. For in such circumstances the Christian religion must go to wrack and ruin. This is what happened in the papacy when the bishops became secular princes. And if the secular lords now become popes and bishops and insist on sermons that defer to their wishes, then let the wretched devil preach to them, for he preaches too. But let us pray God that neither the spiritual nor the secular realm abuses its office that way (*LW* 22, 228, Commentary on John 2).

B1, V. In connection with God's providence we may also consider:

Miracles—Prophecies—Prayer—End of life—Chance (*Zufal*).

B1, V, 1. Miracles.

a) **The following designations of miracles occur in Scripture. These words do not always refer to miracles in the strict sense.**

1) **מִוִּפְלְאוֹת - θαυμάσιον - *miraculum* - wonders**

These words describe a miracle that inspires awe. They stress the amazing aspect of the miracle.
Psalm 9:1 I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your *wonders*.

Psalm 40:5 Many, O LORD my God, are the *wonders* you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

Exodus 3:20 So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the *wonders* that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

Exodus 15:11 Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working *wonders*?

Judges 6:13 "But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his *wonders* that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian."

Psalm 77:11,14 I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your *miracles* of long ago.¹⁴ You are the God who performs *miracles*; you display your power among the peoples.

Matthew 21:15 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the *wonderful things* he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

2) **תִּפְזִימָה - τέρας - *prodigium* - wonders, signs**

Though these words are often translated "wonder" or "sign," they sometimes carry the negative connotation of an "omen" or "portent."

Exodus 4:21 The LORD said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the *wonders* I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go."

Exodus 7:3,9 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my miraculous signs and *wonders* in Egypt,⁹ "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a *miracle*,' then say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,' and it will become a snake."

Matthew 24:24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and *miracles* to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

John 4:48 “Unless you people see miraculous signs and *wonders*,” Jesus told him, “you will never believe.”

Acts 2:19,43 I will show *wonders* in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many *wonders* and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

3) **הַבְּרָאָה - דְּבָרִים - *vis, virtus* - mighty acts**

These words point to the power that makes the miracle possible.

Deuteronomy 3:24 O Sovereign LORD, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and *mighty works* you do?

Psalms 106:2 Who can proclaim the *mighty acts* of the LORD or fully declare his praise?

Psalms 150:2 Praise him for his *acts of power*; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

Matthew 14:2 He said to his attendants, “This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why *miraculous powers* are at work in him.”

Mark 6:2 When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. “Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does *miracles!*”

Galatians 3:5 Does God give you his Spirit and work *miracles* among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?

4) **אֵימָנוּת - σημεῖον - *signum* - sign**

These words point to the purpose or testimony of the act—why the miracle was done.

Exodus 4:8,9,17 Then the LORD said, “If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first *miraculous sign*, they may believe the second [*sign*]. ⁹ But if they do not believe these two *signs* or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.” ¹⁷ “But take this staff in your hand so you can perform *miraculous signs* with it.”

Exodus 7:3 But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and though I multiply my *miraculous signs* and wonders in Egypt.

Deuteronomy 4:34 Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by *miraculous signs* and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

Deuteronomy 6:22 Before our eyes the LORD sent *miraculous signs* and wonders—great and terrible—upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household.

Luke 11:16 Others tested him by asking for a *sign* from heaven.

John 2:11 This, the first of his *miraculous signs*, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

John 4:48 “Unless you people see *miraculous signs* and wonders,” Jesus told him, “you will never believe.”

Acts 2:22 Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and *signs*, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

Acts 2:19,43 I will show wonders in the heaven above and *signs* on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and *miraculous signs* were done by the apostles.

Matthew 24:24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great *signs* and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

5) **Also general words, which speak of God’s works (ἔργα, עֲלִילָה) may denote a miracle.**

Psalms 9:11 Sing praises to the LORD, enthroned in Zion; proclaim among the nations *what he has done*.

Isaiah 12:4 In that day you will say: “Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations *what he has done*, and proclaim that his name is exalted.

John 5:20,36 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all *he does*. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. ³⁶ “I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very *work* that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me.”

Revelation 15:3 [They] sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: “Great and marvelous are your *deeds*, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages.”

b) **A miracle in the strict sense is a deed which is performed by power beyond the laws of nature.**

Psalms 78:13 He divided the sea and led them through; he made the water stand firm like a wall.

Compare Psalms 33:7 He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses.

Psalms 78:19,20 They spoke against God, saying, “Can God spread a table in the desert? ²⁰ When he struck the rock, water gushed out, and streams flowed abundantly. But can he also give us food? Can he supply meat for his people?”

Compare Numbers 11:31 Now a wind went out from the LORD and drove quail in from the sea. It brought them down all around the camp to about three feet above the ground, as far as a day's walk in any direction.

Quenstedt: A distinction must be made between θαύματα and θαυμάσια, or between miracles and wonders or marvels. Miracles which are true and properly so called are those things which are done contrary to the power given to natural things by God and contrary to the natural course or through the extraordinary power of God, as when iron floats, water is changed into wine, etc. 2 Cor 11:14; Re 17:6. It is by extraordinary providence when God works either without means or beyond or above means or contrary to means and their nature, or, which is the same, above and contrary to the order established by him (*TDP*, Part I, Chapter XI, Section II, qu. IV, fon. so., X, p 471).

- 1) **As on the one hand the laws of nature do not prevent miracles, so on the other hand miracles do not abrogate the laws of nature for the regular course of events.**
- 2) **Miracles are frequently divided into natural miracles (*miracula naturae*) and miracles of grace (*miracula gratiae*, e.g. conversion, Lord's Supper, Baptism). It is the former class with which we are chiefly concerned when speaking of God's providence.**
- 3) **Though not miracles in the strict sense, God's government of the world is one unbroken chain of wonders.**

Job 5:8-10 "But if it were I, I would appeal to God; I would lay my cause before him. ⁹He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted. ¹⁰He bestows rain on the earth; he sends water upon the countryside.

Psalms 40:4,5 Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. ⁵Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

c) **God alone can perform miracles.**

- 1) **Scripture attests to this truth.**

Direct statements:

Exodus 15:11 Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

Psalms 72:18 Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds.

Psalms 136:4 To him who alone does great wonders, His love endures forever.

Implied Statements:

Exodus 15:6 Your right hand, O LORD, was majestic in power. Your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy.

Psalms 77:14 You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

Psalms 78:4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.

Psalms 86:10 For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.

Daniel 4:2,3 It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. ³How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation.

Calov: [Miracles are] things which cannot originate except from a first cause and exceed the powers of any creature, from which their divinity could certainly be easily recognized (*Systema*, tom. I, cap. III, p 273).

- 2) **Men have performed miracles by God's power.**

-a) They were then authorized by God to do so.

Exodus 4:21 The LORD said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go."

Matthew 10:8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Mark 16:17,18 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.

-b) They declined any personal honor.

Genesis 40:8 "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

Genesis 41:16 "I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

Daniel 2:26-28 The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?" ²⁷ Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these."

Acts 3:12,13,16 When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham,

Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁶By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see."

3) Even enemies of God have performed apparent miracles.

-a) This was with God's permission.

Exodus 7:11 Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts.

Compare Exodus 8:18,19 But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not. And the gnats were on men and animals. ¹⁹ The magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

Deuteronomy 13:1-3 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, ² and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," ³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Revelation 13:13 [The second beast] performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. ¹⁴ Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth.

-b) God's purpose in such cases is varied.

-1) He does this to test his children.

Deuteronomy 13:1-3 above

Matthew 24:24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

-2) He does this to punish the hardened unbeliever.

Exodus 7:22 But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret arts, and Pharaoh's heart became hard; he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

d) In performing miracles, God has a clear purpose.

1) He performs them to rescue his children.

Psalms 107:2,8 Let the redeemed of the LORD say this— those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, ⁸ Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Repeated in verses 15,21,31

Jeremiah 21:2 Inquire now of the LORD for us because Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is attacking us. Perhaps the LORD will perform wonders for us as in times past so that he will withdraw from us.

2) He performs them to assist our faith.

John 2:11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

John 20:30,31 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Matthew 11:5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Mark 16:20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

Acts 2:22 Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

Chemnitz: But miracles, on the other hand, should not be preferred to doctrine, which was confirmed by the miracles of Christ and the apostles. Cf Jn 2:23-24; 4:48 (*Loci*, pars III, *de ecclesia*, p 132).

Gerhard: Miracles, if they do not have the truth of doctrine joined to them, prove nothing (*Loci*, tom. XII, loc. XXIII, cap XI, sect. XI, paragraph 276, p 107).

Luther: If they try to make you institute a different worship, that is, to forsake the single pure doctrine and to start something different alongside it, then you should not believe, though it were snowing miracles.... The rule is this: Regardless of their size and number, no wonders or signs are to be accepted contrary to established teaching (*LW* 21, 279).

3) He does not perform them to satisfy people's curiosity.

Matthew 12:39 He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Luke 23:8-9 When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle. ⁹ He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer.

e) **Liberal theology denies the reality of miracles.**

Philip J. Hefner: Jesus is pictured as a person "in touch" with the creator God and God's activity. As such he is himself an agent of the Creator's power. The nature miracles portray this vividly. Jesus stills the storm in a quiet and matter-of-fact manner; the swine serve his purpose with the demoniac; he knows where the fish are to be found even when the master fishermen are confounded. The so-called "nature miracles," whatever their exact background, are really creation stories reflecting Jesus' basic trust in the creator (Braaten and Jenson, *Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 288).

B1, V, 2.

a)

Prophecies.

Through prophecies God announces his plans (πρόγνωση, πρόθεσις).

1) Prophecy (foretelling) proves God's sovereign majesty.

Isaiah 41:21-23 "Present your case," says the LORD. "Set forth your arguments," says Jacob's King. ²² "Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, ²³ tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear."

Isaiah 42:9 See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.

Isaiah 43:9 All the nations gather together and the peoples assemble. Which of them foretold this and proclaimed to us the former things? Let them bring in their witnesses to prove they were right, so that others may hear and say, "It is true."

Isaiah 44:6,7 This is what the LORD says— Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. ⁷ Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come—yes, let him foretell what will come.

Daniel 2:28 There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these:

2) As a rule God employed human spokesmen.

Numbers 12:6 He said, "Listen to my words: "When a prophet of the LORD is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams."

1 Samuel 9:9 Formerly in Israel, if a man went to inquire of God, he would say, "Come, let us go to the seer," because the prophet of today used to be called a seer.

Hosea 12:10 I spoke to the prophets, gave them many visions and told parables through them.

Genesis 15:1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."

1 Samuel 28:6 [Saul] inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets.

Numbers 23:5 The LORD put a message in Balaam's mouth and said, "Go back to Balak and give him this message."

John 11:51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation.

Numbers 22:28 Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?"

Gerhard: The name "prophets" is given in Scripture chiefly and particularly to those teachers of the church who, after the Levitical priesthood was established, were called and raised up by God in an extraordinary way for the purification of doctrine and the clearer repetition of the promise of the Messiah and who, illuminated by the spirit of prophecy, foretold future things. (He says further:) Prophets are men ... speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and fortelling the future. (Then he adds:) Which things must be fulfilled (*Locī*, tom XII, loc. XXIV, de minist. eccl., cap I, paragraph XVIII, p 18).

3) God's prophecies must not be compared with heathen oracles, human conjectures, forebodings, etc.

Leviticus 19:31 Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 18:10-11 Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, ¹¹ or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead.

Isaiah 8:19 When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?

Acts 19:18-19 Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. ¹⁹ A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.

b) All prophecies must be fulfilled (God's immutability).

Matthew 26:54 But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?

Mark 14:49 Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Luke 24:25,26 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!
²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

Romans 15:8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs.

Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must ($\delta\epsilon\iota$) soon take place.

c) All prophecy culminates in Christ.

1) Jesus is himself the great prophet.

Deuteronomy 18:15,18 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

Matthew 12:17-18 This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: ¹⁸ "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations."

Matthew 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

John 1:17 The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

2) The Savior is the central theme of all prophecies.

Matthew 11:13 All the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

Acts 3:24 Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.

Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Gerhard: Just as the prophets describe the worship of the New Testament with words that pertain properly to the legal worship of the Old Testament and are taken from it, so also they picture the spiritual kingdom of Christ with words for earthly things taken from the customary state of the church under the Old Testament (*Loci*, tom. XX, loc. XXX, cap. VII, paragraph XC, 6, p 120).

3) Jesus is the end of all the ways of God.

-a) At times seemingly trivial things were the objects of prophecy, but God's ability in the small things points to his power in the greater.

1 Samuel 9:19-20 "I am the seer," Samuel replied. "Go up ahead of me to the high place, for today you are to eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart. ²⁰As for the donkeys you lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they have been found. And to whom is all the desire of Israel turned, if not to you and all your father's family?"

-b) All of God's plans center in Christ.

Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

Acts 3:18 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer.

Acts 4:28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.

-c) Thus prophecies help to establish the truth that divine providence aims at man's salvation through Christ.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

Ephesians 1:10 To be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

d) The cessationist view holds that all prophecy has ceased.

Grudem: Within the evangelical world today there are differing positions over the question, "Are all the gifts mentioned in the New Testament valid for use in the church today?" Some would say yes. Others would say no, and would argue that some of the more miraculous gifts (such as prophecy, tongues plus interpretation, and perhaps healing and casting out of demons) were given only during the time of the apostles, as "signs" to authenticate the apostles during the early preaching of the gospel. They state that these gifts are no longer needed as signs today, and that they ceased at the end of the apostolic age, probably at the end of the first century or beginning of the second century A.D. We should also realize that there is a large "middle" group with respect to this question, a group of "mainstream evangelicals" who are neither charismatic or Pentacostals on the one hand, nor "cessationists" on the other hand, but are simply undecided, and unsure if this question can be decided from Scripture (*Systematic Theology*, p 1031).

1) They base this view on 1 Corinthians 13:8

1 Corinthians 13:8 But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

- 2) **This view seems to be in harmony with the truth that God's plan of salvation and his Scriptures are complete.**

Hebrews 1:1-2 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Revelation 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

- 3) **Scripture does not establish this point with certainty, therefore it must remain an open question. Our only responsibility is to judge the alleged prophet's doctrine by using Scripture.**

B1, V, 3.

Prayer

- a) **God hears and answers the petitions of his children.**

- 1) **Scripture states this clearly.**

Job 34:28 They caused the cry of the poor to come before him, so that he heard the cry of the needy.

Psalms 4:3 Know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD will hear when I call to him.

Psalms 34:17 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

Psalms 65:2 O you who hear prayer, to you all men will come.

Proverbs 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

Zechariah 13:9 This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, "They are my people," and they will say, "The LORD is our God."

- 2) **Prayer has a great influence on God's government of the world.**

Philippians 1:19 I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.

Philemon 22 And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

James 5:14-18 Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. ¹⁷Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. ¹⁸Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

- b) **God has from eternity woven the prayers of his children into his plan of world government.**

- 1) **Prayers are in themselves the free exercise of the Christian's ability to communicate with his heavenly Father.**

Luke 11:2-4 He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. ³Give us each day our daily bread. ⁴Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'"

John 16:26,27 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

Romans 8:14,28 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

- 2) **According to the new self, Christians pray according to God's will.**

John 16:23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

1 John 5:14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

- 3) **God prearranges the course of events according to his foreknowledge of his children's prayers.**

Jeremiah 7:16 So do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them; do not plead with me, for I will not listen to you.

Jeremiah 11:14 Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them, because I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their distress.

Acts 27:24 He said, "Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you."

Compare Acts 27:31 Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved."

Isaiah 65:24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

B1, V, 4.**End of life (*terminus vitae*).****a) In a general way, God has determined the length of human life.**

Psalm 90:10 The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

Psalm 102:23,24 In the course of my life he broke my strength; he cut short my days. ²⁴ So I said: "Do not take me away, O my God, in the midst of my days; your years go on through all generations."

b) God has also determined the years of each individual.

Note: God has done this by giving a man a certain constitution, placing him in a certain environment, leading him on a certain career, etc.

Job 14:5 Man's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.

Psalm 31:15 My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me.

Psalm 39:4,5 Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. ⁵ You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath.

Psalm 91:7 A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

Psalm 139:16 All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

c) In predetermining the end of an individual life, God pays due regard to natural causes, man's conduct, etc. In doing so his justice and mercy are evident.

Isaiah 57:1,2 The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. ² Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.

1 Kings 14:12,13 As for you, go back home. When you set foot in the city, the boy will die. All Israel will mourn for him and bury him. He is the only one belonging to Jeroboam who will be buried, because he is the only one in the house of Jeroboam in whom the Lord, the God of Israel, has found anything good.

2 Kings 20:1-6 In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover." ² Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, ³ "Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. ⁴ Before Isaiah had left the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: ⁵ "Go back and tell Hezekiah, the leader of my people, 'This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the LORD. ⁶ I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David.'"

Acts 27:24 He said, "Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you."

Compare Acts 27:42-44 ⁴² The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. ⁴³ But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. ⁴⁴ The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety.

Psalm 5:7 But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. Compare Psalm 5:6 You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors.

Psalm 55:23 But you, O God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of corruption; bloodthirsty and deceitful men will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you.

Psalm 94:23 He will repay them for their sins and destroy them for their wickedness; the LORD our God will destroy them.

Baier: It is a well established fact that it is not absolutely necessary that each man die at that time and in that manner of death with which he dies, nor it has not been absolutely and immutably decreed by God outside of and before all respect to causes or circumstances which are to be found outside of God. For otherwise the prayers and vows of the pious would be useless, and the divine promises and threats would also be useless ... [Gerhard:] The supernatural or divine end is always conditional, including the condition of piety or impiety or the contempt of means [to prolong life, such as food, medicine, etc.] (*Compendium*, p 315).

Note: Observation is insufficient when it comes to God's providence. Even here he often remains the hidden God.

d) In determining the end of life God is guided by his love.

Genesis 4:15 But the LORD said to him, "Not so; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him.

Luke 2:26, 29-32 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁹ Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

Baier: Divine providence changes the natural end of human life both as far as pious men are concerned as well as impious. For the pious God prolongs their life either as a reward for their obedience or because of their public usefulness. He shortens life for the same (i.e., the pious), partly that they may not be corrupted by the evil examples of others, partly that they may not see the calamities which are going to happen and be pained by them.—For the impious, God by a just judgment cuts off their life more quickly when he either inflicts on them a deadly disease or death or orders death to strike them, or allows that through their intemperance or other crimes they contract diseases or a violent death (*Compendium*, p 313).

e) Even though God controls the time of our life, he makes us stewards of our lives and the lives of our fellow human beings.

1) As Christian stewards we will remember that God has ultimate control over life and death.

Deuteronomy 32:39 See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

Psalms 31:14,15 But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God."

¹⁵ My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me.

2) As Christian stewards we will let God's Word guide the decisions we make that affect life and death.

3) As Christian stewards we will take all medical decisions to God in prayer and ask him to bless us with wisdom, insight, and pure motives.

4) As Christian stewards we will remember that all human life is valuable to God, even when the quality of that life is diminished.

5) As Christian stewards we will seek to improve the quality of people's lives, if possible.

B1, V, 5. Chance (*casus*, *Zufall*).

a) By "chance" we understand the apparently causeless meeting of two events, each one of which is traceable to an adequate cause.

b) Several Bible passages contain the word or concept of "chance."

1) A number of them simply deny intention, or control of circumstances on the part of the acting person.

Ecclesiastes 9:11 I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and *chance* happen to them all.

1 Kings 22:34 But someone drew his bow *at random* and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor. The king told his chariot driver, "Wheel around and get me out of the fighting. I've been wounded."

Deuteronomy 22:6 If you *come across* a bird's nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young.

2 Samuel 1:6 "I *happened* to be on Mount Gilboa," the young man said, "and there was Saul, leaning on his spear, with the chariots and riders almost upon him."

Luke 10:31 A priest *happened* to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

Exodus 21:13 However, if he does not do it *intentionally*, but God lets it happen, he is to flee to a place I will designate.

Numbers 35:22 But if without hostility someone suddenly shoves another or throws something at him *unintentionally*

Numbers 6:9 If someone dies *suddenly* in his presence, thus defiling the hair he has dedicated, he must shave his head on the day of his cleansing—the seventh day.

2) One passage speaks of real chance, quoting heathens as using the term.

1 Samuel 6:9 If it goes up to its own territory, toward Beth Shemesh, then the LORD has brought this great disaster on us. But if it does not, then we will know that it was not his hand that struck us and that it happened to us by *chance*.

c) Admitting chance in the strict sense of the word would deny God's government of the world.

Note. As chance would deny God's government, so the opposite of chance, fatalism, would destroy man's responsibility.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.

Lamentations 3:37 Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it?

Amos 3:6 When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?

B1, VI. God created a host of spirits, whom he employs as ministers in his work of providence. First we consider the good angels.

B1, VI, 1. Scripture teaches that there are angels.

a) Angels are real beings.

1) When it comes to angelology, two extremes can be noted.

-a) Some have displayed an unhealthy interest in angels.

Note the apocalyptic literature of the intertestamental period.

Lutheran Cyclopedia: Apocalyptic literature is a term applied to a type of literature produced in abundance by Jews after 200 BC and by Christians through AD 200. It presents a world caught in war between good and evil and offers hope of the victory of God in catastrophic action, which destroys its enemies. It is marked by strong angelology and demonology and by fervent messianic hope, which sometimes takes on an extreme political character. Apocalyptic literature usually emerges from a downtrodden and oppressed people (p 38).

Examples: The Book of Tobit and The Testament of Abraham

1 Enoch 6 And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. And the angels, the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them and said to one another: 'Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children.' And Semjaza, who was their leader, said unto them: 'I fear you will not indeed agree to do this deed, and I alone shall have to pay the penalty of a great sin.' And they all answered him and said: 'Let us all swear an oath, and all bind ourselves by mutual imprecations not to abandon this plan but to do this thing.' Then swore they all together and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. And they were in all two hundred; who descended in the days of Jared on the summit of Mount Hermon, and they called it Mount Hermon, because they had sworn and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. And these are the names of their leaders: Samlazaz, their leader, Arakiba, Rameel, Kokabel, Tamllel, Ramlel, Danel, Ezeqeel, Baraqijal, Asael, Armaros, Batarel, Ananel, Zaqllel, Samsapeel, Satarel, Turel, Jomjael, Sariel. These are their chiefs of tens.

1 Enoch 7 And all the others together with them took unto themselves wives, and each chose for himself one, and they began to go in unto them and to defile themselves with them, and they taught them charms and enchantments, and the cutting of roots, and made them acquainted with plants. And they became pregnant, and they bare great giants, whose height was three thousand ells: Who consumed all the acquisitions of men. And when men could no longer sustain them, the giants turned against them and devoured mankind. And they began to sin against birds, and beasts, and reptiles, and fish, and to devour one another's flesh, and drink the blood. Then the earth laid accusation against the lawless ones.

1 Enoch 8 And Azazel taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures. And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways. Semjaza taught enchantments, and root-cuttings, 'Armaros the resolving of enchantments, Baraqijal (taught) astrology, Kokabel the constellations, Ezeqeel the knowledge of the clouds, Araqiel the signs of the earth, Shamsiel the signs of the sun, and Sariel the course of the moon. And as men perished, they cried, and their cry went up to heaven.

Erickson: In the last part of the twentieth century, a real resurgence of angelology has taken place. In society in general there has been a considerable growth of interest in the supernatural, including a fascination with the occult. Perhaps as a reaction against naturalistic scientific rationalism, explanations falling outside the realm of natural law have flourished in some circles. Christians have shown renewed interest in demonology, particularly demon possession and demonically induced illnesses. Related to that, although lagging somewhat in time, has been a popular interest in good angels. In the 1900s, this emerged in several movies related to the reality and activity of angels. Yet, for all of this, there has not been a balanced inquiry into the nature and activity of angels, both the good and the evil (*Christian Theology*, p 461).

-b) Others have denied the existence of angels.

Acts 23:8 The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

Quenstedt: [The testimony of Scripture about the personal nature of angels] must be upheld against the ancient Sadducees, who believed that the angels are certain movements or feelings inspired in men; likewise (it must be upheld) against the Anabaptists, who foolishly imagine that the angels are only actions of God by which he punishes evil deeds and rewards good deeds; and likewise (it must be upheld) against David George, the archheretic of the previous century (1501–1556), who confused angels with thoughts of the human mind (*TDP*, I, p 444).

Robert Jenson: What about liturgy enables such a discourse to have sense that it would not have as mere propositions on a page? It is that liturgy is art that angels and archangels and streams and stars are spirited. Sung, "with angels and archangels," seems perfectly natural. Even in a said service, if the language of the great thanksgiving has poetic dignity, all is well. But when liturgical experimenters have tried to make the prayers relevant by reducing them to prose, the presiding minister feels foolish at such passages (*Christian Dogmatics*, II, p 174).

2) Angels are not the good spirits of the dead (ancestors).

Lessa and Vogt: Ancestors play an important part in African religion. They are vested with mystical power and retain a jural role in the world of the living, particularly in the lives of their descendants. Indeed, African kin-groups are often described as communities of both the living and the dead. Ancestors are regarded as ambivalent, at best capricious. While their benevolence is generally insured through propitiation and sacrifice, it is believed that ancestors readily punish their descendants for any neglect of such ritual obligation (*Reader in Comparative Religion*, p 393).

3) Angels are not impersonal forces or merely something that represents good.

Tillich: Angels and demons are mythological names for constructive and destructive powers. . . . They are not beings (*ST*, II, p 40).

4) Angels are personal, spiritual beings.

Hebrews 1:14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

Quenstedt: The personal nature of angels is evident: 1) from their names, for they are called guardians, principalities, lords, gods, sons of God, men of God; 2) from their personal actions, which are to serve, to stand before Jehovah, to appear, to speak, etc., which surely cannot be ascribed to feelings inspired in men or mere actions of God; 3) from the fall or ruination of the angels, and from the perseverance of the good angels in the truth; 4) from the fact that knowledge, desire, power are ascribed to them (*TDP*, I, p 444).

Hollaz: The human soul is an incomplete spirit, ordained as such and by its own nature for the composition of the whole man. Therefore, also, when the soul is separated from the body, it has a natural propensity and inclination towards the body, with which as a component part it constitutes a complete man; but the angels are not naturally ordained to constitute a unit as such with a certain component part, but they have their essence complete in themselves. Therefore the human soul is an incomplete spirit, the angels are complete spirits (*Examen*, p 378).

-a) As spiritual beings they are invisible and do not take up space (*illocal*).

Quenstedt: Invisibility is a consequence of spirituality: for a spirit cannot be seen with bodily eyes. For this reason also the angels are numbered among the invisible things.—The indivisibility of the angelic “substance” arises from their incorporeity or immateriality; for whatever is not material, that is not a quantity, nor does it have parts outside its parts and consequently is indivisible into quantitative parts (*TDP*, I, p 446).

-b) Yet they are confined to a single location.

Daniel 10:13,14 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”

Quenstedt: A *ποῦ* or whereabouts is attributed to them, in which an angel definitely is, that is, their substantial, not only their virtual, presence is limited to some space, so that they are there, not in other places, much less everywhere. And because an angel is without parts, he is not only as a whole in the whole place, but he is also able to exist as a whole in any, even the least part of a place, yes, in a point (*TDP*, I, p 446).

Hollaz: The agility and speed of the angels is wonderful, so that without local movement, which is characteristic of bodies, and therefore without a succession of parts, which they do not have, they can change their whereabouts most quickly. And nevertheless it does not seem that all movement must be denied to the angels since they are present now here, now elsewhere. And although the movement of the angels is very rapid, nevertheless it is not instantaneous, because the space in which they move is extended and continuous, which no creature can cross in an instant (*Examen*, p 384).

Note: To angels is ascribed existence in *ubi definitivo* (place, no space), to God in *ubi repletivo* (no place, no space) to physical bodies in *ubi circumscriptivo* (place and space).

5) Only two angels are given names in the Bible.

-a) Michael (who is like God)

Daniel 10:13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.

Jude 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

-b) Gabriel (hero of God)

Daniel 8:16 And I heard a man’s voice from the Ulai calling, “Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision.”

Daniel 9:21 While I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.

Luke 1:19 The angel answered, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.”

Luke 1:26 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee.

b) Scripture uses various words to refer to angels.

1) The most common name is angel (messenger or envoy). מַלְאָךְ - ἄγγελος

-a) A messenger of God may also be a man.

Ecclesiastes 5:6 Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple *messenger*, “My vow was a mistake.” Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?

Haggai 1:13 Then Haggai, the LORD’s *messenger*, gave this message of the LORD to the people: “I am with you,” declares the LORD.

Malachi 2:7 “For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is the *messenger* of the LORD Almighty.

Malachi 3:1 “See, I will send my *messenger*, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the *messenger* of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

Mark 1:2 It is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my *messenger* ahead of you, who will prepare your way.”

James 2:25 In the same ways, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the *spies* and sent them off in a different direction?

Revelation 2:1,8 To the *angel* of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands:⁸ To the *angel* of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.”

-b) The Son of God is called the Angel of the Lord.

This is covered under “Holy Trinity”. See page 170 ff.

-c) Most frequently the ἄγγελοι are angels.

Psalm 91:11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

Psalm 103:20 Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

Psalm 148:2 Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

Matthew 1:20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 4:11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

2) Angels are sometimes called sons of God. בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי־אֱלִים

-a) Believers are also called “sons of God.”

Genesis 6:2,4 The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

-b) When the term “sons of God” is applied to angels, it may indicate the grandeur of their nature or position.

Job 1:6 One day the angels (בְּנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים) came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.

Job 2:1 On another day the angels (בְּנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים) came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him.

Job 38:7 While the morning stars sang together and all the angels (בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים) shouted for joy?

Psalm 89:6 (7) For who in the skies above can compare with the LORD? Who is like the LORD among the heavenly beings (בְּנֵי־אֱלִים)?

3) Angels are called “gods.”

Psalm 8:5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings (אֱלֹהִים) and crowned him with glory and honor. Compare Hebrews 2:7 You made him a little lower than the angels (ἄγγελος); you crowned him with glory and honor

4) Angels are also called holy ones or “saints.” דְּשִׁיִּי־אֱלִים - ἅγιοι

Job 5:1 Call if you will, but who will answer you? To which of the *holy ones* will you turn?

Psalm 89:5,7 The heavens praise your wonders, O LORD, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the *holy ones*.⁷ In the council of the *holy ones* God is greatly feared; he is more awesome than all who surround him.

Daniel 4:13 In the visions I saw while lying in my bed, I looked, and there before me was a messenger, a *holy one*, coming down from heaven.

Deuteronomy 33:2 He said: “The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of *holy ones* from the south, from his mountain slopes.

Zechariah 14:5 You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the *holy ones* with him.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his *holy ones*.

Jude 14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his *holy ones*.”

5) Angels are called “watchers” or “watchmen.”

Daniel 4:17,23 The decision is announced by messengers (עֲרֵי), the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.²³ You, O king, saw a messenger (עֲרֵי), a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live like the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.

6) Angels are called “hosts” or “armies” צְבָאוֹת .

Psalm 148:2 Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

c) Scripture teaches that angels were created during the six days of creation.

1) They were created by God.

Psalm 148:2, 5 Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. ⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

2) **Angels were created during the six days of creation**

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Compare Genesis 2:1,2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ²By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Chemnitz: Because there is no description of the creation of angels in the books of Moses, many things are curiously debated, namely, when they were created.... But because Scripture does not indicate the precise time and day of the creation of the angels, let us gladly be ignorant of what we neither should nor can know.—Let it therefore be sufficient for us to know: 1) that the angels did not come into existence of their own accord; nor were they born from the substance of God, but they were created; 2) the angels have not existed from eternity and they did not exist before that beginning when all things that are in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, began to be. For to have been in the beginning is a characteristic only of that one alone through whom all things were made and who is eternal (*Loci*, I, p 122).

Quenstedt: The angels were created by God in time together with this visible world or within the space of the first six days. But on which day or at what time they were created, we willingly admit that we don't know.... They were created, however, not after, but within the six days, because when these had elapsed, God rested from the ordinary work of creation (*TDP*, I, p 459).

-a) **Some suggest Day 1 – when light was created.**

Job 38:6,7 On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—⁷ while the morning stars sang together and all the angels (Hebrew “sons of God”) shouted for joy?

Baier: That the angels were created before man is usually proved from Job 38:7. Some indeed believe that from this passage it can be known that the angels were created on the first day, namely, because when God laid the foundation of the earth, the angels are at once said to have praised God. But these things are not sufficiently clear, although we do not deny that according to Job 1:6 angels are denoted by the name sons of God, and we say that the beginning of these (i.e., the angels) is to be included in the beginning of the rest of the creatures. Perhaps, also, just as we know that man was created after the other creatures that were intended for his good, so also it is rightly concluded that the angels, who were going to serve man, were created before man. Nevertheless, it is not necessary that we say that the angels are indicated by the names heaven or light, taken metaphorically (*Compendium*, I, Cap. III, p 106).

-b) **Some suggest Day 2 because the phrase “and God saw that it was good” is missing since the angels were created and the evil angels immediately fell.**

Chemnitz: Others suggest that when Moses says, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” the angels are included under the word “heaven.” Still others believe that they were created on the second day and that some of them immediately fell, because with respect to this day Moses does not add the words “God saw that it was good” (*Loci Theologici*, I, p 165).

-c) **Some suggest Day 4 since that is when the sun, moon, and stars were created. They cite the close connection in Scripture between the angels and the sun, moon and stars.**

Psalm 148:1-3 Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above. ²Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. ³Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars.

-d) **Some suggest Day 6 saying that creation is progressive.**

-e) **Scripture seems to indicate that angels were created early in the creation week, but we cannot determine the day with certainty.**

Job 38:4-7 Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. ⁵Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? ⁶On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—⁷ while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

Chemnitz: It is sufficient that we know this: (1) that the angels did not exist by themselves and that they were not begotten of the substance of God, but were created; (2) that the angels were not from eternity and had not existed before the beginning when all things which are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, began to exist, for in the beginning there was only he through whom all things were made and who is the eternal One, John 1:1,3; (3) that the angels were created before the human race, which may be concluded from Job 38:4-7. For God says in regard to the human race, “where were you when all the sons of God shouted for joy?” He is referring to the founding of the earth, the creation of the stars, and he adds this in regard to the angels; and finally he says regarding the human race, “Where were you then?” v. 4 (*Loci Theologici*, I, p 165).

-f) **The time of their creation remains an open question**

Chemnitz: Because Scripture does not expressly state the precise time and day of the creation of the angels, “We are free to be ignorant,” as Ambrose says, “because we neither must nor can know.” (*Loci Theologici*, I, p 165).

-g) **Some put the creation of angels prior to the creation of the world.**

J. Kenneth Grider: The creation accounts in Genesis do not mention the creation of angels. On several bases, however, Scripture elsewhere implies that they were created prior to the world and us. . . . Further, Scripture implies that they must have been created at some point in time, since it implies that only God existed “in the beginning” (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 166).

Chemnitz: To Gregory of Nazianzus is attributed the opinion that the angelic nature was made out of nothing, before the creation of heaven

and earth (*Loci Theologici*, I, p 165).

-h) According to this view the fall also occurred before the creation of the world.

Ed Murphy: The Old Testament hints that these invisible, evil, supernatural, created cosmic beings are fallen angelic creatures. Somewhere, sometime, evidently before the creation of mankind, they were led by a mighty angelic creature, perhaps called Lucifer, into rebellion against the lordship of God (*The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare*, p 21).

d) God created numerous angels.

1) Angels were created holy.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Hollaz: The angels were created with a perfect but not immutable righteousness that could not be lost. For in the state of grace the will of the angels was not limited to perpetually loving and choosing the good, but God had given the angels freedom of choice with a concreated inclination toward the good, so that they had not a likely but a most remote possibility of sinning, consisting in a denial of the impossibility of sinning and of the incapability of losing the gifts with which they were created (*Examen*, p 385).

2) Their number is great.

Deuteronomy 33:2 The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones from the south, from his mountain slopes.

Daniel 7:10 Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.

Matthew 26:53 Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly.

Revelation 5:11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand.

3) Their number appears to be stable since they do not die or reproduce.

Luke 20:35,36 But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage,³⁶ and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection.

Calov: Although they could again be reduced to nothing by God, by whom they were created out of nothing, through his absolute power, and in that way could be called corruptible, and God alone is incorruptible and has immortality, nevertheless they are free from physical corruption, nor do they have any internal beginning of corruption, because they are altogether without matter, and therefore they are by nature incorruptible and immortal (*Systema*, IV, p 24).

Hollaz: God alone is absolutely immutable; the angels are relatively immutable, because they are not subject to physical changes, which are characteristic of natural bodies. For neither do the angels reproduce (*Examen*, p 382).

4) The good angels were confirmed in their holiness.

Matthew 18:10 See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

Luke 20:36 They can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection.

1 Timothy 5:21 I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

Quenstedt: The angels are called good not only on account of their innate, metaphysical or transcendental goodness, which all the angels, even the evil ones, have; for inasmuch as they are beings, in so far they are also good. Nor only on account of the good aptitude which they have by virtue of their creation, for also in this respect they were equal to the evil angels, since they formerly had this in an equal measure, but also on account of the good deed or obedience they rendered to God and on account of their perseverance in the good and finally on account of their own confirmation in what is good. And so the essential reason why they are called good angels is that they remained in the goodness and truth in which they were created and now have been confirmed in it in such a way that they never wish to nor are able to fall from it. Confirmation in their original state did not deprive the good angels of their liberty, nor did they on this account cease to have a free will, but rather they obtained greater liberty thereafter.... The greatest liberty, indeed, is not to be able to sin, not to be able not to do well, which highest degree of liberty God, who is the freest of all, possesses (*TDP*, I, p 477).

B1, VI, 2. Scripture teaches that there are ranks of angels yet nothing definite can be said about the order of precedence.

Hollaz: There is no doubt that there is a certain order among the good angels, but what and of what kind that angelic order is, we believe that no one in this life knows.—This is proved 1) by the general rule, 1 Cor 14:40; 2) by the various names of the heavenly spirits; 3) by analogy: There is an order among the evil angels (*Examen*, p 392).

Pomazansky: The Orthodox Church, guided by the view of the ancient writers of the Church and the Church Fathers, and in particular by the work of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, divides the angelic world into nine choirs or ranks, and these nine into three

hierarchies, with three ranks in each. In the first hierarchy are those who are closest to God: The Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. In the second middle hierarchy are the Authorities, Dominions and Powers. In the third closer to us are the Angels, Archangels and Principalities (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 117).

a) Archangel (ruling angel)

1) Michael is called the archangel.

Daniel 10:13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes (מִיכָאֵל הַרְאֲשֵׁי הַמַּלְאָכִים), came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Jude 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

2) Scripture does not reveal whether there is only one archangel or many archangels.

b) Cherubs or Cherubim

Note: The etymology of this word is uncertain. Possibly related to the Semitic root *karabu* (כָּרַב) which appears in Akkadian and means to "bless, praise, adore."

Genesis 3:24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Ezekiel 1:8-10 Under their wings on their four sides they had the hands of a man. All four of them had faces and wings,⁹ and their wings touched one another. Each one went straight ahead; they did not turn as they moved.¹⁰ Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a man, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle.

Ezekiel 10:20 These were the living creatures I had seen beneath the God of Israel by the Kebar River, and I realized that they were cherubim.

Psalms 80:1 Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock; you who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth.

Exodus 25:17,18 Make an atonement cover of pure gold—two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide.¹⁸ And make two cherubim out of hammered gold at the ends of the cover.

c) Seraphs or Seraphim

Note: The word "seraph" comes from the root שָׂרַף meaning to "burn"

Isaiah 6:2-4 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

d) Other names do not seem to establish a systematic order.

Ephesians 1:21 Far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου.

Ephesians 3:10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ ταῖς ἐξουσίαις ἐν τοῖς

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. θεόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι

1 Peter 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

B1, VI, 3. Though spiritual beings, angels can assume various visible forms.

a) Angels can assume a form like that of ordinary humans.

Genesis 19:1-5 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.² "My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." "No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square."³ But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.⁴ Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house.⁵ They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight?"

b) Angels can assume a form like a man, but brilliant and glorious.

Matthew 28:2,3 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

Daniel 10:6 His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

c) **Angels can assume the form of horses and chariots.**

2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

2 Kings 2:11 As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Note how Scripture uses a similar phrase to refer to the prophets.

2 Kings 2:12 Elisha saw this and cried out, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them apart.

2 Kings 13:14 Now Elisha was suffering from the illness from which he died. Jehoash king of Israel went down to see him and wept over him. "My father! My father!" he cried. "The chariots and horsemen of Israel!"

d) **Angels can assume the form of a creature with four faces.**

Ezekiel 1:4-14 I looked, and I saw a windstorm coming out of the north—an immense cloud with flashing lightning and surrounded by brilliant light. The center of the fire looked like glowing metal,⁵ and in the fire was what looked like four living creatures. In appearance their form was that of a man,⁶ but each of them had four faces and four wings.⁷ Their legs were straight; their feet were like those of a calf and gleamed like burnished bronze.⁸ Under their wings on their four sides they had the hands of a man. All four of them had faces and wings,⁹ and their wings touched one another. Each one went straight ahead; they did not turn as they moved.¹⁰ Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a man, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle.¹¹ Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out upward; each had two wings, one touching the wing of another creature on either side, and two wings covering its body.¹² Each one went straight ahead. Wherever the spirit would go, they would go, without turning as they went.¹³ The appearance of the living creatures was like burning coals of fire or like torches. Fire moved back and forth among the creatures; it was bright, and lightning flashed out of it.¹⁴ The creatures sped back and forth like flashes of lightning.

Ezekiel 10:20 These were the living creatures I had seen beneath the God of Israel by the Kebar River, and I realized that they were cherubim.

Compare with the description in Revelation 4:6-8

Revelation 4:6-8 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

e) **Angels are also pictured with wings:**

1) **Two wings**

1 Kings 6:24 One wing of the first cherub was five cubits long, and the other wing five cubits—ten cubits from wing tip to wing tip.

2) **Four wings**

Ezekiel 1:6 But each of them had four faces and four wings.

3) **Six wings**

Isaiah 6:2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

Revelation 4:8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings.

B1, VI, 4. God gave angels exceptional abilities.

a) **Angels possess wisdom.**

1) **This wisdom is superior to that of human beings.**

Daniel 9:22 He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding."

Daniel 10:13,14,21 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.¹⁴ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.

2) Yet the wisdom of the angels is limited and capable of increase.

Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Ephesians 3:10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

1 Peter 1:12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Quenstedt: But the angels do not know all things at one time, by one perception, but separately and through various perceptions, and not only through a simple apprehension, but also by putting things together and dividing them, yes, also by drawing conclusions and by inferring one thing from another. They know God, yet they do not comprehend him, because of the infinity of the divine essence and the finitude of the angels' intellect (*TDP*, I, p 445).

Gerhard: But what can we little worms crawling on the ground affirm in this darkness of our mind about the understanding of heavenly spirits since we do not even fully understand our own mind. It is better, therefore, to give sincere thanks to God for the service of the angels which he daily demonstrates to us than to search out curiously these secret things outside the limits of the Word that have not been revealed (*Locii*, IV, p 22).

b) Angels have great but limited power.

Psalms 103:20 Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

Acts 12:7,10 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. ¹⁰ They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

2 Thessalonians 1:7 [God will] give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.

2 Peter 2:11 Yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord.

Hollaz: The power of the angels is great, but finite (*Examen*, p 382).

c) Angels are not equal to Christ in excellency.

Hebrews 1:4-8,13,14 So [Christ] became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. ⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? ⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." ⁷ In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire." ⁸ But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom." ¹³ To which of the angels did God ever say, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? ¹⁴ Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

B1, VI, 5. Angels were created to serve God.

a) Angels worship God.

Isaiah 6:1-4 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

Revelation 4:8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

b) Angels serve as divine messengers.

Luke 1:26-28 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

c) Angels played a role in the giving of the law.

Acts 7:53 You who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it.

Galatians 3:19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.

Deuteronomy 33:2 [Moses] said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones from the south, from his mountain slopes."

Compare also the follow passages.

Exodus 19:16,19 On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. ¹⁹ and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

Matthew 24:31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

d) Angels prevent evil and execute judgment.

Acts 12:23 Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

Note also the account of the Passover in Exodus 12. Compare with Psalm 78:49 He unleashed against them his hot anger, his wrath, indignation and hostility—a band of destroying angels.

e) Angels ministered to the Savior.

Matthew 1:20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 2:13,19 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt

Matthew 4:11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Luke 22:43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

f) Angels serve God’s people.

1) Angels serve the physical needs of God’s people.

1 Kings 19:5,7 Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.”⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.”

2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Psalm 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

Psalm 91:11,12 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;¹² they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Daniel 6:22 My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.

Calov: The purpose of the created angels ... with respect to men is service, which they were divinely destined to furnish since God created all things on account of man and he made the angels servants in their very creation, intending to use their service especially for men for their welfare (*Systema*, IV, p 23).

2) Angels promote the spiritual welfare of God’s people and the spread of the gospel.

Luke 15:7,10 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Acts 5:17-20 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy.¹⁸ They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.²⁰ “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people the full message of this new life.”

Acts 8:26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.”

Acts 10:1-3 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.² He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly.³ One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, “Cornelius!”

Acts 12:7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.

Acts 27:23,24 Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me²⁴ and said, “Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.”

3) Whether each believer has a personal guardian angel is an open question.

Matthew 18:10 See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

Acts 12:15 “You’re out of your mind,” they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, “It must be his angel.”

Tim Unsworth: Saint Jerome, a fourth-century doctor of the church, wrote that the dignity of the souls was so great that each person has an angel to guard him or her from birth (*U. S. Catholic*, March 1990, p 31).

Grudem: Scripture clearly tells us that God sends angels for our protection: "He will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone" (Ps. 91:11-12). But some people have gone beyond this idea of a general protection and wondered if God gives a specific "guardian angel" for each individual in the world, or at least for each Christian. Support for this idea has been found in Jesus' words about little children, "in heaven *their angels* always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10). However, our Lord may simply be saying that angels who are assigned the task of protecting little children have ready access to God's presence. (To use an athletic analogy, the angels may be playing "zone" rather than "man-on-man" defense.) When the disciples in Acts 12:15 say that Peter's "angel" must be knocking at the door, this does not necessarily imply belief in an individual guardian angel. It could be that an angel was guarding or caring for the Peter just at that time. There seems to be, therefore, no convincing support for the idea of individual "guardian angels" in the text of Scripture (*Systematic Theology*, p 399, 400).

g) Angels pray for the church.

Zechariah 1:12 Then the angel of the LORD said, "LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years?"

h) Angels carry believers to heaven.

Luke 16:22 The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side.

i) Angels will accompany Christ at the final judgment.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

Mark 8:38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Matthew 13:39,41 The enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.

Matthew 24:31 He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

B1, VI, 6. Scripture warns us not to worship angels.

Colossians 2:18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

Revelation 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Smalcald Articles, II, 26: And although the angels in heaven pray for us (as Christ himself also does), as also do the saints on earth, and perhaps also in heaven, yet it does not follow thence that we should invoke and adore the angels and saints, and fast, hold festivals, celebrate Mass in their honor, make offerings, and establish churches, altars, divine worship, and in still other ways serve them, and regard them as helpers in need and divide among them all kinds of help, and ascribe to each one a particular form of assistance, as the Papists teach and do. For this is idolatry, and such honor belongs alone to God.

B1, VII. Scripture also teaches that there are evil angels called demons.

B1, VII, 1. Some deny the existence of the devil and his evil angels.

Barth: They are the myth, the myth of all mythologies (*CD*, III,3,521), one of the bad dreams of the older dogmatics (*CD*, III,3,531).

Bultmann: I maintain that to revive or perpetuate the demonology of the NT in the modern world is to incur the charge of obscurantism and superstition. The church should do all in her power to root it out (*Kerygma and Myth*, 120).

Peters: Symbols such as Satan and demonic forces give expression to something endemic to human experience—namely, sin comes from the outside as well as the inside. Evil is larger than we are. It comes to us just as we go to it (*God, the World's Future*, p 168).

Note also that Anton LaVey (1930-1997), the leading figure in Satanism in the past century, did not believe that Satan was a real person. He believed that the term "Satan" personified all that is evil.

B1, VII, 2. Demons were created by God as holy angels. Entirely on their own initiative they turned and became the enemies of God.

a) Demons originally were angels.

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority (*ἀρχήν*) but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

Quenstedt: They are called evil angels not because of their essence, for as far as their essence is concerned they are good and were created with the rest of the angels in truth, holiness, and righteousness. But they are called evil 1) because of their evil act, namely, their malicious defection and apostasy from God; 2) because of the habitual malice or horrible depravity of their nature, which followed that act; 3) because of their perseverance and persistence in incorrigible evil; and 4) finally because of their evil effects since they perpetrate nothing but evil deeds.—The general essence of the devils' fall consists in a free and spontaneous turning away from God and from the rule of right. For they could have continued in the

truth and holiness with which they were created and not have fallen. By the grace of creation they could have held to the rule of right. They sinned, therefore, willingly and freely, namely, through the abuse of the liberty that had been given them.—For they did not sin because of a defect in their nature or because of helplessness, but out of pure malice and obstinacy and through a spontaneous abuse of the free will given to them (*TDP*, I, p 450).

b) These angels rebelled against God; they willingly joined Satan's rebellion and believed the lie that God is not love.

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.

Genesis 3:5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Quenstedt: What in particular the first sin of the evil angels was is not clear. Nevertheless, the temptation with which Satan attacked and overcame our first parents renders probable the opinion of those who think that it was aspiring to equality with God or a striving for higher authority (*TDP*, I, p 452).

B1, VII, 3. About the time of the fall nothing definite can be said. It must have happened between the end of creation and the fall of man.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Quenstedt: In what order the evil angels sinned, whether all at the same time or one after another, or whether one fell first and led the others by his example and persuasion into apostasy and the fall, about this the scholastics argue but without any basis in Scripture (*TDP*, I, p 453).

Hollaz: It is probable that the evil angels fell under a certain leader or head, whom Holy Scripture calls Satan and the devil, who either by his example or persuasion influenced more angels to join him in the same sin (*Examen*, p 399).

The following passages speak about kings as servants of Satan. They cannot be used to develop a history and chronology of Satan.

Ezekiel 28:12-17 Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. ¹⁵You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. ¹⁶Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. ¹⁷Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.'"

Isaiah 14:12-15 How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! ¹³You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. ¹⁴I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." ¹⁵But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.

B1, VII, 4. A significant number of angels rebelled against God and became demons.

Mark 5:9 Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many."

a) Scripture does not reveal with certainty the number of angels that fell.

b) Based on Revelation 12, some put the number at one-third.

Revelation 12:3,4 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. ⁴His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth.

B1, VII, 5. The head of these evil angels is Satan or the devil. They represent a well-organized kingdom.

Matthew 12:26 If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand?

a) Scripture reveals that there are many evil angels.

1) Evil angels are called demons (δαιμόνιον).

Matthew 9:34 But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

Mark 1:34 Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

2) Evil angels are called evil spirits (πονηρά πνεύμα).

Luke 7:21 At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits (πνευμάτων πονηρών), and gave sight to many who were blind.

Luke 8:2 Also some women who had been cured of evil spirits (πνευμάτων πονηρῶν) and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out.

Acts 19:12,13 Even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits (τὰ τε πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ) left them. ¹³ Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits (τὰ πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ) tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out."

3. Evil angels are called unclean spirits (ἀκάθαρτα πνεύμα).

Matthew 10:1 He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits (πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων) and to heal every disease and sickness.

Mark 1:23 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit (πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ) cried out.

Luke 6:18 Those troubled by evil spirits (πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων) were cured.

Luke 8:29 For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit (τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀκαθάρτῳ) to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

4) Evil angels are called "world rulers."

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς, πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου, πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν κοσμοκράτορας ἐπουρανίων.

b) Scripture reveals that there is only one devil (διάβολος), that is, Satan (ΙΟΥΨ σατανᾶς).

Note: The word **διάβολος** "devil" "slanderer" is used in Scripture only in the singular.

Note: The word "satan" often refers to an accuser, especially in court.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

1 Chronicles 21:1 Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.

Zechariah 3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Mark 1:13 He was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Luke 11:18 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebul.

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

1) Satan serves as the tempter (ὁ πειράζων).

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

1 Corinthians 7:5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

2) Satan serves as the accuser (ὁ κατήγων).

Revelation 12:10 The accuser (ὁ κατήγων) of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

Job 1:6-11 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and [the] Satan also came with them. ⁷ The LORD said to [the] Satan, "Where have you come from?" [The] Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." ⁸ Then the LORD said to [the] Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." ⁹ "Does Job fear God for nothing?" [The] Satan replied. ¹⁰ "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. ¹¹ But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

Jude 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

3) Other names, titles, or descriptions for Satan include:

- **Prince of this world** ὁ ἀρχὼν τοῦ κόσμου

John 12:31 Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

- **the ruler of the kingdom of the air**, ὁ ἀρχὼν τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ αἵρου

Ephesians 2:2 You followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

- **God of this age** ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνου

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- **Evil one** ὁ πονηρός

Ephesians 6:16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

- Abaddon and Apollyon (destroyer)

Revelation 9:11 They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon.

- **Murderer** ἀνθρωποκτόνος

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

- **Red Dragon** δράκων

Revelation 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.

- **Ancient Serpent** ὄφις

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

- **Roaring lion** ὡς λέων ὠρυόμενος

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

- **Beelzebub** בְּעֵלְזֵבוּב originally name of a heathen god

Βεελζεβουλ βεεζεβουλ βεελζεβουβ

Luke 11:15 But some of them said, "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." Compare 2 Kings 1:2-4.

2 Kings 1:2-4 Now Ahaziah had fallen through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria and injured himself. So he sent messengers, saying to them, "Go and consult *Baal-Zebub*, the god of Ekron, to see if I will recover from this injury." "But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Go up and meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and ask them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going off to consult *Baal-Zebub*, the god of Ekron?' "Therefore this is what the LORD says: 'You will not leave the bed you are lying on. You will certainly die!'"

- **Belial** בְּלִיַּעַל בְּלִיַּעַל originally name for a scoundrel

originally name for a scoundrel

2 Corinthians 6:15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

- **Lucifer, "light bearer"** הַיְלֵל בְּמֹשֶׁךְ originally name for the King of Babylon.

originally name for the King of Babylon.

Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! (KJV)

- **Angel of light**

2 Corinthians 11:14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

B1, VII, 6. Hell was prepared as a place of punishment for Satan and his evil angels.

Matthew 25:41 Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

a) Satan and his evil angels are confirmed in sin.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

2 Peter 2:4 God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

Baier: When sin had been committed, all those angels lost the grace with which they had been created and so fell into the greatest misery without hope of restoration (*Compendium*, p 280).

Calov: The punishment of the evil angels is, on the one hand, the eternal desertion of God, from which they can never be converted, and, on the other hand, the rejection to infernal punishments which must be borne forever (*Systema*, IV, p 318).

Hollaz: The punishment of loss, which is also called deprivation, is the saddest loss of grace and glory. The punishment of sensation or positive punishment is the tortures which the demons from the time of their fall feel as being very great, but which they will undergo even more on the day of the final judgment (*Examen*, p 403).

b) Contrary to popular portrayals, Satan is an inmate and not the warden of hell.

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

B1, VII, 7. Satan and his demons are powerful.

Mark 9:20-22 So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. ²¹ Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From

childhood,” he answered.²² “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”

Luke 4:5 The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.

Luke 8:29 For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

Luke 11:14 Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed.

a) Their natural powers were corrupted by sin.

Ephesians 4:17,18 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

Quenstedt: The evil angels through their fall did not lose their natural knowledge or that which they had from the light of nature, for to a certain extent they know God and other supernatural things; but that knowledge of supernatural things is joined 1) with an extreme hatred and raging against God; 2) with malice, envy and fury against the good angels and pious and blessed people; 3) with ignorance, doubt, error and forgetfulness. They lost completely, however, the knowledge which arises from the light of grace (*TDP*, I, p 454).

Baier: Their intellect, since it was deprived not only of the light of grace but also of the light of glory and since it is riveted as it were on contemplating divine wrath and their own misery, is dulled and lacks a correct judgment concerning good deeds. The corruption of the devils' intellect is at other times usually shown from this that Satan promoted the death of Christ with such eagerness, not realizing that thereby his own very great adversity was brought about. Whatever natural knowledge remains in the evil angels, however, adds no happiness to those who have been rejected by God (*Compendium*, p 280).

b) They can perform deceiving signs and wonders.

2 Thessalonians 2:9,10 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

⁹ οὐ ἔστιν ἡ παρουσία κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ σατανᾶ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν ψεύδους ¹⁰ καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἀπάτῃ ἀδικίας τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις.

Exodus 7:10-12 So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake.¹¹ Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts:¹² Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

c) They distort the truth of God's Word and plant the seeds of false doctrine.

1 Timothy 4:1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

1 Kings 22:20-22 And the LORD said, “Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?” One suggested this, and another that.²¹ Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, “I will entice him.”²² “By what means?” the LORD asked. “I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,” he said. “You will succeed in enticing him,” said the LORD. “Go and do it.”

d) They work against God's church and its members and against the spread of God's kingdom.

Luke 8:12 Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.

Luke 22:31 Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.

2 Corinthians 2:11 In order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:2 In which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

1 Thessalonians 2:18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us.

1 Peter 5:8,9 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Revelation 2:10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 12:12,17 Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.¹⁷ Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Hollaz: The evil spirits zealously scheme to disturb, to overthrow, and deeply undermine the existing church by scattering heresies, by hindering the efforts of pious ministers of the church, by distracting the minds of the hearers from meditating on and practicing the divine Word, by stirring up persecutions against the kingdom of Christ (*Examen*, p 403).

e) **They can work on the heart and mind of a person and plant the seeds of doubt.**

Matthew 13:25,39 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

Luke 22:3,4 Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.

John 13:2 The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus.

John 13:27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.

Acts 5:3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

f) **Apart from Christ all people are a part of Satan's kingdom.**

Ephesians 2:1,2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

John 8:42-44 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

g) **They can "demonize" people in various ways.**

1) **They can afflict people physically.**

Job 2:7: Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the top of his head to the soles of his feet.

2 Corinthians 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

Also see point 4 below concerning physical possession.

2) **They can afflict people spiritually.**

Luke 22:3,4 Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.

John 13:2 The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus.

John 13:27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.

Hollaz: The activities of the evil angels are indeed various, but they are all directed toward undermining divine glory and toward not only the temporal but also eternal destruction of both individual human beings and the hierarchical estates (i.e., in both the church and the state) (*Examen*, p 400).

Augsburg Confession, Ap., 46,47,49,50: Although the scholastics extenuate both sin and punishment when they teach that man, by his own strength, can fulfill the commandments of God; in Genesis the punishment, imposed on account of original sin, is described otherwise. For there human nature is subjected not only to death and other bodily evils, but also to the kingdom of the devil. For there, Gen. 3:15, this fearful sentence is proclaimed: I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.⁴⁷ The defects and the concupiscence are punishments and sins. Death and other bodily evils, and the dominion of the devil, are properly punishments. For human nature has been delivered into slavery and is held captive by the devil, who infatuates it with wicked opinions and errors.⁴⁹ Even the history of the world shows how great is the power of the devil's kingdom. The world is full of blasphemies against God and of wicked opinions, and the devil keeps entangled in these bands those who are wise and righteous in the sight of the world. In other persons grosser vices manifest themselves. But since Christ was given to us to remove both these sins and these punishments, and to destroy the kingdom of the devil, sin and death, it will not be possible to recognize the benefits of Christ unless we understand our evils. For this reason our preachers have diligently taught concerning these subjects, and have delivered nothing that is new, but have set forth Holy Scripture and the judgments of the holy Fathers.

Large Catechism, The Sacrament of the Altar, 80-82: Besides this, you will also have the devil about you, whom you will not entirely tread under foot, because our Lord Christ Himself could not entirely avoid him. Now, what is the devil? Nothing else than what the Scriptures call him, a liar and murderer. A liar, to lead the heart astray from the Word of God, and to blind it, that you cannot feel your distress or come to Christ. A murderer, who cannot bear to see you live one single hour. If you could see how many knives, darts, and arrows are every moment aimed at you, you would be glad to come to the Sacrament as often as possible. But there is no reason why we walk so securely and heedlessly, except that we neither think nor believe that we are in the flesh, and in this wicked world or in the kingdom of the devil.

3) **They can oppress people.**

1 Samuel 16:14 Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.

4) **They can possess people.**

Mark 5:1-9 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.² When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him.³ This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain.⁴ For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him.⁵ Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him.⁷ He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!"⁸ For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!"⁹ Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many."

Luke 8:2 And also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out.

Matthew 12:22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see.

Mark 9:17-22 A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech.¹⁸ Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not."¹⁹ "O unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."²⁰ So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.²¹ Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered.²² "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

Luke 13:11 A woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all.

Note how Scripture distinguishes between illnesses that have a medical basis, illnesses and physical afflictions that have a demonic cause, and demonic oppression and possession.

Matthew 4:24 News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

Quenstedt: [Possession] is an action of the devil by which with the permission of God he instigates people to sin and occupies and torments their bodies in order that they might lose their eternal salvation. From the first, namely, the instigation to sin, spiritual possession arises; from the second, namely, the occupying of human bodies by the devil, bodily possession arises. The former happens when the devil is said to possess and fill the minds and hearts of the ungodly, to enter into their hearts and persons, and to be active in them. The latter happens when the devil directly and locally lives and works within the body and subjugates it for a time.... The subject of this bodily possession is not only an ungodly person, but also sometimes a godly person (Mk 9:21) [??], since it sometimes happens that also upright persons are possessed by Satan as a result of a secret but nevertheless most just judgment and counsel of God. God gives the ungodly over to be possessed by Satan in order that they may be punished and corrected; he gives the godly over, however, in order that the heinousness of their sins may be demonstrated and their faith exercised (*TDP*, I, p 456).

h) God warns us that Satan has powers that are superior to those of human beings, but not sufficient to overcome those who trust God's power.

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Ephesians 6:11-18 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Quenstedt: Sometimes they know future happenings with certainty from divine revelation (Job 1:12; 2:6; 1 Kgs 22:22). Certain things, however, they know as very probable from their natural shrewdness (*TDP*, I, p 454).

i) God comforts us with the truth that he is more powerful than Satan and his evil angels.

Exodus 7:10-12 So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake.¹¹ Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts:¹² Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

Job 1:12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job 2:6 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

Luke 8:31,32 And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss.³² A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. Parallel Matthew 8:31.

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

Revelation 20:2,3 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

j) **God comforts us with the truth that the good angels can overpower the evil angels and defend us.**

2 Kings 6:15-17 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked.¹⁶ "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Revelation 12:7-9 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.⁸ But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.⁹ The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

B1, VII, 8. Satan and his demons were defeated by Christ.

a) **Satan tried to tempt Jesus to sin.**

Matthew 4:1-10 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Luke 4:1-12 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert,² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"⁵ The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.⁶ And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to."⁷ So if you worship me, it will all be yours.⁸ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"⁹ The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here."¹⁰ For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."¹² Jesus answered, "It says: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

1) **These temptations were real**

Hebrews 2:14-18 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

2) **Because of the communication of attributes, it was not possible for Christ to sin.**

James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

3) **This gives us the assurance that our salvation was never in doubt.**

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

b) **Christ crushed the head of Satan through his death on the cross.**

Hebrews 2:14,15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Colossians 2:13-15 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

1 Peter 3:18,19 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison.

B1, VII, 9. Scripture warns us against various forms of the occult.

a) **This includes Satanism.**

Matthew 4:8-10 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

b) **This includes witchcraft and magic.**

Micah 5:12 I will destroy your witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells.

1) **Wicca, also called witchcraft, is a nature religion condemned by God.**

Romans 1:25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

- 2) **Wicca worships many gods and goddesses, especially the horned god of nature and hunting and Diana, the moon goddess. They do not necessarily regard these gods and goddesses as personal beings.**

Exodus 20:3,4 “You shall have no other gods before me. ⁴“You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

- c) **This includes astrology, mediums, spiritists, tarot cards, and other methods used to contact the dead or to know the future.**

Deuteronomy 18:10-11 Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, ¹¹ or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead.

2 Chronicles 33:1,2,6 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. ² He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. ⁶ He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

Isaiah 47:13,14 All the counsel you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you. ¹⁴ Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame. Here are no coals to warm anyone; here is no fire to sit by.

- d) **God protects his people against the occult.**

Numbers 23:7-10, 23: Then Balaam uttered his oracle: “Balak brought me from Aram, the king of Moab from the eastern mountains. ‘Come,’ he said, ‘curse Jacob for me; come, denounce Israel.’ ⁸ How can I curse those whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce those whom the LORD has not denounced? ⁹ From the rocky peaks I see them, from the heights I view them. I see a people who live apart and do not consider themselves one of the nations. ¹⁰ Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my end be like theirs!” ²³ There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel.

B2. Man's Nature.

B2, I. Man was created by God as a personal being consisting of body and soul.

B2, I, 1. Adam and Eve were created directly by God.

Genesis 2:7,21,22 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

B2, I, 2. They were not the result of an evolutionary process.

Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Contra Genesis 1, Ted Peters: This leads to our third and fourth scientific concepts—evolution and ecology. The planet earth represents one of these open subsystems at the meso level. Earth is constantly receiving energy input from the sun. Its own system—its ecology—is for the time being exempt from falling victim to entropy. Hence, the interplay of randomness and chance makes possible leaps in creativity, fluctuations out of which new and higher forms of order can emerge. The fact that earth is an open system has made possible the evolution of life. By *evolution* I mean here essentially what Charles Darwin in 1859 meant, namely, the gradual epigenetic appearance of new species due to mutations and natural selection. The chronology looks something like this: point zero in time and the onset of the big bang began perhaps 15 billion years ago; the earth's crust congealed about 4 billions years ago; single cell life forms appeared 3.8 billion years ago; dinosaurs roamed the planet from 180 million to 63 million years ago; and the proto-human *homo erectus* flourished between 600,000 and 350,000 years ago (*God—The World's Future*, p 140, 141).

B2, I, 3. God created man with a material body.

a) God made man from the dust of the ground.

Note: the Hebrew says God formed man "dust from the ground."

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man [from the] dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

וַיִּצְרֵהוּ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עֹפָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה

b) God gave man the "breath of life" (נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים).

c) God made man a "living being" (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה).

Genesis 2:7: The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Note that the animals were also made "living beings" (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה). Thus Genesis 2:7 is not a proof passage for the doctrine of soul as the KJV may seem to indicate.

Genesis 1:30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה) in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

Genesis 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 (KJV).

B2, I, 4. God created man with an immaterial soul.

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 And the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Note that there is no single word in Scripture that corresponds to the English word "soul." The following words may be used to denote the immaterial "soul" of man.

Hebrew: נֶפֶשׁ - רוּחַ - לֵב Greek: ψυχή - πνεῦμα Latin: *anima, spiritus*

B2, I, 5. The human soul is a creation and not an emanation from God.

Isaiah 42:5 This is what God the LORD says—he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath (נְשֵׁמָה) to its people, and life (רוּחַ) to those who walk on it.

Jeremiah 38:16 But King Zedekiah swore this oath secretly to Jeremiah: “As surely as the LORD lives, who has given us breath (שָׁנָה), I will neither kill you nor hand you over to those who are seeking your life (שָׁנָה).”

Note this word is also used of animals.

Genesis 1:20,24 And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures (שָׁנָה וְשָׁרָף) and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.”²⁴ And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. — See also Genesis 7:22 Everything on dry land that had the breath of life (נְשַׁמָּה רִחַיִּים) in its nostrils died.

Hollaz: The soul is said to have been breathed in *by* God, not *from* God. For God did not breathe the soul into man out of his own divine substance (*Examen*, p 409).

B2, I, 6. Man's nature seems to consist of two parts: a material body and an immaterial soul (dichotomy).

a) There are some who try to distinguish three constituents: body, soul, and spirit (trichotomy).

Ed Murphy: In speaking about the three levels of protection around us, he states, “The schema follows the trichotomous view that the human person is made up of body, soul, and spirit” (*The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare*, p 434).

1) They point to the following passages for support.

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Luke 1:46,47 And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

2) When interpreted with the rest of Scripture, it is doubtful that these passages teach a trichotomy.

Gerhard: It seems simplest in those passages in which spirit is distinguished from soul to understand by the term “spirit” the higher faculty of the regenerated and renewed soul, by which a man clings to God and follows the leading of the Holy Spirit (Ro 8:16). With this solution for the most part agrees the explanation of those who say that “soul” is used in a double sense by the apostles, first, in so far as it according to its substance gives life to the body, and this is indicated by the word “soul,” secondly, in so far as it is renewed by the Holy Spirit, and this is indicated by the word “spirit” (*Locii*, tom. XVII, loc. XXII, paragraph LXXVI, p 81).

Quenstedt: 1) In passages of this kind Holy Scripture does not understand by “spirit” some spirit substantially different from the human soul, but the higher part of the soul. 2) A distinction must be made between “spirit” taken for an essential part of man—and thus it is the same as soul and not distinguished from it—and when it is used for spiritual gifts and the gifts of sanctification, which are conferred on believers by the Holy Spirit, or when it is used for the grace and effect of the Holy Spirit, namely, the qualities and gifts of the Holy Spirit in a regenerate person (*TDP*, I, p 518).

b) Scripture uses the terms “soul” and “spirit” somewhat interchangeably to designate the same “substance”.

1) In Scripture the “soul” words, שָׁנָה and ψυχή, are used in many ways. The NIV and other English translations use many different terms to reflect these differences.

Note: The LXX often uses ψυχή as a translation for שָׁנָה.

-a) שָׁנָה / ψυχή can refer to “breath.”

Job 41:21 His *breath* sets coals ablaze, and flames dart from his mouth.

Acts 20:10 Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “He’s *alive!*” [He’s breathing]

-b) שָׁנָה / ψυχή can denote “odor” or “fragrance.”

Isaiah 3:20 The headdresses and ankle chains and sashes, the *perfume* bottles [literally “houses of soul”] and charms.

-c) שָׁנָה / ψυχή is used for “that which animates the body and makes it a functioning living being.”

Genesis 1:30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the *breath* of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

Genesis 9:4 But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood (αἷματι ψυχῆς LXX) still in it.

-d) Ψῆ / ψυχή is contrasted with the body.

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the *soul*. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both *soul* and body in hell.

1 Kings 17:21 Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried to the LORD, “O LORD my God, let this boy’s *life* return to him!” [or soul?]

-e) Ψῆ / ψυχή is used to denote the emphatic “I,” “me,” or “self.”

Psalms 103:1,2 Praise the LORD, O my *soul*; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ² Praise the LORD, O my *soul*, and forget not all his benefits.

Luke 1:46,47 And Mary said: “My *soul* glorifies the Lord ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

-f) Ψῆ / ψυχή can refer to the living creature, including a human being.

Genesis 1:21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving *thing* with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.

Revelation 8:9 A third of the *living* creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

-g) Ψῆ / ψυχή is the seat of emotions, affections, and inner feelings of all kinds.

Genesis 34:3 His *heart* was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her.

Psalms 6:3 My *soul* is in anguish. How long, O LORD, how long?

Ephesians 6:6 Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your *heart*.

-h) Ψῆ / ψυχή can denote “earnestness.”

Proverbs 27:9 Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one’s friend springs from his *earnest* counsel (literally “soul counsel”). Note: ψυχή in LXX.

-i) All the functions by which life is sustained or strengthened is attributed to the

Ψῆ / ψυχή

- The soul gets thirsty and hungry.

Psalms 107:9 For he satisfies *the thirsty* [the soul who is thirsty] and fills *the hungry* [the soul who is hungry] with good things.

- Fasts

Psalms 69:10 When I weep and fast, I [my soul] must endure scorn;

- Gets full

Proverbs 27:7 *He* [The soul] who is full loathes honey, but to the hungry even what is bitter tastes sweet.

- Gets refreshed

Jeremiah 31:25 I will refresh the weary [*soul*] and satisfy the faint [*soul*].

- **Delights in the richest of fare**

Isaiah 55:2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your *soul* will delight in the richest of fare.

- **Can pollute itself with defiled food**

Ezekiel 4:14 Then I said, “Not so, Sovereign LORD! I (my soul) have never defiled myself. From my youth until now I have never eaten anything found dead or torn by wild animals. No unclean meat has ever entered my mouth.”

-j) The following are true of the Ψῆ / ψυχή

- It can be killed

Numbers 31:19 All of you who have killed *anyone* or touched anyone who was killed must stay outside the camp seven days. On the third and seventh days you must purify yourselves and your captives.

- devoured

Ezekiel 22:25 There is a conspiracy of her princes within her like a roaring lion tearing its prey; they devour *people*, take treasures and precious things and make many widows within her.

- demanded or asked for

1 Kings 3:11 So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the *death* of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice.”

- risked or forfeited

Judges 9:17 And to think that my father fought for you, risked his *life* to rescue you from the hand of Midian

- redeemed

Psalm 34:23 The LORD redeems [*the souls of*] his servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in him.

- renewed

Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the *soul*.

- relieved

Lamentations 1:11 All her people groan as they search for bread; they barter their treasures for food to *keep themselves alive* (to revive their souls).

- feared for.

Joshua 9:24 They answered Joshua, “Your servants were clearly told how the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from before you. So we feared for our *lives* because of you, and that is why we did this.”

2) Scripture also uses the “spirit” words רוּחַ / πνεῦμα in many ways.

-a) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα can refer to “wind.”

Genesis 8:1: But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded.

-b) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα can refer to “breath of life.”

Genesis 6:17 I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life (רוּחַ חַיִּים) in it. Everything on earth will perish.

James 2:26 As the body without the *spirit* is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

-c) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα can be used to stress the temporary nature of life.

Job 7:7 Remember, O God, that my life is but a *breath*.

-d) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα can be used to refer to the soul (as opposed to the body).

Ecclesiastes 12:7 The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the *spirit* returns to God who gave it.

-e) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα can refer to “anger.”

Judges 8:3 “God gave Oreb and Zeeb, the Midianite leaders, into your hands. What was I able to do compared to you?” At this, their *resentment* against him subsided.

-f) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα can refer to the seat of other affections and sensations.

- Unrest

Genesis 41:8 In the morning his *mind* was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

- Sorrow and vexation

Isaiah 65:14 My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail in brokenness of *spirit*.

- Patience and pride

Ecclesiastes 7:8 The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience (*in spirit*) is better than pride (*in spirit*).

- Despair

Isaiah 61:3 And provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a *spirit* of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

- Inner thoughts

1 Corinthians 2:11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s *spirit* within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the *Spirit* of God.

-g) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα may refer to the emotion or attitude that governs a person’s actions.

- Spirit of jealousy

Numbers 5:14 And if *feelings* of jealousy come over her husband and he suspects his wife and she is impure—or if he is jealous and suspects her even though she is not impure.

- Spirit of prostitution

Hosea 4:12 A *spirit* of prostitution leads them astray; they are unfaithful to their God.

- Spirit of dizziness

Isaiah 19:14 The LORD has poured into them a *spirit* of dizziness; they make Egypt stagger in all that she does, as a drunkard staggers around in his vomit.

- Spirit of timidity, power, love, self-discipline

2 Timothy 1:7 For God did not give us a *spirit* of timidity, but a *spirit* of power, of love and of self-discipline.

-h) רוּחַ / πνεῦμα is also used to refer to the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit.

Exodus 31:3 And I have filled him with the *Spirit* of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts.

John 3:8: The *wind* blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the *Spirit*."

3) When comparing "soul" and "spirit" in Scripture we can note the following similarities.

- a) Both נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα and פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή are regarded as the seat of emotions, affections, and intelligence.**

Philippians 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in *one spirit*, contending as *one man* for the faith of the gospel.
ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

Note also passages in the previous sections.

- b) Human beings are said to be body and נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα (Matthew 10:28) and body and פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή (1 Corinthians 5:5).**

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

1 Corinthians 5:5 Hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature [flesh] may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

- c) Death is described as giving up the נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα (Matthew 27:50; Acts 7:59) and the departing of the פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή (Genesis 35:18; Acts 5:5,10).**

Matthew 27:50 And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit (ἀφῆκεν τὸ πνεῦμα).

Acts 7:59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit (δέξαι τὸ πνεῦμα μου)."

Genesis 35:18 As she breathed her last ($\text{הַפְּסָחַיִם בְּנֵי בְנֵי}$)—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. But his father named him Benjamin.

Acts 5:5,10 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died (ἐξέψυξεν). And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. ¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and died (ἐξέψυξεν). Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

- d) The departed are called נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα (Hebrews 12:23; 1 Peter 3:19) and פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή (Revelation 6:9; 20:4).**

Revelation 6:9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the *souls* of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.

Revelation 20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the *souls* of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Hebrews 12:23 To the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the *spirits* of righteous men made perfect.

1 Peter 3:19 Through whom also he went and preached to the *spirits* in prison.

4) While it is difficult to define clearly the differences between "soul" and "spirit," yet we can note the following differences.

- a) פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή is preferred when speaking about emotions, while נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα is preferred when speaking about intelligent will.**
- b) פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή is preferred when speaking about "essence" while נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα is preferred when speaking about "activity."**
- c) פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή is preferred when speaking about receptivity (of some actions) while נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα is preferred when speaking about the activity (of the soul).**
- d) פְּסָחַיִם / ψυχή is preferred when speaking about the creature as a whole while נַּפְשׁ / πνεῦμα is preferred when speaking about the living principle in the creature.**

- e) **נְפֹשׁ / ψυχή** is preferred when speaking of the spiritual substance that is joined to the body while **רוּחַ / πνεῦμα** is preferred when speaking about the spiritual substance as opposed to matter.
 - f) **נְפֹשׁ / ψυχή** is preferred when speaking of humans, who are called souls but not spirits (though deceased humans can be called spirits), while **רוּחַ / πνεῦμα** is preferred when speaking of angels (called spirits but not souls).
 - g) **נְפֹשׁ / ψυχή** is preferred to speak of the natural life in unbelievers while **רוּחַ / πνεῦμα** is preferred when speaking about the new spiritual life in Christians and the exalted state of Christ.
- c) **Scripture also uses the word “heart” (לֵב / לֵב / καρδία) in similar ways, yet does not suggest that this is another part of man’s essence.**
- 1) **The word “heart” (לֵב / לֵב / καρδία) is used to describe the seat of life.**

Psalm 22:26 The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the LORD will praise him— may your *hearts* live forever!

Isaiah 1:5 Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion? Your whole head is injured, your whole *heart* afflicted.
 - 2) **The word “heart” (לֵב / לֵב / καρδία) is used to describe the center of spiritual or soul-life.**
 - Love

Judges 16:15 Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you won’t *confide* in me? (literally: “when your heart is not with me.)

Mark 12:30 Love the Lord your God with all your *heart* and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

1 Peter 1:22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the *heart*.
 - Joy

Psalm 104:15 Wine that gladdens the *heart* of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart.

Acts 2:26 Therefore my *heart* is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope.
 - Heaviness

Proverbs 12:25 An anxious *heart* weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.
 - Sorrow

Proverbs 14:13 Even in laughter the *heart* may ache, and joy may end in grief.
 - Despair

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the *brokenhearted*, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

Psalm 109:16 For he never thought of doing a kindness, but hounded to death the poor and the needy and the *brokenhearted*.
 - Fear

Psalm 27:3 Though an army besiege me, my *heart* will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident.
 - 3) **The word “heart” (לֵב / לֵב / καρδία) is used to describe the seat of thoughts and concepts.**

Song of Solomon 5:2 I slept but my *heart* was awake.

2 Kings 5:26 But Elisha said to him, “Was not my *spirit* with you when the man got down from his chariot to meet you?”

Psalm 31:12 I am *forgotten* by them as though I were dead; I have become like broken pottery. (literally: "I have passed out of heart/mind.")

Judges 5:16 Why did you stay among the campfires to hear the whistling for the flocks? In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of *heart*.

1 Kings 9:3 The LORD said to him: "I have heard the prayer and plea you have made before me; I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my *heart* will always be there.

Luke 2:19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her *heart*.

1 Corinthians 14:25 And the secrets of his *heart* will be laid bare.

4) The word "heart" (לֵב / לִב / καρδιά) is used to describe the seat of motivation, inclination, determination, and planning.

1 Samuel 14:7 "Do all that you have in *mind*," his armor-bearer said. "Go ahead; I am with you *heart and soul*."

1 Samuel 13:14 But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own *heart* and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command.

Exodus 35:21 And everyone who was willing and whose *heart* moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments.

Esther 7:5 King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is the man who has *dared to do* such a thing?" (literally: "have in heart")

Matthew 18:35 This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your *heart*.

Luke 12:34 For where your treasure is, there your *heart* will be also.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

5) The word "heart" (לֵב / לִב / καρδιά) is used to describe the seat of understanding and wisdom.

1 Kings 10:24 The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.

Psalm 90:12 Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

6) The word "heart" (לֵב / לִב / καρδιά) is used to describe the center of moral life of a person.

Deuteronomy 4:29 But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your *heart* and with all your soul.

Deuteronomy 6:5 Love the LORD your God with all your *heart* and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Psalm 51:10 Create in me a pure *heart*, O God, and renew a steadfast *spirit* within me.

1 Kings 3:6 Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in *heart*. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day."

1 Kings 9:4 As for you, if you walk before me in integrity of *heart* and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe my decrees and laws.

Nehemiah 9:8 You found his *heart* faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites,

Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Gergashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.

Jeremiah 24:7 I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their *heart*.

Jeremiah 3:17 At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the LORD, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the LORD. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil *hearts*.

Psalms 101:4 Men of perverse *heart* shall be far from me; I will have nothing to do with evil.

Matthew 15:19 For out of the *heart* come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

Acts 1:24 Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's *heart*. Show us which of these two you have chosen."

Acts 8:21 You have no part or share in this ministry, because your *heart* is not right before God.

Romans 10:10 For it is with your *heart* that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Note: In Scripture the heart is used for the whole inner man including—but not limited to—the emotions. It is not contrasted to the head or intelligence, as is done in Western culture. This shows that the western way of viewing the heart as the center of emotions does not parallel the Scriptural concept of "heart." It should also be noted that Scripture uses other words to describe the emotional center of human beings (Example: Romans 12:2 "the renewing of your *mind*" – τῆ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοῦς).

d) Scripture may prefer certain words when speaking about the material or spiritual aspects of human beings. However, it does not make clear distinctions in the use of these words. It frequently uses them interchangeably.

1) Scripture seems to teach dichotomy.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

2) The relationship between body and soul/spirit is one of mutual dependence:

- The body is the instrument of the soul/spirit. Without the body the soul/spirit is incomplete.
- The soul/spirit gives life to the body. Without the soul/spirit the body is dead.

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling,³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

2 Peter 1:13,14 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body,¹⁴ because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

Hollaz: a) The body is a true part of man, without which he is not a true and complete man. b) The human soul has not been thrown by God into the body as into a squalid prison, by which it is hindered from being able to lift itself up quickly and fly to God, who is to be known, loved, and worshiped (*Examen*, p 411).

3) Scripture, then, clearly condemns:

-a) Materialism (Greek atomists, Marxists, Behaviorists)— which assumes the existence of matter only and considers the phenomena of the mind as merely the product of a neurological system.

Susan Blackmore: We are biological organisms, evolved in fascinating ways for no purpose at all and with no end in any mind. We are simply here and this is how it is. I have no self and "I" own nothing. There is no one to die. There is just this moment, and now this and now this (*Dying to Live: Near-Death Experiences*, p 263, 264).

- b) **Idealism (spiritualistic philosophy, e.g., Christian Science) — which claims that reality is essentially psychic, accounting for matter as a product of (misguided) fantasy.**

Mary Baker Eddy: All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-All.... Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness. Therefore, man is not material; he is spiritual (*Science and Health with Key to Scriptures*, p 468:9-15).

B2, II. All inhabitants of the earth today are descended, according to body and soul, from the first pair of human beings created by God in the beginning.

B2, II, 1. The oneness of humanity is the clear doctrine of Scripture.

a) **All humans descended from two people.**

Genesis 1:27,28 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 2:18-25 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." ²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. ²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Genesis 9:1 Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth."

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

b) **The existing differences between the various races have led some to deny the descent of all mankind from one pair.**

1) **Some have spoken of co-Adamites, or pre-Adamites.**

Peyrerius (1655) taught that the Gentiles are different in race and origin from the Jews. The Jews were formed by God in Adam. The Gentiles were created earlier, on the same day as the other animate beings. The origin of the latter is described in Genesis 1, of the former in chapter 2. ... The Gentiles were many ages earlier than the Jewish people.— He refers also to Gn 4:14,16,17; 6:2–4; Ro 5:12–14 (*Prae-Adamitae*, Hoenecke, *Dogmatik*, II, p 315).

2) **Today much of modern science (evolution) advocates the other extreme. It denies not only the creation of man by God, but creation in general.**

c) **The propagation of mankind is a work of God's providence (preservation).**

Job 10:8,9,11,12 Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? ⁹ Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again? ¹¹ Clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews? ¹² You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Psalm 119:73 Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.

Psalm 139:14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

B2, II, 2. Special difficulties have been experienced in explaining the propagation of the human soul, leading to different theories.

a) **Preexistentism. Platonic philosophers, mystics, Origen, Mormons.**

1) **This theory assumes that the life of the soul antedates that of the body. In the moment of conception one of the ready souls, created in the beginning, is sent into the new body.**

William Wordsworth (d. 1850):
Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere its setting and cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness

And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home. (*Ode*)

2) **This is against Scripture.**

Genesis 1:27,28 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

b) **Creationism. Many church fathers, Catholics, Pelagius, Melancthon.**

1) **This theory assumes that by a direct act God creates a soul for every new body naturally conceived (either in the moment of conception or within the first forty days thereafter or later).**

2) **Scripture which speaks of God as our creator is cited in support of this theory.**

Numbers 16:22 But Moses and Aaron fell facedown and cried out, "O God, God of the spirits of all mankind, will you be angry with the entire assembly when only one man sins?"

Job 10:12 You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

Acts 17:25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

3) **However, the following passages argue against creationism.**

God ceased his work of creation at the end of the sixth day.

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

God is the creator of the body, but he does it through the parents.

Job 10:8,9,11 Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? ⁹ Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again? ¹¹ Clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews?

Job 31:15 Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers?

Psalms 119:73 Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.

Psalms 139:14-16 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, ¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Children are born in the image of sinful parents.

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Genesis 46:26 All those who went to Egypt with Jacob—those who were his direct descendants, not counting his sons' wives—numbered sixty-six persons.

Genesis 46:26 All the *souls* that came with Jacob into Egypt, *which came out of his loins* (*לִבְנָיִם*; *'אַנְשֵׁי*), besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six (KJV).

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. etc.

c) **Traducianism. Tertullian, Augustine, most Lutheran dogmaticians.**

- 1) **This theory (from tradux, “runner” or “shoot”) holds that in conception the new soul is propagated together with the body.**
- 2) **It is the one most compatible with Scripture, especially with the doctrine of original sin.**
Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Hebrews 7:10 When Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

See the passages against creationism above.

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 7: In the second place, this, too, is clear and true, as the Nineteenth Article of the *Augsburg Confession* teaches, that God is not a creator, author, or cause of sin, but by the instigation of the devil through one man sin, which is a work of the devil, has entered the world, Rom. 5, 12; 1 John 3, 7. And even at the present day, in this corruption of nature, God does not create and make sin in us, but with the nature which God at the present day still creates and makes in men original sin is propagated from sinful seed, through carnal conception and birth from father and mother.

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 30: [Nor can we accept the view] Augustine attributes to the Manicheans, as though it were not the corrupt man himself that sins by reason of inborn original sin, but something different and foreign in man, and that God, accordingly, accuses and condemns by the law, not the nature as corrupt by sin, but only the original sin therein. For, as stated above *in thesi*, that is, in the explanation of the pure doctrine concerning original sin, the entire nature of man, which is born in the natural way of father and mother, is entirely and to the farthest extent corrupted and perverted by original sin, in body and soul, in all its powers, as regards and concerns the goodness, truth, holiness, and righteousness concreated with it in Paradise. *Non tamen in aliam substantiam genere aut specie diversam, priori abolita, transmutata est*, that is: Nevertheless the nature is not entirely exterminated or changed into another substance, which, according to its essence, could not be said to be like our nature but is diverse in genus or species, and therefore cannot be of one essence with us.

- 3) **Our theologians have expressed themselves in different ways. In general, they support traducianism without being dogmatic about it.**

Quenstedt: The soul of the first man was created by God directly without means. But the soul of Eve and the souls of the rest of men are not daily created in this same way. Nor are they created in the same way as the body or the souls of beasts are born from their parents, but by force of the divine benediction they are propagated from their parents through propagation [like the development of a new plant from a strawberry runner].... This is proved 1) from the primeval blessing of God (Gn 1:28, coll 8:17; 9:1); 2) from God's rest and cessation from all work on the seventh day (Gn 2:2); 3) from the making of Eve's soul (Gn 2:21, 22); 4) from the description of generation (Gn 5:3). Just as Adam after the Fall fathered a son in his image and likeness, not only with respect to the body but also with respect to the soul, so also the rest of men; 5) from Gn 46:26; 6) from the following absurdities: a) if it is claimed that souls are created directly (without means) by God, either original sin would clearly have to be denied or God could not be freed from injustice, both of which are absurd; b) it follows that man does not beget an entire man or a complete composite being, but only a part of him; but anyone who does not give the essence of a man does not beget a man, for a man without his essence, that is, his soul, is not a man; 7) from Ps 51:5 (*TDP*, I, p 519)

Gerhard: From this basic fact [namely, that without the Fall the blessed condition of the first people would have been passed on to all their descendants] we deduce this theory: also the souls of those who were born of Adam and Eve were not created, nor even generated, but propagated.... After the Fall original sin has taken the place of the image of God in man, the propagation of which shows also that after the Fall that propagation of souls takes place. The propagation of original sin shows that human souls are not created directly by God, but are propagated from the parents to the children (*Loci*, IV, p 278).

Gerhard: We do not say that the body is produced separately and the soul separately, but we say that the whole man is generated from the whole man. For it is an axiom in the schools of the philosophers that generation is an act of the whole composite being (*Loci*, IV, p 280).

Augustine: We will gladly defend the opinion of Jerome if they can show us how the souls do not come from Adam and yet receive from him a just sentence of damnation (Cited in Hoenecke, *Dogmatik*, II, p 317).

Augustine: What pertains to the origin of it (i.e., the soul), how it happens that it is in the body, whether it comes from that one who was first created, when man was made into a living soul, or whether individual souls are always made in this way for individual beings, I did not know then and I still don't know (*Retractions*, cited in Hoenecke, *Dogmatik*, II, p 317).

Chemnitz: Let it suffice, therefore, to know about the effective cause that the first parents by their fall merited this that as they were after the Fall both in body and soul, so also all their offspring were procreated. How the soul contracts this evil, however, can be ignored without harm to faith (*Loci*, I, p 219).

Note. The propagation of the body is wonderful indeed; but being witnessed daily also in the animal kingdom the force of the miraculous is not so felt.

Special care must be taken to avoid any materialistic conception of the soul.

B3. Image of God

B3, I. The image of God consisted in a natural conformity of man's mind to God's. Man was created holy just as God is holy.

J. P. Meyer: Sinlessness is the core of the concept of image. Everything else, all pure knowledge, pure strivings, pure joy, is only a fruit of sinlessness, to be viewed as granted with sinlessness (*Our Great Heritage*, II, p 187).

B3, I, 1. It is God's unchanging will that man should bear his image.

a) This was his plan in creating man.

Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 5:1 This is the written account of Adam's line. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.

Genesis 9:6 Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

James 3:9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness.

b) When this image was destroyed through sin, God declared it restored through the sacrifice of his own Son (justification).

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

c) Scripture also teaches that through the work of the Spirit the image of God is being renewed in the Christian (sanctification).

Ephesians 4:23,24 To be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

23 ἀνανεοῦσθαι δὲ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ νοῦς ὑμῶν 24 καὶ ἐνδύσασθαι τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν κατὰ θεὸν κτισθέντα ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας.

Colossians 3:9,10 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

10 καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν.

d) The image is spoken of in connection with man in his sinful state, since God sees each person as one in whom he wants to restore the image through faith in Christ.

Genesis 9:6 Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

James 3:9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness.

Franz Pieper: The Lutheran theologians are agreed that the image of God is lacking in man after the Fall (Col 3:10; Eph 4:24). They differ on the question as to whether a divine image is still ascribed to man after the Fall (Gen 9:6; James 3:9). Some deny this and take the passages to describe man as the noble creature who once bore the image of God and in whom God would recreate this image through faith in Christ (Luther). Others say that these passages describe man as he is after the Fall, a creature endowed with intellect and will, and contend that this constitutes a certain similitude with God (Baier, Quenstedt). The interpretation of Luther is to be preferred (*Christian Dogmatics*, p 518, 519).

B3, I, 2. In determining what constitutes the image of God the following must be considered.

a) God is absolute spirit.

1) **The image of God cannot be seen. Therefore the image of God should not be considered as something corporeal.**

2) **The image presupposes a personal being, that is, a person that exists distinct from God and capable of self-awareness.**

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Genesis 5:1 This is the written account of Adam's line. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.

b) Christ is the essential image of God.

1) Scripture teaches this truth.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. $\text{\u0399}\ \delta\varsigma\ \acute{\omega}\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\sigma\mu\alpha\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \delta\acute{\omicron}\xi\eta\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \chi\alpha\rho\alpha\kappa\tau\eta\rho\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \u03b7\pi\omicron\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \alpha\u0302\u03c5\tau\omicron\u0302\upsilon.$

Compare John 14:9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John 12:45 When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me.

2) Man's image of God will be similar to Christ.

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

1 Corinthians 15:49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

Matthew 10:38 Anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Calov: The substantial image of God is the eternal Son of God because he expresses in himself the entire essence of the Father, but distinct from him in his manner of subsisting. From this it is evident that the conformity which is found in the substance of the soul or body does not pertain to the image of God described in the biblical style, because the substance of the soul or body was not lost through the Fall nor is it restored through renewal (*Systema*, IV, p 573).

c) The spiritual life of a Christian is a restoration of the original image of God.

1) The natural sinful state of man may be regarded as the reverse of the image.

Ephesians 4:22,25 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;²⁵ Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Colossians 3:5-9,10 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

2) The various elements of Christian life may be regarded as components of the image.

Ephesians 4:23,24,32 To be made new in the attitude of your minds;²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.

d) The ordinary use of the Hebrew terms will shed some light.

1) The word דָּגָל (image, *imago*) is used in the following ways:

Numbers 33:52 Drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved *images* and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places.

2 Kings 11:18 All the people of the land went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They smashed the altars and *idols* to pieces and killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars. Then Jehoiada the priest posted guards at the temple of the LORD.

Ezekiel 7:20 They were proud of their beautiful jewelry and used it to make their detestable idols and vile *images*. Therefore I will turn these into an unclean thing for them.

2 Chronicles 23:17 All the people went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They smashed the altars and *idols* and killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars.

Ezekiel 16:17 You also took the fine jewelry I gave you, the jewelry made of my gold and silver, and you made for yourself male *idols* and engaged in prostitution with them.

1 Samuel 6:5,11 Make *models* of the tumors and of the rats that are destroying the country, and pay honor to Israel's god. Perhaps he will lift his hand from you and your gods and your land. ¹¹ They placed the ark of the LORD on the cart and along with it the chest containing the gold rats and the *models* of the tumors.

Ezekiel 23:14 But she carried her prostitution still further. She saw men portrayed on a wall, *figures* of Chaldeans portrayed in red.

Psalm 39:6 Man is a mere *phantom* as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it.

Psalm 73:20 As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as *fantasies*.

2) The word דְּמוּת (likeness, *similitudo*) is used in the following ways:

2 Kings 16:10 Then King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. He saw an altar in Damascus and sent to Uriah the priest a *sketch* of the altar, with detailed plans for its construction.

Isaiah 40:18 To whom, then, will you compare God? What *image* will you compare him to?

Ezekiel 23:15 With belts around their waists and flowing turbans on their heads; all of them *looked like* Babylonian chariot officers, natives of Chaldea.

Ezekiel 1:5,10, 22 In the fire was what *looked like* four living creatures. In appearance their form was that of a man. ¹⁰ Their faces *looked like* this: Each of the four had the face of a man, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle. ²² Spread out above the heads of the living creatures was what *looked like* an expanse, sparkling like ice, and awesome.

Ezekiel 1:28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the *likeness* of the glory of the LORD. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

2 Chronicles 4:3 Below the rim, *figures* of bulls encircled it—ten to a cubit. The bulls were cast in two rows in one piece with the Sea.

3) Theologians provide the following on both terms.

Hollaz: In the beginning two terms were used ... not for this purpose that they might be symbols of distinct things and that the "image" might denote the substance itself of the human soul, "likeness" its attributive qualities (as some papists want to understand the terms), but in order that the latter might be explanatory of the former, and that the image might be designated as a most similar or very similar image of God (*Examen*, p 502).

Gerhard: We do not distinguish "image" and "likeness" in such a way that we refer the former to the essence of the soul, the latter to holiness, righteousness, the knowledge of God, etc. in man, but we state that the same thing is expressed by both words and the term "likeness" is to be taken exegetically (*Locj*, p 241).

e) For a statement of these principles by our Lutheran fathers

Calov: This conformity of man with God has reference to the image of God which 1) was impressed on our first parents in creation, 2) was lost for the most part through transgression (note Calov is using a broader definition), 3) must be restored through renewal in this life and especially in the blessed regeneration to the

life to come (*Systema*, p 572).

Meisner: 1) The image of God must be put among those things by reason of which some similarity exists between man and God. 2) The image of God must not be included among those things which remained whole in man after the Fall. 3) The image of God is not sought in one similarity between man and God, but in all similarities. 4) The image of God can become known in part from a consideration of original sin. 5) The image of God can be recognized best if the renewal of man is noted, which takes place with respect to the lost image. 6) A consideration of our state of glory in the life to come contributes considerably to a knowledge of the image.—Meisner then sums all this up in the axiom: Whatever is similar to God, what we lost through the Fall, the opposite of which we find in unregenerate man, what we know must be restored in us—that let us consider to have belonged without doubt to the image of God (*Locii*, p 7,8)

B3, I, 3. From Scripture we can learn a number of things about loss of the image.

a) Man's intellect was originally conformed to God's but became darkened.

Genesis 2:19,23 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

Ecclesiastes 7:29-8:1 This only have I found: God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes." ¹Who is like the wise man? Who knows the explanation of things? Wisdom brightens a man's face and changes its hard appearance.

Colossians 3:9,10 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Note. This was a conformity in the principles upon which one makes moral judgments, not in the manner, extent, or degree of knowledge used for making those judgments.

b) Man's emotions were stirred and his will strove in harmony with the good and holy will of God but became rebellious against God.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Genesis 2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Ephesians 4:24 Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

c) As a result of the loss of the original holiness and righteousness, the following became true.

1) Man was free from pain and suffering but now suffers.

Genesis 3:16,19 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Genesis 5:29 He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed."

Job 14:1 Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.

Psalms 90:10 The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

2) Man was not subject to death but now dies.

Genesis 2:17 But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.

Genesis 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Romans 5:12 Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3) Man had an easy dominion over creation but now struggles.

Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the

creatures that move along the ground.”²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Compare Genesis 9:2 The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands.

J. P. Meyer: Obviously, it does not mean that we identify the entrusted dominion with the concept of image. The matter is scarcely done justice if man has dominion over creatures simply because of the concept of image. Then dominion is on the same plane as other results of the concept of image, like immortality, freedom from physical and intellectual collapse, and the like. Basically the correct thought is that in the dominion a predisposition or capability is set in motion. To rule with God, to administer God's property freely—here man is to find his blessedness. And in order to make man capable and worthy of such dominion, God grants him his image. Even if the concept of image is not to be identified with dominion either, they are still woven together most intimately, so that we can hardly view one separate from the other (*Our Great Heritage*, II, p 179).

d) Our Lutheran fathers state the following:

Gerhard: Man was created in the highest innocence, in the highest purity of soul and body, so that in him as in a kind of living mirror the image of God shone forth. Thus the image of divine wisdom shone in the intellect of man; the image of goodness, patience, gentleness, and tolerance in the soul of man; the image of divine love and mercy shone in the feelings of the human heart; the image of divine righteousness, holiness and purity shone in the will of man; the image of friendliness, kindness, and truth in man's deeds and words (*Loci*, p 246).

Baier: This image of God in man ought not or cannot be referred to all things which are in God; nor is it in that degree of perfection in man in which it is in God (*Compendium*, p 203).

B3, I, 4. Scripture reveals God's aim in making man in his image.

a) That man may thereby be in a position to enjoy his company.

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

1 John 1:3,6,7 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

John 17:21,26 I pray that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

b) That man may act as God's representative on earth.

Genesis 1:26,28 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Genesis 9:5,6 And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man.⁶ “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.”

Psalms 115:16 The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to man.

B3, I, 5. Within the Christian church there has been and continues to be a wide variety of views on the image of God.

Catholic and Orthodox distinguish image and likeness in order to preserve spiritual powers in man.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Disfigured by sin and death, man remains “in the image of God,” in the image of the Son, but is deprived “of the glory of God,” (Rom 3:23) of his “likeness” (paragraph 705).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone (paragraph 357).

Timothy Ware: The image of God denotes the powers with which each one of us is endowed by God from the first moment of our existence; the likeness is not endowment which we possess from the start, but a goal at which we must aim, something which we can only acquire by degrees. However sinful we may be, we never lose the image; but the likeness depends upon our moral choice, upon our “virtue,” and so it is destroyed by sin (*The Orthodox Church*, p 219).

Daniel B. Clendenin: The Eastern fathers also define theosis as the movement from the divine image to the divine likeness. Many (but not all) Orthodox theologians make this distinction. It was the view of Diadochos of Photiki, Maximus, John of Damascus, Palamas, and others that every person is made in the divine image, but only a few attain the transformation of the distorted image into the divine likeness. That is, we all possess the divine image by nature, but only some acquire the divine likeness through vigilance (*Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective*, p 133).

Evangelicals generally follow a wider definition of the image of God.

R. L. Reymond: Luther regarded the image exclusively in terms of original righteousness and concluded, therefore that the image of God was entirely lost in the Fall.... Calvin disagreed, viewing the image as lying primarily in the understanding or in the heart, that is, in the soul and its powers, but he also suggested that “no part of man, not even his body,” is not adorned in some sense with some rays of its glory. In other words, the image included, for Calvin, both natural endowments and the spiritual qualities of original righteousness (knowledge, righteousness, holiness). The whole image, according to Calvin, had been affected by the Fall, with only original righteousness being completely lost. This is the explication of the image that has become generally acceptable in the Reformed tradition (*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p 426).

Millard Erickson: The image of God should be thought of as primarily substantive or structural. The image is something in the very nature of humans, in the way in which they were made. It refers to something a human is rather than something a human has or does. By virtue of being human, one is in the image of God; it is not dependent upon the presence of anything else. . . . The image is the powers of personality that make humans, like God, capable of interacting with other persons, of thinking and reflecting, and of willing freely (*Christian Theology*, p 532).

Wayne Grudem: Out of all the creatures God made, only one creature, man, is said to be “in the image of God.” What does that mean? We may use the following definition: The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God. . . . Though it would be difficult to define all the ways in which we are like God, we can mention several aspects of our existence that show us to be more like God than all the rest of creation.

- Moral aspects—we are morally accountable before God for our actions.
- Spiritual aspects—we have immaterial spirits.
- Mental aspects—we have an ability to reason and think logically.
- Relational aspects—we relate to God and other human beings.
- Physical aspects—our bodies reflect something of God’s own character.

(*Systematic Theology*, p 442-449)

Compare the heathen poet Ovid: A being holier than these and more capable of a high mentality was lacking up till now, and one which would be able to rule over the rest. Man was born.... The son of Iapetus formed [earth] mixed with rain water into an image of the gods who rule over all things. While the rest of the animals look down to the earth, he gave man an elevated face and commanded him to look up toward heaven and to carry his face raised to the stars (*Met.*1,76–88.) Note: Iapetus was one of the Titans; the son referred to is Prometheus.

H. Orton Wiley: [The image of God] includes both the rational and moral elements, the former being commonly known as the Natural or Essential image of God; the latter as the Moral or Incidental image. . . . We may further summarize the two positions as follows: the natural image of God in man has reference to personality, by which he is distinguished from the lower animal creation; while the moral image refers to the character or quality of this personality. The first has to do with the constitution of man as possessing self-consciousness and self-determination; the second has to do with the rightness or wrongness of the use of these powers (*Christian Theology*, p 32, 38).

Robert L Reymond: Some scholars (e.g., Buswell) suggest that the image in man (or at least an aspect of it) is his dominion over the creation (*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p 427).

Liberal Lutheran

Philip J. Hefner: The image of God presents a fundamental image of human beings as “being-with-a-destiny” (Braaten/Jenson, *Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 330).

Paul Sponheim: Despite Luther and Calvin, it will not do to speak of the image of God as being entirely lost. Already the Priestly writer of the Pentateuch has God blessing humankind after the flood of judgment in nearly the same terms as the initial blessing and making specific appeal to the image of God (Gen. 9:1-2). Ernst Kasemann’s statement is simply too strong: “Adam is a different person before and after the fall.” (Braaten/Jenson, *CD* I, p 421)

Ted Peters: The *imago Dei* is the divine call forward, a call we hear now and respond to now but a call that is drawing us toward transformation into a future reality. . . . Through divinization humanity as the *imago Dei* becomes

fulfilled in us. If this is what is meant by *theosis*, then it expresses in other language what I have here been referring to as the call forward to true humanity (*God—The World's Future*, p 157, 159)

B3, II. The image was an inhering attribute of man (but *accidentalis*).

B3, II, 1. It was not a part of man's essence (not *substantialis*).

a) Christ (but no creature) is the essential image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

b) Man's essence was not changed by the fall.

1) Man is still a rational (personal) being consisting of body and soul.

2) If the image had been a part of man's substance, the fall would have produced a radical change in man's constitution, destroying his identity.

Calov: It is evident that the conformity which is found in the substance of the soul or of the body does not belong to the image of God described in the biblical style, because the substance of the soul or body was not lost through the fall nor is it restored through renewal (regeneration) (*Systema*, p 573).

Quenstedt: The image of God is not man but in man, that is, it is not substantial or essential to man, but accidental (*TDP*, p 17).

3) If the image (righteousness and holiness) had been essential, the fall would have been impossible. In such a fall man would have ceased to be man.

4) If the image had been essential, original sin would now constitute a part of man's substance. This would involve a false dualism.

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 27: For although in Adam and Eve the nature was originally created pure, good, and holy, nevertheless sin did not enter their nature through the Fall in the way fanatically taught by the Manicheans, as though Satan had created or made some evil substance, and mingled it with their nature. But since man, by the seduction of Satan through the Fall, has lost his concreated hereditary righteousness according to God's judgment and sentence, as a punishment, human nature, as has been said above, is so perverted and corrupted by this deprivation or deficiency, want, and injury, which has been caused by Satan, that at present the nature is transmitted, together with this defect and corruption [propagated in a hereditary way], to all men, who are conceived and born in a natural way from father and mother.

Formula of Concord, Ep., 17,19: On the other hand, we also reject the false dogma of the Manicheans, when it is taught that original sin, as something essential and self-subsisting, has been infused by Satan into the nature, and intermingled with it, as poison and wine are mixed. ¹⁹ We reject and condemn also as a Manichean error the doctrine that original sin is properly and without any distinction the substance, nature, and essence itself of the corrupt man, so that a distinction between the corrupt nature, as such, after the Fall and original sin should not even be conceived of, nor that they could be distinguished from one another [even] in thought.

B3, II, 2. The image and likeness were not merely external gifts (*donum superadditum*).

a) This is the view of the Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Disfigured by sin and death, man remains "in the image of God," in the image of the Son, but is deprived "of the glory of God," (Rom 3:23) of his "likeness" (paragraph 705).

Timothy Ware: The image of God denotes the powers with which each one of us is endowed by God from the first moment of our existence; the likeness is not endowment which we possess from the start, but a goal at which we must aim, something which we can only acquire by degrees. However sinful we may be, we never lose the image; but the likeness depends upon our moral choice, upon our "virtue," and so it is destroyed by sin (*The Orthodox Church*, p 219).

b) If the image was simply an added gift, the loss of the image could not have affected man's free will as such.

Council of Trent: First of all the holy synod declares ... that although in the lie of Adam all men lost their innocence ... nevertheless the free will in them was by no means extinguished. *Can.5*: If anyone says that the free will of man after the fall of Adam was lost and extinguished ... let him be damned (VI, Cap. 1).

Bellarmino: The condition of man after the fall of Adam does not differ from his condition in purely natural things any more than a stripped man differs from a naked man ... a wreath, which is placed on the head of a virgin, and although it is removed, she nevertheless remains none the less a virgin; just as a garment, when it

has been taken off, makes a man naked, to be sure, but his nature is not taken away (*Disput.*, tom. IV, de gratia primi hominis, cap. V, 11, p 8).

c) We reject this position.

Formula of Concord p782,15. [We reject the view of Strigel] that original sin is only an external impediment to the good spiritual powers, and not a despoliation or want of the same, as when a magnet is smeared with garlic-juice, its natural power is not thereby removed, but only impeded; or that this stain can be easily wiped away like a spot from the face or pigment from the wall.

Hollaz: The image of God did not indeed constitute the nature of the first man as an essential part, nor did it emanate from his nature of itself and necessarily as an inseparable characteristic; nevertheless it belonged naturally to the first man because by creation it began to be together with the nature itself of the man; and so it was, on the one hand, something that belonged to him and, on the other hand, was deeply fixed in him. Accordingly also it inwardly perfected the nature of the entire man to achieve his purpose and could be passed on through natural generation to his descendants (*Examen*, p 518).

Meisner: As far as the word "natural" is concerned, therefore, it is taken: 1) constitutively, for that which gives the nature itself its essence; 2) consecutively, for that which flows essentially from the essence, as the faculties of the soul; 3) subjectively, for that which inheres most deeply fixed in the nature; 4) perfectly, for that which adorns, aids, and perfects the nature; 5) transitively, because it is propagated naturally and by nature. We do not include the first and second way the term is used when we call righteousness "natural" because the image was neither a part nor the constitutive principle of man in the proper sense of the word, nor was it some faculty of the soul. But we hold to all the latter ways the term is used, and therefore we deny that the primeval righteousness was a supernatural gift, because it did not adhere intrinsically nor was it beyond the native endowments or powers; but rather we call it co-natural, both because it inheres in the nature from creation of itself and most closely as a natural property, and because it perfected the same (i.e., man's nature), and therefore it accompanied it as its natural complement, and because it would have been propagated through physical generation to man's descendants and naturally derived (*Locis*, p 44).

Gerhard: We do not deny that original righteousness can be called a gift of God or a grace by reason of its origin, because the first man did not have that integrity of himself but received it as a result of his condition (as a creature). But if a question is raised about the manner of its inherence, we say that original righteousness was a gift that was not external and superadded, but created together with man, because after he lost it through sin, his natural endowments did not remain unimpaired (*Confessio Catholica*, p 1372).

Luther: The scholastics argue that original righteousness was not a part of man's nature but, like some adornment, was added to man as a gift, as when someone places a wreath on a pretty girl. The wreath is certainly not a part of the virgin's nature; it is something apart from her nature. It came from outside and can be removed again without any injury to her nature. Therefore they maintain about man and about demons that although they have lost their original righteousness, their natural endowments have nevertheless remained pure, just as they were created in the beginning. But this idea must be shunned like poison, for it minimizes original sin. Let us rather maintain that righteousness was not a gift which came from without, separate from man's nature, but that it was truly part of his nature, so that it was Adam's nature to love God, to believe God, to know God, etc. (*LW*, 1, 164f).

B3, II, 3. The image was an important attribute.

a) Consider the following:

1) Man was made in the image of God in his creation.

Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

2) In propagation the image or its absence are transmitted.

Genesis 1:27-28 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Romans 5:12 Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

b) Man was not in a neutral state, a state of moral equilibrium.

1) Freedom to sin is not freedom.

John 8:36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

2) The image was capable of development.

-a) Man was not yet in a state of heavenly perfection.

Baier: [The concreated wisdom was sufficient for the primeval condition] and therefore it was such that with the passing of time it could nevertheless be increased, but was not so perfect and fully developed that it would even include knowing the free decrees of God or would involve a most accurate knowledge of all the things of nature.—Without a doubt (the condition of man when he was in the image of God was such) that sincere and complete obedience was offered not only to the positive laws of God, but also to the negative ones, and all things which could incline the will in another direction could be declined or spurned (*Compendium*, p 205).

-b) The image must not be classed with instincts.

-1) Instincts produce necessary actions as a result of physiological conditions.

-2) The will of man was free to act in different ways.

-c) If man was in a state of moral equilibrium, some questions would come to mind.

-1) Would not a right decision have been purely accidental?

-2) Would a right exercise of the will tend to make righteousness habitual?

-3) Would man after every correct decision swing back to the original state of equilibrium?

-d) It was God's will that man should consciously exercise his innate righteousness.

-1) Scripture teaches this truth.

Genesis 2:17 But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

-2) Logically this would have led to a confirmation. Man would have moved from an ability not to sin (*posse non peccare*) to an inability to sin (*non posse peccare*).

Cf The angels.

B4. The Fall of Man

B4, I. The first man, abusing his freedom of choice (formal liberty), yielded to the temptation of Satan and abandoned his faith in God.

B4, I, 1. Sin among mankind stemmed from an outside temptation rather than any concreated inner flaw.

a) **Sin or sinful lust was not the natural product of man's mind, nor did it spring up spontaneously in the heart of man. It came through a personal tempter.**

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

1 John 3:8 He who

does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

b) **Sin came to man through suggestions from outside, which man did not properly meet and reject. The tempter was Satan using the outward appearance of a real serpent.**

Genesis 3:1,4,13 Now the serpent was more crafty (חָיָה) than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"⁴ "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman."¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Romans 16:20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

Quenstedt: The first and principal external cause of this sin is Satan, acting here not through an inner impulse, nor through outward force ... but through pure outward moral persuasion (*TDP*, II, II, I, Qu. 5, p 973).

Theological Axiom: The serpent was real but an instrument of the devil.

c) **The outcome of the temptation was that man ate of a certain tree against the express will of God.**

Genesis 2:16,17 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Quenstedt: The first sin in the human race is the voluntary apostasy of our first parents from God, their Creator, by which, when they were seduced by the devil, they willingly transgressed both the general and inner divine law impressed on their mind, and the special outward prohibition about not eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Concerning the existence of this sin the history recorded in Genesis 3 does not permit us to doubt (*TDP*, II, II, I, Qu. 7, p 998).

Hollaz: Our first parents by their fall directly violated a positive law made known in paradise about not eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Indirectly and virtually by their disobedience they broke the bounds of the whole moral law. . . . The reason for the positive law was a testing or trial of their obedience, which the whole moral law requires as owed to God. Whoever does not fear, however, to transgress one commandment is not ashamed to violate the rest of the commandments since they have the same author and the same binding force. (*Exam.*, II, 3, Qu 9, p 513).

B4, I, 2. Analyzing the temptation, we find chiefly two attacks.

a) **The first attempt tried to induce man to investigate critically the command of God. This attack was met and rejected by the woman.**

1) **The temptation contained a wicked insinuation: Is the command of God compatible with his goodness since it is so burdensome?**

Genesis 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden."

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

- 2) **The form of the temptation (a sneering question) suggested that man analyze and criticize the divine command, which would be to exhibit an attitude that is against the very nature of faith.**

Job 40:1-5 The LORD said to Job: ² "Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!" ³ Then Job answered the LORD: ⁴ "I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. ⁵ I spoke once, but I have no answer—twice, but I will say no more."

Job 42:1-6 Then Job replied to the LORD: ² "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. ³ You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. ⁴ "You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' ⁵ My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. ⁶ Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Note: A critical analysis of God is different from a contemplation of him and his works. It is quite compatible with faith to contemplate the ways of God.

- 3) **The woman adequately repeats the command in its proper form setting forth God's goodness and shows she understands God's use of it as a test of their obedience of faith.**

Genesis 3:2,3 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

- 4) **Yet it may also be said that the victory was not decisive. The woman emphasized the divine purpose negatively and Satan thus gained an advantage of position.**

- Her answer became argumentative, while faith simply confesses.
- This exposed her to suspicion and fear, but fear is against faith.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

- b) **The second attack involved a more bold assertion by Satan and a clear act of disobedience on the part of man.**

- 1) **Satan boldly denied God's word and asserted God's envy.**

Genesis 3:4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.

Genesis 3:5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

- 2) **The woman believed Satan rather than God. The man willingly followed the lead of the woman. Through unbelief mankind severed their relationship with God.**

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Quenstedt: This deflection embraces in its course several distinct sinful acts, among which according to the previous Word of God there is this order. The first is unbelief, or not having faith in the Word of God. The second is the desire to be like God. The third, born of this [i.e., the desire to be like God], is the intention to transgress the law. The fourth is the carrying out of this intention in the act (*TDP, II, II, I, Thes XXIII, p 54*).

B4, I, 3. Despite various efforts to do so, we cannot reasonably account for the fact that the first man yielded to temptation.

- a) **The freedom of choice given to mankind does not adequately explain the fall of man.**

- 1) **We acknowledge that man was created as a rational, personal being endowed with freedom of choice (formal liberty), that the possibility of choosing evil is not a defect of such liberty but essential to it, and that this freedom of choice thus provided a possibility of the fall.**
- 2) **Yet this does not account for the reality of the fall any more than this freedom would have necessitated the fall.**

- b) **To assume that God decreed the fall does not properly explain the fall of man.**

- 1) **This is the blasphemous doctrine of Supralapsarian (or Antelapsarian) Calvinists.**

Calvin: That it is a horrifying decree indeed, I admit, nevertheless no one would be able to deny that God foreknew what end man would have before he created him, and he foreknew it for this reason that he had so ordained it by his decree (*Institutes, Bk III, Ch 23, Par 7*).

Ursinus (d. 1583): God willed the assent of man, however, by which he obeyed the devil contrary to the divine Word, as a revelation of the creature's weakness.... He likewise willed this deed as an

opportunity or way to manifest his justice and severity toward those who deserve to be punished and his mercy toward sinners who are to be saved (*Tractatio de libero arbitrio*, p 242).

Wayne Grudem: Even though we must never say that God himself sinned or he is to be blamed for sin, yet we must also affirm that the God who “accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will” (Eph. 1:11), did ordain that sin would come into the world, even though he does not delight in it and even though he ordained that it would come about through the voluntary choices of moral creatures (*Bible Doctrine*, p 211).

Millard Erickson: God’s plan includes what we ordinarily call good acts. . . On the other hand, the evil actions of humans, contrary to God’s law and moral intentions, are also seen in Scripture as part of God’s plan, foreordained by him (*Christian Theology*, p 380).

Robert Reymond: If someone should ask: Was Adam totally free from God’s eternal decree, Reformed theology would say, of course not. Could Adam have done differently? Again, from the viewpoint of the divine decree, the answer is no. To answer these questions any other way is simply to nullify the Scripture’s teaching to the effect that God, who works everything in conformity with his eternal purpose (Eph. 1:11), purposed before the foundation of the world to save a multitude of sinners who would fall in Adam (*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p 374).

2) This doctrine has no biblical support.

Genesis 2:16,17 And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

Cf. also all passages about God’s universal love, his truth, and faithfulness.

Quenstedt: A distinction must be made between a positive act of God which works by arousing inwardly or suggesting outwardly . . . and a negative act of God when he withdraws his grace and does not supply new grace for fleeing sin, nor does he hinder but permits sin; and that is the case here (i.e., here in the Fall this negative act of permitting occurs). (*TDP*, II, II, V, ecthesis, qu V, nota IV, p 96).

Quenstedt: God can in no way be called the cause of sin on account of his withdrawal of grace (i.e., the grace of confirmation). . . . Sin is to be derived not from the withholding of help (namely, of the grace of confirmation), but from the abuse of the divinely granted liberty (*TDP*, II, II, I, Thes IV, p 49).

Note: Reason, in its search for an explanation, ultimately concludes that God’s option to intervene, impede, or prohibit the fall must have been overcome by some divine purpose or concern. The truth remains that the Bible is silent on such things.

c) To assume that man’s nature possessed an inherent weakness, thus making the fall inevitable, does not rightly explain the fall of man.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Quenstedt: Man did not fall as a result of the absence and denial of some more special grace nor because of the presence of some internal weakness and natural defect, but because of the incidental abuse of his liberty. (*TDP*, II, I, Thes XVII, nota, p 52)

d) The nature of sin itself does not furnish a reasonable explanation for the fall. Unbelief is full of contradictions and thus incomprehensible. A review of events in Genesis 3 confirms this:

1) God, who had outdone himself in lavishing his blessings on man (Genesis 2:4-25), is represented as envious of man’s happiness.

Genesis 3:5 “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

2) God, the omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth and author of absolutely everything that is, is represented as unable to prevent the misuse of the tree of knowledge—so that his only expedient is a threat (bluff).

Genesis 2:16,17 And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

Genesis 3:5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

3) All the good and happiness man had experienced had come from God, yet man is told to expect greater and in fact the only real happiness by breaking away from God.

4) The Tempter had nothing to substantiate his claims and his word had all the earmarks of a lie, yet man accepted his word.

Smalcald Articles, III, VIII, 5,6. All this is the old devil and old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts, and led them from the outward Word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit, and nevertheless he accomplished this through other outward words. ^{6j} Just as also our enthusiasts at the present day condemn the outward Word, and nevertheless they themselves are not silent, but they fill

the world with their pratings and writings, as though, indeed, the Spirit could not come through the writings and spoken word of the apostles, but first through their writings and words he must come. Why then do not they also omit their own sermons and writings, until the Spirit Himself come to men, without their writings and before them, as they boast that He has come into them without the preaching of the Scriptures? But of these matters there is not time now to dispute at greater length; we have elsewhere sufficiently urged this subject.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Hebrews 13:9 Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them.

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

B4, II. The story of the fall as told by Moses is real history.

B4, II, 1. The Bible presents Genesis chapter 3 as real history that is to be understood or interpreted literally.

- a) **Nothing in the text or the immediate context (the preceding and the following chapters) indicates that the account is anything but real history.**
- b) **The New Testament repeatedly confirms the historicity of the event.**

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

1 Timothy 2:14 Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.

Romans 5:12-19 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—¹³ for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. ¹⁵ But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶ Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

1 Corinthians 15:21,22 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Note: A word of caution is in place when seeking to confirm the historicity of Adam from some other OT passages. Examples of such passages are:

Job 31:33 If I have concealed my sin as men (אָדָם) do

Ecclesiastes 7:29 This only have I found: God made mankind (אָדָם) upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes.

Isaiah 43:27 Your first father (אָבִי הָרִאשׁוֹן) sinned; your spokesmen rebelled against me. [The reference may be to Jacob and other patriarchs.]

Hosea 6:7 Like Adam (אָדָם), they have broken the covenant—they were unfaithful to me there. [The reference may be to a geographical location, a city.]

B4, II, 2. Therefore all approaches to Genesis 3 that question or deny its historicity must be rejected.

a) This includes those views of Genesis 3 that see a mixture of fact and fantasy, e.g., allegorical interpretations.

1) Some take the fall to have been a possible historical event, but maintain that Genesis 3 is a poetical embellishment.

Jack Finegan: The biblical records cannot, on the whole, be “cleverly devised myths” (II Peter 1:16) but are, rather, substantially dependable reports of actual happenings in which real people participated and in which they believed God was dealing with them. . . . What was the fall? The fall was something which happened. . . . The fact that this is a story means that we do not have to take it literally, but the fact that it is a story of an event means that we must reckon seriously with the fact that the fall is something that happened (*In the Beginning*, p 7, 23).

Hermann Gunkel: Does Genesis (known as “The First Book of Moses”) narrate history or story? For historians this is no longer a question. . . . We find then in ancient civilizations two different types of historical transmission: history writing in the strict sense and, side by side with it, popular tradition which deals with the same material, but in popular and imaginative ways, and relates partly to the ancient prehistorical period. Such popular transmissions can also preserve historical recollections, even though in poetic form. . . . But story is not lie; it is rather a particular type of poetic writing. *Story is popular poetic narrative, handed down from of old, dealing with people or events of the past.* . . . It is especially noteworthy that Hebrew narrative is not sensible to the great lack of verisimilitude in what is reported. The first woman was not surprised when the snake began to talk with her; the narrator did not ask how Noah managed to get the animals into the ark, and so on. This is a clear indication that we would be doing an injustice to such simplicity were we to align it with concrete reality (*The Stories of Genesis*, p 1,2,5,6).

2) Others have taken the account as fiction, but with a historical background.

Franz Reinhard (Supranaturalist, d. 1812): The tree was poisonous.—The woman saw the serpent eat with impunity.—Then she deliberated (the reported dialog).—Then she ate.—Her eating poisoned the human system, subjecting all of Eve’s descendents to death.

Note: How could a physical poison affect the purity of the soul?

Richard Hanson: The concept of a fall belongs to the Orphic world of thought, where one begins with the ideal man, a creature of the heavens, and then proceeds to explain how that perfect soul got himself into the predicament of the imperfection we behold on every hand. . . . The notion that Genesis 3 might be the account of the fall came about in that age when Orphic thought was having a heyday in the Eastern Mediterranean world. As its ideas took hold, men sought in the stories of the past an event which could be labeled as the misfortunate moment when man lost his heavenly glory and was forced to take up his abode in mortal flesh. The third chapter of Genesis was conveniently there and was twisted in meaning to fit the demand (*The Serpent Was Wiser*, p 41-42).

b) This also includes those views of Genesis 3 that see it only as fiction (myth, legend).

1) Some scholars assume it to be pure fiction.

Theodor Gaster: The Biblical story of Paradise is a tapestry woven of ancient threads; all of its salient features recur in the traditional folklore of other peoples (*Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament*, p 24).

2) Others assume that Genesis 3 merely presents in allegorical or symbolic form what still happens in free men when tempted.

Tillich: Biblical literalism did a distinct disservice to Christianity in its identification of the Christian emphasis on the symbol of the Fall with the literalistic interpretation of the Genesis story. Theology need not take literalism seriously, but we must realize how its impact has hampered the apologetic task of the Christian church. Theology must clearly and unambiguously represent “the Fall” as a symbol for the human situation universally, not as the story of an event that happened “once upon a time.” (*S.T., II*, p 29)

Regin Prenter (b. 1907): There can hardly be any doubt that the biblical authors conceive of Adam as a real person. On the other hand, there is no doubt either that the narratives about him have the form of a tribal patriarchal legend. Adam is never conceived of as an isolated figure of the past, but as one whom each of us recognizes within himself. The history of the fall is our own history (*Creation and Redemption*, p 255).

Ralph Gehrke: Prototypical narratives cannot be historicized because they tell about what never happened “just that way,” but what always happens in whatever has happened, is happening, and will happen, from earliest times to the present (*Beginning From Basics: The Bible’s Universal Primer in Genesis 1 – 11*, p 112).

3) Modern theology holds that the account of the fall must be demythologized to get at the “religious truth” it conveys.

Barth: [He calls it biblical saga and says that he could not take the account in Genesis 3 as historical], “for a speaking serpent—well, I cannot imagine that any more than anybody else” (*Grundfragen*, p 30).

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (d. 1945): Who can speak of these things except in pictures? Pictures are not lies: they denote things, they let the things that are meant shine through. . . . They are true to the extent that God remains in them. . . . We remain completely in the world of pictures, in the world of the magical, of magic effects by means of forbidden contacts with sacred objects. We hear of trees of miraculous power, of enchanted animals, of fiery angel forms, the servants of a God who walks in his magic garden, of their mysterious deeds, of the creation of man (*Creation and Fall*, p 47, 48).

Emil Brunner: For our generation, the fact that this narrative is no longer historically credible means that the convincing power of this imposing doctrine, which dominated the thought of Europe for fifteen hundred years and—although modified in different ways—has formed the solid substance of the doctrine of sin of all Christian churches, has completely disappeared. . . . We may be grateful to historical science that it has eliminated the historical element from the story of the creation and Fall (*Man in Revolt*, p 120, 144).

Ralph Gehrke: The most we can say about its literary genre is that it is a didactic story (*CTM*, Sept. 1965, p 545).

Ralph Gehrke: The traditional understanding of the Garden of Eden that most of us carry around in our memories is the result of some subtle revising and updating of the original. To be sure, such interpretations were made in good faith, in order to put these stories on a time line and thus incorporate them in one all-encompassing theological view of history as The History of Salvation. Yet careful students must concede that such interpretations have added new lines, have changed the basic roles of the characters, and have put the entire prototypical narrative into a history-of-salvation context the original had not known (*Beginning From Basics: The Bible's Universal Primer in Genesis 1 – 11*, p 70-71).

The Lutheran: *Is it now considered naive or even heresy for Lutherans to believe that Adam and Eve were real people?* For centuries the church believed in the actual existence of Adam and Eve. Recent scholarship suggests that the significance of the Adam and Eve stories is not their literal truth or lack of it about the creation of humankind in God's image. If someone believes Adam and Eve were historic people, and this view is helpful to their Christian life, it is not good ministry to rip such a viewpoint from them. Nor should the faith of those who understand these stories in a symbolic way be questioned. (June 22, 1988, p 42) *Is Genesis 3:15 a reference to the coming Savior?* Nowhere in the New Testament is this verse mentioned as a prophecy of the coming Messiah. Christian tradition has understood the passage as a prophecy about Christ and Mary. Most New Testament scholars agree that the messianic prophecy of this passage is confusing. Most see it as the origin of the battle that has gone on for millennia between humans and snakes ...But this image is helpful in expressing the truth of what God is about in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. (February 2002, p 31)

Philip Hefner: If we read Genesis 3 as if it were an eyewitness account, written on the very day of the fall, it is misleading, because then it seems that humans were from the very beginning sinful. But when we keep in mind that the account is put together in the tenth century B.C. as an explanation of how God works in history, then it becomes not an etiology or even a protology but rather a way of expressing far greater optimism. Of saying that evil is not written in the very law of things, but is located discretely in the human will. As such it can be dealt with and guarded against. The writer is saying, "Humans are like this. If you keep this in mind, it is possible to deal with sin and evil constructively" (Braaten and Jenson, *CD*, p 284).

B5. Sin

B5, I. Sin is any deviation from God's revealed precepts, any failure to conform to divine law.

B5, I, 1. Sin may be defined as something “negative” (or “privative”), marking a lack of conformity to divine standards of perfection. Sin may also be defined as something “positive,” as a condition or act explicitly opposing divine law.

Note: Definitions of sin that borrow from the terminology of the Latin Scholastics have categorized it “in the abstract” (without reference to a particular act, but referring to the quality common to all concrete acts) primarily as a “negative” thing. They have likewise considered sin “in the concrete” (relating to a specific departure from God’s standard) to be “positive.” Few writers use this terminology any more.

a) In biblical use, sin is both a negative concept (lacking conformity to God’s law) and a positive one (opposition to the law).

1 John 3:4 Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness (Πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ, καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία.)

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile (ἐχθρὰ) to God. It does not submit to God’s law (τῷ γὰρ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑποτάσσεται), nor can it do so.

Hollaz: Sin is a blameworthy deviation from the divine law which is binding on creatures, a deviation which leads to temporal and eternal punishment (*Examen*, II, II, qu 1, p 531).

Calov: Sin is nothing else than illegality or deviation from the law (*TP*, II, II, IV, thes. II, p 276).

Tillich (in disagreement): It is not disobedience to a law which makes an act sinful but the fact that it is an expression of man’s estrangement from God, from men, and from himself (*ST*, II, p 46f).

b) Of great importance is to note that sin may be a habitual state (or condition) as well as acts. Whether it is a condition or an act, sin incurs guilt (liability, culpability, reatus ad poenam).

Apology II (I), 35 Here our adversaries inveigh against Luther also because he wrote that “Original sin remains after baptism.” They add that this article was justly condemned by Leo X. But His Imperial Majesty will find on this point a manifest slander. For our adversaries know in what sense Luther intended this remark that original sin remains after baptism. He always wrote thus, namely, that baptism removes the guilt of original sin, although the material, as they call it, of the sin, *i.e.*, concupiscence, remains. He also added in reference to the material that the Holy Spirit, given through baptism, begins to mortify the concupiscence, and creates a new light, a new sense and spirit in man (*Trig.* p 112).

c) A study of biblical names of sin clarifies what sin is and does.

1) In the OT we find various names referring principally to sin as a failure to conform to divine law.

-a) נָסַח: In Hebrew the generic concept of sin is expressed by the root נָסַח. It pictures sin as missing a target (*Judges 20:16*) or going astray (*Proverbs 19:2*). It is thus parallel to the Greek word ἁμαρτάνω, ἁμαρτία. In the piel the verb may mean “make reconciliation,” “offer for sin,” or “bear the loss.” In the hiphil it means “cause to sin” or “lead into sin.” There are six different nouns formed from the root נָסַח that can be translated “sin” or “sinful.” Three are so-called “intensive” forms with dagesh in the וּ. On this word group see *TWBOT*, p 277-279.

-1) נִסְחָה, the most common form (about 298x), refers either to sin in general or to the sin offering. More rarely, it may refer to punishment that must be borne because of sin.

Sin

Genesis 4:7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, *sin* is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.

Psalms 32:5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”—and you forgave the guilt of my *sin*.

Psalms 38:4 (3) Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my *sin*.

Psalms 38:19 (18) I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my *sin*.

Psalms 51:4 (2), 5 (3) ²Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my *sin*. ³For I know my transgressions, and my *sin* is always before me.

Sin offering

Leviticus 4:3 If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, he must bring to the LORD a young bull without defect as a *sin offering* for the sin he has committed. Also verses ,8,20,21,25.

Leviticus 4:33 He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it for a *sin offering* at the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered.

Punishment

Zechariah 14:19 This will be the *punishment* of Egypt and the *punishment* of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

-2) נִסְחָה, a rare alternate form with an open ending, refers to sin or sinfulness.

Exodus 34:7 . . . maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and *sin*. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the *sin* of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.

- Isaiah 5:18 Woe to those who draw *sin* along with cords of deceit, and wickedness as with cart ropes.
- 3) חָטָא, the third “intensive” form, an adjective, usually is used as an adjectival noun, “sinner.” A segolate form without dagesh, חָטָא (34x), refers to sin, guilt, or to punishment as the consequences of sin. It has a feminine variant, חַטָּאָה, which occurs only once.**

Leviticus 22:9 The priests are to keep my requirements so that they do not *become guilty* [bear sin for it] and die for treating them with contempt. I am the LORD, who makes them holy.

Leviticus 24:15 Say to the Israelites: “If anyone curses his God, he *will be held responsible* [will bear his sin].”

Deuteronomy 15:9 Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: “The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near,” so that you do not show ill will toward your needy brother and give him nothing. He may then appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be found *guilty of sin*.

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your *sins* are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

Punishment or guilt

Leviticus 19:17 Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his *guilt* [bear sin].

Lamentations 3:39 Why should any living man complain *when punished for his sins?* [complain about the punishment for his sins]

- 4) חַטָּאָה, without the dagesh, is much rarer (8 or 9x). It refers to sin or to the sin offering.**

Genesis 20:9 Then Abimelech called Abraham in and said, “What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great *guilt* upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should not be done.”

Exodus 32:21,30,31 He said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great *sin?*”³⁰ The next day Moses said to the people, “You have committed a great *sin*. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your *sin*.”³¹ So Moses went back to the LORD and said, “Oh, what a great *sin* these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold.”

Psalm 32:1 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose *sins* are covered.

Sin offering

Psalm 40:7 (6) Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and *sin offerings* you did not require.

- b) חַטָּאת portrays sin as rebellion or violation of a relationship. It has a greater connotation of willfulness than חָטָא.**

Genesis 31:36 Jacob was angry and took Laban to task. “What is my *crime?*” he asked Laban. “What sin have I committed that you hunt me down?”

Genesis 50:17 “This is what you are to say to Joseph: ‘I ask you to forgive your brothers the *sins* and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly. Now please forgive the *sins* of the servants of the God of your father.’” When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

Job 33:9 I am pure and without *sin*; I am clean and free from guilt.

Psalm 32:1 Blessed is he whose *transgressions* are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

- c) חַטְּאת Etymologically חַטְּאת describes sin as that which is twisted, bent, or perverse. It usually carries the connotation of “guilt.” Guilt is liability to punishment because of sin. חַטְּאת may refer to the deed which incurs guilt, to the guilt itself, or to the punishment due to the guilt.**

Deeds that incur guilt

Hosea 12:8 Ephraim boasts, “I am very rich; I have become wealthy. With all my wealth they will not find in me any *iniquity* or sin.”

Guilt

Leviticus 5:17 If a person sins and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD’s commands, even though he does not know it, he is guilty and *will be held responsible* [will bear his guilt].

Genesis 15:16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the *sin* of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.

Exodus 28:38,43 It [the gold plate attached to the turban] will be on Aaron’s forehead, and he will bear the *guilt* involved in the sacred gifts the Israelites consecrate, whatever their gifts may be. It will be on Aaron’s forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to the LORD.⁴³ Aaron and his sons must wear them [linen breeches] whenever they enter the Tent of Meeting or approach the altar to minister in the Holy Place, so that they will not incur *guilt* and die. This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants.

Leviticus 18:25 Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its *sin*, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.

Numbers 15:31 Because he has despised the LORD's word and broken his commands, that person must surely be cut off; his *guilt* remains on him.

1 Samuel 3:14 Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, "The *guilt* of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering."

Nehemiah 3:37 (4:5) Do not cover up their *guilt* or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

Job 31:11,28 For that would have been shameful, a *sin* to be judged. ²⁸These also would be *sins* to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.

Psalms 32:2,5 Blessed is the man whose *sin* the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my *iniquity*. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"—and you forgave the *guilt* of my sin.

Psalms 69:28 (27) Charge them with *crime upon crime* (עֲוֹנוֹם עַל-עֲוֹנוֹם); do not let them share in your salvation.

Punishment

Genesis 4:13 Cain said to the LORD, "My *punishment* is more than I can bear.

1 Samuel 28:10 Saul swore to her by the LORD, "As surely as the LORD lives, you will not be punished for this" [lit.: *guilt* will not come upon you].

Lamentations 4:6,22 The punishment of my people is greater than that of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment without a hand turned to help her. ²² O Daughter of Zion, your punishment will end; he will not prolong your exile. But, O Daughter of Edom, he will punish your sin [visit your *guilt*] and expose your wickedness.

-d) אֲשָׁלְמָה also refers to deeds which incur guilt, to guilt, or to the punishment incurred by guilt. It is also the name of the offering which makes reparation for guilt (Leviticus 5).

Genesis 26:10 Then Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the men might well have slept with your wife, and you would have brought *guilt* upon us."

Numbers 5:7,8 [He] must confess the sin he has committed. He must make full restitution for his *wrong*, add one fifth to it and give it all to the person he has wronged. ⁸ But if that person has no close relative to whom restitution can be made for the *wrong*, the restitution belongs to the LORD and must be given to the priest, along with the ram with which atonement is made for him.

-e) מַרְדָּו, which pictures sin as turning aside, deviation, or stubbornness.

Deuteronomy 13:6 (5) That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached *rebellion* against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

Deuteronomy 19:16 If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse a man of a *crime* . . .

Isaiah 1:5 Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in *rebellion*? Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted.

Jeremiah 28:16 Therefore, this is what the LORD says: "I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached *rebellion* against the LORD."

-f) מַעַל, which describes sin as treachery or unfaithfulness.

Ezekiel 15:8 I will make the land desolate because they have been *unfaithful*, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Ezekiel 17:20 I will spread my net for him, and he will be caught in my snare. I will bring him to Babylon and execute judgment upon him there because he was *unfaithful* to me.

Ezekiel 18:24 But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live? None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered. Because of the *unfaithfulness* he is guilty of and because of the sins he has committed, he will die.

Ezekiel 20:27 Therefore, son of man, speak to the people of Israel and say to them, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: In this also your fathers blasphemed me by *forsaking* me."

Daniel 9:7 Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our *unfaithfulness* to you.

-g) שְׁוָא, which describes sin as wandering, error, or negligence.

Leviticus 4:2,27 Say to the Israelites: "When anyone sins *unintentionally* [in ignorance] and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands . . . ²⁷ If a member of the community sins *unintentionally* [in ignorance] and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, he is guilty."

Ecclesiastes 5:6 Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a *mistake*." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?

Ecclesiastes 10:5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, the sort of *error* that arises from a ruler.

-h) נְבִלָה portrays sin as folly or wickedness.

Job 42:8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your *folly*. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.

2 Samuel 13:12 "Don't, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me. Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this *wicked thing*."

-i) **אָוֶן describes sin as iniquity or futility.**

Numbers 23:21 No *misfortune* is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The LORD their God is with them; the shout of the King is among them.

Isaiah 1:13 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your *evil* assemblies.

-j) **עֲוֹן describes sin as injustice and unrighteousness.**

Leviticus 19:15: Do not pervert justice [do no unrighteousness]; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

Ezekiel 3:20 When a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does *evil*, and I put a stumbling block before him, he will die. Since you did not warn him, he will die for his sin.

-k) **עֲבָרָה describes sin as an outburst of wrath or pride which overflows or crosses over the boundary.**

Isaiah 16:6 We have heard of Moab's pride—her overweening pride and conceit, her pride and her *insolence*—but her boasts are empty.

Jeremiah 48:30 "I know her *insolence* but it is futile," declares the LORD, "and her boasts accomplish nothing."

Proverbs 21:24 The proud and arrogant man—"Mocker" is his name; he behaves with *overweening pride* [haughtiness of pride].

2) **In the OT we also find names for sin that primarily emphasize that it is opposition to divine law (as a condition or an act). (Several of the terms listed above also fall into this category, especially b, e, and k.)**

-a) **עָוֶל evil. This term emphasizes that sin is enmity against God and man (moral evil). עָוֶל also refers to the evil consequences of sin (physical evil).**

Moral evil

Genesis 2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and *evil*.

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only *evil* all the time.

Deuteronomy 4:25 After you have had children and grandchildren and have lived in the land a long time—if you then become corrupt and make any kind of idol, doing *evil* in the eyes of the LORD your God and provoking him to anger . . .

Psalms 51:6 (4) Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is *evil* in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Psalms 97:10 Let those who love the LORD hate *evil*, for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Misfortune, physical evil

Job 2:10,11 He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not *trouble*?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said. ¹¹ When Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the *troubles* that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him.

Psalms 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no *evil*, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Psalms 91:10 No harm will befall you, no *disaster* will come near your tent.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create *disaster*; I, the LORD, do all these things.

-b) **עָשָׂוֹת: Wickedness**

Deuteronomy 9:27 Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Overlook the stubbornness of this people, their *wickedness* and their sin.

1 Samuel 24:13 As the old saying goes, "From evildoers come *evil deeds*," so my hand will not touch you.

Psalms 5:5 (4) You are not a God who takes pleasure in *evil*; with you the wicked cannot dwell.

3) **In the NT we find various designations for sin that denote a failure to conform to divine standards (so-called "formal" designations).**

-a) **ἀμαρτία (missing the mark): sin (often collectively)**

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the *sin* of the world!"

John 8:21 Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your *sin*. Where I go, you cannot come."

Romans 5:12,13,20 Therefore, just as *sin* entered the world through one man, and death through *sin*, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—¹³ for before the law was given, *sin* was in the world. But *sin* is not taken into account when there is no law. ²⁰ The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where *sin* increased, grace increased all the more.

Romans 6:1,2,6,11 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to *sin*; how can we live in it any longer? ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of *sin* might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to *sin* . . . ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to *sin* but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 7:7 What shall we say, then? Is the law *sin*? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what *sin* was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."

Sin personified

John 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to *sin*."

Romans 5:21 . . . so that, just as *sin* reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:12 Therefore do not let *sin* reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

Romans 7:9,11,17 Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, *sin* sprang to life and I died. ¹¹ For *sin*, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is *sin* living in me.

Sinful acts (plural)

Matthew 9:2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your *sins* are forgiven."

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of *sins*.

Mark 1:4 And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of *sins*.

John 20:23 If you forgive anyone his *sins*, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

-b) ἁμαρτήματα: sin (sinful acts)

Mark 3:28 I tell you the truth, all the *sins* and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them.

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the *sins* committed beforehand unpunished.

1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other *sins* a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.

-c) ἀνομία: lawlessness, non-observance of law, iniquity

Matthew 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you *evildoers* [doers of lawlessness]!"

Romans 6:19 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing *wickedness*, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and *wickedness* have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

Romans 4:7 Blessed are they whose *transgressions* are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Hebrews 10:17 Then he adds: "Their sins and *lawless acts* I will remember no more."

-d) ἀδικία: unrighteousness

Romans 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and *wickedness* of men who suppress the truth by their *wickedness*.

Romans 3:5 But if our *unrighteousness* brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.)

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from *wickedness*."

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all *unrighteousness*.

-e) παρακοή : disobedience, not listening

Romans 5:19 For just as through the *disobedience* of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Hebrews 2:2 For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and *disobedience* received its just punishment . . .

-f) παράβασις: transgression, crossing the line

Romans 2:23 You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by *breaking the law*?

Romans 4:15 Where there is no law there is no *transgression*.

Romans 5:14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by *breaking a command*, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

Galatians 3:19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of *transgressions* until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come.

-g) παράπτωμα: trespass

Matthew 6:14,15 For if you forgive men *when they sin* [their trespasses] against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your *sins*.

Mark 11:25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your *sins*.

Romans 5:20 The law was added so that the *trespass* might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more.

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your *transgressions* and sins.

-h) πλάνη: error, wandering

Romans 1:27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed *indecent acts* with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

2 Thessalonians 2:11 For this reason God sends them a powerful *delusion* so that they will believe the lie.

James 5:20 Remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the *error* of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

4) In the NT we also find designations for sin that highlight the nature or character of sin as opposition to divine law (so-called “material” designations). (Some of the preceding words have an element of willfulness and could be placed below).

-a) κακία: Malice, wickedness, evil

Acts 8:22 Repent of this *wickedness* and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.

1 Corinthians 5:8 Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and *wickedness*, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

1 Corinthians 14:20 Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to *evil* be infants, but in your thinking be adults.

James 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the *evil* that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

-b) πονηρία: wickedness, iniquity

Matthew 22:18 But Jesus, knowing their *evil intent*, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me?”

Acts 3:26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your *wicked ways*.

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of *evil* in the heavenly realms.

5) In both OT and NT we also find the term “flesh” (ἡ ψυχή, σάρξ) which is used in reference to sinfulness.

Note: This usage is hard to track in the NIV because of the many different translations it uses for the words for “flesh.”

-a) The term is used in the literal sense.

Genesis 2:21,23 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with *flesh*. ²³ The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and *flesh* of my *flesh*; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”

Luke 24:39 Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have *flesh* and bones, as you see I have.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have *flesh* and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

-b) The term is also used of the human body. In such cases, it is sometimes a euphemism for the sexual organs.

Leviticus 14:9 On the seventh day he must shave off all his hair; he must shave his head, his beard, his eyebrows and the rest of his hair. He must wash his clothes and bathe *himself* with water, and he will be clean.

Job 19:26 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my *flesh* I will see God;

Psalms 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my *body* also will rest secure.

Acts 2:31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his *body* see decay.

Genesis 17:14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the *flesh*, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

Ezekiel 44:7 In addition to all your other detestable practices, you brought foreigners uncircumcised in heart and *flesh* into my sanctuary, desecrating my temple while you offered me food, fat and blood, and you broke my covenant.

Ezekiel 23:20 There she lusted after her lovers, whose *genitals* were like those of donkeys and whose emission was like that of horses.

Ezekiel 16:26 You engaged in prostitution with the Egyptians, your *lustful* [great of flesh] neighbors, and provoked me to anger with your increasing promiscuity.

-c) The term is also used to designate human beings (individually and collectively) as naturally (physically and mentally) constituted.

Ezekiel 21:4 (20:48) Everyone [All flesh] will see that I the LORD have kindled it; it will not be quenched.

Matthew 16:17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man [flesh and blood], but by my Father in heaven.”

Luke 3:6 And all mankind [all flesh] will see God’s salvation.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Romans 3:20 Therefore no one will [all flesh will not] be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

-d) The term is also used to denote relationship (in various senses).

Genesis 2:23,24 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and *flesh of my flesh*; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become *one flesh*.

Genesis 37:27 Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, *our own flesh and blood*.

Romans 1:3 [The gospel he promised] regarding his Son, who as to his *human nature* was a descendant of David.

Romans 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those *of my own race*.

-e) The term is used collectively for animal life (including mankind).

Genesis 6:17,19 I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, *every creature* that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.¹⁹ You are to bring into the ark two of all living *creatures*, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

Genesis 7:21 *Every living thing* that moved on the earth perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind.

Psalms 136:25 [He] gives food to *every creature*. His love endures forever.

-f) The term is also used especially to designate humans in their frailty.

Psalms 56:4 In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can *mortal man* do to me?

Psalms 78:39 He remembered that they were *but flesh*, a passing breeze that does not return.

Isaiah 40:6 A voice says, “Cry out.” And I said, “What shall I cry?” “All *men* are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.”

Jeremiah 17:5 This is what the LORD says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on *flesh* for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD.”

1 Peter 1:24 All *men* are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall.

-g) Finally, the term is used particularly for humans as beings dominated by sin.

Genesis 6:3 Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is *mortal* [or *sinful*]; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

John 3:6 *Flesh* gives birth to *flesh*, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

Romans 7:5,18,25 For when we were *controlled by the sinful nature* [in the flesh], the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my *sinful nature*. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.²⁵ Thanks be to God—

through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the *sinful nature* a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 8:8,12 Those *controlled by the sinful nature* [in the flesh] cannot please God. ¹² Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the *sinful nature*, to live according to it.

Galatians 5:17-24 For the *sinful nature* desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the *sinful nature*. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. ¹⁹ The acts of the *sinful nature* are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the *sinful nature* with its passions and desires.

6) In summary, then, every act and every state or condition of our human will deviating from God's will and norm is sinful.

1 John 3:4 Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.

B5, I, 2. Analyzing sin, we may distinguish various elements. (Note: The full sequence of elements may not be evident in a particular example of sin, and the sequence is as much logical as chronological.)

a) The beginning of sin is a lack of trust in God: unbelief.

Genesis 3:1-6 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴ "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Psalms 78:32 In spite of all this, they kept on sinning; in spite of his wonders, they did not believe.

Matthew 14:31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

b) Unbelief is followed by error of judgment.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

Romans 1:21,22,27 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Ephesians 4:17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.

James 5:20 Remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Note: There is value in recalling the basic meaning of $\chi\upsilon\lambda\omicron\nu$ and ἀμαρτάνειν: to miss, which often includes a failure to grasp the real scope and goal of life or to comprehend what is right and wise.

c) Error is coupled with strong desire.

Romans 1:24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

Romans 7:7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."

1 Corinthians 10:6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

Galatians 5:16,17,24 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷ For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

d) This desire pays no regard to the holy will of God.

Romans 2:25,27 Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. ²⁷ The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 10:6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

e) This disobedience reveals enmity against God.

Genesis 39:9 No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?

Exodus 32:33 The LORD replied to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book."

Psalms 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

f) **The sinner's interests are essentially self-centered.**

1) **The sinner sets himself up as a god against God.**

Genesis 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Psalms 36:1,2 An oracle is within my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes. ² For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin.

Colossians 1:21: Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Matthew 23:12 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

2) **The sinner's selfishness also shows itself in a lack of love for others.**

Titus 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

Luke 6:32-35 If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even "sinners" love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even "sinners" do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even "sinners" lend to "sinners," expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Also Matthew 5:46,47.

1 Corinthians 10:24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

1 Corinthians 13:4,5 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Romans 13:9 The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

B5, I, 3.

The following truths will help clarify the definition and scope of sin.

a) **Sin against God includes more than disobedience to divine law revealed in the Bible.**

1) **Every transgression of the natural (inscribed) law is also sin against God. This truth emphasizes the universality of sin.**

Romans 2:12,14,15 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹⁴(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)

Romans 5:13,14 Before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

Baier: By "law" ought to be understood the eternal and immutable wisdom of God and his judgment concerning those things which are proper or not proper for the rational creature in so far as he is such, joined with his will that they should or should not be done (*Compendium*, II, I, III, p 286).

Baier: That law was first made known in creation itself when a knowledge of practical principles and the ability to apply them to individual actions and circumstances of actions was conferred on men (*Compendium* II, I, IV, p 287).

Afterwards when those perfections which had been received earlier by virtue of the divine image were lost through the Fall, that law was, to be sure, to a great extent obliterated, but nevertheless some traces or indications of it remained. God, however, in addition to other revelations, especially in the decalog by voice and in writing repeated the sum of the law and explained individual precepts more clearly here and there in holy Scripture (*Compendium* II, I, V, p 288).

The universality of sin

Romans 3:9-12,22,23 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 5:12 Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

Galatians 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

1 John 1:8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

2) **Transgressions of laws imposed by human authorities are also sin unless those laws conflict with God's law.**

Romans 13:2,4,5 Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

1 Peter 2:13-14 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

Baier: That, moreover, is also truly sin which is committed against some positive law, whether divine or human, provided only that the human law is not contrary to the divine law (*Compendium* II, I, VII, p 289).

b) **Every sin is a condition or an act of the will in rational beings. This does not mean, however, that sins are only those acts committed against divine law consciously or with deliberation.**

Hollaz: A sinner is a rational creature, endowed with a free will and subject to the divine law, who deviates from it in what he does or does not do (*Examen.*, 497).

1) **Original (inherited) sin is real sin.**

Psalms 51:2-10 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. ³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. ⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. ⁶ Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. ⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. ⁹ Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. ¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Augsburg Confession, II, 2.: This disease ... is truly sin, damning (Trig. p 42).

2) **Many deeds done without knowledge of their nature and without deliberate opposition against God are called sins. These kinds of sins are prevalent in the life of fallen mankind.**

Genesis 19:33 That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

Matthew 26:69-75 Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said. ⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said. ⁷¹ Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!" ⁷³ After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away." ⁷⁴ Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. cf 33-35 ³³ Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." ³⁴ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." ³⁵ But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

Romans 10:2,3 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

Psalms 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Romans 7:14,15,16,19 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.

Galatians 5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

3) **This clarification is important on account of Roman Catholic and Arminian positions.**

Bellarmino: Sin intrinsically requires a free will, and it cannot be understood how anything is a sin in the proper sense of the word if it is not properly free (*Disput.*, tom IV, de grat. et lib. arb., lib II, cap VII, p 260).

Schmalz: For sin man's will is altogether necessary because it is a voluntary transgression of the divine law, and only there is there sin where knowledge has preceded (*Disp. II, contra Franzium*, p 42).

Erickson: Until the first conscious or responsible moral action or decision by a person, there is no imputation of the Adamic sin, just as there is no imputation of Christ's righteousness until there is a conscious acceptance of that work (*How Shall They Be Saved?* p 250).

Grider: Wesley felt ...that there is a vast difference between unintentional and intentional sins-the latter being utterly serious, dislodging us from our redeemed relationship with God. Wesley was often wise to call the unintentional sins mistakes or blunders or infirmities.... Some Wesley-holiness people ask for forgiveness as they later realize that they have breached God's will. Others of us understand (1) that since the act was not willful, perhaps we do not require forgiveness, but only cleansing and (2) that since we receive Christ's cleansing at the time, we do not later pray for either cleansing or forgiveness (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 293, 294)

Brochmand: Is it true that nothing has the nature of sin in the proper sense of the term which is not voluntary? — The Papists and Socinians are of this opinion, but the divine Word clearly maintains the opposite point of view. (*Systema*, I, art XI, cap II, qu I, p 413)

Quenstedt: A distinction must be made between a subjectively voluntary and an effectively voluntary sin. In the former way every sin is voluntary, namely, in so far as it inheres in man's will; but in the latter way there are certain involuntary sins, namely, those which are indeed in and with the will, but not from the will (done deliberately) (*TDP*, II, II, I, Thes LVIII, p 67).

Quenstedt: Take note of the theological rule: For the definition of sin lawlessness is enough, whether willfulness is present or not. And so willfulness is not a part of the essence of sin, nor does it enter into its definition, but it is something outside it (*TDP*, II, II, II, qu III, Thes V, p 93).

c) **Sin remains real and universal despite the fact that many deny it. Sin is denied by the following schools of thought:**

1) **In pantheism so-called sin, together with other phenomena of life, is an emanation from God—the dark side of the force, yin vs. yang, witchcraft.**

Deepak Chopra: To the visionary, good and evil "are two sides of the same force. God created both because both are needed; God is in the evil as much as in the good" (*How to Know God*, p 151).

Wen-Tzu, referring to the Tao, states that: the Way has no front or back, no left or right: all things are mysteriously the same, with no right and no wrong (*Further Teachings of Lao-Tzu*, p 109).

Witches Janet and Stewart Farrar: The Theory of Polarity maintains that all activity, all manifestation, arises from (and is inconceivable without) the interaction of pairs and complementary opposites...and that this polarity is not a conflict between 'good' and 'evil', but a creative tension like that between the positive and negative terminals of an electric battery. Good and evil only arise with the constructive or destructive application of the polarity's output (*A Witches' Bible, Part 2*, p 107).

2) **In evolution sin is merely a stage of development.**

Morals do evolve. This stage of evolutionary thought...

Anthony Flew: All morals, ideas, and ideals have originated in the world; and that having thus in the past been subject to change, they will presumably in the future too, for better or worse, continue to evolve (*Evolutionary Ethics*, p 55).

...evolves (devolves) to this:

The Blood Hound Gang: "You and me, baby, ain't nothin' but mammals, so let's do it like they do on the Discovery Channel."

3) **For philosophical optimism there is no real sin, merely different degrees of goodness.**

Mary Baker Eddy: Man is not matter—made up of brains, blood, bones, and other material elements.... Man is spiritual and perfect.... Man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death, inasmuch as he derives his essence from God (*Science and Health with Key to the Scripture*, p 475).

4) **For rationalism (e.g., lodges) sin is an excusable weakness and defect which may be overcome by personal effort and training.**

Masonry: By the Rough Ashlar we are reminded of our rude and imperfect nature; by the perfect Ashlar of that state of perfection at which we hope to arrive by a virtuous education, by our own endeavors, and by the blessings of God (*Tennessee Craftsman or Masonic Textbook*, p 13).

5) **In modern thought sin is inadequately or perversely defined.**

Ayn Rand (d. 1982): Accept the fact that the achievement of your happiness is the only *moral* purpose of your life, and that happiness—not pain or mindless self-indulgence—is the proof that your moral integrity, since it is the proof and the result of your loyalty to the achievement of your values.... Discard the protective rags of that vice which you call humility—learn to value yourself, which means to fight for your happiness—and when you learn that pride is the sum of all virtues, you will learn to live like a man (*Atlas Shrugged*, quoted in Burr and Goldinger, *Philosophy and Contemporary Issues*, p 200.)

Daphne Hampson: Consequently some woman have wanted to say that woman's "sin"...is the failure to take responsibility for self-actualization. To name such behavior "sin" is (as I have discovered when working with groups of women) very effective. For women to hear that it is their right and duty to take themselves seriously, that it matters who they are and what they think, is to turn Christian theology as they have imbibed it upside-down (*Theology and Feminism*, p 124.)

Universal Pantheism: "Sin lies only in hurting others unnecessarily. All other 'sins' are invented nonsense. Hurting yourself is not sinful-just stupid" (Quoted from the novel *Time Enough For Love* by Robert A. Heinlein).... So what really is a good modern Universal working definition of sin? Heinlein had something, but let's clarify it even more. The Universal Planetary Pantheist Temple definition of sin is: Causing clear and uncalled-for harm to others. Example: Homosexuality. It is the written policy and belief of the UPPT that homosexuality, in and of itself, is not a sin, and that in

fact those who hate homosexuals and cause them harm, are indeed the real sinners because they cause clear and uncalled-for harm to others. We call on them to repent such behavior (Universal Planetary Panentheist Temple web site).

6) **In postmodern thought sin is a culturally unacceptable choice that is not wrong absolutely or in and of itself.**

A. J. Ayer: Moral judgments "are simply expressions of emotion that can be neither true nor false" (*Language, Truth, and Logic*, p103).

The Ethics of Popular Music: It can't be wrong if it feels so right ("You Light Up My Life")

B5, II. "The cause of sin is the evil will of the wicked, that is, of the devil and ungodly men" (A.C. XIX, p 52). The cause of sin is not God.

B5, II, 1. In no way is God the cause of sin.

a) **God is the Holy One who hates sin.**

Isaiah 6:3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Matthew 5:48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Psalms 5:4 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.

Psalms 34:16 The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Psalms 45:7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

Isaiah 65:12 I will destine you for the sword, and you will all bend down for the slaughter; for I called but you did not answer, I spoke but you did not listen. You did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me.

Zachariah 8:17 "Do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the LORD.

b) **God did not create man with a constitution or disposition that made human sin inevitable.**

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Genesis 2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

c) **God does not tempt man to sin. In fact, he actively opposes and punishes those who do, and he urges Christians to resist temptation.**

James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

Genesis 3:14,15 So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.'¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Revelation 20:10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Jeremiah 23:32 "Indeed, I am against those who prophesy false dreams," declares the LORD. "They tell them and lead my people astray with their reckless lies, yet I did not send or appoint them. They do not benefit these people in the least," declares the LORD.

Matthew 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Ephesians 4:27 Do not give the devil a foothold.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 Peter 5:8,9 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

d) **God does not approve of sin or condone it. More than that, God sacrificed his Son to save mankind from sin and continues to call mankind to repentance (a change of heart and mind) from sin.**

2 Chronicles 19:7 Now let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the LORD our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.

Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Ezekiel 33:12,13 Therefore, son of man, say to your countrymen, "The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him when he disobeys, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not cause him to fall when he turns from it. The righteous man, if he sins, will not be allowed to live because of his former righteousness."¹³ If I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done."

Hosea 13:6-9 When I fed them, they were satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; then they forgot me.⁷ So I will come upon them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk by the path.⁸ Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip them open. Like a lion I will devour them; a wild animal will tear them apart.⁹ You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are

against me, against your helper.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Isaiah 53:6,7 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

John 3:16 God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Timothy 2:4 [God] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Chemnitz: With both hands, indeed with all our hearts, we must hold to this true and pious opinion, that God is not the author of sin, nor does he approve of sin. No, rather he is indeed terribly angry with sin, as he declares so often in his Word, by the continuous punishments and miseries he sends upon the world and by his threats of eternal wrath. This wrath against sin has been demonstrated by the Son of God in a particular way when he came to become a sacrifice for sin and to show that the devil was the author of sin and to appease by his death the overwhelming wrath of the Father (*Loci Th*, I, p 127f.).

e) It is an inconsistency when supralapsarian Calvinists try to deny that they make God the author of sin.

Hermann Witsius (d. 1708): It infallibly follows that Adam, when God moved him to understand, will, and eat, was not able not to understand, will, and eat. But since God did not give him the good quality of those actions, he was not able to understand and to will correctly (*De oeconomia foed. Dei cum hominibus*, 1685, I, VIII).

Johannes Wolleb (d. 1629): Even the things that are counter to God's will do not take place apart from his will. —Many things may take place counter to the *voluntas signi*, which yet conform to the *voluntas beneplaciti*. By the will of sign God did not will man's fall, indeed he most severely forbade it. Yet he willed and decreed it by the will of his good pleasure, according as it was a means of revealing his glory... Thus by God's decree and will things good and bad take place, the former by efficient, the latter by permissive decree (*Christianae Theologiae Compendium*, p 18-19).

Robert Reymond: If someone should ask: Was Adam totally free from God's eternal decree, Reformed theology would say, of course not. Could Adam have done differently? Again, from the viewpoint of the divine decree, the answer is no. To answer these questions any other way is simply to nullify the Scripture's teaching to the effect that God, who works everything in conformity with his eternal purpose (Eph. 1:11), purposed before the foundation of the world to save a multitude of sinners who would fall in Adam (*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p 374).

Chemnitz: This explanation also must be noted, however, what it means that God is not the cause of sin, namely, that he does not will and does not approve of sin, nor does he move people's will to sin. For some (i.e., the Calvinists) understand that he is not the author of sin in such a way that in the beginning he did not create sin, nor did he have it in himself or produce sin through himself. But nevertheless men sin by the will of God, and God not only permissively but also effectively produces sin in men and through men; and yet he is not for this reason called the author of sin (according to the Calvinists). And so for the sake of explanation, as it were, there is added: Author and cause of sin (*Loci Th.*, I, 146).

Quenstedt: In no way whatsoever is God the efficient cause of sin as such: neither in part nor totally; neither directly nor indirectly, neither as such nor incidentally; God is not the author of sin nor can he be called the author of sin in the fall of Adam in particular nor of any sin whatsoever in general.—God is not the cause of sin 1) physically or by himself because evil or sin has no cause in that sense; 2) nor psychologically by commanding, persuading, or approving of it, because he does not will sin but hates it; 3) nor incidentally, because nothing can happen to God either by chance or by accident. This is opposed to divine wisdom (*TDP*, II, II, I, Thes. IV, p 49).

B5, II, 2. The cause of sin in the world is the free will of Satan, who tempted man, and of man who yielded to the temptation.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Romans 5:12 Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

Augsburg Confession XIX: Of the cause of sin they teach that, although God does create and preserve nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked, that is, of the devil and ungodly men; which will, unaided of God, turns itself from God, as Christ says John 8, 44: When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own (Trig., p 52).

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 7: In the second place, this, too, is clear and true, as the Nineteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession teaches, that God is not a creator, author, or cause of sin, but by the instigation of the devil through one man sin (which is a work of the devil) has entered the world, Rom. 5, 12; 1 John 3, 7. And even at the present day, in this corruption of nature, God does not create and make sin in us, but with the nature which God at the present day still creates and makes in men original sin is propagated from sinful seed, through carnal conception and birth from father and mother (Trig., p 860).

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 40: From this article, now, the distinction is found indisputably and clearly. For original sin does not come from God. God is not a creator or author of sin. Nor is original sin a creature or work of God, but it is a work of the devil (Trig., p 870).

Formula of Concord, T.D., XI, 6: The foreknowledge of God (*praescientia*) foresees and foreknows also that which is evil; however, not in such a manner as though it were God's gracious will that it should happen; but all that the perverse, wicked will of the devil and of men wills and desires to undertake and do, God sees and knows before; and His *praescientia*, that is, foreknowledge, observes its order also in wicked acts or works, inasmuch as a limit and measure is fixed by God to the evil which God does not will, how far it should go, and how long it should last, when and how He will hinder and punish it; for all of this God the Lord so overrules that it must redound to the glory of the divine name and to the salvation of His elect, and the godless, on that account, must be put to confusion (Trig., p 1064).

Quenstedt: Whatever lawlessness there ever is in a rational agent, this is to be ascribed entirely to the free will of the creature himself, which is deficient when acting on its own accord. — The rational agent or creature which possesses reason and the ability to know those things which the law that has been given either commands or forbids is the cause of sin properly so called, namely, the will of the devil and of man. This rational being ought to be considered to be the cause of sin not by reason of some actual influence but by reason of some defect [i.e., some failure to act positively]. For sin has a deficient rather than an efficient cause (*TDP*, II, II, I, Thes. VI, p 49).

Note: Quenstedt's use of the term "deficient cause" regarding the origin of sin expresses Augustinian thought that was found useful by both Lutheran and Reformed theologians. Cf. R. Muller, *Dictionary*, p 62: "Since God created all things good, there can be no evil thing that exists as the efficient cause (*causa efficiens*) of sin. Sin must therefore arise, not out of the efficiency of some evil existent agent, but rather out of a deficiency in the willing of something by an otherwise good agent. Thus, the *causa peccati* is a deficient, and not an efficient, cause, a deficient willing rather than an efficient willing, i.e., a willing of something not as it ought to be willed. Neither the will itself, as created, nor the object of its willing is evil."

B5, III. Original sin is the inherited and inborn disposition according to which man is void of original righteousness and filled with evil concupiscence.

B5, III, 1. Scripture is the source of the teaching on original sin.

a) Scripture speaks of sin as an innate condition as well as sinful actions. The condition is called "original sin" or "inherited sin," while the actions are called "actual sin."

Romans 7:8,13,17,18,21,23 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me (ἡ ἐνοικοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία). ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature (ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου). For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me (ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται). ²³ I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν μου). ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death (ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου)

Romans 6:6 For we know that our old self (ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος) was crucified with him so that the body of sin (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας) might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—

Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.

Note. This term "original sin" or "inherited sin" does not occur in Scripture. The Augsburg Confession introduced the German name *Erbsünde*. Luther and others referred to this sinful condition variously as *Natursünde*, *Personsünde*, *wesentliche Sünde*, and the like. (Similarly, the term "actual sin," *wirkliche Sünde*, is an ecclesiastical rather than a biblical term.)

Augsburg Confession II, 1-3: Also they teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit. They condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, and who, to obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason (Trig., p42).

Formula of Concord, Ep., I, 20: Now, this original sin is called by Dr. Luther nature-sin, person-sin, essential sin, not because the nature, person, or essence of man is, without any distinction, itself original sin, but in order to indicate by such words the distinction between original sin, which inheres in human nature, and other sins, which are called actual sins (Trig., p782).

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 53: Luther himself explains that by nature-sin, person-sin, essential sin he means that not only the words, thoughts, and works are sin, but that the entire nature, person, and essence of man are altogether corrupted from the root by original sin (Trig., p874).

Note: Another clarification in terminology may be kept in mind. The term *peccatum originis originans* refers to Adam's fall while the term *peccatum originis originatum* refers to inherited sin.

Bellarmino: If anyone therefore asks us what original sin is in the proper sense of the term, we will answer by making a distinction in this way: If sin is taken for an action conflicting with the law, original sin is the first disobedience of Adam... But if sin is taken for that which resides in man after the act and from which the same man is called a sinner although he does not sin,

original sin is the lack of the gift of original righteousness, or the habitual aversion and deflection of the will (*Disput.*, Tom. IV, Lib. V, Cap. XVII, p 189).

- b) **Aside from Scripture, no other source is sufficient to reveal original or inherited sin. Human observation, including self-examination, will confirm the widespread and pervasive corruption of mankind, but cannot determine or comprehend the origin or real nature of the condition.**

Romans 2:15 [The Gentiles] show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

1 John 1:8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

- c) **Scripture is clear in revealing that the corruption of the human nature after the fall is real, universal, and total.**

- 1) **The Bible teaches that human nature is now corrupt and sinful. This truth is nevertheless opposed in varying degrees by Pelagian, Semi-pelagian, and synergistic thought.**

- a) **Typical Bible statements would include these.**

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

Genesis 8:21 The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."

John 3:5,6 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

- b) **Typical statements of those who oppose this truth would include these.**

Pelagius (ca. 412 AD): Everything good and evil, concerning which we are either worthy of praise or of blame is done by us, not born with us. We are born not in our full development, but with a capacity for good and evil. We are begotten without virtue as much as without fault (*Pro libero arbitrio*, quoted by Augustine, *De peccato originale*, XIII, 14).

Synod of Orange (441 AD): Through the Fall of the first man the free will was weakened and reduced, not extinguished. . . . For natural man has a remote power and imperfect strength and therefore can do nothing by himself; but if that power is perfected and strength is added, he can do something good. . . . How is the will free to do what it pleases before grace is given, if it cannot do good? I reply: the will is free, but its freedom is so to speak bound and hindered. It is released, however, and expedited when through God's prevenient grace the very power of doing good is conferred on it (*ibid.*, lib VI, cap. XV, 6 & 7 p 394).

Roman Catholic axioms: The natural powers (i.e., the religious, moral nature of man) after the Fall are intact. . . . Nothing is sin unless it is voluntary (Cited by Bellarmine, *Disput.*, tom. IV, de. amis. grat. et stat. pecc. lib V, cap XV, 2, p 185).

Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274): Man is able to do good from his natural powers alone (cited by Bellarmine, *ibid.*, cap XV, 3, p 185).

Gabriel Biel (d. 1495): The unregenerate are able to obtain justification through works of penance (cited by Bellarmine, *ibid*, cap XXVI, 23, p 364).

Timothy Ware: Most Orthodox theologians reject the idea of "original guilt." . . . Humans (Orthodox usually teach) automatically inherit Adam's corruption and mortality, but not his guilt; they are guilty only in so far as by their own free choice they imitate Adam. Many western Christians used to believe that whatever a person does in the fallen and unredeemed state, since it is tainted by original guilt, cannot possibly be pleasing to God. . . Orthodox would hesitate to say this. And Orthodox have never held (as Augustine and many in the west have done) that unbaptized babies, because tainted with original guilt, are consigned by the just God to the everlasting flames of hell. (*The Orthodox Church*, p 224).

Zwingli: Whether we want to or not, we are forced to admit that original sin, as it is in the sons of Adam, is not sin in the proper sense of the term. For it is not a crime against the law. Therefore in the proper sense of the term it is a disease and condition (*Fidei Ratio ad Carolum Imperatorem*, art. IV).

Schmalz: That original sin is a mere fable which the Lutherans and others foster as a foreign offspring, as it were (*Contra Franzium*; cited by H. II, p 397).

Erickson: Until the first conscious or responsible moral action or decision by a person, there is no imputation of the Adamic sin, just as there is no imputation of Christ's righteousness until there is a conscious acceptance of that work. . . . There is a time of moral responsibility, or an "age of accountability," and sin is not reckoned prior to that (*How Shall They Be Saved?* p 250).

- 2) **The Bible teaches that such corruption is universal.**

1 Kings 8:46 When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near

Psalms 14:2,3 The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. ³ All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Psalms 143:2 Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you.

Proverbs 20:9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?

Romans 3:9-12,22,23 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Galatians 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

3) The Bible teaches that human nature is thoroughly rather than superficially corrupt. Inherited sin is no slight or insignificant flaw as Strigel taught.

-a) As the image of God was not a *donum superadditum (supernaturale)*, so original sin is not an *accidens leviculum*.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 21: [We reject] that original sin is only external, a slight, insignificant spot sprinkled or a stain dashed upon the nature of man, or *corruptio tantum accidentium aut qualitatum, i. e.*, a corruption only in some accidental things, along with and beneath which the nature nevertheless possesses and retains its integrity and power even in spiritual things (Trig., p 864).

Meisner: Original sin is not a slight accident (nonessential characteristic). . . . For it does not leave the nature uncorrupted, but it deeply infects all the powers and faculties of a man to such an extent that the mind is blind in spiritual matters, the will is turned away (from good), and every thought is by nature inclined only to evil. We condemn therefore all who extenuate sin, and we wish and permit it to be emphasized in every way, provided only that that emphasis does not violate the analogy of faith (*Anthopologia sacra*, dec. I, disp. VI, qu I, XV, p 161).

-b) At the same time, although original sin is a deep-rooted evil, it is not a part of the essence or substance of mankind, as Flacius wrongly asserted.

John 1:3 with 1 Timothy 4:4 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. . . . For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Formula of Concord, Ep., I, 19: We reject and condemn also as a Manichean error the doctrine that original sin is properly and without any distinction the substance, nature, and essence itself of the corrupt man, so that a distinction between the corrupt nature, as such, after the Fall and original sin should not even be conceived of, nor that they could be distinguished from one another even in thought (Trig., p 782). Cf. Also T.D., I, 48-62, Trig. p 874 ff.

Flacius: Men have been essentially changed from the image of God into the image of the devil. Their substance has been essentially changed and perverted by Satan (*Clavis scripturae*, see Quenstedt, *TDP*, sect. II, qu X, p 131).

Meisner: If [Flacius] did not err in the matters themselves, nevertheless he stubbornly and contentiously defended that most absurd phrase which is completely contrary to the analogy of faith and which is by no means to be tolerated in him.—An inhabitant and that in which he lives are not one and the same, but they always are actually different (on Ro 7). (*Anthopologia sacra*, dec. I, disp. VI, qu. 1, XV, p 161).

4) The Bible teaches that this deep corruption is being transmitted in propagation.

-a) Bible passages that reveal this truth include the following:

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Job 14:4 Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one!

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Psalms 58:3 Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.

Romans 5:12,19 Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners,

so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 7: And even at the present day, in this corruption of nature, God does not create and make sin in us, but with the nature which God at the present day still creates and makes in men original sin is propagated from sinful seed, through carnal conception and birth from father and mother (Trig., p 860).

-b) Roman Catholics declare the Virgin Mary to be an exception to this truth, but the Bible does not allow this.

Council of Trent, Sess. V: Nevertheless this holy synod declares that it is not its intention to include in this decree, when it speaks about original sin, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.

Pius IX: We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the most blessed Virgin Mary in the first moment of her conception by a singular grace and privilege of the omnipotent God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ the Savior of the human race, was preserved pure of every taint of original guilt, has been revealed by God and therefore must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful (*Ineffabilis Deus, Apostolic Constitution*, Dec. 8, 1854).

Vatican II : The usage prevailed among the holy Fathers whereby they called the mother of God entirely holy and free from all stain of sin.... Adorned from the first instant of her conception with the splendors of an entirely unique holiness, the Virgin of Nazareth is, on God's command, greeted by an angel messenger as "full of grace" (cf. Lk 1:28).... Rightly therefore the holy Fathers see her as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as cooperating in the work of human salvation through free faith and obedience. For, as St. Irenaeus says, she, "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and the whole human race." Hence in their preaching not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert with him: "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience. What the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, Mary loosened by her faith" (*Doc.*, p 88, see also *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 964, 968).

Pius XII: Accordingly ... by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and by Our own authority We pronounce, declare and define that the dogma was revealed by God, that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, after completing her course of life upon earth, was assumed to the glory of heaven both in body and soul. Therefore, if anyone, which may God forbid, should dare either to deny this, or voluntarily call into doubt what has been defined by us, he should realize that he has cut himself off entirely from the divine and Catholic faith (*Munificentissimus Deus*, 1950, see also *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 966).

Genesis 3:15 (Vulgate): She will crush his head.

Luke 1:47 My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Romans 3:10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one."

5) The Bible teaches that the inherited corruption remains within people until death.

-a) No one has the ability to rid himself of this corruption.

Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.

John 3:5,6 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."

Romans 7:14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.

-b) Original sin continues to dwell also in Christians.

Romans 7:17,21,23 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Apology II (I), 35: Here our adversaries inveigh against Luther also because he wrote that "Original sin remains after baptism." They add that this article was justly condemned by Leo X. But His Imperial Majesty will find on this point a manifest slander. For our adversaries know in what sense Luther intended this remark that original sin remains after baptism. He always wrote thus, namely, that baptism removes the guilt of original sin, although the material, as they call it, of the sin, *i.e.*, concupiscence, remains. He also added in reference to the material that the Holy Spirit, given through baptism, begins to mortify the concupiscence, and creates new movements [a new light, a new sense and spirit] in man (Trig., p 112).

Council of Trent, Sess. V: The question is whether concupiscence which remains in the regenerate after baptism and repentance is truly and properly sin. The holy synod declares that this concupiscence which the Apostle sometimes calls sin the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin in the sense that it truly and properly is sin in the regenerate, but because it comes from sin and inclines to sin.—If anyone, however, thinks differently, let him be damned.—In baptism the essence of original sin is removed; therefore the remnants after baptism, namely, concupiscence, are not truly sin. For when the essence is removed, the thing itself is removed.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Although it is proper to each individual, original sin does not have the character of a personal fault in any of Adam's descendants. It is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted: it is wounded in the natural powers proper to it; subject to ignorance, suffering, and the dominion of death; and inclined to sin – an inclination to evil that is called "concupiscence." Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, erases original sin and turns a man back toward God, but the

consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle. (Par. 405) By our first parents' sin, the devil has acquired a certain domination over man, even though man remains free. (Par. 407)

Chemnitz: For (Paul) says according to the inner man... Likewise: I delight in the law of God; with the mind I serve the law of God. These things, unless we want to pelagianize openly, cannot be attributed to unregenerate man (*Loci*, pars I, loc. VII, *de peccato originis*, cap VII, II, p 229).

B5, III, 2. Original sin presents a double aspect. It is described negatively (as the absence of righteousness) and positively (as the presence of evil desires).

a) Described negatively, original sin denotes the absence of original righteousness and thus the ability to express it. This is the *sine* referred to in our Confessions.

Psalm 53:3,4 Everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.
⁴ Will the evildoers never learn—those who devour my people as men eat bread and who do not call on God?

Romans 3:10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one."

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Ephesians 2:1,5 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. ⁵[God] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Colossians 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

Augsburg Confession II, 1-2: They teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God (*sine metu Dei*), without trust in God, and with concupiscence (*cum concupiscentia*); and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit (Trig., p 42). (See also Apology II (I) 7-13, Trig., p 106)

Augsburg Confession XVIII, 1-4: Of Free Will they teach that man's will has some liberty to choose civil righteousness, and to work things subject to reason. But it has no power, without the Holy Spirit, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness; since the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2, 14; but this righteousness is wrought in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the Word (Trig., p50).

Formula of Concord, T.D., I, 22-25: [We reject] that original sin is not a despoliation or deficiency, but only an external impediment to these spiritual good powers, as when a magnet is smeared with garlic-juice, whereby its natural power is not removed, but only hindered; or that this stain can be easily washed away, as a spot from the face or pigment from the wall. They are rebuked and rejected likewise who teach that the nature has indeed been greatly weakened and corrupted through the Fall, but that nevertheless it has not entirely lost all good with respect to divine, spiritual things, and that what is sung in our churches, "Through Adam's fall is all corrupt, Nature and essence human," is not true, but from natural birth it still has something good, small, little and inconsiderable though it be, namely, capacity, skill, aptness or ability to begin, to effect, or to help effect something in spiritual things. For concerning external, temporal, worldly things and transactions, which are subject to reason, there will be an explanation in the succeeding article. These and contrary doctrines of like kind are censured and rejected for the reason that God's Word teaches that the corrupt nature, of and by itself, has no power for anything good in spiritual, divine things, not even for the least, as good thoughts; and not only this, but that of and by itself it can do nothing in the sight of God but sin, Gen. 6, 5; 8, 21 (Trig., p864).

b) Described positively, original sin denotes the innate predisposition to evil, often called concupiscence. This is the *cum* referred to in our Confessions.

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

Genesis 8:21 The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."

Romans 7:8,21,23 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Galatians 5:17,24 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

Augsburg Confession II, 1-2: They teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God (*sine metu Dei*), without trust in God, and with concupiscence (*cum concupiscentia*); and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit (Trig., p 42).

Apology II (I), 14: These were the reasons why, in the description of original sin, we made mention of concupiscence also, and denied to man's natural strength the fear of God and trust in Him. For we wished to indicate that original sin contains also these diseases, namely, ignorance of God, contempt for God, the being destitute of the fear of God and trust in Him, inability to love God. These are the chief faults of human nature, conflicting especially with the first table of the Decalog (Trig., p 108).

Apology II (I), 24,25: Of the same import is the definition which occurs in the writings of Augustine, who is accustomed to define original sin as concupiscence [wicked desire]. For he means that when righteousness had been lost, concupiscence came in its place. For inasmuch as diseased nature cannot fear and love God and believe God, it seeks and loves carnal things. God's judgment it either contemns, when at ease, or hates, when thoroughly terrified. Thus Augustine includes both the defect and the vicious habit which has come in its place. Nor indeed is concupiscence only a corruption of the qualities of the body, but also, in the higher powers, a vicious turning to carnal things. Nor do those persons see what they say who ascribe to man at the same time concupiscence that is not entirely destroyed by the Holy Spirit, and love to God above all things (Trig., p 110).

Gerhard: That corruption of our nature which embraces the inclination and impetus of all the powers of the soul toward evil we call a positive quality, not as though some power of acting were in and through itself sin, but because that power of acting in man is only inclined and disposed to sin.... Meanwhile we do not prohibit that a fine distinction be made between that power of acting itself and the evil quality of that power (*Loci*, tom. IV, loc. X, sec. LXXXVIII, p 331).

c) The absence of righteousness and presence of evil desires are not two parts or components of inherited sin, but the same condition viewed from different angles.

Quenstedt: And so the essence of original sin embraces 1) the absence or lack of the original righteousness which ought to be present; 2) the placement or presence of evil concupiscence and the coming of a contrary character and evil quality, or the corruption of the whole nature (*TDP*, II, II, II, qu XI, thes. p 135).

Hollaz: Spiritual death, the root of all evil, is the immediate consequence of the first apostasy or sin.... This spiritual death brought with it the loss of the divine image, the most profound corruption of the whole human nature and the loss of the free will in spiritual matters (*Examen*, pars II, cap. III, qu. 9, p 556).

Brochmand: That original sin includes besides the loss of original righteousness a congenital inclination of the nature to evils of every kind these passages of the Scriptures most plainly teach, Gn 6:5; 8:21; etc. (*Systema*, art XI, cap. V, III, p 442).

d) The sinful nature of concupiscence has been wrongly minimized in the history of the church. The Church of Rome has consistently done this. Theological modernism, liberalism, and much of Evangelicalism have often done the same.

Terms used by Roman Catholicism to denote concupiscence include: "wound of nature, weakness, disease" (*vulnus naturae, infirmitas, morbus*). They also define evil desire as "an appetite lacking the bridle of original righteousness" (*sensualitas freno originalis iustitiae destituta*).

Bellarmino: The Lutherans correctly admit the common definition of original sin, namely, that it is the loss of original righteousness.... Their error is that those things which the Catholics describe as wounds of nature, weaknesses, diseases remaining from original sin, such as ignorance, difficulty in doing good, concupiscence, they insist are truly and properly original sin. . . . A third error is proposed which is common to all Lutherans and Calvinists: The whole controversy is about whether the corruption of nature and especially concupiscence is by itself and by its very nature original sin in the proper sense of the word.... For the adversaries contend that it is, the Catholics, however, deny it; since they teach that when the will has been cleansed through justifying grace, the remaining diseases not only do not make men guilty, but they are not able to make men guilty since they do not have the true character of sin. (He calls the main question) whether it is a positive quality or not, and whether this evil itself is properly and essentially original sin. . . . They affirm both, and we deny both. We assert: the corruption of the nature is not original sin, not only because it is not imputed, but also because it cannot be imputed since it is not of itself and by its very nature sin. . . . Concupiscence in the regenerate is not sin, is not imputed, and does not make people guilty (*Disputat.*, tom IV, de amis grat, lib V, cap IV, I, p 155, 156).

Council of Trent, Sess. V Decree 5: For God hates nothing in the regenerate.... This holy synod confesses and believes that concupiscence or inclination remains in the baptized. Since this was left for the purpose of exercise, it is not able to harm those who do not consent but manfully resist it through the grace of Christ Jesus.

Tillich: Original sin is neither original nor hereditary; it is the universal destiny of estrangement which concerns every man (*ST*, II, 56). Reinterpretation is also needed for the term "original" and "hereditary" with respect to sin. But in this case reinterpretation may demand rejection of the terms (*ST*, II, 46).

B5, III, 3.

a) Original sin makes us guilty before God. Inherited sin is imputed to us and we are held responsible for it. The Bible presents guilt as imputed sin. The sinner is held accountable to God for sin and is subject to divine punishment.

1) Terms in both the OT and NT express the idea of the sinner being accountable to God for sin.

ⲃⲱⲪ: guilt (m.,f.,adj.,vb.)

Jeremiah 51:5 For Israel and Judah have not been forsaken by their God, the LORD Almighty, though their land is full of *guilt* before the Holy One of Israel.

2 Chronicles 24:18 They abandoned the temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and worshiped Asherah poles and idols. Because of their *guilt*, God's anger came upon Judah and Jerusalem.

Leviticus 5:2,3 If a person touches anything ceremonially unclean—whether the carcasses of unclean wild animals or of unclean livestock or of unclean creatures that move along the ground—even though he is unaware of it, he has become unclean and *is guilty* [vb.].³ Or if he touches human uncleanness—anything that would make him unclean—even though he is unaware of it, when he learns of it he *will be guilty* [vb.].

ⲓⲱ: iniquity; punishment.

Exodus 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, *punishing* the children *for the sin* [visiting the iniquity] of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

Leviticus 5:17 "If a person sins and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though he does not know it, he is *guilty* [bears iniquity] and will be held responsible.

Isaiah 1:4 Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with *guilt*, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.

Isaiah 6:7 With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your *guilt* is taken away and your sin atoned for."

ὀφείλημα: debt

Matthew 6:12 Forgive us our *debts*, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

ὑπόδικος: guilty (subject to judgment or punishment)

Romans 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 silenced and the whole world held *accountable* to God. (only here in N.T.)

ἔνοχος: guilty

Matthew 5:21,22 You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, "Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be *subject* to judgment." ²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be *subject* to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, "Raca," is *answerable* to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, "You fool!" will be *in danger* of the fire of hell.

Mark 3:29 Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is *guilty* of an eternal sin.

Mark 14:64 "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as *worthy* of death.

1 Corinthians 11:27 Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be *guilty* of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

Hebrews 2:15 and free those who all their lives *were held* [ἔνοχοι ἦσαν] in slavery by their fear of death.

James 2:10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is *guilty* of breaking all of it.

2) The Bible also uses various expressions to denote the imputation or non-imputation of sin.

2 Samuel 3:8 Abner was very angry because of what Ish-Bosheth said and he answered, "Am I a dog's head—on Judah's side? This very day I am loyal to the house of your father Saul and to his family and friends. I haven't handed you over to David. Yet now *you accuse me of an offense* [וַיַּאֲרֹךְ עָלַי עוֹן] involving this woman!

2 Samuel 19:19 [He] said to him, "May my lord *not hold me guilty* [אֶל־יְהוָה־לִי־עוֹן]. Do not remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. May the king put it out of his mind."

Psalms 32:1,2 Blessed is he whose transgressions are *forgiven* [נָשַׁח], whose sins are *covered* [יָסַף]. ² Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does *not count against him* [לֹא יִשְׁבַּח] and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Psalms 130:3 If you, O LORD, *kept a record of sins* [עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמַר], O Lord, who could stand?

Jonah 1:14 Then they cried to the LORD, "O LORD, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. *Do not hold us accountable* [אֶל־תִּתֵּן עָלֵינוּ] for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased."

Romans 4:6 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God *credits* [λογίζεται] righteousness apart from works.

Romans 3:23 All have sinned and *fall short* [ὑστεροῦνται] of the glory of God.

Hollaz: Guilt (*culpa*) is moral foulness or deformity resulting from an act not in harmony with the law and unbecoming for a rational creature and clinging to a sinner as a shameful blemish. . . . Liability of guilt (*reatus culpae*) is an obligation by which a man on account of an act not in harmony with the moral law is held bound as it were under sin and stain so that from that act he is considered and called a detestable sinner (*Examen*, pars II, cap 4, qu 10-12. p 542ff.).

Gerhard: The liability (*reatus*) properly and accurately speaking is not the punishment itself of sin but the obligation to punishment by which a man is made liable, that is, subject to the wrath of God (*Loc. de peccat. Sec 89*).

Baier: For guilt (*culpa*) essentially is a certain relationship resulting from sin considered in relation to the standard of moral rectitude or law; and liability (*reatus*) essentially implies an obligation by which someone is held bound under sin through sin itself so that he truly is and is called a sinner. This obligation itself, however, is also a relation to the law or rule resulting from sin through which a man is made liable for sin. Nor does there appear to be a difference between liable of sin and guilty or liable of guilt (*reum peccati, culpabilem, culpae reum*)(*Compendium*, pars II, cap II, sec 8, p 308).

3) Guilt is independent of the sinner's consciousness.

Psalms 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Psalms 50:21,22 These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke

you and accuse you to your face. ²² Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue.

Leviticus 4:13 If the whole Israelite community sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though the community is unaware of the matter, they are guilty. Also verses 22,27.

4) **Guilt may be described as "infinite" since sin is in opposition to the infinite God.**

Psalms 90:11 Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

Psalms 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

Psalms 49:7-9 No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him—⁸ the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough—⁹ that he should live on forever and not see decay.

Matthew 16:26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 18:24,25 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

Ezra 9:6 O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens.

Psalms 38:4 My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.

b) **Original or inherited sin is also imputed to us and we are held accountable for this condition.**

1) **We are by nature excluded from heaven.**

John 3:5,6 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath [τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς].

2) **Adam's sin was imputed indirectly (*imputatio mediata*) to mankind as Adam transmitted a sinful nature to his descendants (hereditary corruption). Adam was not only the physical head of the human race, but in a sense also served as humanity's moral head.**

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Formula of Concord, Ep., I., 11,12: . Therefore we reject and condemn the teaching that original sin is only a *reatus* or debt on account of what has been committed by another [diverted to us] without any corruption of our nature. . Also, that evil lusts are not sin, but concreated, essential properties of the nature, or, as though the above-mentioned defect and damage were not truly sin, because of which man without Christ would be a child of wrath (Trig., p 780).

3) **Adam's sin may also be said to be imputed directly to mankind by a verdict of God (*imputatio immediata*) (hereditary guilt).**

Romans 5:12,14,18,19 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. ¹⁸Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:14 (On the concept of imputation) For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

Quenstedt: "Just as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed through to all men, ἐφ' ᾧ, in whom (namely, in Adam) all sinned" (*TDP*, II, II, sec II, qu VII, p 112).

Note: There is a preferable – and more grammatical – way to understand Romans 5:12. It is plain that ἐφ' ᾧ in Greek refers to a cause. Luther translated it *diueil*. The NIV translates it *because*.

Quenstedt: It was not a matter of good pleasure (i.e., a whim) nor of absolute divine dominion, but of the highest justice and fairness that the sin which Adam as the root and source of the whole human race committed is imputed to us and passed on to us as a liability. And thus we all sinned in Adam as in a common stock, and the first fall is ours, not indeed by propagation but by imputation, not actually but originally (*TDP*, II, II, II, qu VII, thes., p 111).

Baier: It is not necessary, nor perhaps is it advisable to debate rather subtly how God was able to impute the fall of the first people to their offspring who did not yet exist in such a way that on account of it it was necessary for them also to be born without original righteousness and as sinners. For it is enough that the fact has been revealed, although how this can be is not known (*Compendium*, II, II, sec 8, c, p 308).

4) The Bible teaching that inherited sin is imputed as guilt to mankind has been strongly denied by many.

Julius Wegscheider (d. 1849): But that imputation of Adam's sin which the Apostle Paul, following the Jewish teachers of his time, made the basis of his arguments ought to be relegated to the status of obsolete dogmas (*Instit*, art 18, p 386).

Peter De Rosa: Original sin in us must be sharply distinguished from any personal sins we may commit. The sin and guilt of original sin are not the same as the sin and guilt of actual sins. We are not responsible for original sin; we do not do penance or make satisfaction for it; we are not strictly speaking "enemies" of God by reason of it (*Christ and Original Sin*, p 82).

Rudolph Bultmann: To attribute human mortality to the fall of Adam is sheer nonsense, for guilt implies personal responsibility, and the idea of original sin as an inherited infection is sub-ethical, irrational, and absurd (*Kerygma and Myth*, p7).

Paul Tillich: Reinterpretation is also needed for the term "original" and "hereditary" with respect to sin. But in this case reinterpretation may demand rejection of the terms (*ST*, II, 46).

Ted Peters: Critics have objected to the idea of original sin because (1) the story of a first sin in a primeval garden sounds mythical rather than historical; (2) it is unjust for the present generation to suffer because of the sin of its ancestors; and (3) too frequently the sexual intercourse necessary for procreation has become the target of those who wish to point to the precise moment at which the disease is passed on. Despite these criticisms, I believe theologians need a concept such as original sin to account for the human experience it articulates. Evil comes to us and we sin—these are basic elements of human experience and are symbolized in Adam and Eve, who represent everyone. Sin is universally human. The idea of original sin is an attempt to provide a workable concept of this universal phenomenon (*God the World's Future*, p 169).

Kenneth Grider: Yet both words in the phrase "original sin" are in themselves misleading as to what is intended. To the altogether uninitiated, the word "original," coupled with the word 'sin,' would suggest the first act of sin—Adam's act of rebellion in the Garden of Eden. However, 'original sin' refers to a state of sin in us due to that original act of sin on Adam's part. The word "sin" also tends to be misleading. In this phrase it refers to a state, but it is commonly used of an act of disobedience. And we think of being guilty for sin, whereas for this original sin we are not now guilty (because of Christ), and it therefore does not make us culpable (so that, as John Wesley said, no one will ever go into eternal hell for this sin alone)." (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 277)

Owen Kendall White, Jr: In contrast with the orthodox Christian notion that the fall resulted in a condition of human depravity, the Mormon view asserts that the fall was a necessary condition for man to realize his ultimate potential....Mormons generally avoid using "sin" to describe Adam's disobedience to God since it seems too extreme for them....to the Mormon the fall is a fall upward rather than downward. It is an important step in the eternal quest of man. In a recent article, Sterling Sill, a contemporary Mormon ecclesiastical official, wrote: "Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction" ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," p 101-104. Quoted in Tanner).

Abdalati: The idea of original sin "has no room in the teachings of Islam. Man, according to the Qur'an (30:30) and to the Prophet, is born in a natural state of purity or *fitrah*" (*Islam in Focus*, p 31-32).

B5, IV. Actual sins are all acts, words, and thoughts (emotions, desires, impulses, judgments) against God's Law.

B5, IV, 1. Scripture distinguishes between innate or inherited sinfulness (original sin) and sins a person commits (actual sin). Scripture does not, however, use the term "actual sin."

a) The Bible speaks of sins that people do, commit, work, and so forth.

Matthew 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers (οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν)!"

John 8:34,44 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins (πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) is a slave to sin. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out (θέλετε ποιεῖν) your father's desire.

Romans 2:9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil (κατεργάζομαι τὸ κακόν): first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits (ποιέω) are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.

Galatians 5:16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify (τελέω) the desires of the sinful nature.

James 2:9 If you show favoritism, you sin (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε) and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

b) The Bible also refers to sinful works and practices (which includes thoughts).

Galatians 5:19-21 The acts (τὰ ἔργα) of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this (τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες) will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 5:11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds (ἔργα) of darkness, but rather expose them.

Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices (πράξεις).

Hebrews 6:1 Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts (ἔργοι) that lead to death, and of faith in God.

Hebrews 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death (ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων), so that we may serve the living God!

2 Peter 2:8 That righteous man [Lot], living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds (ἀνόμοι ἔργοι) he saw and heard.

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

Romans 7:5 For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in (ἐνεργέω) our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.

- c) **To maintain a distinction between original and actual sin is therefore valid. At the same time it should be remembered that actual sin begins with the so-called “first feelings, movements, ticklings” (*motus primo primi, primae titillationes*) within sinful mankind, and the progression from original to actual sin is not easily charted.**

James 1:14,15 Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Augustine: Concupiscence is original sin, while desires, which are the expression of concupiscence, are actual sins (Quoted by Peter Lombard, *2 Sent. 30.7; pL. 192:722B*).

Chemnitz: And this difference can be understood still more clearly from that distinction of steps which has been handed down from the ancient teachers: 1) The inclination (*fomes*, literally, tinder), or inherent depravity, which also includes choice; 2) the stirrings (*suggestion*) of the thoughts and feelings, that is, when the original depravity becomes active in some direction; 3) pleasure (*delectatio*); 4) consent (*consensus*); 5) the act itself (*opus*).—Of these steps the first two pertain to original sin, the remaining three to actual sin (*Loci*, IV, p 239). Note: Many theologians would identify the second phase as actual sin.

Chemnitz: Now someone might claim that this distinction is too clumsy, and might sophistically urge that all impulses and acts against the Law of God belong to actual sin by definition. Then it is time to invoke the two ancient rules which state the essential doctrine of original sin without any double talk: (1) Original sin is not an inactive thing (*res otiosa*). (2) In original sin there is always present at the same time actual sins. Thus Luther said in his *Resolutiones* that the tinder or natural state (*fomes*) is actual sin, i.e., the lack of what should be present, and the presence of weakness and desires which should be absent. . . This natural tinder is therefore a most lively and restless origin of actual sins (*Loci*, VII, Cited in *The Doctrine of Man*, p 211-212).

Quenstedt: The word “act” and “actual” in this place is not taken strictly for only outward acts and sins of commission, but broadly, in such a way that it embraces also inward evil feelings, both primary and secondary ones, as well as sins of omission. [He then immediately gives the explanation of the primary feelings:] They call the primary feelings (movements) or even the first primary ones inducements to sin, ticklings of the flesh, arising before they are noticed by the mind, inordinate movements which are sudden or involuntary or which are even apt to creep up against one’s will (*TDP*, II, II, I, thes XL, p 63).

- d) **Actual sins include also those acts which natural or unregenerate sinners do which in themselves are neutral or even good.**

Isaiah 1:11-18 “The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?” says the LORD. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. ¹² When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? ¹³ Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies. ¹⁴ Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; ¹⁶ wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, ¹⁷ learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow. ¹⁸ Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

Amos 5:21 I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies.

Malachi 2:13 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD’s altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.

Romans 10:2,3 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

Hebrews 11:6 Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Chemnitz: It must be carefully observed that to the definition of actual sin belong not only actions which of themselves and by their very nature are evil, but everything which does not proceed from faith is sin, Ro 14:23 [Better: He 11:6] (*Loci*, I, VII, B, VIII, p 313).

B5, IV, 2. With reference to consciousness and deliberation actual sins may be classified as involuntary or voluntary sins.

- a) **Involuntary sins refer to sins that are not the result of conscious or deliberate activity of the will.**

Romans 7:15-17,19,20 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Quenstedt: Sin is here called involuntary, not because it is not in the will and does not proceed from the will, but because it does not take place from knowing and willing (*TDP*, II, II, I, thes. LXXI, p 70).

- 1) **Usually classified as involuntary sins are sins of ignorance. Different kinds of ignorance may be identified, for example, ignorance or unclarity of the true nature of an act, of the meaning of God's Law, or difference of attendant circumstances. Some have also distinguished between avoidable sins of ignorance (a diligent person could have gotten the truth) and almost unavoidable or inevitable sins of ignorance (the ministry of the Word is absent or very corrupt).**

Leviticus 4:2 Say to the Israelites: "When anyone sins unintentionally (בְּשִׁגְגָה) and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands . . .

Numbers 15:27 If just one person sins unintentionally (בְּשִׁגְגָה), he must bring a year-old female goat for a sin offering.

Acts 3:17 Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance (κατὰ ἄγνοϊαν), as did your leaders.

Ignorance of God's will

1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance (ἄγνοῶν) and unbelief.

Ignorance of fact

Genesis 29:23,25 But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and gave her to Jacob, and Jacob lay with her. ²⁵ When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?" [Is this sin by Jacob?]

Vincible

2 Samuel 15:11 Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter.

Genesis 19:33 That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

Romans 1:21,25,28 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. ²⁸ Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

Invincible

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Gerhard: That which arises for the regenerate, without their knowing it and being ignorant of it, from the darkness of the mind, which has not yet been fully removed through the illumination of the Holy Spirit (*Isagoge*, cited by Quenstedt, *TDP*, II, II, I, thes LXXVII, nota I, p 70).

Quenstedt: It is a sin of ignorance because it has overtaken the regenerate against their will from the darkness of the mind which has not yet been fully removed by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (*TDP*, II, II, I, thes LXXVII, nota I, p 70).

- 2) **Also often classified as involuntary sins are sins of weakness (and sometimes sins of rashness).**

Genesis 9:21 When [Noah] drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body (σὰρξ) is weak.

Matthew 26: 35, 69-74 But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same. ⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said. ⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said. ⁷¹ Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!" ⁷³ After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away." ⁷⁴ Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Immediately a rooster crowed.

Romans 7:15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

Galatians 2:12,13 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³ The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Quenstedt: Note here furthermore that sins of ignorance and weakness are present in the regenerate together with the grace of God, faith, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Such sins are mortal as far as merit is concerned, but not in fact. For God forgives them because the person is pleasing to God and because repentance follows immediately (*TDP*, II, II, I, thes. LXXVII, p 71).

- 3) **By subsequent impenitence involuntary sins become voluntary.**

Numbers 35:26-28 But if the accused ever goes outside the limits of the city of refuge to which he has fled ²⁷ and the avenger of blood finds him outside the city, the avenger of blood may kill the accused without being guilty of murder. ²⁸ The accused must stay in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest; only after the death of the high priest may he return to his own property. [Note the case of Shimei, who violated his parole.]

b) **Voluntary sins are those that involve conscious deliberation or willfulness.**

1) **Voluntary sins include those committed willfully or maliciously.**

Numbers 15:29,30 One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien. ³⁰ But anyone who sins defiantly (רָמָה בְּדָבָר), whether native-born or alien, blasphemes the LORD, and that person must be cut off from his people.

Numbers 35:20,21 If anyone with malice aforethought (בְּשׂוֹן אָדָם) shoves another or throws something at him intentionally (בְּדָבָר) so that he dies ²¹ or if in hostility (בְּאִיבָה) he hits him with his fist so that he dies, that person shall be put to death; he is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

Hebrews 10:26 If we deliberately (ἐκουσίως) keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left.

Quenstedt: Sin is here called voluntary, not because it is with the will and in the will, for thus also involuntary violations would be voluntary, but it is taken here as opposed to that which is done through ignorance and not deliberately (*per ignorantiam et ἀπροαιρέτως*) (TDP, II, II, I, sec I, thes. LXXI, p 70).

2) **Also classified by many as voluntary sins are sins that are the result of intimidation.**

Matthew 26: 35, 69-74 But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same. ⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said. ⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said. ⁷¹ Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.” ⁷² He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!” ⁷³ After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away.” ⁷⁴ Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!” Immediately a rooster crowed.

Quenstedt: Voluntary sin viewed with respect to the purpose of the will is twofold. For the one kind is that which is committed from pure malice and a will that is altogether free, the other is committed from a will that is influenced by force or fear and surrounding dangers (TDP, II, II, I, sec I, thes. LXXVII, p 71).

3) **Voluntary sin brings the grave danger of a fall from grace.**

Psalms 51:10-14 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. ¹⁴ Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

Romans 8:12,13 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

Quenstedt: The regenerate in so far as they are such do not commit sin that is voluntary and against their conscience, but in so far as they have fallen from the state of grace and cease being regenerate. . . . The most direct and immediate effect in the regenerate is the loss of faith and indwelling grace (TDP, II, II, I, sec I, thes. LXI, LXIII, p 67, 68).

Smalcald Articles, Par. III, Art. III, 43,44: It is, accordingly, necessary to know and to teach that when holy men, still having and feeling original sin, also daily repenting of and striving with it, happen to fall into manifest sins, as David into adultery, murder, and blasphemy, that then faith and the Holy Spirit has departed from them [they cast out faith and the Holy Spirit]. For the Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so as to be accomplished, but represses and restrains it so that it must not do what it wishes. But if it does what it wishes, the Holy Spirit and faith are certainly not present. For St. John says, 1 John 3, 9: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, ... and he cannot sin. And yet it is also the truth when the same St. John says, 1, 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (Trig., p 490).

B5, IV, 3. With reference to the spiritual state of the sinning person sin may be classified as venial sin or mortal sin.

a) **Venial (forgiven or forgivable) sins are not forgivable by their nature. Every sin makes the sinner guilty before God. Venial sins are such because due to the presence of saving faith they have forgiveness inseparably connected with them.**

Exodus 32:33 The LORD replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book.”

Deuteronomy 27:26 “Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.” Then all the people shall say, “Amen!”

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”

James 2:10 Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

Psalms 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Psalms 32:5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Isaiah 42:3 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice.

Matthew 12:20 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.

Romans 8:1,33,34 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

Hollaz: Venial sin is every involuntary sin in the regenerate which neither drives out the indwelling grace of the Holy Spirit nor extinguishes faith, but in the same moment in which it is committed has forgiveness inseparably connected with it.—The distinction of sin into mortal and venial is not derived from the merit of the sin: for every sin is of itself and by its nature damnable in a legal court with respect to merit, but 1) from the different condition of the subject or person who sins. For sin is venial in the regenerate, mortal in those who either never were regenerated or who, having been overcome by the power of the flesh, have fallen from the state of grace. 2) From God's evaluation according to the gospel: because God, a reconciled and gracious Father, does not impute to the regenerate sins of weakness and ignorance for guilt and punishment. 3) From the outcome: mortal sin hurls the sinner headlong into a state of wrath, death, and condemnation, so that, if he should die in that state and without repentance, he would be altogether condemned. Venial sin, however, because it has forgiveness as an inseparable companion (*quia veniam individuum comitem habet*), is able to coexist with the grace of God and saving faith.—The causes of remission or non-imputation are: the mercy of God, the satisfaction and intercession of Christ, the efficacious working of the Holy Spirit, the daily repentance of the regenerate (*Examen*, 547).

Note. Venial sins must not be confused with involuntary sins. Every venial sin is involuntary, but not every involuntary sin is venial. Involuntary sin of unbelievers is mortal.

b) Mortal sins are so called because due to the absence of saving faith spiritual death is inseparable from them.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Galatians 5:19-21 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 John 5:16-18 If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. ¹⁷ All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death. ¹⁸ We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

Augustine: I, however, say that this is sin unto death: to give up faith, which works through love, until death (*De spiritu et littera*, cap. 28).

c) False teachers have wrongly taught that certain sins are *per se* either venial or mortal rather than seeing the spiritual state of the sinner as the determining factor.

Bellarmino: [Catholics] teach by common consent that certain sins from their very nature, without respect to predestination or reprobation or the state of the regenerate or unregenerate, are mortal, certain ones are venial. The first make a person unworthy of God's friendship and subject to eternal death. By the latter a person is made subject only to temporal punishment and fatherly chastisement (*De amicitia grat. et stat. pecc.*, tom. IV, lib. I, cap. III, p 35).

Note: They enumerate seven mortal sins, traditionally called the Seven Deadly Sins: *Superbia, avaritia, luxuria, ira, gula, invidia, acedia* (pride, greed, extravagance, anger, gluttony, envy, satiety or indifference).

Bellarmino: [Identifying sins that are venial for the Catholic Church] A.) Those that are venial because of the kind of sin. These are those which have something evil and inordinate as their object, but which are not opposed to the love of God or one's neighbor—an idle word, too much laughter. B.) Those that are venial because of the imperfection of the deed. Sins may indeed be mortal because of the kind of sin; but they are rendered venial because of the imperfection of the deed. a) Some of these sins are venial because they overtake a person suddenly. They are not completely voluntary, e.g., a sudden feeling of lust, anger, envy. b) Others of these sins are venial because of the smallness of the matter, such as the theft of one penny would be, which neither harms one's neighbor appreciably nor is of such a kind that it can destroy friendship among equals. (*Ibid.*, p 33)

Catechism of the Catholic Church: For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent. . . The gravity of sins is more or less great: murder is graver than theft. One must also take into account who is wronged: violence against parents is in itself graver than violence against a stranger. . . . One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent (Paragraphs 1857, 1858, 1862).

Socinus: One act of sinning cannot have that power that of itself it brings death to the person (who commits it) and when one speaks about sin unto death, the discussion is not about one sin but about the habit of sinning. (From *Kommentar zum 1 Joh.*, cited in Quenstedt, *TDP*, II, II, sec II, qu. XIII, p 148).

The Arminian Confession (1622): Certain sins are such that they deserve to be called slight lapses rather than crimes, through which according to the gracious covenant of God and his fatherly kindness a person is not excluded from the hope of eternal life (Cap 7, p 6; cited by Quenstedt, *idem.*).

Note: Human reason is prone to disregard the fact that sin in itself is a violation of God's holiness.

B5, IV, 4. Another way of classifying sins is to distinguish between sins of commission and sins of omission. Sins of omission are real sins just as sins of commission are.

Matthew 23:23 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

Luke 12:47 That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows.

James 4:17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

B5, V. Two actual sins deserve our special attention: The sin of hardness of heart (obduracy) and the sin against the Holy Spirit.

B5, V, 1. The sin of hardness and the divine judgment of hardening consist of a hardening of the sinner's heart against the word and will of God.

a) Scripture uses various metaphorical terms, which elsewhere often refer to physical processes.

Note: In reading the lists, note the difference of four kinds of passages: 1) prophecies of the hardening of the heart, 2) statements of the condition of hardness, 3) human action of hardening the heart, 4) divine action of hardening the heart.

- **קָטַן**: to fetter, brace up (LXX, σκληρύνω) in the qal of a condition, the hardness of the human heart; in the piel as a causative, of the divine action of hardening.

Exodus 4:21 The LORD said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will *harden* his heart so that he will not let the people go."

Exodus 7:13,22 Yet Pharaoh's heart *became hard* and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said. ²² But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret arts, and Pharaoh's heart *became hard*; he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

Exodus 8:19 The magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart *was hard* and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

Exodus 9:12,35 But the LORD *hardened* Pharaoh's heart and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said to Moses. ³⁵ So Pharaoh's heart *was hard* and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had said through Moses.

Exodus 10:20,27 But the LORD *hardened* Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let the Israelites go. ²⁷ But the LORD *hardened* Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go.

Exodus 11:10 Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh, but the LORD *hardened* Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let the Israelites go out of his country.

Exodus 14:4,8,17 "And I will *harden* Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD." So the Israelites did this. ⁸ The LORD *hardened* the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. ¹⁷ "I will *harden* the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen."

Joshua 11:20 For it was the LORD himself who *hardened* their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Jeremiah 5:3 O LORD, do not your eyes look for truth? You struck them, but they felt no pain; you crushed them, but they refused correction. They *made* their faces *harder* than stone and refused to repent.

- **קָשָׁה**: to harden (LXX, σκληρύνω); the causative is hiphil.

Exodus 7:3-4 But I will *harden* Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt, ⁴ he will not listen to you.

Deuteronomy 2:30 But Sihon king of Heshbon refused to let us pass through. For the LORD your God had *made* his spirit *stubborn* and his heart obstinate in order to give him into your hands, as he has now done.

2 Kings 17:14 But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked

(**וַיִּקְשְׁוּ אֲתֵּי שֵׁׁרְפָאֵם**) as their fathers, who did not trust in the LORD their God.

2 Chronicles 36:13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him take an oath in God's name. He *became stiff-necked* and hardened his heart and would not turn to the LORD, the God of Israel.

Nehemiah 9:16,17,29 They, our forefathers, *became arrogant and stiff-necked*, and did not obey your commands. ¹⁷ They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They *became stiff-necked* and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them. ²⁹ You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, *became stiff-necked* and refused to listen.

Job 9:4 His wisdom is profound, his power is vast. Who has resisted him (מִי־הִקְשָׁה אֵלָיו) and come out unscathed?

Psalms 95:8 Do not *harden* your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert.

Proverbs 28:14 Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD, but he who *hardens* his heart falls into trouble.

Proverbs 29:1 A man who remains *stiff-necked* after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.

Jeremiah 7:26 They did not listen to me or pay attention. They were *stiff-necked* and did more evil than their forefathers.

Jeremiah 19:15 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “Listen! I am going to bring on this city and the villages around it every disaster I pronounced against them, because they *were stiff-necked* and would not listen to my words.”

- **נָקַד**: to harden (LXX, σκληρύνω); causative is hiphil.

Isaiah 63:17 Why, O LORD, do you make us wander from your ways and *harden* our hearts so we do not revere you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes that are your inheritance.

- **בָּרַב**: to be heavy; insensitive (LXX, βαρύνω); causative is hiphil. Used also of physical things.

Exodus 7:14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is *unyielding*; he refuses to let the people go.”

Exodus 9:7,34 Pharaoh sent men to investigate and found that not even one of the animals of the Israelites had died. Yet his heart was *unyielding* and he would not let the people go. ³⁴ When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had stopped, he sinned again: He and his officials *hardened* their hearts.

Exodus 10:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh, for I have *hardened* his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them.”

1 Samuel 6:6 Why do you *harden* your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When he treated them harshly, did they not send the Israelites out so they could go on their way?

Genesis 48:10 Now Israel’s eyes *were failing* because of old age, and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them.

Isaiah 59:1 Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too *dull* to hear.

- **יָמַד**: to stiffen; be stout (LXX, κατισχύω); causative is piel.

Deuteronomy 2:30 But Sihon king of Heshbon refused to let us pass through. For the LORD your God had made his spirit stubborn and his heart *obstinate* in order to give him into your hands, as he has now done.

2 Chronicles 36:13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him take an oath in God’s name. He became stiff-necked and *hardened* his heart and would not turn to the LORD, the God of Israel.

Deuteronomy 15:7 If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be *hard-hearted* or tightfisted toward your poor brother. [ἀποστρέφω, ed, Rahlfs: ἀποστ’ ρξεις]

- **יָמַשׁ**: to be fat; unreceptive (LXX, παχύνω)

Isaiah 6:10 Make the heart of this people *calloused*; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.

- **παχύνω**: to thicken, fatten

Matthew 13:15 For this people’s heart has become *calloused*; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

Acts 28:27 For this people’s heart has become *calloused*; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’

- **σκληρύνω**: to make firm, harden

Acts 19:9 But some of them *became obstinate*; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

Romans 9:18 Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he *hardens* whom he wants to harden.

Hebrews 3:8,13,15; 4:7 Do not *harden* your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be *hardened* by sin’s deceitfulness. ¹⁵ As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not *harden* your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” ⁷ Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not *harden* your hearts.”

- **πωρόω**: to petrify; harden; make insensitive (vb., n.)

Mark 8:17 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts *hardened*?” Also Mark 6:52

John 12:40 He has blinded their eyes and *deadened* their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with

their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them.

Romans 11:7 What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were *hardened*.

2 Corinthians 3:14 Their minds were *made dull*, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.

Mark 3:5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their *stubborn* hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

Romans 11:25 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a *hardening* in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

Ephesians 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the *hardening* of their hearts.

b) The sin of hardening the heart may be committed by heathen who are entirely under the law. A three-fold process appears to be characteristic: (1) Acts of resistance to the law and to conscience lead to (2) habit formation and weakened conscience and (3) result in a state of insensibility.

Exodus 4-11: The sin of hardening of the heart of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Notice the text contains four kinds of passages: 1) prophecies of the hardening of the heart, 2) statements of the condition of hardness, 3) human action of hardening the heart, 4) divine action of hardening the heart. Divine hardening does not begin until Exodus 9:12, the 6th plague.

Exodus 4:21 The LORD said to Moses, “When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But *I will harden his heart* so that he will not let the people go.”

Exodus 8:19 The magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But *Pharaoh’s heart was hard* and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

Exodus 8:15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, *he hardened* his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

Exodus 9:12,35 But *the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart* and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said to Moses. ³⁵ So Pharaoh’s heart *was hard* and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had said through Moses.

1 Samuel 6:6 Why do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When he treated them harshly, did they not send the Israelites out so they could go on their way?

Deuteronomy 2:30 But Sihon king of Heshbon refused to let us pass through. For the LORD your God had made his spirit stubborn and his heart obstinate in order to give him into your hands, as he has now done.

Joshua 11:20 For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. [Read in the light of Genesis 15:16, In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.]

Romans 1:28,32 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. ³² Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

c) The sin of hardening may also be committed by people who are exposed to and in contact with the gospel. By repeated despising of the gospel faith may be lost and spiritual insensibility may result. This hardening against the gospel appears to be a step toward the sin against the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 95:8 Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert.

Isaiah 5:1-7 I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. ² He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. ³ “Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴ What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? ⁵ Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. ⁶ I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briars and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it.” ⁷ The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

Isaiah 6:9-11 He said, “Go and tell this people: “Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.” ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.” ¹¹ Then I said, “For how long, O Lord?” And he answered: “Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged.” [Read in the light of Isaiah 1:3, The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner’s manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.]

Matthew 13:14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

Mark 4:12 They may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!

Romans 11:8 As it is written: “God gave [Israel] a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day.”

Note: When considering the apparent close connection between the sin of hardness and the sin against the Holy Spirit among those exposed to the gospel, the proximity of texts in Matthew 11-13 may be useful:

Matthew 11:16-19 To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷ "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn." ¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon." ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and 'sinners.'"

Matthew 12:31 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

Matthew 13:3,10-15 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed...." ¹⁰ The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" ¹¹ He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.' ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them."

Quenstedt: The subject of hardening first of all are those to whom the will of God was revealed in the Word, whether they have fallen away having had the benefit of regeneration or were never affected by it, Jn 12:40; but secondly those to whom the will of God revealed in the Word was not made known, who commit hardening when they suffocate whatever natural light remains in them, Ro 1:20,24,28 (*TDP*, II, II, I, Thes. CXVI, p 89).

Quenstedt: The object or *materia circa quam* (the thing with which this sin is concerned) is the gospel, according to Jn 12:37–40, and the law; and the latter, the written moral law in the case of those who are in the church; but the law of nature in the case of unbelievers, Ro 2:12–17 (*TDP*, Thes. CXVII).

Quenstedt: The essence of this sin consists in incurable disobedience joined with violent resistance and opposition to God. (*TD.*, Thes. CXVIII).

Quenstedt: The effects of hardening are on the one hand various—and those (consisting in) the most terrible evil deeds—and on the other hand eternal damnation. (*ibid.*, Thes. CXIX).

d) **Hardening is also a judgment of God inflicted on self-hardened sinners to prevent their salvation. This is more than God merely permitting the hardening but involves a judicial act that has the intended effect of hardening. In cutting off people's time of grace God is not arbitrary. He hardens those who first harden themselves.**

Isaiah 6:10 Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed. [*this people* – the faithless vineyard of the Lord, Isaiah 5:1-7]

Matthew 13:11-15 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them."

John 12:39,40 For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them."

Romans 9:18 Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

Psalms 81:11,12 But my people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to me. ¹² So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts to follow their own devices.

Romans 1:24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

Quenstedt: [God hardens] a man by leaving him to himself, by deserting him, by abstaining from illuminating him, by withdrawing whatever grace remains, by handing him over to the power of Satan. (*TDP*, II, II, I., Thes. CXIV, nota, p 88).

Calov: When therefore God is said to harden, this must by no means be understood actively or effectively, as if God sends the hardening or effectively cooperates in the hardening, but (it must be understood) I. permissively, because of his permission, as it is said in Is 63:17, "You have caused us to err," i.e., you have permitted it, as it is explained in Ps 81:13. II. opportunely, because of the opportunity which the wicked seize from those things which God does. ... III. by way of abandonment, on account of desertion, because his grace deserts the wicked. ... IV. by way of deliverance, on account of his giving them over to a reprobate mind and into the further power of Satan (Ro 1:28) (*Bibl. Illustr., N.T.*, tom. I, p 162).

e) **God makes use of hardened sinners for his gracious purposes.**

Romans 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you

and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.”

Romans 11:9-11 And David says: “May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. ¹⁰ May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.” ¹¹ Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

Joshua 2:8-11: Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof ⁹ and said to them, “I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. ¹⁰ We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. ¹¹ When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone’s courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

1 Samuel 6:6 Why do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When he treated them harshly, did they not send the Israelites out so they could go on their way?

f) **The sin and judgment of obduracy is revealed not that we strive to determine if or to assume that any person living is under this judgment. Rather we are to watch and pray.**

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.

Romans 11:20 They were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Luke 11:4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.

Formula of Concord, T.D., XI, 57-59: Likewise, when we see that God gives His Word to one kingdom or realm, but not to another nation; removes it from one place and allows it to remain at another; also, that one is hardened, blinded, given over to a reprobate mind, while another, who is indeed in the same guilt, is converted again, etc.,—in these and similar questions Paul [Rom. 11, 22ff] fixes a certain limit to us how far we should go, namely, that in the one part we should recognize God’s judgment for he commands us to consider in those who perish the just judgment of God and the penalties of sins. For they are well-deserved penalties of sins when God so punishes a land or nation for despising his Word that the punishment extends also to their posterity, as is to be seen in the Jews. And thereby by the punishments God in some lands and persons exhibits his severity to those that are his in order to indicate what we all would have well deserved, and would be worthy and worth, since we act wickedly in opposition to God’s Word and often grieve the Holy Spirit sorely, in order that we may live in the fear of God, and acknowledge and praise God’s goodness, to the exclusion of, and contrary to, our merit in and with us, to whom he gives his Word, and with whom he leaves it, and whom he does not harden and reject (Trig., p 1081).

Formula of Concord, T.D., XI, , 84-86: Accordingly, even Pharaoh (of whom it is written, Ex. 9, 16; Rom. 9, 17: In very deed for this cause have I raised you up, to show in you my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth) perished, not because God had begrudged him salvation, or because it had been his good pleasure that he should be damned and lost. For God is not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. 3, 9; He also has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, Ezek. 33, 11. But that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, namely, that Pharaoh always sinned again and again, and became the more obdurate, the more he was admonished, that was a punishment of his antecedent sin and horrible tyranny, which in many and manifold ways he practiced inhumanly and against the accusations of his heart towards the children of Israel. And since God caused his Word to be preached and his will to be proclaimed to him, and Pharaoh nevertheless willfully reared up straightway against all admonitions and warnings, God withdrew his hand from him, and thus his heart became hardened and obdurate, and God executed his judgment upon him; for he was guilty of nothing else than hell-fire. Accordingly, the holy apostle also introduces the example of Pharaoh for no other reason than to prove by it the justice of God which he exercises towards the impenitent and despisers of his Word; by no means, however, has he intended or understood it to mean that God begrudged salvation to him or any person, but had so ordained him to eternal damnation in His secret counsel that he should not be able, or that it should not be possible for him, to be saved (Trig., p 1091).

B5, V, 2. The sin against the Holy Spirit may be defined as a willful, determined, or malicious rejection of the gospel. It is a final hardening against the gospel.

a) **Scripture mentions this sin by name and also plainly refers to it.**

Matthew 12:31,³² And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Mark 3:28-30 I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. ²⁹ But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.” ³⁰ He said this because they were saying, “He has an evil spirit.”

Luke 12:10 And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹ John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death (ἀμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον). I am not saying that he should pray about that.

Hebrews 6:4-6 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ if they fall away (καὶ παραπεσόντας), to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again (ἀνασταυροῦντας) and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Hebrews 10:26-31 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Isaiah 63:10 Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.

b) In their contexts the Bible references to this sin indicate that the sinners had experienced the work of the Holy Spirit or had tasted the sweetness of the gospel. This blasphemy is not committed in ignorance.

Matthew 12:24-29 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons." ²⁵ Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶ If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. ²⁸ But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house."

Hebrews 5:11-12, 6:1-6 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹ Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ² instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And God permitting, we will do so. ⁴ It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Hebrews 10:22-27 Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. ²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

Gerhard: For it must be noted that this kind of sin is charged by Christ against the Pharisees who, although they were constrained by the force of the truth preached by him and convicted in their consciences by its illumination, nevertheless raged against him with such malicious impiety that they did not blush to ascribe his doctrine and miracles to Satan. The Epistle to the Hebrews describes those sinning against the Holy Spirit in such a way that those who were previously illuminated tasted also the heavenly gift and, having been made sharers of the Holy Spirit, also tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, nonetheless afterwards fall away and thus crucify for themselves again the Son of God and hold him in contempt; likewise that by voluntary apostasy they trample underfoot the Son of God and consider the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified an unholy thing and heap abuse on the Spirit of grace (*Loci*, V, 85).

c) We conclude, therefore, that this sin is not a speaking against the person of the Holy Spirit but against his saving work through the gospel. This sin involves a willful or malicious rejection of the gospel.

Quenstedt: The word "Spirit" is not taken here essentially, as it is a common term for all three persons of the Deity, but it is taken personally for the third person of the Deity. Nevertheless, reference is made not so much to the person itself of the Holy Spirit, as if this sin were committed directly against his person, as to his office and benefit, in so far, namely, as he strives to illuminate men through the doctrine of the Gospel.... Therefore here the Holy Spirit is understood as viewed in his office, and it is called a sin against the Holy Spirit in part by reason of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, in part by reason of his testimony (*TDP*, II, II, I, Thes. XCVII, qu XVII, p 161).

Note: This truth also clarifies the reason why speaking against the Son of Man is judged less severely. Also, the Son of Man in his state of exinanition might remain unrecognized.

Meisner: And these were those eight principal requirements of the sin against the Spirit. ... 1) it concerns doctrine, 2) and that doctrine is understood, 3) and it proceeds from a full knowledge of the mind [hence children are excluded], 4) from extreme malice of the will, 5) and it denies the truth which has been understood, 6) it blasphemes the truth which has been denied. 7) it opposes the truth which has been blasphemed, 8) together with the opposed truth it throws away and tramples under foot all the means of salvation. But from the collection of these requirements such a definition can be formed: The sin against the Holy Spirit is a malicious and voluntary denial of the known truth, a blaspheming and opposition to and rejection of all the means of salvation (*Anthropologia sacra*, dec. I, disp. X, qu. II, art. 42, p 330).

Dannhauer: The sin against the Holy Spirit is a premeditated apostate, blasphemous rejection of the office of the Holy Spirit in a man who has been sufficiently illuminated, convinced, (and is) free (not under compulsion). As a final result it is unpardonable (and) continues to the end (*Hodosophia christ.* seu theol. pos. ph. XI, p 1418).

Quenstedt: Although according to the opinion of most of our theologians the sin against the Holy Spirit can be perpetrated also with respect to the doctrine of the divine law, nevertheless that (sin) strikes chiefly and most powerfully against the doctrine and truth of the gospel (*TDP*, II, II, I,., thes. XCVIII, p 81).

d) The sin against the Holy Spirit is therefore unforgivable not because Christ's atoning sacrifice is insufficient to cover it, nor because the gospel has lost its power to save.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Isaiah 55:10,11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

- e) **The sin against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable because the sin by its very nature is malicious opposition to the gospel and a forfeiture of gospel blessings.**

Hebrews 6:7,8 Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. ⁸ But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.

- f) **Scripture speaks of this sin to warn people who are in an immediate or more remote danger of committing it.**

1 Samuel 15:23 Rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.

Nehemiah 9:26 But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they put your law behind their backs. They killed your prophets, who had admonished them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

- g) **The Bible's strong words of warning expose the insidious nature of resisting the Holy Spirit in order to check the sin in its initial stages and to prevent the terrible sin lest God inflict the judgment of hardness (obduracy) and thereby preclude the possibility of repentance.**

Hebrews 6:9-12 Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation. ¹⁰ God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. ¹¹ We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. ¹² We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

Hebrews 10:35-39 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. ³⁷ For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. ³⁸ But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

Note: While we use this teaching for self-examination purposes and to warn others, we do well to hesitate in accusing people of having already committed it. Luther warned, "Do not rashly charge anyone with this sin. These are poor, burdened consciences which the devil is driving to despair by causing them to think they have committed the unpardonable sin" (Cited in F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 575, quoting St.L X:1209).

Note: A person who is in danger of committing the sin against the Spirit does not care about his condition. A man whose conscience is assailed by fear of having committed it certainly is not guilty of it. Proclaim to such a person the universal and all-powerful gospel of God's grace.

- f) **Ministering to a world in which many are hardened against the gospel, the preacher must be "hard" enough to persist in preaching law and gospel without giving up.**

Ezekiel 3:7-11 But the house of Israel is not willing to listen to you because they are not willing to listen to me, for the whole house of Israel is hardened and obstinate. ⁸ But I will make you as unyielding and hardened as they are. ⁹ I will make your forehead like the hardest stone, harder than flint. Do not be afraid of them or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house. ¹⁰ And he said to me, "Son of man, listen carefully and take to heart all the words I speak to you. ¹¹ Go now to your countrymen in exile and speak to them. Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says,' whether they listen or fail to listen."

Isaiah 6:10-13 Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." ¹¹ Then I said, "For how long, O Lord?" And he answered: "Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, ¹²until the LORD has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken. ¹³And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land."

B5, VI. As a result of original sin mankind by nature has no free will or "free choice" (*liberum arbitrium*) in spiritual matters. By free will or free choice we mean the ability to choose without restraint between alternatives and the ability to act according to one's choice.

B5, VI, 1. It is important to define "free will" or "freedom of choice" in this matter. The following points are made to offer clarifications and minimize confusion.

- a) **God alone has absolute free will (*libertas ab obligatione*). Any creature can be only relatively free.**

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Job 9:12 If he snatches away, who can stop him? Who can say to him, "What are you doing?"

Job 40:2 Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!

Job 41:1,10,11 Can you pull in the leviathan with a fishhook or tie down his tongue with a rope? ¹⁰ No one is fierce enough to rouse him. Who then is able to stand against me? ¹¹ Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me.

Isaiah 45:9 Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?" Does your work say, "He has no hands?"

Romans 9:18,20,21 God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. ²⁰ But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" ²¹ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?

- b) **The relative freedom that human beings have as creatures is variously called "freedom from coercion" (*libertas a coactione*) and "freedom from necessity" (*libertas a necessitate*). At the same time humanity remains subject to certain necessities, e.g., of natural laws (*necessitas physica*), of the consequent (*necessitas consequentis*), and of consequences (*necessitas consequentiae*). (See page 97 on these terms.)**

Genesis 1:28,29 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

Genesis 9:2,3 The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands. ³ Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

Quenstedt: Freedom from coercion is common to man and the animals, but freedom from necessity man has in common only with God and the angels (since it presupposes personality). . . . An intelligent being has a free will, and indeed an infinite or divine being has it in a most excellent and perfect manner, a finite being, whether angelic or human, in a more imperfect manner (*TDP*, II, III, I, sec. I, thes. XXI, p 175).

- c) **Human beings may also have other kinds of relative freedom that are not part of our discussion here. Freedom from sin (*libertas a peccato*), freedom from pain or misery (*libertas a miseria*), or freedom from coercion in externals or adiaphora (*libertas a vi et coactione*) are freedoms that apply to believers or to their glorified state, but do not apply to natural man after the fall.**

Romans 6:18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

Romans 8:2 Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

1 Corinthians 7:37 But the man who has settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will, and who has made up his mind not to marry the virgin—this man also does the right thing.

- d) **The freedom of choice under discussion here has been called the freedom from internal necessity. This involves a freedom of choice among various objects, modes of procedure, etc., and a freedom to will and do – or not to will and do.**

Chemnitz: There is a great diversity among ecclesiastical writers, some asserting, some denying free will. Indeed the same writer often in different places seems to say contradictory things about free will, now affirming it, then denying it. This diversity cannot be more conveniently settled than by a grammatical explanation of the word. For if the term "free will" is taken in its most common sense, to say that man has a free will is nothing else than (to say): 1) that he is rational, or has a mind and a will; 2) that in addition to natural feelings and actions about which there is neither a deliberation of the mind nor a choice of the will man has voluntary feelings for the exercise of which the judgment of the mind and the desire of the will concur; 3) that in vices or virtues as actions are called either good or bad an intelligent mind is required and a will which either yields to or opposes this judgment (*Loci*, VI, III, II, ii., p 230).

Quenstedt: The essence of free will consists in the neutral state of the will, both that which has to do with specification (i.e., making a choice) as well as the other which has to do with the doing of the act. That is, it consists in such neutrality and freedom that the will is not necessarily determined toward one thing but in accordance with its liberty, when all the things necessary for acting are present, it is able to do this or that, to choose one thing and reject another (*libertas contrarietatis*) which is the freedom of specification (*libertas specificationis*); to do something or not do it, which is the freedom of acting (*libertas exercitii*) (*TDP*, II, III, II, qu I, p 183).

Quenstedt: Free will is therefore nothing else than the active ability of the will by which, when all the requirements for acting are present, it is in a neutral position both as far as a choice is concerned and as far as the doing of the act is concerned (*TDP*, II, III, I, thes. XXI, p 175).

B5, VI, 2. Original or inherited sin has limited the activities of the natural human will to external matters and to sinful matters.

- a) **The fall into sin did not destroy the faculty of will itself. Humans are still rational beings with an essential freedom of will. Through the fall, however, mankind's mental faculties are weakened along with his physical constitution.**

Quenstedt: The subject of free will in general is an intelligent being. In particular, as far as it pertains to man, the subject is either the entire subject (*subjectum quod*) or the subject in a certain respect (*subjectum quo*). The entire subject is a whole man; the subject in a certain respect is either indirect or direct. The indirect subject is the rational soul; the direct is essentially the will, antecedently and in a preparatory way the mind (*TDP*, II, III, I, thes. XIX (sic), p 175).

Richard Muller: Lutherans and Reformed agree that the faculty of the will, the *voluntas*, is itself free and that the bondage into which humanity has fallen is not a bondage of the faculty of will as such. No human being is compelled to sin; the will is thus free from external restraint (*coactio*) and from an imposed necessity. The human predicament is therefore defined neither as the loss of the faculty of will nor of the inward freedom, or *libertas*, of the will. What has been lost is the freedom of choice, specifically, the ability freely to choose the good and freely to avoid that which is evil. . . . The fall, therefore, can be conceived as removing the basic indifference of the will toward sin, with the result that all choices of the will become sinful and the free choice of the good is no longer a possibility (*Dictionary*, p 176-177).

b) Fallen mankind has freedom of choice to a degree in external matters, e.g., in matters of self-preservation, sociology, government, science, and art. This limited freedom to make choices regarding civic righteousness is not to be confused with, nor is it preparatory to, but is actually opposed to the righteousness of God.

Romans 1:19-21 What may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Romans 2:14-15 When Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Romans 10:3 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Quenstedt: Experience testifies and Scripture grants that there is concerning such objects some freedom of the will in the unregenerate, but on account of various impediments it is very weak and feeble, Ro 1:19,20; 2:14,15; 10:3; Php 3:6 (*TDP*, II, III, I, thes. XXIX, p 177).

Chemnitz: For on that account this restriction is always added: (man) has some freedom in outward things; to some extent he is able to achieve outward discipline; some choice must be granted (*Loci, de libero arbitrio*, cap. III, p 173).

Chemnitz: Because therefore in spiritual matters there is no freedom of the will which has not been freed: so that freedom is not taken away entirely from the will even in external matters, this doctrine is handed down concerning freedom of the will in outward discipline. This discipline is, however; carefulness in governing the outward actions and coercing the outward members according to the precepts of the decalog: even if inner feelings either are not present or do not consent.... It is most manifest ... that there is left in men, even the unregenerate, some ability of the mind to perceive and judge those things which are subject to reason and the senses (*Loci, de libero arbitrio*, cap. II, p 171).

Heerbrand: There is left in the mind the ability to distinguish between honorable and shameful things in civil actions. And the will is able to some extent to control the power of movement and provide outward discipline. Likewise, an unregenerate man is able by the powers of his free will to hear and meditate on the Word of God, but not to understand it properly (*Compendium, de libero arbitrio*, p 98).

Quenstedt: There are two hemispheres of objects with which the will of man in the state of corruption is occupied, the one lower, the other higher. The lower hemisphere embraces 1) sacred and divine things in so far as these are by nature to be known and done, likewise outward sacred things or pedagogical actions, which are natural; 2) natural things in the strict sense of the term; 3) civil (political) matters; 4) economic matters; 5) artistic and scientific matters. . . . In particular, the object of the mind are all things which can be known by nature, especially, that which is known about God (Ro 1:18ff; Ac 17:27). But the object of the will is a sense of shame concerning shameful deeds and a natural love of what is outwardly honorable and all things which can be performed and done by nature, and especially the things of the law, Ro 2:14,15, (which concern outward discipline or an outward desire for virtue). . . . Also a man who is not yet regenerated has to some extent within his power outward sacred actions, which outwardly contribute to spiritual actions and therefore are called pedagogical or leading to conversion but are neither a part of the conversion itself of the man nor a cause of it. Of that kind are going to church, hearing the Word of God, discussing it, and reading the books of Scripture (*TDP*, II, III, I, Thes XXVIII, Thes. V, Thes. VI).

Augsburg Confession XVIII, 1-2: Of free will they teach that man's will has some liberty to choose civil righteousness, and to work things subject to reason (Trig., p50).

Formula of Concord, T.D., II, , 53: This Word man can externally hear and read, even though he is not yet converted to God and regenerate; for in these external things, as said above, man even since the Fall has to a certain extent a free will, so that he can go to church and hear or not hear the sermon (Trig., p 900).

c) Fallen mankind has full or perfect freedom of choice in sinful matters. That is, he delights in sin and, subject only to creaturely limitations, may choose which sins he will commit. This "freedom" is identical with slavery to sin.

John 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 6:20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

Chemnitz: He sins willingly and with pleasure, and he is not unwillingly such a person (i.e., a sinner) (*Loci, de libero arbitrio*, cap. II, p 173).

Heerbrand: The will is free only with respect to sin and evil (*Compendium, de libero arbitrio*, p 100).

Quenstedt: In the state of corruption there is in the will of man not only freedom of contradiction or exercise, but also freedom of contrariety or specification, not indeed that which is concerned with a choice between spiritual good and evil, for this was lost through the fall, but that which is concerned with a choice between this and that spiritual evil in particular (*TDP*, II, III, I, thes. XXVI, p 176).

Gerhard: Therefore freedom of the will exists in man together with slavery to sin, for he both sins and is unable not to sin, and nevertheless he sins freely and delights in sinning (*Locī*, tom V, cap II, art. XXIX, p 99).

B5, VI, 3.

a) In inner spiritual matters, however, natural man after the fall has no free will whatsoever. Original sin has given to the human will a definite direction opposed to God's will.

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

Ezekiel 11:19 I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Romans 3:11 There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.

b) Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Original sin has destroyed fallen mankind's ability to do good in God's eyes. Therefore human achievements always fall short of the mark because they lack both the proper motivation and the required quality.

Romans 7:18,23 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Matthew 7:18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

Romans 3:10,12 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Romans 10:3 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Gerhard: If the question is asked concerning the freedom to do what is right or concerning the ability to take an equal stand toward one or the other, namely, choosing or repudiating good or evil, we say that it has perished.... For after the fall the image of God was lost; at the same time also that ability to choose good was lost.... Therefore in place of that freedom has come that unbridled drive toward evil, in such a way that after the fall in corrupt and as yet unregenerated men ... there is only a free will toward evils because corrupt men and those who have not yet been regenerated can do nothing but sin (*Locī*, tom V, loc XII, cap I, art IV, p 87).

c) In particular, natural human beings have no free will or free choice to seek or to cooperate with God's grace in conversion.

1) This truth is clearly and repeated revealed in Scripture.

Isaiah 65:1 I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, "Here am I, here am I."

Luke 6:43,44 No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars.

John 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

John 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Romans 3:11 There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.

Romans 10:20 And Isaiah boldly says, "I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me."

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.

Colossians 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

Chemnitz: In this place we understand "spiritual matters" to mean to begin, to achieve, to retain, and to preserve in the mind, the will, the heart, and the rest of our powers those things which the law and the gospel set before us (*Loci, de libero arbitrio*, cap. II, art. XXIX, p 99).

Quenstedt: In these purely spiritual actions just mentioned we assert that there are no powers either in the mind or in the will of unregenerate man. (*TDP*, II, III, I, loc IV, Thes. XXX, XXXI, p 255).

Chemnitz: The human will is not able without the Holy Spirit by its own powers either to begin inner and spiritual movements nor to produce and effect inner obedience of the heart, nor to persevere in, complete, or consummate a course that has been started (*Loci, de libero arbitrio*, cap. V, p 175).

2) The entire work of conversion is ascribed to the Spirit.

Jeremiah 32:39 I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me for their own good and the good of their children after them.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Ephesians 1:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

Ephesians 2:5 [God] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Calov: A man contributes nothing to his conversion, nor is he able to contribute anything ... but he is purely passive (*Apodixis art. fidei, de salut. consequendae modo*, art. V, p 259).

Luther: Free will after the fall into sin is a mere term and when it does what is in itself, it sins mortally (*De servo arbitrio*, B, XIX, p 105).

Meisner: Natural man does not wish nor is he able to wish to convert himself to God (*Anthropologia sacra*, dec. III, disp. XXII, thes. I, p 57).

Formula of Concord, T.D., II, 7,9: In spiritual and divine things the intellect, heart, and will of the unregenerate man are utterly unable, by their own natural powers, to understand, believe, accept, think, will, begin, effect, do, work, or concur in working anything, but they are entirely dead to what is good, and corrupt, so that in man's nature since the Fall, before regeneration, there is not the least spark of spiritual power remaining, nor present, by which, of himself, he can prepare himself for God's grace, or accept the offered grace, nor be capable of it for and of himself, or apply or accommodate himself thereto, or by his own powers be able of himself, as of himself, to aid, do, work, or concur in working anything towards his conversion, either wholly, or half, or in any, even the least or most inconsiderable part; but that he is the servant and slave of sin, John 8, 34, and a captive of the devil, by whom he is moved, Eph. 2, 2; 2 Tim. 2, 26. Hence the natural free will according to its perverted disposition and nature is strong and active only with respect to what is displeasing and contrary to God.⁹¹ For, first, although man's reason or natural intellect indeed has still a dim spark of the knowledge that there is a God, as also of the doctrine of the Law, Rom. 1, 19ff, yet it is so ignorant, blind, and perverted that when even the most ingenious and learned men upon earth read or hear the Gospel of the Son of God and the promise of eternal salvation, they cannot from their own powers perceive, apprehend, understand, or believe and regard it as true, but the more diligence and earnestness they employ, wishing to comprehend these spiritual things with their reason, the less they understand or believe, and before they become enlightened and are taught by the Holy Spirit, they regard all this only as foolishness or fictions (Trig., p 882).

Formula of Concord, T.D., II, 24: But before man is enlightened, converted, regenerated, renewed, and drawn by the Holy Spirit, he can of himself and of his own natural powers begin, work, or concur in working in spiritual things and in his own conversion or regeneration just as little as a stone or a block or clay. For although he can control the outward members and hear the Gospel, and to a certain extent meditate upon it, also discourse concerning it, as is to be seen in the Pharisees and hypocrites, nevertheless he regards it as foolishness, and cannot believe it. And in this respect he acts even worse than a block, inasmuch as he is rebellious and hostile to God's will, unless the Holy Spirit is efficacious in him, and kindles and works in him faith and other virtues pleasing to God, and obedience (Trig., p 890).

3) The total inability of natural man's free will in spiritual matters, conversion in particular, is denied by advocates of Pelagianism, Semipelagianism, and Synergism.

Pelagius: We distinguish three things and arrange them in a certain order. We put in the first place "possibility," in the second "willing," in the third "being." The possibility [of doing good] we assign to nature, the willing to our will, and the being to actual realization. The first of these, possibility, is properly assigned to God, who conferred it on his creatures. But the other two, willing and being, are to be referred to the human agent, since they have their source in the divine will... When we say that it is possible for someone to be without sin, we are even then praising God by acknowledging the gift of the possibility which we have received (*Pro libero arbitrio*, quoted by Augustine, *De gratia Christi*, IV, 5.)

Augustine, summarizing the position of the Pelagians: The beginning of faith comes from us, the increase and completion of faith comes from God (*De praedest. sanct.*, cap. II, tom. VII, col 1233).

Durandus (Dominican, d. 1332): The corrupt nature does not lack healing grace, but only assisting grace (Cited in Hoenecke, II, p 478).

Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Can. 4,5: If anyone says that the free will of man, moved and aroused by God, does not cooperate by assenting to God who arouses and calls, by which man disposes and prepares himself for obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is not able to dissent if it wishes but like some inanimate thing does nothing at all and is purely passive, let him be damned. . . . If anyone says that the free will of man after the fall of Adam has been lost and extinguished, or that it is a thing that is a mere name, yes, a name without a thing, and finally a figment introduced into the church by Satan, let him be damned.

Chemnitz, summarizing the position of the Council of Trent: For they (i.e., the Catholics) think that in the mind and will of an unregenerate man from his first birth in this corruption there are naturally still some inborn powers or certain abilities for divine or spiritual actions: but the ability of these powers and the movement and use of these powers is suppressed and retarded in the unregenerate through sin. But the grace of God and the efficacy of the Spirit does not simply effect and work in those who are reborn some new power, force, ability or power to begin and achieve spiritual movements and actions which they did not have before conversion or renewal from their natural powers, but grace only breaks their chains and frees them from their bonds so that the natural ability which was bound, suppressed and hindered before is now able, having been aroused by grace, to exercise its powers in spiritual matters (*Examen, de lib. arb.*, cap. II, can. IV, V, p 113).

Note: Ambiguities in the above canons will be apparent. Many variations of thought and manner of expression concerning the question of free will and the extent of free will in fallen mankind have prevailed in church history.

Melanchthon's Variata to the AC XVIII, to the Apology II, and to his Loci: In the altered Augustana he says: We are *helped* by the Holy Spirit in achieving spiritual righteousness in ourselves; and the Holy Spirit *helps* our hearts in achieving inner movements.

In the altered Apology he says: We affirm, nevertheless, that free will and reason can do nothing *alone* in spiritual matters. Additions to #3: Spiritual righteousness is effected in us when we are *helped* by the Holy Spirit. Additions to #9 . . . unless the Holy Spirit governs and *helps* our hearts. . .

In Examination of those to be Ordained he says: In conversion these causes concur: 1) the Word of God; 2) the Holy Spirit, whom the Father and the Son send that he may kindle our hearts; 3) and *our will* assenting and not resisting the Word of God.

In The Loci: Free will is the *ability to apply oneself to grace (facultas applicandi se ad gratiam)*, that is, it hears the promise and tries to assent. Since the promise is universal and there are no contradictory wills in God, it is necessary that there be in us some reason for the difference, why Saul is rejected and David is accepted, i.e., it is necessary that there be some dissimilar action in these two.

Iowa Synod theologians: But such preceding feelings and movements in the life of the soul are to a large extent hidden from us human beings, while they are well known to the omniscient God (See Pieper I, p 74).

Richard Lenski: A purpose of grace is thus combined with one of judgment. Which is to prevail in the end is decided by the heart of those upon whom the truth is thus brought to act with its power (*Commentary on John*, p 714).

Formula of Concord, T.D., II, 75-78: [We expose, censure, and reject] secondly, the error of the gross Pelagians, that the free will, from its own natural powers, without the Holy Spirit, can turn to God, believe the Gospel; and be obedient to God's Law from the heart, and by this its voluntary obedience can merit the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. 3. Thirdly, the error of the Papists and scholastics, who have proceeded in a somewhat more subtle manner, and have taught that man from his own natural powers can make a beginning of doing good and of his own conversion, and that then the Holy Spirit, because man is too weak to bring it to completion, comes to the aid of the good begun from a person's own natural powers. 4. Fourthly, the doctrine of the Synergists, who pretend that man is not absolutely dead to good in spiritual things, but is badly wounded and half dead. Therefore, although the free will is too weak to make a beginning, and to convert itself to God by its own powers, and to be obedient to God's Law from the heart, nevertheless, when the Holy Spirit makes a beginning, and calls us through the Gospel, and offers His grace, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal salvation, that then the free will, from its own natural powers, can meet God, and to a certain extent, although feebly, do something towards it, help and cooperate thereto, can qualify itself for, and apply itself to, grace, and apprehend accept it, and believe the Gospel, and can also cooperate, by its own powers, with the Holy Spirit, in the continuation and maintenance of this work. 78] Over against this, however, it has been shown at length above that such power, namely, *facultas applicandi se ad gratiam*, that is, to qualify one's self by nature for grace, does not proceed from our own natural powers, but alone from the operation of the Holy Spirit (Trig., p 908).

B5, VII. Punishment is described in Scripture as compensation for sin and guilt, that is, as suffering imposed on the guilty as an equivalent penalty for sin.

B5, VII, 1. Scripture describes punishment as an alternative for the repayment of a debt incurred.

- a) **In general terms the Bible refers to punishment as a penalty or payment imposed to bring about restoration and redemption if the payment is a full equivalent of the debt.**

Exodus 21:23-25 You are to take life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound

for wound, bruise for bruise.

Matthew 5:26 I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Matthew 18:25,30,34 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. ...³⁰ But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³⁴ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

Jeremiah 2:19 "Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you. Consider then and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the LORD your God and have no awe of me," declares the Lord, the LORD Almighty.

Quenstedt: For the law forces us either toward obedience or punishment (*TDP*, II, II, I, thes. XI, nota, p 51).

- b) Specifically, the Bible speaks of Christ's atoning work as a bearing of our deserved punishment that results in redemption, justification, and peace. Punishment satisfies God's uncompromising justice and confirms his majesty.**

Deuteronomy 27:26 Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.

Romans 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Isaiah 53:4-6,10-12 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Romans 5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Romans 3:25-26 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Baier: Punishment properly so called is the suffering of a loss or of an evil, which is contrary to the inclination of the subject, contracted because of guilt and to be undergone for the sake of vindicating guilt and compensating for the injury done to another (and in this case indeed to God) (*Compendium*, pars II, cap I, art 15, d., p 294).

Hollaz: Divine punishment is a disagreeable evil by which God, the offended judge, takes vengeance for preceding and not yet remitted guilt, a) in order to demonstrate his righteousness, b) and to assert his majesty and the authority of the law and preserve it from contempt (*Examen*, pars II, cap. II, qu 19, p 546).

B5, VII, 2. Scripture does not present punishment as a remedial or corrective action designed to better the guilty.

- a) The view that punishment is to serve the restoration or improvement of the punished has been advocated by philosophers and theologians. When linked to the punishment of hell, this view inevitably leads to a universal restoration theory (ἀποκατάστασις).**

Aristotle: But there is a difference between revenge and punishment; the latter is inflicted in the interest of the sufferer, the former in the interest of him who inflicts it, that he may obtain satisfaction (*Rhetoric*, 1369b, 13).

F. V.Reinhard: All of God's punishments, i.e., all evils which in this life follow upon vice, are according to the teaching of Scripture entirely of a beneficial nature and have the purpose of improving the sinner. It is undeniable that the chief purpose of punishment must be the improvement of the one punished (*Dogmatik*, p 130, 3).

William Barclay (d. 1978): I am a convinced universalist. I believe that in the end all men will be gathered into the love of God. In the early days Origen was the great name connected with universalism. I would believe with Origen that universalism is no easy thing. Origen believed that after death there were many who would need prolonged instruction, the sternest discipline, even the severest punishment before they were fit for the presence of God. Origen did not eliminate hell; he believed that some people would have to go to heaven via hell. He believed that even at the end of the day there would be some on whom the scars remained. He did not believe in eternal punishment, but he did see the possibility of eternal penalty. And so the choice is whether we accept God's offer and invitation willingly, or take the long and terrible way round through ages of purification (*A Spiritual Autobiography*, p 65-66).

- b) The Bible, however, consistently emphasizes that real improvement of the sinner through conversion and sanctification is produced by the gospel, not by the law (punishment).**

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Galatians 5:22,23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and

self-control.

Titus 2:11,12 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.

Titus 3:8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

Galatians 3:21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

c) Disciplinary benefits, moreover, come from divine, fatherly chastisement administered to believers, not punishment inflicted on the impenitent wicked.

1 Corinthians 11:32 When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

Hebrews 12:5,6,10,11 And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶ because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” ¹⁰ Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VI, 24: For the old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass, is still a part of them, which must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching, admonition, force and threatening of the Law, but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles, until the body of sin is entirely put off, and man is perfectly renewed in the resurrection, when he will need neither the preaching of the law nor its threatenings and punishments, as also the gospel any longer; these belong to this mortal and imperfect life (Trig., p 968).

Note: Scripture does not sharply distinguish the terms for punishment and chastisement, and the difference between punishment and chastisement, though real, is not always easy to distinguish as God works in our lives. The believer is both old Adam and new man. To the old Adam God’s activity is punishment and to the new man it is chastisement.

B5, VII, 3. Scripture acknowledges that punishment may serve as a deterrent to sinners and a warning against further sinning. But this is not the primary purpose of punishment.

a) Scripture clearly affirms that punishment may serve as a deterrent.

Deuteronomy 8:11, 19-20 Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. ¹⁹ If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. ²⁰ Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 13:10-11 Stone him to death, because he tried to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ¹¹ Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and no one among you will do such an evil thing again.

Ecclesiastes 8:11: When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong.

Jeremiah 7:12-14 “Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. ¹³ While you were doing all these things,” declares the LORD, “I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer. ¹⁴ Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your fathers.”

Romans 13:3-5 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

1 Corinthians 10:6-10 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.” ⁸ We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. ⁹ We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. ¹⁰ And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

b) Yet the primary emphasis on punishment is to satisfy justice, to be a compensation for sin and guilt.

Exodus 21:23-25 You are to take life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

Matthew 5:26 I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Matthew 25:41,46 Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” ⁴⁶ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

Note: To make deterrence the chief purpose and justification of punishment would often change justice into cruelty, as the punished become mere examples for others. Also, how could hell, for example, serve as a deterrent?

B5, VII, 4. Punishments may be classified according to certain categories.

a) Punishments may be classified according to the way they are carried out, that is, they may be the natural result of the sin or God may more directly intervene.

Romans 1:24, 26-27 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁶Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Galatians 6:7,8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Acts 5:1-11 Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. ²With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. ³Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." ⁵When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. ⁶Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. ⁷About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." ⁹Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." ¹⁰At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

Acts 12:21-23 On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. ²²They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." ²³Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

- b) **Punishments may be classified according to their duration, that is, whether they are temporal (in health, wealth, honor, peace, family, etc.) or eternal.**
- c) **A distinction may also be made between punishments of loss or forfeiture (*poena damni aut mali*) and punishments of feeling (*poena sensus*, e.g., torment, shame). These aspects of punishment, however, must not be separated.**
 - 1) **The Roman Catholic teachings of the *limbus infantum* or *limbus infantorum* and the *limbus patrum* assume a punishment of loss of the beatific vision but not of punishment of feeling the torment of hell.**
 - 2) **Rationalists have also assumed a *poena sensus* but not *damni* in eternity, saying that sinners, although bettered by hell punishment, will yet continue to feel a setback on account of their belated repentance. Such ideas really advocate an eternal punishment which is not punishment and eternal salvation which is not salvation.**

Ezekiel 18:22 None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous things he has done, he will live.

Ezekiel 33:16 None of the sins he has committed will be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he will surely live.

Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

Jeremiah 31:34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

B5, VIII. The human conscience is a consciousness of a person's relation to God. Through the conscience a sinner realizes his guilt and feels his punishment as fully merited.

B5, VIII, 1. Conscience is more than the intellectual faculty of judging the correctness or ethical value of an act or condition. It is essentially a religious ability that evaluates acts or conditions in their relation to God.

Romans 2:14-15 When Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Job 27:6 I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.

Romans 13:5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

1 Peter 2:19 It is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God (διὰ συνείδησιν θεοῦ).

1 John 3:21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God.

B5, VIII, 2. The conscience not only evaluates acts or conditions in their relation to God but also testifies to a person regarding his relation to God.

- a) **An evil or guilty conscience testifies to a sinner of his guilt and his inability to make atonement.**

Psalms 32:3-4 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Isaiah 57:20-21 But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. ²¹ "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience (ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς) and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Acts 24:16 I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. (ἀσκῶ ἀπρόσκοπον συνείδησιν ἔχειν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους.)

- 1 Timothy 4:2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.
- b) A good or clean conscience comes through faith in Christ Jesus and testifies that the sinner has been given peace with God.**

1 Timothy 1:19 [You may fight the good fight] holding on to faith and a good conscience (ἔχων πίστιν καὶ ἀγαθὴν συνείδησιν). Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith.

1 Timothy 3:9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience (ἐν καθαρᾷ συνείδησει).

Hebrews 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences (καθαριεῖ τὴν συνείδησιν ἡμῶν) from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

2 Corinthians 1:12 Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom but according to God's grace.

Hebrews 10:2 If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins (ἔχειν ἔτι συνείδησιν ἁμαρτιῶν).

Hebrews 13:18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience (ὄτι καλὴν συνείδησιν ἔχομεν) and desire to live honorably in every way.

1 Peter 3:21 This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God (συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν). It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

B5, VIII, 3. Aside from good/clean and evil/guilty consciences, other classifications of conscience may be used.

- a) With reference to single acts, we may speak of an antecedent or a consequent conscience. The former reflects knowledge or feeling prior to an act and the latter evaluates past activity.**

Matthew 14:9 The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted

Romans 13:5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

Acts 23:1 Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day."

Romans 2:15 They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Romans 9:1 I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 3:16 Do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

- b) With reference to conformity to God's standard, we may speak of four different kinds of consciences.**

1) There is a correct, accurate conscience.

Romans 1:21,25 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Romans 2:18,21 If you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law . . . ²¹ you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal?

2) There is an erring, inaccurate conscience that errs due to ignorance or weakness.

Acts 3:17 Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders.

1 Corinthians 8:7 But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled.

1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

Titus 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted (καὶ ὁ νοῦς καὶ ἡ συνείδησις μεμιάνται).

3) There is a probable conscience that considers one thing as more advisable than another for conscience's sake. It would be sin to neglect the preferred path or to treat options lightly. Prayerful study is the proper conduct.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

4) There is a doubting, uncertain conscience that wavers in the lack of sureness of how to proceed.

Romans 14:23 But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith [πίστις, assurance, conviction] is sin.

1 Corinthians 8:12 When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

Apology, XII (V), 89: Consciences, however, do nothing from faith when they perpetually doubt whether they have remission. [For it is not possible that there should be rest, or a quiet and peaceful conscience, if they doubt whether God be gracious. For if they doubt whether they have a gracious God, whether they are doing right, whether they have forgiveness of sins, etc.] How can they in this doubt call upon God, how can they be confident that they are heard? Thus the entire life is without God and faith and without the true worship of God. This is what Paul says, Rom. 14, 23: Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. And because they are constantly occupied with this doubt, they never experience what faith is. Thus it comes to pass that they rush at last into despair, die in doubt, without God, without all knowledge of God. Such is the doctrine of the adversaries, the doctrine of the Law, the annulling of the Gospel, the doctrine of despair (Trig., p 277-278).

Quenstedt: Sin against conscience is fourfold. 1) For it is committed either against a correct conscience, when a man in what he does or fails to do does not follow but despises the dictate of conscience, even though he agrees with the divine law. 2) Or it is committed against an erring conscience when a man in what he does or fails to do turns aside from the dictate of his conscience imbued with error. 3) Or it is committed against a probable conscience when some one offends against the dictate of the mind which urges that for probable causes something should be done or not done here and now. 4) Or it is committed against a doubtful conscience when some one does or fails to do that about which he is in doubt whether it should be done or not done (*TDP*, II, subject in H. II, 431).

Luther: There is nothing more tender in heaven or on earth and nothing that can less easily suffer abuse than conscience. It is said that an eye is very delicate; but conscience is much more tender and sensitive. For that reason we see again and again how the apostles dealt very carefully with consciences (*St. L.*, XI, 1677).

C. CHRISTOLOGY

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR OF SALVATION.

Our redemption was achieved completely by Christ the God-Man in His two states of exinanition and exaltation, which suggests the division of this part of dogmatics into three main heads.

1. The person of the Redeemer: He is the God-man.
2. The two states of his existence: Humiliation and Exaltation
3. The mediatorial work of Christ and his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

C1. The Person of the Redeemer.

The material will be presented under three heads.

- A. The two natures of Christ.
- B. The union of the two natures.
- C. The communication of idioms (idioms = attributes and activities specific to each nature).

C1 A. The Two Natures.

C1 A, I. Christ is true God.

Note. For a presentation of the wealth of Scripture testimony on this point see the section on the Holy Trinity, I, 6 (pages 175-181). See also the Monarchian and Arian controversies (page 198-199).

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

C1 A, II. Christ is true man.

C1 A, II, 1. This truth is stated in general terms.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 2:14,17 Since the children have flesh and blood (αἵματος καὶ σαρκός), he too shared in their humanity (μετέσχεν τῶν αὐτῶν) so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Notice the comparisons between Adam and Jesus, the second Adam:

Romans 5:15-19 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶ Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

C1 A, II, 2. This humanity includes a human soul, with human volition.

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

John 12:27 Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour?" No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Matthew 26:38,39 Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

C1 A, II, 3. This humanity is rejected by various heresies.

a) Docetic Gnostics, who taught that the divine would not unite with flesh, so Christ only seemed to be man (his body a phantom, his suffering a shadow play).

Ignatius of Antioch (d. 107): Do not pay attention if anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the family of David, the child of Mary, who was truly born, who ate and drank, who was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and truly died, in full view of heaven, earth, and hell, and who was truly raised from the dead.... But, if as some godless people, that is, unbelievers say, he suffered in mere

appearance (*to dokein pepothēnai*)—being themselves mere appearances—why am I in bonds [as a martyr] (Letter to the Trallians, 9-10).

Ireneus (d. ca. 200): Saturninus...declared that the Savior was unborn, incorporeal, and without form, asserting that he was seen as a human being in appearance only (*Adversus haereses* I.xxiv.12-2).

Tertullian (d. 220): He suffered nothing who did not truly suffer; and a phantom could not truly suffer.... Now if his death is denied because of the denial of this flesh, there will be no certainty of this resurrection. Similarly is Christ's resurrection is nullified ours is also destroyed (*Against Marcion*, ANF III, 328).

- b) **Apollinarius who taught that the Λόγος takes the place of the human spirit so that there is no complete human nature. The Word became flesh, but he did not become fully human. Christ had human *psuche* but not *pneuma*. Opposed by Cyril of Alexandria.**

Apollinarius (a.k.a. Apollinaris) (d. 390): The Word himself has become flesh, without having assumed a human mind—that is, a changeable mind, which is enslaved to filthy thoughts—but which exists as an immutable and heavenly divine mind (Letter 2).

Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394) in opposition: Mind, which is man's proper nature, distinguishes him from irrational beasts.... Man is necessarily rational and is not a man should he lack this capacity (*Against Apollinaris*, p 14).

- c) **The Monothelites who taught that Jesus lacked a truly human will, since the only will was that of the Λόγος. Sergius of Constantinople, Cyrus of Alexandria and Pope Honorius vs Sophronius of Palestine, Popes Martin and Agatho and the Council of 680.**

Sergius (d. 638): For the saving doctrine of the holy Fathers clearly teaches that the intellectually animated flesh of the Lord never performs its natural movement apart from, and by its own impetus contrariwise to, the direction of the Word of God hypostatically united to it, but only at the time and in the manner and to the extent that the Word of God wishes, just as our body is moved by our rational soul (Letter to Honorius).

Council of Constantinople (680): We likewise preach two natural wills in Christ, and two natural operations undivided, inconvertible, inseparable, unmixed, according to the doctrine of the holy fathers, and the two natural wills are not contrary (as the impious heretics assert) far from it! But his human will follows the divine will and is not resisting or reluctant but rather subject to his divine and omnipotent will.

- d) **The orthodox fathers opposed the denial of the full humanity.**

Gregory Nazianzen: τὸ ἀπρόσληπτον ἀθεράπευτον.

Cyril of Jerusalem: Εἰ φαντασία ἦν ἡ ἐνανθρώπησις, φαντασία καὶ ἡ σωτηρία.

C1 A, II, 4. Christ is one person.

- a) **The human nature was non-personal.**

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Augustine: The Word did not take on a human person, but a human nature (*De Fide ad Petrum*, ch. 17, MPL 40, 772).

- b) **The human nature was received into the personality of the Logos. ἅμα σαρξ, ἅμα Λόγου σάρξ. We acknowledge the divine mystery.**

Gerhard: In Christ there is ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο, since his divine essence, or nature, is something else than his human essence, or nature; however, he is not ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος, since there are not two persons, a divine person and a human person, but the θεάνθρωπος is one God and Man and therefore one Person (*Exeg.* 1.4 par. 34).

Athanasian Creed: 28-34: For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; Perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood; Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ: One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God; One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 6: We believe, teach, and confess that the Son of God, although from eternity He has been a particular, distinct, entire divine person, and thus, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, true, essential, perfect God, nevertheless, in the fullness of time assumed also human nature into the unity of his person, not in such a way that there now are two persons or two Christs, but that Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary, as it is written Rom. 9, 5: Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.

Ibid., 11: We believe, teach, and confess also that now, since the incarnation, each nature in Christ does not so subsist of itself that each is or constitutes a separate person, but that they are so united that they constitute one single person, in which the divine and the assumed human nature are and subsist at the

same time, so that now, since the incarnation, there belongs to the entire person of Christ personally, not only his divine, but also his assumed human nature; and that, as without his divinity, so also without his humanity, the person of Christ or *Filii Dei incarnati* (of the incarnate Son of God), that is, of the Son of God who has assumed flesh and become man, is not entire. Hence Christ is not two distinct persons, but one single person, notwithstanding that two distinct natures are found in him, unconfused in their natural essence and properties.

C1 A, III. Christ's dual nature points to a twofold generation.

C1 A, III, 1. He was begotten of the Father from eternity.

John 1:14,18 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only (μονογενοῦς) who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only (μονογενῆς θεός) who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son (τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ), that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

C1 A, III, 2. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin (הַעַלְמָה) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Matthew 1:20,23 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." ²³ The virgin (ἡ παρθένοσ) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel—which means, "God with us."

John Schaller: While it is idle to speculate upon the nature of the generative act of the Holy Ghost, it may safely be described from its effects as a segregation of one living germ cell in the Virgin; its purification from all taint of inherited sin; the propagation and transplantation of a soul from the substance of the mother's soul; and the successive development of the child's body. Yet Mary was the true mother of Jesus, even as he is true man (*Christology*, p 54).

C1 A, III, 3. He was born of the Virgin Mary.

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 1:3 Regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David.

Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

C1 A, III, 4. When we say Christ is *de Maria* that is the *de* of material (*materiale*). When we say Christ is *de Spiritu Sancto* that is the *de* of power (*potentiale*).

C1 A, III, 5. The incarnation and virgin birth are rejected by liberal theologians.

Tillich: The assertion that God has become man is not a paradoxical but nonsensical statement (*ST*, II, p 94).

Braaten: The primary interest of dogmatics is to interpret the virgin birth as a symbol and not as a freakish intervention in the course of nature. Scientific inquiries into the frequency of parthenogenesis in the world of nature are beside the point. They contribute nothing to deeper insight into the revelatory reality to which the story of Jesus' birth points. It is possible to hold to the virgin birth as a biological fact and miss its point. It is also possible to make the same point without reference to the virgin birth, as the writings of Paul and John prove by not mentioning it. It is important, then, not to let the story get bogged down in biology, but to read it as a symbol witnessing to the truth of the kerygma (*Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 546).

C1 A, IV. Christ was without sin in his human nature (ἀναμαρτησία).

C1 A, IV, 1. Scripture teaches this truth.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

John 8:46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

1 Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

C1 A, IV, 2. His temptations caused him a painful struggle, but he remained untainted by sin. In fact, as true God, he cannot sin, yet his temptations were very real.

Matthew 4:1-11 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Hebrews 2:18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

James 1:13: When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

Francis Pieper: Was it possible for Christ according to His human nature to commit a sin? We emphatically deny this possibility. Not because of the sinlessness of the human nature of Christ in itself, for Adam, too, was created sinless and nevertheless succumbed to temptation, but because Christ's human nature never existed as a separate person, but from the beginning constitutes one Person with the Son of God. To assume that the man Christ could sin is assuming that the Son of God could sin, with whom the man Christ constitutes one Person. They that assume the peccability of the man Christ thereby relinquish, whether they know it or not, the incarnation of the Son of God, the *unio personalis* of God and man, and substitute for it an *unio mystica*. Some object that impeccability would exclude temptability, would make of Christ's temptation a sham battle. However, Matt. 4:1 ff. does describe a real battle (*CD*, II, p 76).

Alfred Edersheim (d. 1889) (more speculatively): The position of the first Adam was that of being capable of sinning, not that of being incapable of sinning. The Second Adam also has a nature capable of not sinning, but not incapable of sinning. This explains the possibility of "temptation" or assault upon him. ... The Second Adam, morally unfallen, though voluntarily subject to all the conditions of our nature, was, with a peccable human nature, absolutely impeccable, as being also the Son of God—a peccable nature, yet an impeccable person (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Bk. III, Ch. I, p 137).

C1 A, IV, 3. Although Christ's human nature was not in itself subject to death since Christ had no sin, yet because he willingly assumed our sin, he also took our death.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man (lit. in the likeness of sinful flesh) to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Philippians 2:8: And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Pieper: The immediate result of the sinlessness of Christ's human nature was its immortality. According to Scripture, death is the direct result of sin (Gen. 2:17; 3:17–19; Rom. 5:12; 6:23). Christ died because He willed to die. John 10:18: "No man takes it [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself," namely, as the Redeemer of men, in payment of their sins. 1 Cor. 15:3: "Christ died for our sins." The death of Him who in Himself is immortal is the ransom (λύτρον Matt. 20:28; ἀντίλυτρον, 1 Tim. 2:6) which purchased life for all who are doomed to die (II, p 77).

Adolf Hoenecke: Jesus does not die but gives his life into death. And it is part of his divine power that he subjected his deified, human nature to death (*ELD* III, p 72). [???

C1 B. The Union of the Two Natures.

C1 B, I. The union of the two natures in Christ is most intimate and indissoluble.

C1 B, I, 1. The subject of the act of union is the Logos ἄσαρκος. The act is not reciprocal. The divine nature is the assuming nature, the human nature is the assumed nature. *Divina natura est assumens, humana assumpta.* (Other names for union—assumption of the flesh—incarnation—conception.)

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared (μετέσχευ) in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

C1 B, I, 2. The subject of the resulting union is the Logos ἔσσαρκος.

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body (ἐν σαρκί), was vindicated by the Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι), was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

C1 B, I, 3. The act of uniting is not reciprocal, the divine nature alone was active. The resulting union is reciprocal.

C1 B, I, 4. The union is real, not merely verbal like an honorary title (*nominalis*), nor logical (as substance and accident)—nor relative like two closely knit but separate people—nor συνάφεια (simply placed side by side).

C1 B, I, 5. The union is personal, resulting in a person, not like the union of persons such as the mystic union or the union of persons in marriage.

C1 B, I, 6. The union is not a natural union (as body and soul) but one of two natures; not essential (as resulting in a new essence); not accidental (as whiteness and sweetness in milk); nor one of mere jointure (συνάφεια).

Augsburg Confession, III, 1-2: Also they teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, did assume *the human nature* in ²¹ the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably enjoined in one Person, one Christ, true God and true man.

Formula of Concord, E, VIII, 15: Hence we believe, teach, and confess that the Son of Man is *realiter*, that is, in deed and truth, exalted according to his human nature to the right hand of the almighty majesty and power of God, because he was assumed into God when He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb, and his human nature was personally united with the Son of the Highest.

Hollaz: It is a union of natures, but not a natural union. It is a personal union, but not a union of persons. We call it "personal" not by reason of the starting point (*terminus a quo*), as if the union had been made from two persons, but by reason of the result (*terminus ad quem*), a union resulting in one person (*Examen*, Part III, p 106).

C1 B, I, 7. The union is denied by various heresies.

a) Nestorius divided the person and opposed the word θεοτόκος.

Nestorius: I cannot worship a God who was born, put to death, and buried (Mansi, IV, 1028, 1197).

Nestorius: If anyone says that he who is Emmanuel is God the Word and not rather that he is God with us, that is, that he inhabited the nature which is of our kind by his being united with our substance (*massa*), which he received from the Virgin Mary; if the Holy Virgin is declared to be the mother also of God the Word, and not rather of him who is Emmanuel, and that this Word of God himself was converted into flesh [this is Nestorius' own deduction] which he received to show forth his deity, to live in it as in his house as a man, let him be anathema" (*Anathematism I*).

Zwingli: In the statement Luke 24:26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" the term 'Christ' designates solely the human nature; the human nature alone could suffer and die, not, however, the divine nature. In the passages Matthew 26: "The Son of Man is betrayed," or delivered "to be crucified," and Matthew 20: "The Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and scribes," the Son of Man stands for the human nature, for that could be delivered and killed, but by no means the divine nature" (*Zwingli's Answer to Luther*, reprinted in St. L. XX:1195).

Francis Pieper: True, Nestorius had no intention of denying the one Person in Christ. He bitterly resented the charge of Cyril that he conceived of Christ as a mere man. But he did, in fact, dissolve the *unio personalis*. When he claimed that Mary did not give birth to the Son of God and that the Jews did not crucify the Son of God, but rather that the Son of Man was only the instrument of God in His birth and crucifixion, he revealed dearly that in his mind the Man Christ was neither in his birth nor in his crucifixion received into the Person of the Son of God, but remained distinct and separate from this divine person. He taught a connection (συνάφεια) between God and man in Christ, which left the Ego of the Man Christ separate and distinct from the Ego of the Son of God. By this συνάφεια the Son of God works through the Man Christ merely as through His instrument and dwells in the Man Christ merely as in His temple (CD, II, p 93).

Luther: Christ is God and a human being in one person. Whatever is said about him as a human being must also be said about him as God, namely, "Christ has died," and, as Christ is God, it follows that "God has died" not God in isolation (*der abgesonderte Gott*) but God united with humanity (*On the Councils and the Church*, Weimar Vol. 50, 590. 3-4). This work also appears in *LW*, Vol. 41. On pages 95-100 Luther admits that the popes and other enemies of Nestorius and Eutyches had distorted their views, but that they justly were condemned for denying the communication of idioms. Luther is nearly as critical of the councils as he is of Nestorius and Eutyches.

b) Eutyches merged the two natures (Monophysites; Monotheletes).

Eutyches: I confess that our Lord was born of two natures before the union; but after the union I confess one nature (Mansi, V, 744).

Petition of the Monophysites to Justinian (532): Just as an ordinary human being, who is made up of various natures (such as soul, body, and so on) is not divided into two natures on account of a soul being joined by composition to a body to make up one nature and person of a human being, so also God the Word, who was personally united to and joined by composition with a flesh which possesses a soul cannot be "in two natures" on account of his union with a body (In McGrath, *Christian Theology Reader*, p 149).

c) The Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) settled on the orthodox formulation that rejected both errors:

ἀσυγχύτως (*inconfuse*)—ἀτρέπτως (*immutabiliter*)—ἀδιαίρετως (*indivise*)—ἀχωρίστως (*inseparabiliter*).
John of Damascus later added: ἀδιαστάτως (*indistanter*).

C1 B, II. In the union of the two natures in Christ a communication takes place of each to the other.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

C1 B, II, 1. The human nature is the nature of the Son of God: God is man.

Psalms 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Matthew 22:42-45 "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?"

"The son of David," they replied. ⁴³ He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, ⁴⁴ 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet."⁴⁵ If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"

C1 B, II, 2. The divine nature is the nature of the Son of Man: This man is God.

Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.

Matthew 1:20-23 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

Matthew 16:13,16 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

C1 B, II, 3. This communication is expressed in words like: περιχώρησις, *immeatio, permeatio, penetratio*. It leaves room for neither an *extra separationis* nor an *extra excessus (extra Calvinisticum)*.

Mentzer: Those who say that after the incarnation took place the Logos was or exists outside the flesh, with whatever color they paint it, dissolve as far as they are concerned the hypostatic union, since they destroy its definition (*Disp. Theol. De praicipuis controv.* In Adadem. Giess. T. I. p 36).

Gerhard: [The natural acts] belong to him naturally according to his essence; [the personal acts] belong to him personally according to his state of being; e.g., iron does not burn or glow naturally by reason of its essence, but it is rightly said to burn or glow when it is heated because of the peculiar manner of its existence (*Exeg. I IV, par. 121*).

C1 B, II, 4. Note that in the personal propositions (*propositiones personales*) both subject and predicate are expressed by concrete nouns not by abstracts (God is man; this man is God, not divinity is humanity or humanity is divinity).

a) **Note a change in the use of the terms concrete and abstract. Modern use: abstract is the name of some idea, e.g., quality, action, relation, etc., concrete is the name of some material, visible, tangible thing.**

Old use: abstract is the thing as such (the Godhead *per se*, human nature *per se*; the concrete are the divine and human natures as they appear united in the person of Christ).

Baier: Abstracts, which signify the natures as such, cannot be predicated equally of one another since the natures, although they are joined together within one person, are nevertheless different from one another (*Compendium*, IIIa, p 39).

b) **To illustrate this point consider this passage.**

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. [Notice that this passage does not say that the divine nature became corporeal.]

Note: “Christ is true God (or, true man)” is not a *propositio personalis* (χριστοτόκος).

C1 B, II, 5. Note that the personal propositions (*propositiones personales*) express a reality (*propriae*). They are not empty words (*nude verbales*) or mere figures of speech (*tropicae*). They are neither saying the same thing in the subject and predicate (*identicae* or *univocae*), nor is it that there is no real connection between subject and predicate (*accidentales*).

Nestorius: Do not boast, O Jew, not God but man you have crucified (*Historia Tripartita*, XII, 4).

C1 B, II, 6. Thus Christ in his human nature is a natural, not an adopted, Son of God—though he is not such in a natural way (*naturaliter*) by a physical birth.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

Galatians 4:5 To redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 8:15,23 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

The adoptionist controversy at the time of Charlemagne shifted the Sonship from the person to the nature (modified Nestorianism). Elipandus of Toledo and Felix of Urgellis were opposed by Alcuin.

Felix (Urgellis) to Alcuin: We confess and believe that God of God, the Son, was begotten of the Father before all times without any beginning ... not by adoption but by birth, and not by grace but by nature.... But for the salvation of the human race ... assuming a visible body from a virgin ... according to the tradition of the fathers we confess and believe that he, made of a woman, made under the law, was the Son of God, not by birth, but by adoption, and not by nature but by grace (referred to by Quenstedt, *TDP*, III, s. 2 q. 8. p 216).

C1 C. The Communication of Idioms.

Preliminary remarks.

C1 C, 1. An idiom (including not only qualities but also actions) is the name for an attribute common to the species alone and found in every normal individual of that species.

C1 C, 2. God being absolutely one, his nature and attributes are really identical—while in a human being they are distinct.

C1 C, 3. In reality there is no difference between the communication of natures and the communication of idioms.

C1 C, 4. As the communion of natures does not involve an essential change of either or both natures, neither does the communication of idioms.

Quenstedt: A characteristic of fire never becomes a characteristic of iron; meanwhile, nevertheless, when iron and fire are joined together, the fire penetrates the iron in such a way that it communicates to it the power to burn and shine (*TDP*, Part III, Chapter III, Section I, Subsection I, Thesis LII, Note II, p 92).

C1 C, 5. There are Scripture passages which ascribe the idioms of either nature to the person of Christ (cf *χριστοτόκος*). Those speaking about a real interchange are commonly grouped under three heads.

- Genus idiomaticum:** All idioms of either nature are ascribed to the person of Christ, designated either by a personal name, or by a concrete of either nature.
- Genus maiestaticum:** The truly divine perfections are communicated to the human nature as considered by itself.
- Genus apotelesmaticum:** Christ performs all official acts (*ἀποτελέσματα*) according to both natures, each nature in intimate communion with the other contributing that which is peculiar to it, in one undivided action.

C1 C, 1) Genus Idiomaticum.

All idioms of either nature are ascribed to the person of Christ, designated either by a personal name or by a concrete of either nature.

C1 C, 1), 1. The subject may be a name of the person as such.

- This is called *alternatio* (*ἀντίδοσις*) since the subject and predicate can be transposed without altering the truth of the statement.

Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:4 For to be sure, [Christ] was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

1 Corinthians 10:4 [The Israelites] drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

- Sometimes distinguishing terms (*particulae diacriticae*) may be used to indicate the nature in Christ to which this attribute belongs essentially.

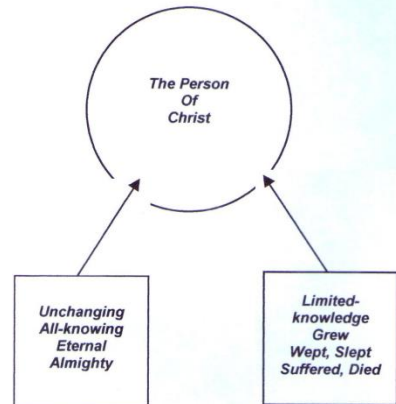
Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry (*ὧν οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα*) of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body (*ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ*) on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body (*Χριστοῦ οὖν παθόντος σαρκί*), arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

Genus Idiomaticum

"He is the God-Man"



1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body (θανάτωθεῖς μὲν σαρκί) but made alive by the Spirit (ζωοποιήθεις δὲ πνεύματι). [??]

C1 C, 1), 2. The subject may be a concrete of the divine nature with an idiom of the human nature in the predicate.

- a) This is known as *appropriatio* (ἰδιοποίησις) since the divine nature appropriates to itself a human attribute.

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

1 Corinthians 2:8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- b) Note also the following passages.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 8:36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

C1 C, 1), 3. The subject may be a concrete of the human nature with an idiom of the divine nature in the predicate.

- a) This is known as *communicatio divinorum* (κοινωνία τῶν θείων) since an attribute of the divine nature is communicated to the human nature itself.

1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

John 8:57-58 "You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"⁵⁸ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

John 6:62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

- b) Likewise, human attributes are attributed to the person of Christ.

Matthew 17:12 But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.

Mark 8:31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

C1 C, 1), 4. These propositions are reciprocal (*reciprocae*). Subject and predicate may be interchanged without altering the truth of the statement.

C1 C, 1), 5. Zwingli's *alloeosis* destroys the communication of attributes.

- a) Zwingli would substitute for the subject the nature to which the predicate applies, "Christ's human nature died for us."

Zwingli (commenting on John 6:55): The flesh is properly speaking that of the human nature in him, but through a change (*alloeosis*) the divine nature is put in its place. For the same reason for which he is the Son of God, for that reason he is food for the soul (*Amica Exegesis*, *Opp.* III, 525, quoted in Pieper II, p 137).

John 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

- b) The idea expressed in the distinguishing terms (*particulae diacriticae*) would be turned into one of separation.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 21: This Dr. Luther has fully explained in his Large Confession concerning the Holy Supper in opposition to the blasphemous *alloeosis* of Zwingli, who taught that one nature should be taken and understood for the other, which Dr. Luther committed, as a devil's mask, to the abyss of hell. [cf. F. C., T.D., VIII 38-43].

Richard Muller: The Lutheran teaching is a real *communicatio* while the Reformed, remaining at the level of a *communicatio in concreto* only, is quite accurately called *antidosis onomaton*, a mutual interchange or reciprocation of names rather than a transfer or communication of properties (*Dictionary*, p 74).

C1 C, 1), 6. Illustration: How did the Son of God suffer? How was God crucified?

Not in abstract (*abstracto*), the Godhead per se, but by means of its union with the human nature in Christ. Hence:

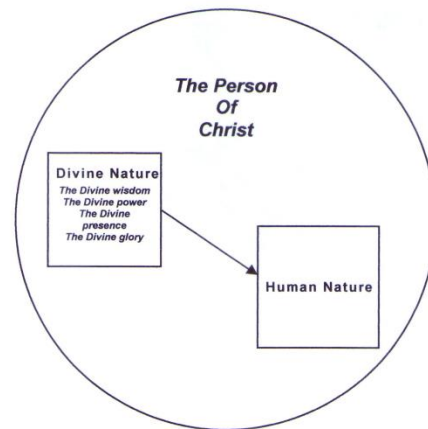
- *hypostatic*—Christ died as a person
- *appropriative*—the person suffered according to his human nature. cf Cyril (Alex) ἀπαθῶς ἔπαθεν.
- *voluntarie*—cf Irenaeus: ἡσαθηχάζοντος τοῦ Λόγου. The Word rested allowing the human nature to be put to death.
- *permissive* (*potuisset repellere*).
- *effective dupliciter*—sustaining the human nature; giving infinite value to this death.
- *Si sola humanitas est passa, ergo non persona, ergo non Filius Dei.* If only the human nature suffered, then the person has not suffered, then the Son of God has not suffered.

C1 C, 2) Genus Maiestaticum.

C1 C, 2), I. The truly divine perfections are communicated to the human nature as considered by itself.

1. This genus, also called αὐχηματικόν is described by the Greek fathers as βελτίωσις, προσθήκη μεγάλη, περύψωσις, μετάδοσις, δόξασις, μετάληψις θείας ἀξίας, μετοχή θείας δυνάμεως, θέωσις, ἀποθέωσις, θεωποιήσις.
2. This genus is not reciprocal (*reciprocum*), nor is there a corresponding *genus tapeinotikon*. Humanity is raised, deity is not lowered. Malachi 3:6 "I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."
3. If the union of the divine nature with the human is admitted, the communication of divine idioms to the human nature of Christ may not consistently be doubted.
 - a) Both are far beyond human conception.
 - b) It is a conclusion from the greater to the lesser (*Conclusio a maiore ad minus*).
 - c) Denying the *genus maiestaticum* practically annuls the union of the natures.
4. The divine nature has the divine idioms essentially; Christ's humanity has them as a gift. Hunnius: One and the same majesty does not belong to both natures in the same way, but it is attributed in a far higher way to the divinity than to the humanity. The Logos is omnipotent by its very being, the human nature by having received it; the Logos by nature, the human nature by grace; the Logos in itself, the human nature not in itself, just as it does not exist in itself but in the person of the Logos, into whose fellowship it is taken up (*Libelli*, IV. p 54).

Genus Maiestaticum
"In this Man, We Find God"



Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 9: Accordingly, we believe, teach, and confess that to be almighty, eternal, infinite, to be of itself everywhere present at once naturally, that is, according to the property of its nature and its natural essence, and to know all things, are essential attributes of the divine nature, which never to eternity become essential properties of the human nature.

C1 C, 2), II. The *genus maiestaticum* is taught by Scripture.

1. Scripture teaches this truth.

Philippians 2:6 [Christ] who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.

Matthew 28:20 And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

Psalms 45:2,7 You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you forever. ⁷You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

2. It is applied to Christ's human nature as such (*in abstracto*).

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

John 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 51-52: For the Holy Scriptures, and the ancient Fathers from the Scriptures in which they were fully trained, testify forcefully that, for the reason and because of the fact that it has been personally united with the divine nature in Christ, the human nature in Christ, when it was glorified and exalted to the right hand of the majesty and power of God, after the form of a servant and humiliation had been laid aside, did receive, apart from, and over and above its natural, essential, permanent properties, also special, high, great, supernatural, inscrutable, ineffable, heavenly *prerogativas* (prerogatives) and excellences in majesty, glory, power, and might above everything that can be named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come [Eph. 1, 21]; and that, accordingly, in the operations of the office of Christ: the human nature in Christ, in its measure and mode, is equally employed at the same time, and has also its *efficaciam*, that is, power and efficacy, not only from, and according to, its natural, essential attributes, or only so far as their ability extends, but chiefly from, and according to, the majesty, glory, power, and might which it has received through the personal union, glorification, and exaltation.^{52]} And nowadays even the adversaries can or dare scarcely deny this, except that they dispute and contend that those are only created gifts or *finitae qualitates* (finite qualities), as in the saints, with which the human nature in Christ is endowed and adorned; and that, according to their crafty thoughts or from their own silly *argumentationes* (argumentations) or fictitious proofs, they wish to measure and calculate of what the human nature in Christ could or should be capable or incapable without becoming annihilated.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 13: Now as regards this majesty, to which Christ has been exalted according to his humanity, he did not first receive it when he arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, but when he was conceived in his mother's womb and became man, and the divine and human natures were personally united with one another.

C1 C, 2), III. Scripture names specifically four idioms that are communicated: omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, honor. Though these are transitive attributes, the immanent (intransitive, quiescent, absolute) are not excluded. God's intransitive attributes are infinite, eternal, immutable, etc.

John 6:62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

Quenstedt: It is rightly said: all the divine attributes are communicated to the human nature, likewise, certain ones are communicated, and none are communicated. 1) *All* are communicated as far as indwelling and possession are concerned; 2) *certain ones* at least as far as immediate predication and enunciation are concerned as the operative ones or those who have an *actus primus* [presence] and *secundus* [exercise], as omnipotence, omniscience, etc., but not the inoperative ones, as eternity, infinity, etc. 3) *None* are communicated as far as transfer from one subject to another is concerned (*TDP*, III. s. 2. q. 10. F. 228).

Adolph Hoenecke: Thus one can scripturally say: The humanity of Jesus has omnipotence, omnipresence, eternity, immeasurability, infinity and further: The human nature of Jesus is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient; but not: the human nature of Jesus is infinite, eternal, immeasurable (*ELD* III, p 89).

Omnipotence

1. Limited human power.

John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

Luke 22:43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

John 18:12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him.

Luke 23:33 When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.

2. Communicated divine omnipotence.

John 5:19,21,26,27,29 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

John 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Hebrews 2:8,9 "And put everything under his feet." In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Psalms 8:6,7 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: ⁷ all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field.

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Daniel 7:13,14 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Matthew 11:27 All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

John 13:3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.

John 3:35 The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Matthew 9:6 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."

Notice the testimony of his miracles.

John 2:11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Notice divine attributes predicated even to abstracts of the human nature.

John 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Omniscience

1. Limited human knowledge.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Mark 13:32 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

2. Communicated divine omniscience.

Matthew 9:2,4 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." ⁴Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?"

Luke 5:22 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?"

John 2:24,25 But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. ²⁵ He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

Acts 1:24 Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen."

Note in the following three passages that the ability to know thoughts is clearly a divine attribute.

Jeremiah 11:20 But, O LORD Almighty, you who judge righteously and test the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

Psalms 7:9 O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure.

Psalms 139:2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

John 1:48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

John 11:4,11 When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." ¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

Matthew 16:21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

John 3:31,32 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 3:13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.

3. **The unity of consciousness: How can limited and unlimited knowledge exist in the same person at the same time? Compare: human knowledge in a state of sleep; when one tries to recall some name but can't; cured amnesia.**

Omnipresence

Christ has at least four modes of presence.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 97-103 quotes Luther: God has and knows of many modes of being in any place, and not only the single one concerning which the fanatics talk flippantly, and which philosophers call *localem*, or local. ^{98]} Also: The one body of Christ has a threefold mode or all three modes of being anywhere. ^{99]} First, the comprehensible, bodily mode, as he went about bodily upon earth, when, according to his size, he vacated and occupied space [was circumscribed by a fixed place]. This mode he can still use whenever he will, as he did after the resurrection, and will use at the last day, as Paul says, 1 Tim. 6, 15: "Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed God and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." And to the Colossians, 3, 4: "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear." In this manner he is not in God or with the Father, neither in heaven, as the mad spirits dream; for God is not a bodily space or place. And this is what the passages how Christ leaves the world and goes to the Father refer to which the false spirits cite. ^{100]} Secondly, the incomprehensible, spiritual mode, according to which he neither occupies nor vacates space, but penetrates all creatures wherever he pleases according to his most free will; as, to make an imperfect comparison, my sight penetrates and is in air, light, or water, and does not occupy or vacate space; as a sound or tone penetrates and is in air or water or board and wall, and also does not occupy or vacate space; likewise, as light and heat penetrate and are in air, water, glass, crystal, and the like, and also do not vacate or occupy space; and much more of the like. This mode he used when he rose from the closed sepulcher, and passed through the closed door to his disciples, and in the bread and wine in the Holy Supper, and, as it is believed, when he was born of his mother, the most holy Virgin Mary. ^{101]} Thirdly, the divine, heavenly mode, since he is one person with God, according to which, of course, all creatures must be far more penetrable and present to him than they are according to the second mode. For if, according to that second mode, he can be in and with creatures in such a manner that they do not feel, touch, circumscribe, or comprehend him, how much more wonderfully will he be in all creatures according to this sublime third mode, so that they do not circumscribe nor comprehend him, but rather that he has them present before him self, circumscribes and comprehends them! For you must place this being of Christ, who is one person with God, very far, far outside of the creatures, as far as God is outside of them; and again as deep and near within all creatures as God is within them. For he is one inseparable person with God; where God is, there must he also be, ^{102]} or our faith is false. But who will say or think how this occurs? We know indeed that it is so, that he is in God outside of all creatures, and one person with God, but how it occurs we do not know; this mystery is above nature and reason, even above the reason of all the angels in heaven; it is understood and known only by God. Now, since it is unknown to us, and yet true, we should not deny his words before we know how to prove to a certainty that the body of Christ can by no means be where God is, and that this mode of being is false. This the fanatics must prove; but they will forego it. ^{103]} Now, whether God has and knows still more modes in

which Christ's body is anywhere, I did not intend to deny herewith, but to indicate what awkward dolts our fanatics are, that they concede to the body of Christ no more than the first, comprehensible mode; although they cannot even prove that to be conflicting with our meaning. For in no way will I deny that the power of God may accomplish this much that a body might be in many places at the same time, even in a bodily, comprehensible way. For who will prove that this is impossible with God? Who has seen an end to his power? The fanatics indeed think thus: God cannot do it. But who will believe their thinking? With what do they make such thinking sure?

1. Circumscribed presence – one place and one space like a human body (*praesentia circumscriptiva*).

Luke 2:7,46 And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

Matthew 9:20 Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak.

Matthew 8:23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.

2. Illocal presence - in one place but taking up no space like angels (*praesentia definitiva*).

Luke 4:30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

John 8:59 At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

3. Divine presence, filling presence, a presence not bound by finite measurements of place and space (*praesentia repletiva*).

John 3:13 No one has ever gone up into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man [add variant who is in heaven].

Ephesians 1:23 Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Matthew 28:20 And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Jeremiah 23:24 "Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD.

4. Sacramental presence (*Praesentia sacramentalis*).

Matthew 26:26,28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ²⁸ "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

5. The divine presence (*praesentia repletiva*) is not invalidated by Christ's ascension into heaven and his return to judgment nor by his sitting at the right hand (*sessio ad dextram*).

a) Notice how Scripture speaks of Jesus' return.

John 16:16 In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming (τῆ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ).

1 Timothy 6:14 To keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing (τῆς ἐπιφανείας) of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Titus 2:13 While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing (ἐπιφάνειαν) of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

b) Notice how Scripture speaks of the right hand of God.

Psalms 20:6 Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

Psalms 77:10 Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High."

Hebrews 1:3,4 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

Hebrews 8:1 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 3:21 He must remain in heaven (ὅν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δεξασθαι) until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Ephesians 1:19-23 That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Grudem, on the other hand: When we are talking about Jesus' human nature, we can say that he ascended to heaven and is no longer in the world. But with respect to his divine nature, we can say that Jesus is everywhere present. So we can say that both things are true about the person of Christ—he has returned to heaven, and he is also present with us (*Systematic Theology*, p 558, 559).

c) The right hand of God is everywhere (*Dextra Dei est ubique*).

Formula of Concord, Ep., VII, 12: The second: That God's right hand is everywhere; at which Christ is placed in deed and in truth according to his human nature, and therefore being present, rules, and has in his hands and beneath his feet everything that is in heaven and on earth as Scripture says, Eph. 1, 22, where no man else, nor angel, but only the Son of Mary is placed; hence He can do those things which we have said.

- 6. The sacramental presence (*praesentia sacramentalis*) is taught by us, not because of the divine presence (*praesentia repletiva*), but because of Christ's promise. When the Sacramentarians in Nestorian fashion denied the communicated divine presence to Christ's human nature, and thus tried to force their own interpretation on the words of institution, then the fallacy of their argument was pointed out.**

Formula of Concord, Ep., VII, 10: The grounds, however, on which we stand against the Sacramentarians in this matter are those which Dr. Luther has laid down in his Large Confession concerning the Lord's Supper.

Divine Honor

- 1. Divine honor is ascribed to Christ in his human nature.**

John 5:22,23 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

Philippians 2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

- 2. To exclude Christ's human nature from divine adoration is Nestorianism.**

a) In a controversy precipitated originally by a loathing of Roman Catholic adoration of the host and Corpus Christi celebrations, the Reformed went beyond Scripture in their condemnations and also charged the Lutherans with idolatry for any divine adoration given to Christ's human nature (*horrendae idolatriae crimen*).

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.

Jeremiah 17:5 This is what the LORD says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Worship of the Eucharist (*Eucharistiae cultus*). In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. “The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration (*latria cultum*), not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession” (Paul VI, *MF* 56, Par. 1378).

Muller: Because of their view of the *communicatio idiomatum*, or communication of proper qualities, the Lutheran scholastics argued a *cultus vere divinus* of Christ according to his human nature. The Reformed, by way of contrast, held a *cultus mediatorius*, or mediatorial worship, due to Christ’s humanity in its union with the divine nature (*Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, p 86).

Quenstedt: The flesh of Christ must not be adored separately or as a certain separate person, but as a hypostatic nature, existing in the person of the Son of God (*TDP*, III, f. 296).

Luther: Likewise, here in the sacrament and in all believing hearts it should be left a matter of freedom, in order that we may be assured that he gave no command about worshiping him in the sacrament or in believing hearts. Moreover, that is not the reason for his presence there. Nevertheless, one should not withhold from him such worship and adoration either; but freely give it, if the proper time and occasion presents itself, or omit it. For that reason we say now that one should not condemn people or accuse them of heresy if they do not adore the sacrament, for there is no command to that effect and it is not for that purpose that Christ is present just as we read that the apostles did not adore the sacrament since they were sitting and eating at table [Matt. 26:20, 26]. On the other hand, one should not condemn and accuse of heresy people who do adore the sacrament. For although Christ has not commanded it, neither has he forbidden it, but often accepted it. Free, free it must be, according as one is disposed in his heart and has opportunity. Therefore both parties are to be blamed when they take a stand on either of these two sides and quarrel over this matter and condemn one another, and both of them miss the middle way (*LW* 36:294).

Nevertheless, you can see that adoration of this sacrament is a dangerous procedure if the Word and faith are not inculcated; so much so that I really think it would be better to follow the example of the apostles and not worship, than to follow our custom and worship. Not that adoration is wrong, but simply because there is less danger in not adoring than in adoring; because human nature tends so easily to emphasize its own works and to neglect God’s work, and the sacrament will not admit of that (*LW* 36:296).

b) The Roman Catholic and Orthodox distinguish levels of worship.

Worship (*Latria*) — God alone.

Veneration (*Dulia*)—Saints and angels.

Super-veneration (*Hyperdulia*)—the Man Jesus (and Mary)

Catechism of the Catholic Church: “All generations will call me blessed”: “The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship (*christiani cultus*).” The Church rightly honors “the Blessed Virgin with special devotion (*speciali cultu*). From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of ‘Mother of God,’ to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs...This very special devotion...differs essentially from the adoration (*a cultu adorationis*) which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration.” The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an “epitome of the whole gospel,” expresses this devotion to the Virgin Mary (Paragraph 971).

Timothy Ware: Among the saints a special position belongs to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom Orthodox reverence as the most exalted of God’s creatures, “more honored than the cherubim and more exalted than the seraphim.” Note that we have termed her “most exalted *among God’s creatures*.” Orthodox, like Roman Catholics, *venerate* or *honour* the Mother of God, but in no sense do the members of either Church regard her as a fourth person of the Trinity, nor do they assign to her the *worship* due to God alone. In Greek theology the distinction is very clearly marked: there is a special word, *latreia*, reserved for the worship of God, while for the veneration of the Virgin entirely different terms are employed (*duleia*, *hyperduleia*, *proskynesis*) (*The Orthodox Church*, p 157).

C1 C, 3) Genus Apotelesmaticum.

C1 C, 3), I.

Christ performs all official acts (ἀποτελέσματα) according to both natures, each nature in intimate communion with the other contributing that which is peculiar to it, in one undivided act (including the gifts of the *genus maiestaticum*).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 51: In the operations of the office of Christ: the human nature in Christ, in its measure and mode, is equally employed at the same time, and has also its *efficaciam*, that is, power and, efficacy, not only from, and according to, its natural, essential attributes, or only so far as their ability extends, but chiefly from, and according to, the majesty, glory, power, and might which it has received through the personal union, glorification, and exaltation.

- The official acts of Christ are often summed up in his titles and descriptions, such as Savior, Mediator, King, Priest, Prophet, Lord, Shepherd, and by his actions as shown below.**

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

1 Timothy 2:5,6 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Ephesians 5:2 Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God

1 Corinthians 15:3,4 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

Galatians 1:4 [Christ] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

1 John 3:8 The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

- Whether stated in verbs or in these titles the official act (*apotelesm*) is always presented as an undivided act, in which both natures participate.**

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

1 John 4:2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

- To say that the human nature "cannot be made the organ" (Hodge) for divine omnipotence, omnipresence, etc., is a Nestorian separation of Christ's natures.**

Note. "Organ" is in this case not an *instrumentum separatum*, but one *personaliter coniunctum*, i.e. Christ is not an instrument in the way an inspired or possessed person is.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Genus Apotelesmaticum

"He is the God-Man, Our Kinsman and Redeemer"



Genesis 22:18 And through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

1 John 4:2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

4. **The work of our redemption in all its phases is thus truly theanthropic; and the *genus apotelesmaticum* rests on the two previous genera.**

Hollaz: The remote basis of this communication is the unity of the person of Christ and an intimate communion of the divine and human nature in Christ. The near basis is the communication of idioms of the first and second class (*Examen, De pers. Christo*, qu 67).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 46-47: Secondly, as to the execution of the office of Christ, the person does not act and work in, with, through, or according to only one nature, but in, according to, with, and through both natures, or, as the Council of Chalcedon expresses it, one nature operates in communion with the other what is a property of each. ⁴⁷¹ Therefore Christ is our Mediator, Redeemer, King, High Priest, Head, Shepherd, etc., not according to one nature only, whether it be the divine or the human, but according to both natures, as this doctrine has been treated more fully in other places.

C1 C, 3), II. To hold fast to the *genus apotelesmaticum* is of utmost practical importance for our faith.

1. **On this point we hear Luther.**

Luther: Make sure that you comprehend this doctrine in such a way that you leave the Person of Christ intact and assign the functions of each nature to Him despite the difference in these natures. For according to the divine nature, He was not born of a human being, nor did He inherit anything from the Virgin. It is true that God is the Creator and that man is a creature. But here the two have come together in one Person, and now God and man are one Christ. Mary bore a Son, and the Jews crucified a Person who is God and man. Otherwise—if He were only man, as other saints are—He would be unable to deliver us from even one sin or to extinguish one little drop of hell's fire with all His holiness, His blood, and His death (*LW 24:108–109*).

Luther: Beware, beware, I say, of this alloiosis, for it is the devil's mask since it will finally construct a kind of Christ after whom I would not want to be a Christian, that is, a Christ who is and does no more in his passion and his life than any other ordinary saint. For if I believe that only the human nature suffered for me, then Christ would be a poor Savior for me, in fact, he himself would need a Savior. In short, it is indescribable what the devil attempts with this alloiosis (*LW 37:209–210*).

Formula of Concord, TD, VIII, 44: We Christians must know that if God is not also in the balance, and gives the weight, we sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: If it were not to be said, God has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if "God's death" and "God died" lie in the scale of the balance, then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light, empty scale.

2. **Only by a happy inconsistency does Reformed theology retain the gospel.**

Charles Hodge: Such expressions as *Dei Mors*, *Dei sanguis*, *Dei passio* have the sanction of Scriptural as well as of church usage. It follows from this that the satisfaction of Christ has all the value which belongs to the obedience and sufferings of the eternal Son of God, and His righteousness, as well active as passive, is infinitely meritorious (*S.T.*, II, p 168).

This in spite of his claim that the human nature "cannot be made the organ" for divine omnipotence, "a soul which is omniscient ... is not a human soul"; "the human nature of Christ is no more omniscient or almighty than the worker of a miracle is omnipotent" (*S.T.*, II, p 468).

Reformed Axiom: *Finitum non est capax infiniti* (The finite cannot contain the infinite).

Genus Apotelesmaticum

"He is the God-Man, Our Kinsman and Redeemer"



C2. The Two States of Our Redeemer.

C2, I. The Scriptures, both in history and in doctrine, present Christ to us in two states of living.

C2, I, 1. General statements are found in Philippians 2, Psalm 22, and Isaiah 53.

Philippians 2:5-9 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus; ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. 5 Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. 6 ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ. 7 ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εἰρεθεῖς ὡς ἄνθρωπος 8 ἑταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸς ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Hebrews 3:3 Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

C2, I, 2. In the one state he refrained from living on an equal level with God, but appeared in the form of a servant; in the other he received the name above every name.

Cf. passages above.

C2, I, 3. The one state is called the state of exinanition (humiliation); the other, exaltation.

C2, I, 4. These states affect directly Christ's human nature only.

a) The divine nature is not subject to change, but in Christ it partook of the exinanition by means of the hypostatic union.

Psalm 102:27 But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Malachi 3:6 I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

b) Only according to the human nature could Christ receive gifts (Php 2:9 –ἐχαρίσατο). Christ as God gives all things, as man receives all things. There is no advancement of the assuming nature, but only of the assumed nature.

c) Yet exinanition is predicated of the person of Christ, even designated by a *concretum* of the divine nature.

1 Corinthians 15:3,4 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Galatians 1:4 [The Lord Jesus Christ] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

C2, I, 5. The incarnation as such is not identical with the exinanition.

Schertzer: The exinanition is badly defined as the incarnation. If that were the case, the exaltation would have to be described as exarnation (Syst. L. VIII. p 221).

C2, II. In the exinanition Christ voluntarily gave up the full use of his divine prerogatives for a time.

C2, II, 1. He emptied himself of the ἴσα εἶναι θεῶ.

a) He was under law.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

b) He was poor and lowly.

Matthew 8:20 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

- Isaiah 7:15 He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right.
- c) **He gave up the display of glory.**
John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.
- d) **He gave up full use of his authority.**
Luke 22:42,54 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁵⁴ Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.

Psalm 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."
Ephesians 1:20 Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.
- e) **His knowledge was limited.**
Mark 11:13 Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs.
Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
John 11:34 "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied.
Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

C2, II, 2. Christ did not give up any of the divine attributes (Col. 2:9).

Opposed to this is Kenoticism, which taught that Jesus did not possess the transitive divine attributes during his exinanition. Distinguish κτήσις ("possession") and χρήσις ("use").

C2, II, 3. Temporarily giving up the full use of the divine attributes is sometimes called concealment. (The term "concealment" has at times been misused in such a way as to almost deny the meaning of the exinanition. See Pieper Volume II, p 296-301, Schaller, p 87, Hoenecke, ELD, p 110-113.)

a) **There was a secret use.**

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

John 3:13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.
[some manuscripts add: who is in heaven]

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

Formula of Concord, Ep., VIII, 16: This majesty Christ always had according to the personal union, and yet he abstained from it in the state of his humiliation, and on this account truly increased in all wisdom and favor with God and men; therefore he exercised this majesty, not always, but when it pleased him, until after his resurrection he entirely laid aside the form of a servant, but not the human nature, and was established in the full use, manifestation, and declaration of the divine majesty, and thus entered into His glory. Also Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 26.

b) **This secret use was not identical with the *sessio ad dextram*, since this is a technical term for the exaltation.**

c) **Even now there is a certain concealment.**

Hebrews 2:8 In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.

1 Corinthians 1:7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ἀπεκδεχομένους τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

C2, II, 4. He assumed the μορφή δούλου, in obedience and suffering.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

C2, II, 5. Careful moderation is in place: the divine mystery is to be adored; it cannot be explained.

C2, III. The exinanition covered the period of Christ's life from his conception to his burial (inclusive).

C2, III, 1. The various phases of Christ's life do not denote degrees, but rather different epochs.

- a) **Since the Scriptures do not determine the number of phases, any enumeration that covers the entire period is acceptable.**
- b) **Following the Second Article, six steps are very commonly treated. It is advisable to list more.**

C2, III, 2. Conception by a virgin. The incarnation was not in itself humiliation, but the manner of Christ's conception and birth has led to suspicions and innuendos against him.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

John 8:39-41: "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did." ⁴⁰ As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

Origin: But let us now return to where the Jew is introduced, speaking of the mother of Jesus, and saying that "when she was pregnant she was turned out of doors by the carpenter to whom she had been betrothed, as having been guilty of adultery, and that she bore a child to a certain soldier named Panthera" and let us see whether those who have blindly concocted these fables about the adultery of the Virgin with Panthera and her rejection by the carpenter, did not invent these stories to overturn his miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit: for they could have falsified the history in a different manner, on account of its extremely miraculous character, and not have admitted, as it were against their will, that Jesus was born of no ordinary human marriage. It was to be expected, indeed, that those who would not believe the miraculous birth of Jesus would invent some falsehood. And their not doing this in a credible manner, but their preserving the fact that it was not by Joseph that the Virgin conceived Jesus, rendered the falsehood very palpable to those who can understand and detect such inventions (*Contra Celsum* I xxxii. See also Talmud, *b. Shabbat* 104, *t. Hullin* 2,22).

C2, III, 3. Birth. Jesus experienced a real human birth.

Luke 2:7 And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:23 As it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord."

Exodus 13:2 Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal.

a) Jesus was born of a virgin.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Jeremiah 31:22 How long will you wander, O unfaithful daughter? The LORD will create a new thing on earth—a woman will surround a man. (יְקַבֵּלָהּ תְּסֻבֵּב גִּבּוֹר)

[This verse has traditionally been associated with the virgin birth, but in context it seems to refer more to unfaithful Israel becoming faithful.]

Luke 1:34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

Matthew 1:18,20,25 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The following oppose either the reality of the birth or the conception by a virgin.

Valentine (Gnostic, d. 150): Christ was only a kind of guest in Mary's womb with his flesh, which was assumed from somewhere else, as if he was born of Mary in the way water passes through a pipe, assuming nothing from the substance of the pipe, whether of lead or wood (*Damascenus, De Haeresibus*, 31m MPG 94, 697; Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, p 57).

Braaten: The primary interest of dogmatics is to interpret the virgin birth as a symbol and not as a freakish intervention in the course of nature. Scientific inquiries into the frequency of parthenogenesis in the world of nature are beside the point. They contribute nothing to deeper insight into the revelatory reality to which the story of Jesus' birth points. It is possible to hold to the virgin birth as a biological fact and miss its point. It is also possible to make the same point without reference to the virgin birth, as the writings of Paul and John prove by not mentioning it. It is important, then, not to let the story get bogged down in biology, but to read it as a symbol witnessing to the truth of the kerygma (*Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 546).

Tillich: The actual story is a myth, the symbolic value of which must be seriously questioned.... By excluding the participation of a human father in the procreation of the Messiah, it deprives him of full participation in the human predicament (*S. T.*, II, p 160).

b) There is no scriptural evidence that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Christ.

1) Scripture says nothing of a miraculous process of giving birth (*clauso utero*).

Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew: There has been no spilling of blood in his birth, no pain in bringing him forth. A virgin has conceived, a virgin had brought forth, and a virgin she remains (13).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 499: The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. In fact, Christ's birth did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it. And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as *Aeiparthenos*, the "Ever-virgin."

Formula of Concord quotes Luther, T.D., VII, 100: Secondly, the incomprehensible, spiritual mode, according to which he neither occupies nor vacates space, but penetrates all creatures wherever he

pleases; as, to make an imperfect comparison, my sight penetrates and is in air, light, or water, and does not occupy or vacate space; as a sound or tone penetrates and is in air or water or board and wall, and also does not occupy or vacate space; likewise, as light and heat penetrate and are in air, water, glass, crystal, and the like, and also do not vacate or occupy space; and much more of the like. This mode he used when he rose from the closed sepulcher, and passed through the closed door, and in the bread and wine in the Holy Supper, and, as it is believed [emphasis added], when he was born of his mother.

Luther in the Smalcald Articles, First Part, IV: That the Son became man in this manner, that he was conceived, without the cooperation of man, by the Holy Spirit, and was born of the pure, holy [ever-]Virgin Mary [Latin: *sempervirgine*; the German does not have “ever”].

2) **Whether Mary had children after the birth of Jesus cannot be determined from Scripture with absolute certainty. The three theories about the identity of those known as Jesus’ brothers and sisters, named after church fathers who advocated them, are:**

- a) **Joseph’s children from a previous marriage (Epiphanian). Favored by Ambrose and the East.**
- b) **Cousins of Jesus, children of Mary wife of Alpheus (Hieronymian). Favored by most Western Fathers after the time of Jerome.**
- c) **Children of Mary and Joseph (Helvidian). Only Tertullian among the leading fathers.**

Explanation c seems to accord best with the evidence. On the theories see Lightfoot, Galatians, p 252-291.

Ezekiel 44:2 The LORD said to me, “This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered through it.”

Matthew 12:46 While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him.

Matthew 13:55 “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?”

Mark 6:3 “Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

Galatians 1:19 I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord’s brother.

Luke 2:7 She gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:23 As it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord.”

Matthew 1:25 But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The following passages are included to illustrate the use of “until” in Scripture.

Psalms 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”

2 Samuel 6:23 And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Deuteronomy 34:6 He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.

Isaiah 46:4 Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

C2, III, 4. Circumcision may be considered as the first public testimony of Christ’s being under the Law.

Luke 2:21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Quenstedt: In the same way that we were under the law, in that way also Christ was made under the law; and we were under the law not only by reason of the curse and of eternal and temporal punishments, but also by reason of perfect obedience (which was owed to the law) (*TDP*, pars III, cap. III, memb. III, sect. I, thes. XXVI, nota, p 345).

C2, III, 5. Education, growing, learning.

Luke 2:41,51-52 Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. ⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And

Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

C2, III, 6. Lack of social and economic status.

Mark 6:3 “Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

John 7:15 The Jews were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having studied?”

Matthew 8:20 Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

Matthew 17:24-27 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the temple tax?” ²⁵ “Yes, he does,” he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?” ²⁶ “From others,” Peter answered. “Then the sons are exempt,” Jesus said to him. ²⁷ “But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.”

John 19:10 “Do you refuse to speak to me?” Pilate said. “Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?”

C2, III, 7. Suffering. Jesus’ suffering is often divided into two parts:

a) The beginning of his suffering (*Passio inchoata*).

Matthew 17:17 “O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.”

Mark 4:11,12 He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables ¹² so that, ‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”

Luke 19:41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it.

John 11:33,35,38 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

b) His great suffering (*Passio culminata, magna*).

John 13:21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.”

Matthew 26:38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

Luke 22:44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

C2, III, 8. Death. Jesus death was real, it was voluntary; he suffered no decomposition.

John 19:30-35 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. ³¹ Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. ³² The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. ³⁵ The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Mark 15:44,45 Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

John 10:11,15,17,18 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Psalm 16:10 Because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

Acts 2:31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

Acts 13:37 But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

Schaller: At the same time, the death of Christ did in no way alter the fact of the personal union of the two natures. His soul and his body, though separated for a brief time from one another, were even then united with the personality of the Son of God (*Christology*, p 94).

We know the union of the natures continued and the death was real, but we should not speculate as to how this could be.

C2, III, 9. Burial (there was a transitional element in the honor he received in his burial).

Isaiah 53:9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 27:57-66 As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb. ⁶² The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Mark 15:42-47 It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid.

1 Corinthians 15:1,3,4 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

C2, IV. In the exaltation the human nature of Christ entered upon the full and uninterrupted use of the divine majesty communicated to it by virtue of the hypostatic union.

C2, IV, 1. The exaltation followed the exinanition.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Luke 24:26 Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

1 Peter 1:11 Trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

C2, IV, 2. The exaltation pertains to the use (χρῆσις), not to the possession (κτῆσις), of the divine glory.

a) Negatively (from the perspective of what he put off) it was the deposition of the lowly way of life.

Philippians 2:6-9 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Romans 6:9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

b) Positively (from the perspective of what he put on) it was the assumption of the unrestricted, continuous, perpetual use of the ἴσα εἶναι θεῷ.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 13: Now as regards this majesty, to which Christ has been exalted according to His humanity, he did not first receive it when he arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, but when he was conceived in his mother's womb and became man, and the divine and human natures were personally united with one another.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 26: Hence also the human nature, after the resurrection from the dead, has its exaltation above all creatures in heaven and on earth; which is nothing else than that he entirely laid aside the form of a servant, and yet did not lay aside his human nature, but retains it to eternity, and is put in the full possession and use of the divine majesty according to his assumed human nature. However, this majesty he had immediately at his conception, even in His mother's womb, but, as the apostle testifies [Phil. 2, 7], laid it aside; and, as Dr. Luther explains, he kept it concealed in the state of his humiliation, and did not employ it always, but only when he wished.

C2, IV, 3. The right to make use of his divine power and glory is presented in Scripture as a gift.

Psalms 2:8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

Psalms 8:5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Quenstedt: New power, strength, or majesty were not given to Christ which he did not have before; but there was conferred on him only the full ability to administer his kingdom which he had received through the union itself (TDP III, .s. 1. Th. 70 f. 527).

C2, IV, 4. The exaltation produced a change in the mode of living, not in the human nature itself.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:39-42 Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a Spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

C2, IV, 5. This state began with the resurrection and continues forever.

John 10:17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. Θανατωθεῖς μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιηθεῖς δὲ πνεύματι

Romans 6:9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

Revelation 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Luke 1:33 And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

C2, IV, 6. The exaltation serves the carrying out of the work of redemption.

- a) **The exaltation may be considered as a reward for the exinanition, but not as a reception of gifts he did not previously have nor as the motivation for his willing exinanition. He came to win for us, not for himself.**

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Isaiah 53:10-12 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- b) **Christ is now exalted as Lord of all.**

Philippians 2:10,11 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 7:39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Ephesians 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:8-10 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." ⁹ (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

- c) **The various phases may be viewed either as manifestations of glory or as apotelesms.**

C2, V. The divine glory which our exalted Savior manifests may conveniently be considered according to the five phases mentioned in the Second Article.

C2, V, 1. The descent into hell.

- a) **The time was between the resurrection and his resurrection appearances (hence, it does not refer to suffering on the cross, nor to suffering in hell; nor is it a synonym for burial). Note: Some have taken note of the period of time between his "coming alive" in the grave and his showing himself alive to the apostles and the women. The former they call resuscitation (*vivificatio*) and the later resurrection. The problem arises because of the order of events in the Apostles Creed.**

1 Peter 3:18,19 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached (*ἐκήρυξεν*) to the spirits in prison.

Braaten: The downward curve of the incarnational line reached its lowest point in Jesus' descent into hell. In the 17th century, Lutheran and Reformed dogmaticians debated whether Jesus' descent into hell was the extreme limit of his humiliation or the initial step toward triumph and exaltation. We are including it under the state of humiliation, because the descent into hell is a symbol which conveys the truth that Jesus' victory over the enemies of man (sin, death, and the devil) was attained by first suffering the negation they introduced into the world (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 1, p 548).

Grudem: Concerning the doctrinal question of whether Christ did descend into hell after he died, the answer from several passages of Scripture seems clearly to be no (*Systematic Theology*, p 594).

Hodge: Christ's humiliation after his death consisted in his being buried, and continuing in the state of the dead, and under the power of death till the third day, which has been otherwise expressed in these words, "He descended into hell." This is the correct view of Christ's descent into hell (*Systematic Theology*, p 616).

b) The purpose for descending was not to suffer.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

c) The purpose was not to rescue the souls of Old Testament believers from the abode of the dead (limbo).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Scripture calls the abode of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down, "hell" – *Sheol* in Hebrew or *Hades* in Greek – because those who are there are deprived of the vision of God. Such is the case for all the dead, whether evil or righteous, while they await the redeemer: which does not mean that their loss is identical, as Jesus shows through the parable of the poor man Lazarus who was received into "Abraham's bosom." It is precisely these holy souls, who awaited their Savior in Abraham's bosom, whom Christ the Lord delivered when he descended into hell (Paragraph 633).

Michael Pomazansky: Christ, after his death on the cross, descended in his soul and in his divinity into hell, at the same time that his body remained in the grave. He preached salvation to the captives of hell and brought up from there all the Old Testament righteous ones into the bright mansions of the kingdom of heaven (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 217).

d) The purpose was not to preach salvation (εὐαγγελίζω), but to herald (κηρύσσω) his victory and proclaim judgment. Κηρύσσω does not necessarily denote preaching of the gospel.

Matthew 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, *preaching* in the Desert of Judea.

Acts 15:21 For Moses has been *preached* in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.

Romans 2:21 You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who *preach* against stealing, do you steal?

Luke 16:26,31 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us. ³¹ He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

1 Peter 3:18-19; 4:5-6 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison ^{4:5} But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are [*now*] dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle (ἐδειγμάτισεν) of them, triumphing (θηριαμβεύσας) over them by the cross.

Formula of Concord, T.D., IX, 1-3: And since even in the ancient Christian teachers of the Church, as well as in some among our teachers, dissimilar explanations of the article concerning the descent of Christ to hell are found, we abide in like manner by the simplicity of our Christian faith, to which Dr. Luther in his sermon, which was delivered in the castle at Torgau in the year 1533, concerning the descent of Christ to hell, has pointed us, where we confess: "I believe in the Lord Christ, God's Son, our Lord, dead, buried, and descended into hell." For in this the burial and descent of Christ to hell are distinguished as different articles; and we simply believe that the entire person, God and man, after the burial descended into hell, conquered the devil, destroyed the power of hell, and took from the devil all his might. We should not, however, trouble ourselves with high and acute thoughts as to how this occurred; for with our reason and our five senses this article can be comprehended as little as the preceding one, how Christ is placed at the right hand of the almighty power and majesty of God; but we are simply to believe it and adhere to the Word. Thus we retain the substance and consolation that neither hell nor the devil can take captive or injure us and all who believe in Christ.

e) The relevance of Ephesians 4:9 for the topic is disputed.

Ephesians 4:9 What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? Κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς

C2, V, 2. The resurrection.

a) As the efficient cause both the Father and the Son are mentioned.

The following passages attribute Jesus' resurrection to the Father.

Acts 2:24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Acts 4:10 Then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

Acts 5:30-31 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Acts 10:40 But God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.

Acts 13:30 But God raised him from the dead.

Ephesians 1:20 [God exerted power] in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

The following passages attribute Jesus' resurrection to him.

John 2:19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Romans 1:4 And who through the Spirit of holiness (κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης) was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bucanus (d. 1603): Did the human nature of Christ cooperate in his resurrection?—According to his divine nature Christ himself effected his resurrection; he suffered from the weakness of the flesh—and he lives by the power of God. But properly speaking he rose according to his human nature, which was obedient to his resuscitating divine nature and acted according to its will and power (*Insti. theol.*, XXVI, 4; in Heppe,, p 362). [???

b) Christ had the same body as before, but in a glorified form.

John 20:20,25-27 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." ²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Luke 24:39-43 "Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a Spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Romans 6:9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

Quenstedt: Christ rose ... when the sepulcher was closed or the stone had not yet been rolled away from the door of the sepulcher by the angel....The stone was rolled away by the angel, but he did this in order to demonstrate that the resurrection had already occurred (*TDP*, III,III, III, sect I, thes. XCVII, p 378, note).

Contra: Peter Martyr (d. 1562): Perhaps the doors gave way; perhaps Christ entered through a window or the roof (quoted by Quenstedt, *TDP*, III,.s. 2.q.11.f. 634).

c) The time was the third day after his death.

Matthew 28:1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

Mark 16:1,2 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ²Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise,

they were on their way to the tomb.

Luke 24:1-3 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

John 20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

Matthew 16:21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Matthew 17:23 "They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life." And the disciples were filled with grief.

Matthew 20:19 And will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!

Mark 8:31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

Here is an example of the Hebrew way numbering days.

Esther 4:16; 5:1 "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." ¹ On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance.

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

d) The New Testament testifies to the certainty of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15).

1 Corinthians 15:5-6 He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Mark 16:6 "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him."

John 20:1-10 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" ³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes.

Matthew 28:11-15 While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹² When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³ telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.'" ¹⁴ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

e) The resurrection is God's public declaration of the justification of all mankind.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Hebrews 13:20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep.

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Matthew 12:38-40 Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you." ³⁹ He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three

days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Luke 24:25,26,46 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day."

Romans 4:24 But also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

1 Peter 1:21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Romans 8:11,34 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Romans 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

1 Corinthians 15:12-20 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵ More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

2 Corinthians 1:9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.

Gerhard: Just as God punished our sins in Christ, which had been laid on and imputed to him as our substitute, so also by raising him from the dead he absolved him of our sins which were imputed to him, and therefore he also absolved us in him in order that the resurrection of Christ might thus be the cause and pledge and counterpart of our resurrection. In the resurrection of Christ we were absolved of our sins so that they no longer can condemn us before the judgment seat of God (quoted by Calov in *Bibl. illustr.* ad 1.c. Rom 4:25).

f) **The forty days after the resurrection.**

1) Jesus was no longer with his disciples.

Luke 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

2) Yet he was with them.

Luke 24:39,40 "Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a Spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

John 21:14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Acts 10:41 He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:5-8 And that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

3) He was instructing his disciples concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts 1:3 He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Luke 24:25-27 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24:44-48 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things."

g) The abundant testimony to the resurrection has not eliminated the teaching of errors concerning the resurrection.

1) Some deny the possibility, necessity, or reality of the resurrection (mythical invention, swoon theory, substitute theory, hallucination theory, mistaken identity theory).

The first denial: Matthew 28: 12-15 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³ telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

Paul Tillich: The most primitive theory, and at the same time most beautifully expressed, is the physical one.... The sources of this story (the women finding the tomb empty) are rather late and questionable.... Theologically speaking, it is a rationalization of the event, interpreting it with physical categories that identify resurrection with the presence or absence of a physical body (S. T., II, p 155).

Rudolf Bultmann: An historical fact which involves a resurrection from the dead is utterly inconceivable ... the incredibility of a mythical event like the resuscitation of a dead person (*The New Testament and Mythology*, p 39).

Emil Brunner: ... to speak of the Resurrection itself as "one of the most sure historical facts in the history of the world" is ... senseless. (*The Mediator*, p 578) The Resurrection is not a "fact of world history," it is a fact of the history of the Kingdom of God (*Dog. I, CDG*, p 33).

John Dominic Crossan, the Jesus Seminar: The tales of entombment and resurrection were later wishful thinking. Instead, Jesus' went the way of all abandoned criminals' bodies. It was probably barely covered with dirt, vulnerable to the wild dogs (*Time*, Jan 10, 1994 on www.time.com)

Hugh Schonfeld: Jesus contrived to be arrested the night before the Passover, fully aware that he would be nailed to the cross the following day, but taken down before the onset of the Sabbath in accordance with Jewish law. He would survive the agony of but three hours on the cross.... Given a drug that would render him unconscious and make him appear dead, he would then be cut down from the cross in a deathlike trance, removed by his accomplices to the tomb where he would be nursed back to health and then "resurrected" (*The Passover Plot*, cover blurb).

Robert Cavin: Jesus had an unknown identical twin who impersonated Jesus after the crucifixion, thereby convincing people that he had risen from the dead (1995 debate).

Muslim theories: Jesus was not crucified on the cross, but God made someone [Judas?, Simon of Cyrene?] look like Jesus and this person was mistakenly crucified as Jesus. The words "God raised him up" means that Jesus was taken alive up to heaven (summarized by Geisler, *Answering Islam*, p 65.) This theory is implied by Quran 4:156-158 and stated in the Gospel of Barnabas, which is a Muslim forgery.

Michael Martin: Certainly it is not beyond the realm of psychological possibility...that in first century Palestine, among the unsophisticated people who believed in the divinity of Jesus, one disciple's hallucinations of Jesus could have triggered corresponding hallucinations in others (*The Case Against Christianity*, p 94-95).

Carl Braaten: We can call the resurrection an historical event because it happened at a particular place, in Palestine, and at a definite time, a few days after his death and prior to Pentecost (*Christian Dogmatics I*, p 551).

Kirsopp Lake contended that the women made a mistake and visited the wrong tomb, where they met a young man who said to them "He is not here," but the women were frightened and left (*The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, p 250-252).

Siegbert Becker: It is amazing what people will believe as long as it's not in the Bible.

2) **Some deny single features of the resurrection:**

-a) **Calvinists**

-1) **Deny that Christ's human nature participated effectively in his resurrection**

-2) **Claim that Christ's glorified body is dependent on space and time**
Hodge: It still occupies a definite portion of space and retains all the essential properties of a body (*ST*, II, p 629).

-b) **Photinians (4th century) denied that Christ still has real flesh and blood after his exaltation into heaven.**

Compare Jehovah's Witnesses: Jesus did not take his human body to heaven to be forever a man in heaven. Had he done so that would have left him even lower than the angels... God did not purpose for Jesus to be humiliated thus forever by being a fleshly man forever. No, but after he had sacrificed his perfect manhood, God raised him to deathless life as a glorious spirit creature (*Let God Be True*, p 41).

Compare a recent sharp controversy among Evangelicals that pitted Murray Harris vs. Norman Geisler.

Murray Harris: This suggests that after his resurrection *his essential state was one of invisibility and immateriality*... The Resurrection marked his entrance upon a spiritual state of existence, or, to borrow Pauline terminology, a "spiritual body," which was both immaterial and invisible yet capable of interaction with the world of space and time.... However, the Resurrection did not convert Christ into "pure spirit" (*Raised Immortal*, 1983, p 56-57).

Murray Harris: The resurrection of Christ was not his transformation into an immaterial body (as Prof. Geisler imagines I believe) but into a "spiritual body" which could be expressed in an immaterial or material mode, a nonphysical or a physical form (*From Grave to Glory*, 1990, p 405). Nor have I ever expressed the view that the resurrection body of Christ was simply immaterial. It was "*customarily immaterial*" in the sense that in *his customary mode of existence* during the forty days he did not have a material body of "flesh and bones" (*From Grave to Glory*, 1990, p 404).

C2, V, 3. The ascension.

a) **Christ rose to the clouds in a real, gradual motion. Then he disappeared.**

Mark 16:9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

John 20:17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Luke 24:51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Acts 1:9-11 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Carl Braaten: The mythical features of this trajectory of exaltation are obvious the moment we ask where Jesus went when he ascended to heaven. ... The need to demythologize should not, however, weaken our sense for the message it contains (*CD*, I, p 552).

b) **He ascended both to the presence of the saints and angels (*coelum beatorum*) and to the position of rule and authority over the whole universe (*coelum maiestaticum*).**

Hebrews 12:22-23 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Revelation 5:6-8 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.

Hebrews 4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

Hollaz: Its common goal was the home and dwelling place of the blessed, where Christ shows himself to the blessed in order that they may behold his face. Christ thus ascended into Paradise, where the converted thief was with him (Lk 23:43); where mansions are ready for the faithful (Jn 14:2); where the most glorious Redeemer himself by his most glorious appearance fills with joy the souls of the saints. The *terminus proprius*, or the ultimate goal, is the *coelum Dei maiestaticum*, that is, the heaven of divine majesty or the throne of divine majesty. The *coelum Dei maiestaticum* is above the other heavens, as Eph 4:10 teaches.... It is the very right hand of God itself, where Christ has been made far higher than all heavens (He 7:28) (*Examen*, III, I, III, p 785).

c) Ascending into heaven does not lead to a local confinement, a retirement to a state of rest and glory.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Psalms 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Acts 2:34-36 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand ³⁵ until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" ³⁶ Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Acts 3:21 He must remain in heaven (ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δεξασθαι) until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VII, 119: Likewise, [we reject] when it is taught that because of his ascension into heaven Christ is so enclosed and circumscribed with his body in a definite place in heaven that with the same [his body] he cannot or will not be truly present with us in the Supper, which is celebrated according to the institution of Christ upon earth, but that he is as far and remote from it as heaven and earth are from one another, as some Sacramentarians have wilfully and wickedly falsified the text, Acts 3, 21; *oportet Christum coelum accipere*, that is, *Christ must occupy heaven*, for the confirmation of their error, and instead thereof have rendered it: *oportet Christum coelo capi*, that is, *Christ must be received or be circumscribed and enclosed by heaven or in heaven*, in such a manner that in his human nature he can or will in no way be with us upon earth.

Pieper: δεχέσθαι here can only mean *capere* (to receive) and not *capi* (to be received), no matter whether οὐρανὸν or ὄν is regarded as the subject of the clause. To express the passive *capi*, the statement would have to read somewhat like this: ὃν δεῖ ὑπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ or οὐρανῷ δεξασθαι [*sic*—δεχθῆναι?] (Vol II, p 327).

Quenstedt: Therefore the Calvinists do violence to the words of the apostle, ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν δεξασθαι, which τὸ δεξασθαι they interpret (to be contained in, to be inclosed as one held). But persuasive for the active meaning is (1) the nature of the verb δεξασθαι. For it is purely a deponent verb, which is always active, never passive, especially in this form, the middle, as it is called (*TDP*, II, 279).

d) While the resurrection needed no eye witnesses, the disciples witnessed Christ's ascension as that which marked the end of his post-resurrection appearances.

Luke 24:31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.

Acts 1:3,9-10 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

C2, V, 4. The sitting at the right hand.

a) The right hand is a position of power.

Exodus 15:6,12 Your right hand, O LORD, was majestic in power. Your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy. ¹² You stretched out your right hand and the earth swallowed them.

Psalms 20:6 Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

Psalms 63:8 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

Psalms 77:10 Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High."

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Gerhard: Of God himself, who is enclosed in no place and excluded from no place, it is said that he dwells on high, that he is in heaven, that he looks down from heaven on the sons of men; nevertheless, no one concludes from this or is able to conclude that he rules only in the place of heaven. The Holy Spirit defines that loftiness of God and of God's right hand, not by spatial elevation, but by the inexpressible exaltedness of his glory and heavenly majesty (*Disputatt. Th.*, par. 221 in Baier, IIIa, p. 99).

b) The sitting at the right hand of God is correctly described by our dogmaticians as ruling with power.

Psalms 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Matthew 26:64 "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Mark 16:19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Ephesians 1:20 Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

Colossians 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 8:1,2 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, ²and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

Hebrews 10:12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1 Peter 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Revelation 3:21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Quenstedt: Christ's sitting at the right hand of God is the highest degree of exaltation, or an act by which he himself after his ascension into heaven, when he was placed according to his human nature on the throne of divine majesty, dwells in the fullness of honor, glory and majesty and fully exercises his infinite power and through it rules in a most present and powerful way over all things in heaven and on earth for the glory of his own name and for the comfort and salvation of his afflicted church (*TDP*, pars III, cap. III, memb. III, sect. I, thes. CXVII, p 386).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 28: Yet this occurred not in an earthly way, but, as Dr. Luther explains, according to the manner of the right hand of God, which is no fixed place in heaven, as the Sacramentarians assert without any ground in the Holy Scriptures, but nothing else than the almighty power of God, which fills heaven and earth, in [possession of] which Christ is installed according to His humanity, *realiter*, that is, in deed and truth, *sine confusione et exaequatione naturarum*, that is, without confusion and equalizing of the two natures in their essence and essential properties.

c) This sitting at the right hand in the strictest sense applies to the human nature of Christ (*subiectum quo*).

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—

is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Acts 2:32,33 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 5:30,31 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Matthew 26:64 “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Luke 22:69 But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.

Calov: Although Christ rules according to both natures, nevertheless his exaltation, following his exinanition, has reference to his human nature alone, according to which he was made Lord over all things (*Theol. Pos.*, III, I, XIII, par. 842, p 383).

Quenstedt: To sit at the right hand of God the Father is not entirely the same as to reign with the Father. For until now Christ has reigned with the Father and the Holy Spirit from eternity. Nevertheless, he did not sit at the right hand of God from then (i.e., eternity), for this sitting began first from the time of this exaltation (*TDP*, III, III, III, thes. CXIV, p 384).

d) Christ's sitting at the right hand is a source of comfort for the church (an apotelesm).

Ephesians 1:20-23 [That power] which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 4:10-13 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe. ¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Matthew 28:18-19 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Romans 8:32,34 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 78: But we hold that by these words the majesty of the man Christ is declared, which Christ has received, according to his humanity, at the right hand of the majesty and power of God, namely, that also according to his assumed human nature and with the same, he can be, and also is, present where he will, and especially that in his Church and congregation on earth he is present as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest, not in part, or one-half of him only, but the entire person of Christ is present, to which both natures belong, the divine and the human; not only according to his divinity, but also according to, and with his assumed human nature, according to which he is our Brother, and we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.

C2, V, 5. Return to judgment.

a) This sitting at the right hand is the final stage of exaltation.

Hebrews 10:12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Luke 1:33 And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

b) The return to judgment is the revelation of Christ's glory.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

1 Timothy 6:14-16 To keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus

Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

2 Timothy 4:1,8 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Titus 2:13 While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

c) The judgment is the final act of Christ as Savior.

1 Corinthians 15:23-28,51-57 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. ⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:31-33 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Matthew 13:39-43 The enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰ As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

C3. The Office of Christ.

C3, I. By office we understand Jesus' work (ἔργον) of undoing the damage inflicted by Satan through the introduction of sin and of reuniting the human race with God.

C3, I, 1. The Son was appointed to the office.

John 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Psalms 2:6,7 "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." ⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

Hebrews 5:5 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

Zachariah 6:12,13 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. ¹³ It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two."

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

C3, I, 2. The Son willingly assumed the office.

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

Psalms 40:7,8 Then I said, "Here I am, I have come—it is written about me in the scroll. ⁸ I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

John 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

C3, I, 3. The nature of the work is expressed in the title Mediator.

a) The work of a mediator is to reconcile.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator (μεσίτης) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 8:6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator (μεσίτης) is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator (μεσίτης) of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 12:24 To Jesus the mediator (μεσίτη) of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Hebrews 7:22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee (ἔγγυος) of a better covenant.

Galatians 3:19,20 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. ²⁰ A mediator (μεσίτης), however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

b) Christ was mediator in both natures.

Formula of Concord, Ep., III, 2-3: For the one side [Osiander] has held that Christ according to his divinity alone is our Righteousness, if he dwell in us by faith; contrasted with this divinity, dwelling in us by faith, the sins of all men must be regarded as a drop of water compared to the great ocean. Others, on the contrary, [Stancarus] have held that Christ is our Righteousness before God according to the human nature alone. ³ Against both the errors just recounted, we unanimously believe, teach, and confess that Christ is our Righteousness neither according to the divine nature alone nor according to the human nature alone, but that it is the entire Christ according to both natures, in his obedience alone, which as God and man he

rendered to the Father even unto death, and thereby merited for us the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, as it is written: "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous," Rom. 5: 19.

Andreas Osiander (d. 1552): The one and only righteousness availing before God is God Himself. But Christ is the Word which we apprehend by faith, and thus Christ in us, God himself, is our righteousness which avails before God ("Action of the Honorable Wise Council in Nürnberg with Their Preachers").

Francesco Stancarus (d. 1572): Christ is mediator according to the human nature only; this exclusive "only" does not exclude the divine nature from the person of Christ, but from his office as mediator (quoted by Bente in the *Historical Introduction to the Symbolical Books*, p 160).

Bellarmino: The common belief of Catholics is ... that the basis on which those works of the Mediator were performed by the Mediator was the human nature, not the divine.... A mediator ought to be altogether in the middle, i.e., standing apart from both dissenting parties (*Disput.*, tom. I, lib. V, de Christo, cap. I, p 261).

Quenstedt: If Christ served as our Mediator in his divine nature alone, in this way the necessity of the incarnation of the Son of God for the work of reconciliation and mediation is removed, and his obedience accomplished for us and its imputation are denied (*TDP*, pars III, cap. III, sect. II, qu. I, antithes. I, p 273).

Augustine: If man had not perished, the Son of man would not have come (Sermon 174; Pieper II, p 332).

Gottfried Hoffmann (d. 1712): If you say that Christ in so far as he is God was not separate from God the Father and the Holy Spirit, much less from himself, also in so far as he is a man he will not be separate from men. It is sufficient therefore that he is separate from God not indeed as to his nature, but nevertheless as to his work and office (*Synopsis*, par. I, p 515).

C3, I, 4. The work is also called salvation.

Σωτηρία

Romans 13:11 Do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our *salvation* is nearer now than when we first believed.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive *salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:5 [We] who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the *salvation* that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring *salvation* to those who are waiting for him.

Acts 13:26 Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of *salvation* has been sent.

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the *salvation* that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Σωτήρ

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a *Savior* has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Acts 13:23 From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the *Savior* Jesus, as he promised.

Titus 2:10 And not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our *Savior* attractive.

1 Timothy 4:10 We have put our hope in the living God, who is the *Savior* of all men, especially of those who believe.

Ἰησοῦς

Matthew 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name *Jesus*, because he will save his people from their sins.

Luke 1:31 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name *Jesus*.

Luke 2:21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named *Jesus*, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

C3, I, 5. The office is indicated especially by the name Christ, i.e. the Anointed (Messiah).

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

Daniel 9:24-26 Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. ²⁵ Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶ After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

Psalms 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One.

Psalm 45:7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. (Quoted in Hebrews 1:9)

John 4:25,29,42 The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" ⁴² They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."
Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Acts 4:27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

Luke 4:1-2, 14, 17-18 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. ¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

b) Christ was anointed in his human nature.

Greek fathers: ἡ θειότης χρίσις τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος.

Gottfried Hoffmann: For since he was anointed with the oil of gladness, that is the Holy Spirit, by God the Father, therefore also he was called Christ. And, indeed, he was anointed not as God, but as man; although he administers the office for which he was anointed not only according to his human nature, but also according to his divine nature. For he is said to have been anointed above his companions (Ps 45:8); but according to his divine nature he does not have companions (*Synopsis, de offic. Christi*, paragraph I, ecthes., p 513).

Chemnitz: Christ, was anointed according to his human nature "above all his fellows" (Ps 45:7), not only with infused gifts of the Spirit, nor only with the indwelling of the Spirit through grace in order that the Spirit might accomplish certain or numerous or great works in Christ, but also because the divine nature of the Logos with its total substantial fullness dwells personally in his assumed nature (*The Two Natures in Christ*, p 328).

Gerhard: It is one and the same anointing with which the Father anointed Christ according to his human nature and with which Christ anointed his own flesh with the oil of the Deity and the fullness of his own Spirit (*Locī*, Tom. 1, loc. IV, cap I paragraph 14, p 452).

C3, I, 6. The mediatorial work of Jesus began with his conception.

a) He was born as our Savior.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

b) His circumcision, as also his presentation, were acts of obedience to the Law.

Luke 2:21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

Romans 2:25 Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised.

Luke 2:22,23 When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord").

c) In his baptism God presented him publicly as the promised Messiah.

Matthew 3:15,17 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

John 1:33 I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit."

1 John 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

Bernhard Weiss (d. 1918): The Spirit descends on Christ to equip him for his Messianic calling... For the Messiah baptism with the Spirit is directly combined with water baptism (*Das Matthäus Evangelium*, p 73).

**C3, II. It is customary to speak of a threefold office of Christ:
He is our Prophet, Priest, and King.**

C3, II, 1. This ancient tradition is based on Scripture passages which name these offices.

Deuteronomy 18:18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

Luke 13:33 In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!

Psalm 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews 4:5,6,14 And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest." ⁶ It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. ¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

Psalm 2:6 I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.

Matthew 21:5 Say to the Daughter of Zion, "See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Eusebius (d. 341): All these [OT prophets] refer to the true Christ, the divine and heavenly Logos, who alone is the High Priest of the whole world, who alone is King of the entire creation, and who alone among the prophets is the highest Prophet of his Father ... that to the present he is honored as King, admired as more than a prophet, and praised as the true and only High priest of God (*Church History*, Chap 1, p 3).

C3, II, 2. Some theologians speak of only a twofold office.

Gerhard: The office of Christ is commonly designated as threefold: prophetic, priestly, and kingly—but this can be reduced to two members, in such a way that the office of Christ is considered as twofold, priestly and kingly. For it is the work of a priest not only to sacrifice, pray, intercede, and bless, but also to teach, which is ascribed to the prophetic office (*Disputatt. isag.* p 406).

C3, II, 3. Gerhard himself shows the adequacy of the threefold division.

Gerhard: As many as the groups are into which the names which are ascribed to Christ with respect to his office and the statements of Scripture which speak about the office of Christ can be referred, so many parts of the office of Christ are also established... Because of the ignorance of our mind brought on by sin we needed a teacher or prophet. Because of our sins and the punishments of our sins we needed a priest who would reconcile us to God, make satisfaction for us, and intercede before the tribunal of God. Because of the weakness of our will we needed a king to lead and defend us. (Ibid.)

C3 A. The Prophetic Office.

C3 A, I. We study the prophetic office of Christ, pointing out various aspects, and comparing him with human prophets.

C3 A, I, 1. He was declared to be a prophet in name and by activity.

By Old Testament prophecy:

Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put

my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

Isaiah 42:1-3 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. ² He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. ³ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice.

Isaiah 50:4,10 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. ¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

Isaiah 55:4,5 See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. ⁵ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.

Isaiah 61:1,2 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.

By the testimony of eye witnesses of his ministry and by his own testimony:

Acts 3:18,22-24 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. ²² For Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people." ²⁴ Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.

John 6:14 After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

John 7:40 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet."

Luke 7:16 They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people."

Luke 24:19 "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people."

Matthew 21:11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

John 4:19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet."

Matthew 8:10 Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ.

John 12:49,50 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. ⁵⁰ I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.

John 17:8,14,26 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Note: the overlap of the office of prophet and the kingdom of grace.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Hebrews 2:3,12 How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ¹² He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises."

By the witness of his prophetic activity:

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Luke 4:15 He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

By the witness of his miraculous signs which testified to his prophetic office:

John 3:2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

John 7:31 Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"

John 9:17 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet."

John 10:25,28 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand."

John 12:37 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.

C3 A, I, 2. He was a prophet from his birth.

Colossians 1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.

Colossians 2:3,9 In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁹For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

John 1:4,5,9,14 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. ⁹ The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

Luke 2:32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

As the eternal Λόγος his prophetic activity can be traced before his incarnation:

1 Peter 1:11 [The prophets were] trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Genesis 16:7,13,14 The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. ¹³ She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." ¹⁴ That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

Genesis 31:11,13 The angel of God said to me in the dream, "Jacob." I answered, "Here I am." ¹³ "I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land."

Exodus 3:2,4,6 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." ⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

C3 A, I, 3. He spoke with divine authority (truly, I say to you).

Scripture makes specific statements of this truth.

John 3:31,32 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

John 6:46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.

John 7:17 If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

John 8:38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father.

His authority was recognized by those who heard him.

Matthew 7:29 Because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Mark 1:22 The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.

Luke 4:22,32 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. ³² They were amazed at his teaching, because his message had authority.

John 7:26,46 Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ? ⁴⁶ "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

C3 A, I, 4. Christ is the prophet for the whole world.

a) In the days of his flesh his teaching activity was limited to Israel.

Matthew 15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

Matthew 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans."

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles."

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Romans 9:4 Theirs [Israel] is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.

Romans 15:8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs.

John 12:20-23 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. ²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

b) Christ now brings God's message to the whole world.

Isaiah 49:6 He says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Isaiah 55:4,5 See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. ⁵ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.

Isaiah 60:3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Haggai 2:7 "I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the LORD Almighty.

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 10:16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

Luke 2:30-32 For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

John 1:9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

Romans 10:12,17 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and

richly blesses all who call on him,¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

c) The Christian religion is the only saving religion.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

Ephesians 2:12,13 Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

1) Other religions may contain some elements of truth since they are based on the natural knowledge of God and the law.

2) They are fundamentally false, since they are built on the error of work-righteousness.

3) This teaching that salvation is by faith in Christ alone is called exclusivism, is opposed by the unbiblical teachings of pluralism (there are many ways to heaven) and inclusivism (Christianity is the best way to God among many ways).

G.W. Gilmore (d. 1933): The progress of study has already compelled a modification of earlier estimates of other religions and an increasing gentleness in discussing them. The statement can no longer be made without challenge even from Christians that the world outside of Christianity is a "welter of errors" (Calvin)... There results (1) an increasing appreciation of the discovery that religion is one, in different stages of growth, and (2) a growing willingness to grant to all religious faiths impartial examination and candid recognition of whatever excellencies they may possess (*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, "Comparative Religion," Vol 3, 1977 edition, p 192).

Vatican II, Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions: The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions. She looks with sincere respect upon those ways of conduct and life, those rules and teachings which, though differing in many particulars from what she holds and sets forth, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.... Upon the Moslems, too, the Church looks with esteem. They adore one God, living and enduring, merciful and all-powerful, Maker of heaven and earth and Speaker to man.... Consequently, they prize the moral life, and give worship to God especially through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting (*Doc.*, p 662f).

A New Catechism: Catholic Faith for Adults (1969): The great civilizations are characterized in general by polytheism.... Though mixed with sin, such as despotism and licentiousness, and with error, such as fatalism, these religions were the way in which millions of men experienced the mystery of God in their lives.... And we may be sure that our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, was at work in the wisdom of these religions, through his Holy Spirit: not manifestly, as God revealed him among the Jews, but no doubt really and profoundly (p 27). It is not for us to pass precise judgments on the elements of sin or Satanic evil which may also be found in these forms of thought. Hinduism and Buddhism set men's minds on Nirvana. Islam imprisons men in a doctrine which does not call God father. Humanism teaches children not to turn to God. Marxism holds out a future that will never come. There is some wickedness and corruption in all this. But we must trust the Spirit of God, who leaves no man untouched, and concentrate on the truth and goodness which they offer to men. And then they can also be helpful to us. The gleam of truth in another way of life can help Christians to gain a deeper and more vital conviction of Jesus' truth (p 33).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation (Paragraph 847).

"Interfaith Relations and the Churches," a statement by the National Council of Churches from a link on the ELCA Web Site: As Christians we recognize that Jesus is not central to other religious traditions. For men and women in other communities, the mystery of God takes many forms. Observing this, we are not led to deny the centrality of Christ for our faith, but to contemplate more deeply the meaning of St. Paul's affirmation: 'Ever since the creation of the world, (God's) eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things [God] has made' (Romans 1:20). Christians disagree on the nature and extent of such 'natural revelation' and its relation to salvation. No matter what our view on this may be, we can be open to the insights of others.

d) Today Christ employs the church and its ministry to carry out his prophetic work.

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Luke 10:16 He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.

Isaiah 52:6 Therefore my people will know my name; therefore in that day they will know that it is I who foretold it. Yes, it is I.

Ephesians 4:11,12 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Jeremiah 3:14,15 "Return, faithless people," declares the LORD, "for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion. ¹⁵ Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding."

Jeremiah 23:1-6 "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD. ² Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: "Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done," declares the LORD. ³ "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. ⁴ I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the LORD. ⁵ "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

Isaiah 40:6-11 A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. ⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." ⁹ You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰ See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. ¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young."

C3 A, II. Christ's message is the gospel.

C3 A, II, 1. Christ did also preach the law.

a) This was in order to make people conscious of their sins. This work is often called his "foreign work" (*alienum opus*).

Isaiah 28:21 The LORD will rise up as he did at Mount Perazim, he will rouse himself as in the Valley of Gibeon—to do his work, his strange work, and perform his task, his alien task.

Luke 10:25-28 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" ²⁷ He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" ²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

John 5:45 But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.

Apology, Article XII (V): Of Repentance: "The Lord shall be angry that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act." He calls it the strange work of the Lord when He terrifies, because to quicken and console is God's own work.

b) Christ used the law as a guide for Christian behavior. Christ explains the true meaning of the law in the Sermon on the Mount.

Formula of Concord, Ep., V., 8,10: As to the revelation of sin, because the veil of Moses hangs before the eyes of all men as long as they hear the bare preaching of the Law, and nothing concerning Christ, and therefore do not learn from the Law to perceive their sins aright, but either become presumptuous hypocrites who swell with the opinion of their own righteousness as the Pharisees, or despair like Judas, Christ takes the Law into his hands, and explains it spiritually, Matt. 5, 21ff ; Rom. 7, 14. And thus the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all sinners [Rom. 1, 18], how great it is; by this means they are directed to the Law, and then first learn from it to know aright their sins—a knowledge which Moses never could have forced out of them. ¹⁰Yet as long as all this (namely, Christ's suffering and death) proclaims God's wrath and terrifies man, it is still not properly the preaching of the gospel, but the preaching of Moses and the Law, and therefore a foreign work of Christ, by which he arrives at His proper office, that is, to preach grace, console, and quicken, which is properly the preaching of the Gospel. Also Formula of Concord, T.D., V., 10.

C3 A, II, 2. Christ's chief message was the gospel.

a) Scripture states this fact.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.)

Mark 1:14,15 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Luke 7:22 So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor."

Luke 4:43 But he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent."

John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

John 8:31,51 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ⁵¹ I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

b) When he speaks of "obeying" his word, "doing" his will, etc., these are often a reference to accepting his gospel in faith.

Romans 10:16 But not all the Israelites accepted [literally: obeyed] the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

2 Thessalonians 1:8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

1 John 3:23 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

C3 A, II, 3. The purpose of his message is to enlighten and convert sinners.

a) In other word, the goal of preaching is faith and salvation.

Luke 2:32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

John 1:9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

John 5:25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

John 8:12,51 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. ⁵¹ I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

John 10:27,28 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

John 17:6-8 I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

Acts 26:15-18 Then I asked, "Who are you, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," the Lord replied. ¹⁶ "Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

b) The rejection of the gospel hardens the hearts of the hearers.

Matthew 13:11-15 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them."

Luke 8:10 He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, "though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand."

John 12:37-40 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. ³⁸ This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" ³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them."

C3 B. The Priestly Office.

Preliminary remarks: The gospel which Christ proclaims as prophet he himself established as priest. His prophetic message is dependent on his priestly work. If he as priest produced a partial salvation, he can as prophet proclaim only a partial salvation. If he produced a conditioned justification, he can as prophet do no more than announce the conditions.

As priest he did not provide a justification which we receive only after meeting certain conditions, he provided a justification complete in every respect, which he proclaims as a ready blessing and which we receive as such through faith.

C3 B, I. Christ is attested as our high priest by being directly called so, by descriptive names which characterize his position as such, and by sacerdotal functions which he performs.

C3 B, I, 1. He is called priest and declared to be the fulfillment of Old Testament types.

Psalms 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Zechariah 6:13 It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.

Hebrews 2:17 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

Hebrews 4:14,15 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Hebrews 5:5,6,10 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." ⁶ And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." ¹⁰ [He] was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6:20 Where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:26-28 Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 8:1-4 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, ² and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. ³ Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. ⁴ If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law.

Hebrews 9:11 When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation.

Hebrews 10:21 Since we have a great priest over the house of God.

C3 B, I, 2. Since the purpose of the priesthood is to restore communion between a sinner and his offended God, also the names Mediator (Guarantee), Redeemer, and Lamb of God indicate the priesthood.

a) Mediator (Guarantee).

1 Timothy 2:5,6 For there is one God and one mediator (μεσίτης) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Hebrews 8:6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is *mediator* is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the *mediator* of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 12:24 To Jesus the *mediator* of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Hebrews 7:22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee (ἔγγυος) of a better covenant.

Galatians 3:19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a *mediator*.

b) Redeemer, לַאֲלֹהִים.

Job 19:25 I know that my Redeemer [לַאֲלֹהִים] lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

Isaiah 44:6,24 This is what the LORD says—Israel's King and *Redeemer*, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. ²⁴ This is what the LORD says— your *Redeemer*, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself.

Isaiah 49:7 This is what the LORD says—the *Redeemer* and Holy One of Israel—to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: “Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

Isaiah 59:20 “The *Redeemer* will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,” declares the LORD.

Hosea 13:14 I will ransom [לַאֲלֹהִים] them from the power of the grave; I will redeem [לַאֲלֹהִים] them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?

Psalms 103:4 Who redeems [לַאֲלֹהִים] your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.

c) Lamb of God (ἀμνός, ἀρνίον, πάσχα).

ἀμνός

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

1 Peter 1:18,19 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

ἀρνίον

Revelation 5:12 In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

Πάσχα

1 Corinthians 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

C3 B, I, 3. Priestly functions are ascribed to Christ.

- a) **He atones for sins by a sacrifice which fulfills the meaning of the Old Testament sacrifices.**
Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Hebrews 9:14,26 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 10:12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 8:3 Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer.

Hebrews 10:1,5,9,10 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. ⁵ Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.” ⁹ Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

- 1) **Old Testament sacrifices were of two basic kinds: sin and guilt offerings—and thank offerings. See Leviticus 1-7. Christ’s sacrifice was a sin offering (περι ἁμαρτίας).**
- 2) **Old Testament sin offerings had both a law and a gospel aspect.**

Hebrews 10:3 But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.

Leviticus 1:3,4 If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to offer a male without defect. He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that it will be acceptable to the LORD. ⁴ He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

Leviticus 16:20-22 When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. ²¹ He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat’s head. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. ²² The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.

The prayer for the Day of Atonement (*Talmud*): O Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have transgressed, they have rebelled, they have sinned before thee. I beseech thee now, absolve their transgression, their rebellion, and their sin that they have sinned against thee, as it is written in the law of Moses, thy servant, that on this day he shall make “an atonement for you to cleanse you from your sins, and you shall be clean.”

Quenstedt: The purpose and use of the sacrifices is twofold, legal and evangelical. The legal use was a reminder of sins, so that, namely, sinners might be admonished about the seriousness, hideousness, and guilt of their sins, and thus they were a means of arousing contrition.... The evangelical use was that they might point to that unique propitiatory sacrifice which was to be offered for us at some time on the altar of the cross and might reconcile penitent sinners to God.... Moreover they had expiatory power as types, namely, in so far as the bodies were so to speak substitutes and representative of the victim that was to be offered for the sins of the world in the fullness of time (*TDP*, P.IV. c.1.s.1.th.46-48).

- 3) **These sacrifices benefited only those who used them in faith.**

Isaiah 1:11-13 “The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?” says the LORD. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. ¹² When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? ¹³ Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies.”

Amos 5:22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them.

Psalms 51:16-19 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. ¹⁸ In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

4) Sin offerings were bloody.

-a) This is stated as a *sine qua non*.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

Hebrews 9:22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

-b) Hence "blood" often means, metonymically, the sacrificial death.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Hymn of Thomas Aquinas:
O pious Pelican, Lord Jesus,
cleanse impure me with your blood,
one drop of which is able to save
the whole world from all wickedness.
(quoted in Hoenecke III, p 228)



b) Christ makes intercession.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense [παράκλητον]—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

c) Christ pronounces benediction.

Numbers 6:23-27 Tell Aaron and his sons, "This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ²⁴ 'The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.' ²⁷ So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Luke 24:50,51 When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

John 20:19,21 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

d) Christ's is an everlasting priesthood.

Hebrews 7:23-25 Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood (ἀσράβατον ἔχει τὴν ἱερωσύνην). ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

C3 B, II. The priestly work of Christ is called obedience.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

C3 B, II, 1. It was the Father's will to save sinners through the sacrifice of his Son, and the Son agreed to carry out that will (vocational obedience).

John 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 6:57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

John 5:30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

Hebrews 10:7,10 Then I said, "Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God." ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Psalms 40:8 I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Isaiah 50:5 The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back.

C3 B, II 2. In a special sense the obedience of Christ was submission to the law.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Formula of Concord, T.D., III, 15,16: For since Christ is not man alone, but God and man in one undivided person, he was as little subject to the law, because he is the Lord of the Law, as he had to suffer and die as far as his person is concerned. For this reason, then, his obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that he in our stead was voluntarily made under the law, and fulfilled it by this obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that, on account of this complete obedience, which he rendered his heavenly Father for us, by doing and suffering, in living and dying, God forgives our sins, regards us as godly and righteous, and eternally saves us. ¹⁶ This righteousness is offered us by the Holy Spirit through the gospel and in the sacraments and is applied, appropriated, and received through faith, whence believers have reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, the grace of God, sonship, and heirship of eternal life.

C3 B, II 3. He was obedient to the commands of the law.

a) This is known as active obedience.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

Matthew 3:15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

Matthew 5:17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Luke 2:51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

John 8:46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

1 Peter 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

1 Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

b) The active obedience was vicarious (substitutionary).

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Quenstedt.: Hence the obedience of Christ, afforded in our place, is commonly said to be twofold, the active, which consists in the most perfect fulfillment of the Law, and the passive, which consists in the perfectly sufficient payment of penalties that awaited us (*TDP*, III, 244).

Hollaz: By his active obedience, Christ most exactly fulfilled the divine Law in our stead, in order that penitent sinners, applying to themselves, by true faith, this vicarious fulfillment of the Law, might be accounted righteous before God, the judge, Gal. 4:4, 5; Rom. 10:4; Matt. 5:17 (*Examen*, 737).

Anselm (d. 1109): If we say because he will give himself for obedience to God so that by steadfastly preserving righteousness he may subject himself to his will, this was not to give what God did not demand from him as his due. For every rational creature owes God this obedience (*Cur Deus Homo*, II 11, quoted in Pieper II, p 373, but see note 75 there).

c) **As Son of Man Jesus was Lord of the Law.**

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Philippians 2:6,8 [Christ] being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

C3 B, II 4. He was obedient by suffering the curse of the law.

a) **This is known as passive obedience.**

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Hebrews 10:10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

b) **This obedience was vicarious.**

C3 B, II 5. We must use caution in regard to the axiom: “The law obligates either to obedience or to punishment” (*Lex obligat vel ad obedientiam vel ad poenam*). It cannot be used to deny the need for Christ’s active obedience. (See Pieper, Volume II, p 377)

a) **As a general rule the axiom applies only to unfallen man. It does not apply to fallen man, who needs both perfect obedience and punishment for failures. The axiom does not apply to Christ who needs neither obedience or punishment for himself.**

Parsimonius (Karg) (1563) who recanted his view: The law binds to either obedience or punishment, not both at once. Therefore, because Christ endured the punishment for us, he thereby rendered obedience for himself. Also: What he rendered, that we dare not render, and are under no obligation to do it. But we must render obedience to the law. Christ, therefore, did not render obedience to the law for us, but for himself, that he might be an offering unspotted and acceptable to God (Schmid, p 355).

Quenstedt: The cause on account of which the Son of God was subject to the law was not his own obligation; for Christ not only as God, but also according to his human nature, was in no way subject to the law.... For Christ, with respect to himself, was the Lord of the entire law, and not its servant, Mark 2:28. And, although he was and is the seed of Abraham, yet, because in the unity of his person he was and is the Son of God, he was not subject to the Law with respect to himself. That consequently as Christ has nevertheless fulfilled the Law, he has done it in our stead (*TDP*, III, 246).

Gerhard: The suffering of penalties alone is not the righteousness of the law, for then it would follow that the damned most perfectly fulfill the law; since they endure the most exquisite punishments for their sins.... The passion of Christ would not have profited had it not been combined with most full and perfect obedience to the law.... The active obedience alone would not have been sufficient, because punishment was to be inflicted for the sins of the human race; the passive obedience alone would not have been sufficient, because if the sins were to be expiated, perfect obedience to each and every precept of the Law was required, i.e., the passive obedience had to be that of one who had most fully met every demand of active obedience.... Rational creatures not yet fallen into sin, the law places under either punishment or obedience. The holy angels it obliges only to obedience, but in no way to punishment. Adam, in the state of innocence, it obliges only to obedience, but not at the same time, except conditionally, to punishment. For, where there is no transgression, there is no punishment. But rational creatures that have fallen into sin, it obliges to both punishment and obedience: to obedience, so far as they are rational creatures, to punishment, because they have fallen into sin. Thus, since the Fall, Adam and all his posterity are under obligation at the same time both to punishment and to obedience, because the obligation to obedience is in no way abated by a fall, but on the other hand, a new obligation has entered, viz., that of the endurance of punishment for sin (*Loci*, vii, 70, sqq.).

b) The two forms of Christ's obedience are not to be separated mechanically.

Quenstedt: Nevertheless it must be noted that the active and passive obedience in the satisfaction of Christ are most closely connected, since his suffering was active and his active obedience involved suffering (*TDP*, II, p 407).

Quenstedt.: The distinction into active and passive obedience is not very accurate, as Dr. Mentzer well remarks, because the passive obedience does not exclude the active, but includes it, inasmuch as the latter was wonderfully active, even in the very midst of Christ's death. Hence Bernard correctly called Christ's action passive, and his passion active (*TDP*, III, 244).

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

John 18:11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

C3 B, II 6. It was the God-Man who became obedient.

Quenstedt: The obedience of Christ is an action not only of his human nature but of Christ the God-man, who, just as he was born and given for us, so also was made under the law for us, and is the end, i.e., the fulfilling, of the law not for himself, but for righteousness to every believer (*TDP*, III.c. 3. membr. 2. s. 2. q. 3. f. 407).

C3 B, III. The vicarious nature of Christ's obedience is set forth in various ways.

C3 B, III, 1. It is expressed by prepositions which convey the ideas of substitution and benefit.

a) ὑπὲρ (instead of, in place of, for).

Non-justification usage of ὑπὲρ:

Matthew 2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea *in place of* his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee,

Matthew 5:38 You have heard that it was said, "Eye *for* eye, and tooth *for* tooth."

Matthew 17:27 "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them *for* my tax and yours."

Usage in the context of justification:

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom *for* many.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom *for* many.

b) ὑπὲρ + gen. (for one's benefit, instead of – at times also, "concerning").

Non-justification usage of ὑπὲρ:

Philemon 13 I would have liked to keep him with me so that he *could take your place* in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

Usage in the context of justification:

John 11:50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die *for* the people than that the whole nation perish.

2 Corinthians 5:14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died *for* all, and therefore all died.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up *for* us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Luke 22:19,20 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given *for* you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out *for* you."

John 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give *for* the life of the world.

John 10:15 Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life *for* the sheep.

Romans 5:6,8 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died *for* the ungodly. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up *for* us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

2 Corinthians 5:15,21 And he died *for* all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died *for* them and was raised again. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin *for* us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself *for* me.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse *for* us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered *for* you, leaving you an example, that you

should follow in his steps.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death *for* everyone.

Hebrews 10:12,14,18 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice *for* sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

c) $\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}$ is usually used with sin as its object and rarely with sinners as the object. (The usage of $\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho$ is the opposite.)

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for [$\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}$] sins once for all, the righteous for [$\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho$] the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out *for* [$\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}$] many for the forgiveness of sins.

C3 B, III, 2. His death is called a sacrifice.

a) In a sacrifice the victim takes the place of the sinner (denoted by the laying on of hands).

Isaiah 53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

b) Scripture describes Christ's self-sacrifice.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Hebrews 9:14,25,26,28 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ²⁵ Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Hebrews 10:12,14,18 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹⁴ By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

1 Corinthians 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

John 17:19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

John 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

C3 B, III, 3. His death is called a ransom.

a) A ransom is the price by which a prisoner or a slave is set free, the redemption by gold or silver.

1 Peter 1:18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers.

b) On Christ's redemption

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed ($\acute{\epsilon}\xi\eta\gamma\acute{o}\rho\alpha\sigma\epsilon\nu$) us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom ($\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\nu$) for many.

1 Timothy 2:6 [Christ] gave himself as a ransom ($\tau\acute{o}\nu \acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\lambda\upsilon\tau\rho\nu$) for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Titus 2:14 [Christ] gave himself for us to redeem ($\lambda\upsilon\tau\rho\acute{\omega}\sigma\eta\tau\alpha\iota$) us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Luke 2:38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption (λύτρωσιν) of Jerusalem.

Hebrews 9:12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption (λύτρωσιν).

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought (περιποιήσατο) with his own blood.

Ephesians 1:14 Who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession (ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως) —to the praise of his glory.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging (περιποιήσιν) to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price (ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς). Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price (τιμῆς ἡγοράσθητε); do not become slaves of men.

c) Notice Christ's (and the Father's) willingness

Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Galatians 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

C3 B, III, 4. In view of the above Scripture testimony all objections to the vicariousness of Christ's obedience become invalid.

Note: Shame on sinners, who need redemption and are blessed with Christ's redemption, for criticizing God's method. We list some of these errors.

a) "God could forgive sins by his mighty power."

Perhaps—but he didn't.

Hebrews 2:17: For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Romans 3: 25-26 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

b) "It is an insult to God to attribute anger, wrath, and enmity, to him."

But God's wrath is a fact. Scripture the reality of death, and our conscience all testify to it.

Romans 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

Romans 5:9,10 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

c) "Christ's death manifests God's love."

True—but also his wrath.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

d) "It is unjust to punish the innocent for the guilty."

Although Christ was willing, yet the saying "there is no injustice done to the willing" (*volenti non fit iniuria*) does not satisfy human reason.

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

John 18:4-11 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.)⁶ When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.⁷ Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."⁸ "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go."⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"
Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

e) **"Christ could not suffer eternal damnation in a few hours."**

Yet Christ is the infinite God.

f) **"The idea of vicariousness is too juridical."**

But the entire doctrine of law, sin, wrath, judgment is juridical.

So is the doctrine of justification. Hence this "pious" objection strikes at the very heart of Christianity.

Mark Lewis Taylor: Christian scapegoating interpretations of Jesus' death bear a significant responsibility for today's theatrics of terror, as we suffer it in the form of prisons, endemic police brutality, and state-sanctioned executions. Christians who wish to counter this theatrics of terror with something really new must lay aside the scapegoating myth of Jesus' death. Jesus' execution was not a salvific event, and I have not presented it as such in this book (*The Executed God*, p 108).

Carl Braaten: The historical account is a code, a surface manifestation of a real meaning to be found on a different and transcendent level. The historical event must be translated into eternal truth about the satisfaction of God's honor, or elevated to a sublime example of dedication to whatever religious people are supposed to be dedicated to, or transcribed into a story about the deception of cosmic tyrants. None of that is evident from the event itself. It comes from the moral, mythological and metaphysical baggage we carry with us (*Christian Dogmatics*, Volume II, p 79).

From *The Lutheran*: Question: Is it true Jesus was born so he could die on the cross? Jesus was born not to die, but to live for us. If Jesus was born simply to die, Herod's soldiers could have killed him as a baby. The cross is central to our preaching because it shows the depth of God's love for us. ...Some preaching describes Jesus' death as a payment to God's wrath. This approach stresses guilt as a barrier to our entry into heaven. There is truth here, but this is only one of many ways the Scriptures proclaim the meaning of Jesus for us (March 30, 1988, p 46).

Robert Brinsmead: The penal-satisfaction theory of atonement too closely portrays God as a celestial Shylock who must have his pound of flesh before he can forgive (*Verdict*, Essay 8, 1983, p 9).

g) **"God's demand for suffering and allowing his Son to suffer foster a spirit of vindictiveness, legitimize child abuse, or endorse inappropriate parental dominance."**

Mary Daly: The model of Jesus as the supreme scapegoat, projected upon women and others for them to imitate, has contributed to their victimization. Taking on the idealized qualities of a victim, such as sacrificial love, passive acceptance of suffering, humility, and meekness, has reinforced women's subservient role (*Beyond God the Father*, summary p 75-77).

h) **"Christ's submission to the Father's will endorses submission to the point of sin and invites or enables low self-esteem, passivity, and irresponsibility."**

Mary Daly: As a uniquely masculine image and language for divinity loses credibility, so also the idea of a single divine incarnation in a human being of the male sex may give way in the religious consciousness to an increased awareness of the power of Being in all persons (*Beyond God the Father*, p 71).

Daphne Hampson: Consequently some women have wanted to say that "woman's 'sin' ... is 'the failure to take responsibility for self-actualization.'" ... For women to hear that it is their right and duty to take themselves seriously, that it matters who they are and what they think, is to turn Christian theology as they have imbibed it upside-down (*Theology and Feminism*, p 124.)

Rita Brock: We redeem Christ when we recognize the images of Jesus Christ that reflect our hunger for healing wholeness and claim those images as resources for hope because we belong to a community of transformation and empowerment ("The Feminist Redemption of Christ," in *Christian Feminism: Visions of a New Humanity*, p 74)

**C3 B, IV. The grand result of Christ's priestly work may be expressed as:
Satisfaction—Propitiation/Expiation—Reconciliation—Atonement.**

C3 B, IV, 1. Satisfaction (*satisfactio vicaria*): a non-biblical, ecclesiastical term that expresses the truth that all demands of God's righteousness have been fully satisfied.

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price (ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς).
Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price (τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε); do not become slaves of men.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought (τὸν ἀγοράσαντα) them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased (ἠγόρασας) men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

Revelation 14:3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed (οἱ ἠγορασμένοι) from the earth.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed (ἐξηγόρασεν) us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

Galatians 4:5 To redeem (ἐξαγοράσῃ) those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom (ἀπολύτρωσιν) to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις).

Ephesians 1:7,14 In him we have redemption (ἀπολύτρωσιν) through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession (ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως)—to the praise of his glory.

Colossians 1:14 In whom we have redemption (ἀπολύτρωσιν), the forgiveness of sins.

Job 19:25 I know that my Redeemer (יְלֵאֵל) lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

Isaiah 41:14 Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I myself will help you,” declares the LORD, your Redeemer (יְלֵאֵל), the Holy One of Israel.

Hosea 13:14 “I will ransom (דָּוָה) them from the power of the grave; I will redeem (דָּלָה) them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?”

Psalms 49:7,8 No man can redeem (הִדָּוֶה) the life of another or give to God a ransom (יְרָפֶה) for him—⁸ the ransom (יְרָפֶה) for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought (περιποιήσατο) with his own blood.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share (περιποιήσιν) in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging (λαὸς εἰς περιποιήσιν) to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

C3 B, IV, 2. **Propitiation/Expiation.** These are competing English renderings of Greek words based on the root ἰλασ-. “Propitiation” properly means an appeasement or changing of feelings of the gods. The heathen Greeks often used the ἰλασ-words with this meaning. In the Greek Old Testament, however, ἰλασ- words were used to render the Hebrew root כָּפַר, which means covering, full payment, expiation. כָּפַר does not mean “appeasement” in the pagan sense, as if God was angry with man until he received a sacrifice to placate him. God’s love prompted him to provide the offering, Ro 5:8, “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” In the King James Version “propitiation” was used to render the ἰλασ- words. This was not a good choice, but eventually readers of the Bible came to understand “propitiation” as a payment word, not an appeasement word. The NIV uses renderings like “atoning sacrifice.”

Leviticus 16:14,15 He is to take some of the bull’s blood and with his finger sprinkle it on the front of the atonement cover (תְּכַפֵּרֶהּ, in the LXX this is translated with ἰλαστήριον); then he shall sprinkle some of it with his

finger seven times before the atonement cover. ¹⁵ He shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering for the people and take its blood behind the curtain and do with it as he did with the bull's blood: He shall sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of it.

Hebrews 2:17 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement (τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι) for the sins of the people.

Luke 18:13 But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy (ἰλάσθητι) on me, a sinner."

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice (ἱλασμός) for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice (ἱλασμόν) for our sins.

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement (ἱλαστήριον), through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

Hoenecke: As He 2:17 shows, the basic meaning of ἱλάσκεσθαι is this: to cover sin before God with a sacrifice. But it does not mean, as Quenstedt incorrectly takes it, to make God propitious. It is not used with the accusative of the person to be reconciled, neither is ἐξιλάσκεσθαι so used.... Christian revelation teaches about a God who in mercy is favorably inclined toward us from eternity and who does not arrange for an expiation of guilt in order that he might then first become gracious, but in order that sin might be covered and his justice might not be compelled to let his wrath hold sway, but that rather he might let his everlasting mercy have free rein (III, p 193).

Anselm (d. 1109): If God shall say "You are a sinner," you say, "Lord, I interpose the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between my sins and you" (*Liber meditationum, Consolatio*, PL 158:687).

Ambrosiaster (unknown 4th century author wrongly identified with Ambrose): This expiation was by his blood [which means that] we have been set free by his death so that God might reveal him and condemn death by his passion... He nullified the sentence through which it seemed just that everyone should be condemned (*Commentary on Paul's Epistles*, CSEL 81).

Epistle to Diognetus (2nd century): O sweet exchange! O unsearchable operation! O benefits surpassing all expectation! That the wickedness of many should be hid in a single Righteous One, and that the righteousness of One should justify many transgressors (*ANF*, 1:28).

C3 B, IV, 3. Reconciliation.

- a) **These texts are speaking of a change in the world's legal status before God. Neither a change in the world's attitude (conversion) nor a change in God's attitude fits the phraseology.**

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 All this is from God, who reconciled (καταλλάξαντος) us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (καταλλαγῆς): ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 5:9-11 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled (κατηλλάγημεν) to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation (καταλλαγὴν).

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile (ἀποκαταλλάξαι) to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

- b) **Hoenecke has the best definition.**

Hoenecke: To change the relationship between God and the world in such a way that the world no longer has to appear as one that according to justice is separated from him because of sin and damnable (III, p 191).

C3 B, IV, 4. Atonement: the establishment of peace. In older usage atonement was used as a synonym for reconciliation. In more modern usage atonement is used more frequently as a synonym for satisfaction or expiation.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement (לְכַפֵּר) for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

Ephesians 2:14,17 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 20:19,21 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Isaiah 40:1,2 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

C3 B, IV, 5. In view of the above Scripture statements we must reject, or at least correct, the following theories.

a) **Triumphatorial—Christ's work terminates on Satan, forcing him to release his captives (cf. Col 2:15). Greek Fathers, Ludensians.**

Gustaf Aulén (d. 1978) describes what he calls the "classic" idea of the atonement, in contrast to the Latin and traditional Lutheran: Its central theme is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ—Christus Victor—fights against and triumphs over the powers of the world, the "tyrants" under which mankind is held in bondage and suffering, and in him God reconciles the world to him self (*Christus Victor*, p 20f). It is precisely the work of salvation wherein Christ breaks the power of evil that constitutes the atonement between God and the world (p 87).

Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Note: Was the ransom paid to the devil? No, a satisfaction is more than a ransom.

The Eastern Fathers were divided. For example, Gregory of Nyssa supported this theory; Gregory of Nazianzus opposed.

Ireneus: Therefore the almighty Word of God, who did not lack justice, acted justly even in the encounter with the apostate one [Satan] ransoming from him the things which were his own... through persuasion, not by the use of force (*Adverses haereses*, V.i.1).

Gregory of Nyssa: What, then, under these circumstances is justice? It is not the exercising any arbitrary sway over him who has us in his power, nor, by tearing us away by a violent exercise of force from his hold, thus leaving some color for a just complaint to him who enslaved man through sensual pleasure. For as they who have bartered away their freedom for money are the slaves of those who have purchased them, for they have constituted themselves their own sellers, and it is not allowable either for themselves or any one else in their behalf to call freedom to their aid... Whereas, if he wishes to pay a price to get such a one away, there is no law to prevent that. On the same principle, now that we had voluntarily bartered away our freedom, it was requisite that no arbitrary method of recovery, but the one consonant with justice should be devised by him who in his goodness had undertaken our rescue. Now this method is in a measure this; to make over to the master of the slave whatever ransom he may agree to accept for the person in his possession (*Great Catechism*, XXII). The Enemy, therefore, beholding in [Christ] such power, saw also in him an opportunity for an advance, in the exchange, upon the value of what he held. For this reason he [Satan] chooses him [Christ] as a ransom for those who were shut up in the prison of death. ...[God's] making the redemption of the captive a matter of exchange exhibits his justice, while the invention whereby he enabled the Enemy to apprehend that of which he was before incapable, is a manifestation of supreme wisdom (*Great Catechism*, XXIII).

John of Damascus (d. 749): Away with the thought that the blood of the Lord should have been offered to the tyrant (*Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 3:27)

Augsburg Confession, IV, 2: Their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by his death, has made satisfaction for our sins.

Apology, VI, 43: Besides the death of Christ is a satisfaction not only for guilt, but also for eternal death, according to Hosea 13:14, "O death, I will be your death."

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

b) Mystic—Christ's work terminates physically on man, producing an inner participation: not Christ for us, but Christ in us. Osiander, Schleiermacher, Eastern Orthodoxy, Lutheran-Orthodox dialogues, Lutheran-Catholic dialogues.

Andreas Osiander: The gospel has two parts; the first, that Christ has satisfied the justice of God; the other, that he has cleansed us from sin and justifies us by dwelling in us (quoted by Bente in *Historical Introduction to the Symbolical Books*, p 156).

Osiander: The entire fullness of the deity dwells in Christ bodily, hence in those also in whom Christ dwells....Therefore we are just by His essential righteousness....Whoever does not hold this manner of our justification is certainly a Zwinglian at heart, no matter what he may confess with his mouth....They also teach things colder than ice [who hold] that we are regarded as righteous only on account of the forgiveness of sins, and not on account of the [essential] righteousness of Christ who dwells in us through faith (ibid.).

Vladimir Lossky: The descent (*katabasis*) of the divine person of Christ makes human persons capable of an ascent (*anabasis*) in the Holy Spirit. It was necessary that the voluntary humiliation, the redemptive self-emptying of the Son of God should take place, so that fallen man might accomplish their vocation of *theosis*, the deification of created beings by created grace (*In the Image and Likeness of God*, p 97).

c) Moral influence—Christ's work terminates on man, inducing him to work out his own salvation. Abelard, Socinians, some Arminians.

Peter Abelard (d. 1142): God in Christ has united our human nature to himself and by suffering in that same nature has demonstrated to us that supreme love of which Christ himself speaks.... It now seems that we have been justified by the blood of Christ and reconciled to God in this way: through this singular act of grace made known in us...he has more fully bound us to himself by love. As a result our hearts should be set on fire by such a gift of divine grace, and true love should not hold us back from suffering anything for his sake. Therefore, our redemption through the suffering of Christ is that deeper love within us which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but also secures for us the true liberty of the children of God in order that we might do all things out of love rather than out of fear (*Expositio in Epistolam ad Romanos*, 2).

Hastings Rashdall (d. 1924): At last we have found a theory of the atonement which thoroughly appeals to reason and to conscience.... When we see in the death of Christ the most striking expression and symbol of the spirit which dominated his whole life, our recognition of the divine love which shines forth in that death ceases to be dependent upon our accepting of any of those always difficult and sometimes repulsive theories of substitutive or expiatory or objective efficacy which were once connected to it (*Idea of the Atonement*, p 360-362).

d) Rectoral—Christ's work terminates on man, inducing in him a horror of sin and God's wrath which deters him from sin and enables God to safely forgive sin. Hugo Grotius, Jonathan Edwards, John Miley.

Hugo Grotius (d. 1645): When it was determined to spare [sinners], either by instituting or not [instituting] some example against so many and so great sins, he most wisely chose the way by which the greatest number of his attributes might be manifested at the same time, namely, both his clemency and his severity or hatred of sin, and his concern for maintaining the law (*Defensio Fidei*, Ch. 5).

e) Reconciliation—Christ's work terminates on God.

1) Christ, sympathetically entering our condition, adequately repented and confessed.

2) Christ by His obedience earned the right to do as he pleases with those whom God gave him as a reward.

3) This contradicts the Bible, which says the world needed to be reconciled to God, not God to the world.

f) These are travesties of the biblical doctrine.

C3 B, V. The salvation procured by our high priest is complete in very respect.

C3 B, V, 1. It is complete *intensive*.

a) All sins are completely covered and perfect righteousness has been gained for us.

1 John 1:7 The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Romans 5:10,11 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but

we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:19-20 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."

Hebrews 10:14 Because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

b) It is proclaimed unconditionally. Not even faith is a condition or term to be met but is the receiving organ.

Ephesians 2:8 For it is *by* grace you have been saved, *through* faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

C3 B, V, 2. It is complete extensive. It covers all people without exception.

a) It applies to all people in the world.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:14,15 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

1 Timothy 2:6 Who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

b) In some passages "many" is opposed to few or to one (not to all).

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for *all* men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for *all* men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the *many* were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the *many* will be made righteous.

Isaiah 53:6,12 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us *all* (כָּלֵנוּ). ¹²Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of *many* (רַבִּימָה), and made intercession for the transgressors.

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 9:26,28 . Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes (רַבִּימָה) who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28,29 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Quenstedt: Scripture does not correct itself, but explains, when it now calls those *many* whom elsewhere it calls *all*; it does not set many in opposition to all, but to one or few (*TDP*, III, c. 3, m. 2, s. 2.q. 7.f. 459).

c) The fallen angels are not included.

Hebrews 2:16,17 For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Ephesians 1:10 To be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

d) Christ's payment is retroactive.

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.

Luke 16:22 "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side.

Romans 4:3-7: What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. ⁶ David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Acts 15:10,11 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.

Luke 10:24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

e) Christ's payment applies to the world not in *abstracto*, but to each one individually.

1 Timothy 4:10: We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone (ὕπὲρ πάντων).

f) Christ's payment covers also those who are lost.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

Hebrews 6:4-6 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

g) Christ is the only Savior.

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Romans 3:23,24 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace

through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

C3 B, V, 3. It is futile to distinguish between sufficiency of the payment (enough to pay for the sins of all people) and its efficacy (applied only to the elect). “Infinite value”—“Limited in purpose”.

Lorraine Boettner (d. 1990): While the value of the atonement was sufficient to save all mankind, it was efficient to save only the elect. ...When the atonement is made universal its inherent value is destroyed. If it is applied to all men, and if some are lost, the conclusion is that it makes salvation objectively possible for all but that it does not actually save anybody. According to the Arminian theory the atonement has simply made it possible for men to cooperate with divine grace and thus save themselves — if they will. But tell us of one cured of disease and yet dying of cancer, and the story will be equally luminous with that of one eased of sin and yet perishing through unbelief. The nature of the atonement settles its extent. If it merely made salvation possible, it applied to all men. If it effectively secured salvation, it had reference only the elect. As Dr. Warfield says, “The things we have to choose between are an atonement of high value, or an atonement of wide extension. The two cannot go together.” The work of Christ can be universalized only by evaporating its substance. Let there be no misunderstanding at this point. The Arminian limits the atonement as certainly as does the Calvinist. The Calvinist limits the extent of it in that he says it does not apply to all persons (although as has already been shown, he believes that it is efficacious for the salvation of the large proportion of the human race); while the Arminian limits the power of it, for he says that in itself it does not actually save anybody. The Calvinist limits it quantitatively, but not qualitatively; the Arminian limits it qualitatively, but not quantitatively. For the Calvinist it is like a narrow bridge which goes all the way across the stream; for the Arminian it is like a great wide bridge which goes only half-way across. As a matter of fact, the Arminian places more severe limitations on the work of Christ than does the Calvinist (*The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, Ch, XII, Limited Atonement, par. 3).

a) “Christ died for his people.”

True—but only for them?

Calvin: It is clear that salvation is freely offered to some while others are barred from access to it, on account of God’s pleasure (*Inst.* III, XXII, 1 as quoted by McGrath in *Christian Theology Reader*, p 233).

b) “Christ gave his life for many (namely, the elect)”.

See the section on “many” in 2,b above.

Matthew 22:14 For many are invited, but few are chosen.

c) “Christ would not pray for the reprobate, then much less would he die for them.”

1) Christ did and does make special intercession for his own.

John 17:9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

2) He did also pray for those who were never converted.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

C3 B, VI. By his priestly work Christ established Christian liberty.

C3 B, VI, 1. By raising Christ from the dead God declared every sinner to be righteous.

a) This is objective justification.

Romans 3:23,24 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins (διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα) and was raised to life for our justification (διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν).

Romans 5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

2 Corinthians 5:19,21 That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

b) This is the message with which Christ sent his apostles into the world.

John 17:18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

2 Corinthians 5:18,19 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the

ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

c) Through this announcement objective justification becomes subjective.

Explanation to the Third Article of the Creed in Luther's Small Catechism: "in which Christian Church he daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers."

C3 B, VI, 2. Through faith in this message sinners know that they are freed from God's wrath and enjoy peace of conscience.

Romans 5:9,10 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Romans 8:1,31-39 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

C3 B, VI, 3. The state of being under the law is replaced by the state of grace.

a) We stand in grace.

Romans 5:1,2 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Galatians 4:5 To redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Galatians 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

1 Timothy 1:9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous (ὅτι δικαίῳ νόμος οὐ κείται) but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers.

b) Christians will carefully guard this precious liberty.

Galatians 5:1-4 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ² Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. ³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Colossians 2:16,17,20 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

c) In regard to adiaphora they will neither despise a weak brother nor give offense to him.

Romans 14:1,10,13 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

1 Corinthians 8:9,13 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹³ Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

1 Corinthians 10:31-33 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. ³² Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—³³ even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be

saved.

Philippians 2:3,4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

C3 B, VI, 4. The image of God, restored through justification, will impel a renewing in the manner of living. Note even the natural effect of “good news”:

Genesis 45:27 But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

a) Freedom is not license (licentiousness).

John 8:34,36 Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Romans 6:1,2 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom

Galatians 5:1,13 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ¹³ You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

1 Peter 2:16 Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.

b) This freedom means a strenuous effort in sanctification.

1 Peter 1:17-19 Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Romans 6:4-7 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Romans 8:4 In order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Romans 14:8,9 If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

C3 B, VI, 5. The presence of defects and adversity shows that the complete revelation of our freedom is a matter of faith and hope.

a) Our real life is hidden.

Colossians 3:3,4 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

1 Corinthians 15:43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

b) It is a striving not a having attained.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:13 Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

c) Perfection is held out for the future life.

John 6:40,54 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁴Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 10:28,29 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

2 Timothy 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

C3 B, VII. Christ is carrying on his sacerdotal work in the state of exaltation by making intercession for us.

C3 B, VII, 1. The vicarious atonement was completed during the exinanition.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Hebrews 9:12,24-26 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all [ἐφάπαξ] by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. ²⁴ For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. ²⁵ Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

C3 B, VII, 2. During the exinanition Christ's prayers were both expiatory and intercessory.

a) Expiatory, as vicarious fulfillment of the Second Commandment.

b) Intercessory, as pleas for sinners.

1) For those who never came to faith.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

2) For his first disciples.

Luke 22:32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

John 17:9,11,15,17,24 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. ²⁴ "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

3) For his disciples of all time.

John 17:20 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.

C3 B, VII, 3. In the state of exaltation Jesus' prayers are only intercessory not expiatory. He now applies to us the once and for all sacrifice for sin.

a) He claims forgiveness for us.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding (ἐντυγχάνει) for us.

Hebrews 7:24,25 But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede (τὸ ἐντυγχάνειν) for them.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear (ἐμφανισθῆναι) for us in God's presence.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense (παράκλητον)—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

b) This intercession is real. About the manner nothing is revealed.

1) The intercession is real.

Quenstedt: Christ is not a metaphorical priest; therefore he does not make intercession only metaphorically (*TD*, c.3, membr.2.s.2.q.10. f. 472).

2) **Many of the most common verbs for prayer, like εὔχεσθαι, δεῖσθαι, αἰτεῖν, ἐρωτᾶν, are not used. Christ is not so much asking for something as making a legal claim.**

3) **When used of men the expressions for Christ's intercession denote a verbal petition, presenting a case.**

Acts 25:24 Festus said: "King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned (ἐμέτευχον) me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer."

Romans 11:2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed (ἐντυγχάνει) to God against Israel.

Acts 25:2 Where the chief priests and Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.

C3 B, VII, 4. The intercession continues till Judgment Day.

a) **Then Christ's mediatorship will have achieved its purpose.**

1 Corinthians 15:24,28 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

b) **The fruits will endure throughout eternity.**

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

C3 B, VII, 5. Christ is our only intercessor.

a) **He is Paraclete in a different manner from the Spirit.**

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

John 14:16,26 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Romans 8:26,27 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes (ὑπερεντυγχάνει) for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes (ἐντυγχάνει) for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Galatians 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

b) **It is blasphemy against Christ's role as sole mediator to address prayer to departed saints.**

1) **There is no evidence that the saints in heaven know specific details of life on earth.**

Isaiah 63:16 But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

2) **Even though the saints may, in a general way, intercede for the church, nowhere does Scripture command us to pray to them.**

Revelation 6:9,10 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. ¹⁰ They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

Augsburg Confession, XXI, 1-2: Of the Worship of Saints they teach that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works, according to our calling, as the Emperor may follow the example of David in making war to drive away the Turk from his country, for both are kings. But the Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints or to ask help of saints, since it sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor.

Apology, XXI, 8-10 Besides, we also grant that the angels pray for us. For there is a testimony in Zech. 1:12, where an angel prays: "O Lord of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem?" Although concerning the saints we concede that, just as, when alive, they pray for the church universal in general, so in heaven they pray for the church in general, albeit no testimony concerning the praying of the dead is extant in the Scriptures, except the dream taken from the Second Book of

Maccabees, 15:14. Moreover, even supposing that the saints pray for the Church ever so much, yet it does not follow that they are to be invoked; although our Confession affirms only this, that Scripture does not teach the invocation of the saints, nor that we are to ask the saints for aid. But since neither a command, nor a promise, nor an example can be produced from the Scriptures concerning the invocation of saints, it follows that conscience can have nothing concerning this invocation that is certain.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship. The Church rightly honors the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of Mother of God, to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs. This very special devotion differs essentially from the adoration which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration. The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an epitome of the whole Gospel, express this devotion to the Virgin Mary (Paragraph 971).

Pomazansky: When the common conviction of the sanctity of the reposed person is confirmed by special testimonies, such as martyrdom, fearless confession, self-sacrificing service to the Church, the gift of healing, and especially when the Lord confirms the sanctity of the reposed person by miracles after his death when he is remembered in prayer - then the Church glorifies him in a special way...When this happens, prayers for the forgiveness of the sins of the departed one and for his repose cease; they give way to other forms of Church communion with him, namely: a) the praising of his struggles in Christ...b) petitions to him that he might pray for us, for the remission of our sins, for our moral advancement, and that he might help us in our spiritual needs and in our sorrows (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 314-315).

c) Christians carry on their intercession for one another as those who have received a royal priesthood under Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Revelation 1:6 And has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

Revelation 5:10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.

C3 B, VIII. In conclusion we remind ourselves once more that in his vicarious obedience, in his propitiatory sacrifice, in his priestly intercession, Christ acts according to both his divine and his human nature. The God-Man in both natures is the Savior of mankind.

C3 C. The Kingly Office.

C3 C, I. Christ our mediator according to both natures governs and controls all things in heaven, on earth, and in hell.

C3 C, I, 1. Christ is called king or described as king in many passages.

Psalm 2:6 I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.

Psalm 45:1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

Psalm 72:1 Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

Jeremiah 23:5,6 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

Ezekiel 37:24 My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees.

Isaiah 9:6,7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Psalm 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

John 12:13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"

Luke 1:33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

John 1:49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

John 18:33-37 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"³⁴ "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"³⁵ "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"³⁶ Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Ephesians 1:21-23 Far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Colossians 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

C3 C, I, 2. In the Bible "kingdom" (βασιλεία) most often means the exercise of kingly authority (kingship).

a) Christ's kingdom is an exercise of power.

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:18,20 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebul.²⁰ But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

Acts 1:6 So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Luke 17:21 Nor will people say, "Here it is," or "There it is," because the kingdom of God is within you.

b) To call the church the kingdom (of God, of Christ, of heaven) is an ecclesiastical metonymy.

1) It is legitimate.

2) It must not be read into Bible passages as their primary meaning.

Apology, VII, 13: For it is necessary to understand what it is that principally makes us members, that is, living members, of the church. If we will define the church only as an outward polity of the good and wicked, men will not understand that the kingdom of Christ is righteousness of heart and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Small Catechism, Lord's Prayer, Second Petition: Thy kingdom come. *What does this mean?*

Answer. The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also. *How is this done?* Answer. When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life here in time and yonder in eternity.

C3 C, I, 3. The kingdom was given to Christ.

a) It was given to him according to his human nature.

Psalms 2:6 I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Ephesians 1:20 [the power] which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

b) It was given to him at his incarnation.

Luke 1:31-33 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

Matthew 2:2 Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

C3 C, I, 4. Christ's kingdom is universal, unlimited, everlasting (Psalm 72).

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Hebrews 2:8 "And put everything under his feet." In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.

Luke 1:33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

C3 C, II. The manner of Christ's kingship varies with the attitude or state of the person to whom it extends. The commonly used threefold division of Christ's kingdom (power, grace, and glory) must not obscure the fact that God's kingdom is really one ruling activity which is here viewed from three different angles. The three kingdoms are not exclusive of each other.

C3 C, II, 1. Kingdom of Power (*regnum potentiae*).

a) Christ rules over all things by his laws.

Psalm 8:6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.

Daniel 7:14,27 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.

Colossians 1:16,17 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

1 Peter 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Matthew 11:25-28 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. ²⁷ All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

b) His rule extends even over his enemies (*regnum iustitiae*).

Psalms 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

1 Corinthians 15:25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Hebrews 10:12,13 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool.

c) Christ exercises this kingdom in the interest of the church.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

C3 C, II, 2. Kingdom of Grace (*regnum gratiae*).

a) In this kingdom Christ conveys spiritual blessings on his subjects through his gospel.

Romans 14:17,18 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

Jeremiah 23:5 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land."

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

b) The only means by which he exercises this kingship is the gospel.

Matthew 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Also Matthew 9:35, Luke 8:1.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

Luke 4:43 But he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent."

Luke 16:16 The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

c) Christ brings men to faith and unites them in faith.

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Romans 1:16,17 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

2 Corinthians 10:4,5 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they

have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Acts 20:32 Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Matthew 16:18,19 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

d) He endows the believers with spiritual gifts, both sanctifying gifts (*dona sanctificantia*) and gifts for ministry (*dona ministrantia*).

1 Corinthians 1:5-7 For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge— ⁶ because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. ⁷ Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift (χαρίσματος) as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

1 Corinthians 12:4-12 There are different kinds of gifts (χαρισμάτων), but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service (διακονιών), but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. ¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

Romans 12:4-8 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts [χαρίσματα], according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Ephesians 4:7,11 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

e) Under his gracious rule his believers are empowered in their struggle against their enemies (church militant).

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Ephesians 6:12-18 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

f) This kingdom is not now visible (neither the king, nor his ruling, nor the beneficiaries). Perceiving it is a matter of faith.

Luke 17:20,21 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, ²¹ nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you" (ἐντὸς ὑμῶν).

John 3:8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

John 18:36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

John 17:6,14,17 I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 10:14,27 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Ephesians 4:4-7 There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

g) His kingdom will continue to all eternity.

Matthew 28:20 And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

h) We are not to look for an earthly millennial kingdom. Revelation 20 makes three main points.

1) It emphasizes the world-wide spread of the gospel made possible by the binding of Satan.

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

2) It emphasizes the rule of the saints in heaven.

Revelation 20:4-6 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

3) It emphasizes the loosing of Satan for the "short season" at the end.

Revelation 20:7-15 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. ⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵ If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Acts 14:22 Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

i) The papacy is the brazen rival of Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article IV, 10-14: This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained nor commanded by God. 11] This is, properly speaking to exalt himself above all that is called God as Paul says, 2 Thess. 2, 4. Even the Turks or the Tartars, great enemies of Christians as they are, do not do this, but they allow whoever wishes to believe in Christ, and take bodily tribute and obedience from Christians. The Pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that to be saved a person must obey him. This we are unwilling to do, even though on this account we must die in God's name. This all proceeds from the fact that the Pope has wished to be called the supreme head of the Christian Church by divine right. Accordingly he had to make himself equal and superior to Christ, and had to cause himself to be proclaimed the head and then the lord of the Church, and finally of the whole world, and simply God on earth, until he has dared to issue commands even to the angels in heaven. And when we distinguish the Pope's teaching from, or measure and hold it against, Holy Scripture, it is found that the Pope's teaching, where it is best, has been taken from the imperial and heathen law and treats of political matters and decisions or rights, as the Decretals show; furthermore, it teaches of ceremonies concerning churches, garments, food, persons and similar puerile, theatrical and comical things without measure, but in all these things nothing at all of Christ, faith, and the commandments of God. Lastly, it is nothing else than the devil himself, because above and against God he urges and disseminates his papal falsehoods concerning masses, purgatory, the monastic life, one's own works and fictitious divine worship (for this is the very Papacy), and condemns, murders and tortures all Christians who do not exalt and honor these abominations of the Pope above all things. Therefore, just as little as we can worship the devil himself as Lord and God, we can endure his apostle, the Pope, or Antichrist, in his rule as head or lord. For to lie and to kill, and to destroy body and soul eternally, that is wherein his papal government really consists, as I have very clearly shown in many books.

C3 C, II, 3. Christ's Kingdom of Glory (*regnum gloriae*).

a) The exalted Christ at the right hand of the Father is the glorious king.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

Revelation 5:12,13 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Galatians 1:5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:16 Who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

b) The kingly function of Christ includes the resurrection and the final judgment.

John 5:21-23,28,29 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.²⁸ Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Revelation 6:16,17 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

c) Then his glory will be revealed and his subjects will enjoy indescribable bliss in his presence.

John 17:24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Matthew 25:34 Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."

1 Thessalonians 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Revelation 21:1-5 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his

people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” ⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

d) Only the elect will inherit this kingdom; only the church militant will become the church triumphant.

Romans 8:30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

1 Peter 1:5 Who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

D. SOTERIOLOGY

This part of dogmatics, dealing with the personal appropriation of the merits of Christ by a sinner, deals with:

1. **Faith, the proper attitude of the heart**
2. **The means of grace, that produce and preserve faith**
3. **The order of salvation, the various phases of God's activity relating to faith**
4. **The church, that is, the communion of believers**
5. **The office (function) of the public ministry**
6. **The Antichrist**

D1. Faith

D1, I. Faith occupies a central position in the New Testament (that is, in the gospel covenant).

D1, I, 1. The New Testament proclaims reconciliation and union between God and mankind.

a) **Christ re-established union between God and the sinners.**

1) **Sin separates people from God.**

Isaiah 59:2 Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Isaiah 64:7 No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins.

Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

2) **Christ brought about a reconciliation.**

2 Corinthians 5:19 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Daniel 9:24 Seventy "sevens" are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

Ephesians 2:15b-16 His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,¹⁶ and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

Colossians 1:19-20 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

b) **This union is proclaimed and offered for sinners to receive and to enjoy. Receiving the offered reconciliation is called believing.**

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Acts 2:44 All the believers (οἱ πιστεύοντες) were together and had everything in common.

Acts 4:4 But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

Acts 8:13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

Acts 17:12 Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

c) **Faith is the uniting bond in a sinner's renewed union with God.**

1) **Through faith there is peace with God.**

John 1:12 To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 17:20,21 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Romans 5:1,2 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Galatians 3:26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

2) Those who receive this peace are simply called believers.

Acts 5:14 More and more men and women believed (πιστεύοντες) in the Lord and were added to their number.

1 Timothy 4:12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers (τύπος γίνου τῶν πιστῶν) in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Corinthians 6:6 One brother goes to law against another—and this in front of unbelievers (ἄπιστων).

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers (ἄπίστοις). For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

D1, I, 2. The dominance of faith is emphasized in various ways in the New Testament.

a) Sometimes the centrality of faith is stated directly.

1) The “law of faith” (the faith principle) is set in contrast to the law of works and ordinances.

Romans 3:27 Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith (διὰ νόμου πίστεως).

Ephesians 2:14-15 He himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace.

Colossians 2:13-14 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

Galatians 3:2,5 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως)? ⁵ Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως)?

2) The ratifying of the New Testament is the “coming” of faith.

Galatians 3:23,25 Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁵ Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

b) Sometimes the centrality of faith is stated less directly, but clearly.

1) For salvation sinners are asked only to believe.

John 3:16 God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Acts 16:30-31 He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Ephesians 2:8 It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2) A person’s relation to the New Testament revelation may be seen as a reflection of his attitude toward faith (or the faith).

Acts 6:7 The word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith (ὑπήκουον τῇ πίστει).

Romans 1:5 Through him and for his name’s sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith (εἰς ὑπακοήν πίστεως).

Romans 16:26 [The message of Jesus Christ is] now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him (εἰς ὑπακοήν πίστεως).

Galatians 1:23 They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith (εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν πίστιν) he once tried to destroy.”

Jude 3,20 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. ²⁰ But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

c) The coexisting emotions of love and hope are not to be excluded, although faith remains the primary and fundamental factor.

Love

John 14:23 Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

1 John 4:7,16,19 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us.

Hope

Romans 8:24 In this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?

1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 3:15 In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Faith and love

John 16:27 The Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

Galatians 5:6 In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love (πίστις δι’ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη).

Ephesians 3:16-18 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

1 Timothy 1:14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

Faith and hope

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 1:23 Continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Hebrews 11:1 Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Faith, hope, and love

1 Corinthians 13:13 Now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

D1, I, 3. The terms πίστις and πιστεύειν are used also to denote things other than saving faith in Christ.

a) The word πίστις may denote faithfulness, trustworthiness.

Romans 3:3 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God’s faithfulness?

Galatians 5:22,23 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Titus 2:10 [Teach slaves] not to steal from [their masters], but to show that they can be fully trusted (πᾶσαν πίστιν ἐνδεικνυμένους), so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

b) The term πίστις may refer to assurance, confidence in conscience.

Romans 14:22,23 Whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. ²³ But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

c) The word πίστις may have reference to a faith in God's power to do miracles.

1 Corinthians 13:2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

Luke 17:5,6 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" ⁶ He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."

Acts 14:9-10 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed ¹⁰ and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

Matthew 17:19-20 The disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" ²⁰ He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

d) Faith may refer to belief in a human statement.

1 Corinthians 11:18 I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it.

1 Corinthians 13:7 [Love] always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

D1, I, 4. In the language of the church, faith is often distinguished as "subjective faith" and "objective faith."

a) This difference is stated also in the following words:

1) *Fides qua creditur* or *fides subjectiva*. The faith with which it is believed is subjective faith (trust, reliance).

2) *Fides quae creditur* or *fides objectiva*. The faith which is believed is objective (doctrine).

See, e.g., Lenski on Ga 1:23, ἡ πίστις: All these churches heard not only that Paul was gospelizing but that he was gospelizing the faith he once sought to wipe out. What faith was that? The one the Twelve preached — no other. In Jerusalem, the mother church, whither the Twelve often returned, and in all the Judean churches Paul's gospel was acknowledged as the one original faith. What do the Judaizers mean with their falsifications? Here there is another plain example of ἡ πίστις used in the objective sense: "the faith" = the gospel = the doctrine, which contradicts the statement of Cremer-Koegel that this word is never used objectively.

b) Different types of subjective faith are recognized by the church.

1) **Justifying faith (*fides justificans*) is reliance on Jesus and his atoning work.**

2) **Historical faith (*fides historica*) is intellectual acceptance of the Bible record.**

D1, I, 5. In Scripture πίστις occurs mainly in the subjective sense, meaning justifying faith.

a) There are many examples of the use of πίστις in the subjective sense.

Hebrews 11:1 Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Galatians 5:6 In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Ephesians 2:8 It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Romans 4:5 To the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

b) A figurative use of πίστις, for example in personification or metonymy (content), is not excluded.

Galatians 3:23,25 Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁵ Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

c) The word πίστις also appears to be used in the objective sense (for the object of trust, the doctrine).

Jude 3,20 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. ²⁰ But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

1 Timothy 3:9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.

1 Timothy 4:1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

Romans 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming.

Galatians 1:23 They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

d) Subjective faith must never be divorced from its content.

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Acts 16:31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

D1, I, 6.

A number of attributes of faith have been described with various terms.

a) We may speak of a true or genuine faith, or of a dead, hypocritical faith.

1 Timothy 1:5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere (ἀνυποκρίτος) faith.

James 2:17 Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

b) We may speak of a great, little, or weak faith.

Matthew 15:28 Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Matthew 8:10 When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith."

1 Peter 5:9 Resist [the devil], standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Matthew 6:30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Matthew 8:26 He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

Matthew 14:31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

Matthew 16:8 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread?"

Romans 14:1 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

c) We may speak of faith hypothetically or as a demonstrated reality.

James 2:14-26 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. ²⁰ You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. ²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶ As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

D1, II. Faith is essentially trust and confidence.

D1, II, 1. That faith is essentially confidence is stated directly in various passages.

Hebrews 11:1 Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Romans 4:19-21 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. ²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

D1, II, 2. Contrast these departures from the truth with the Bible’s declarations:

Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Canon XII: If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing but trust in the divine mercy which forgives sins for Christ’s sake, or that we are justified by this faith alone, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Canon XIV: If anyone says that a man is absolved from sins and justified by believing with certainty that he is absolved and justified, or that no one is justified except the man who believes that he is justified or that by this faith alone absolution and justification are brought about, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, Cap. VIII: But when the apostle says that a man is justified by faith and freely, these words must be understood in the following sense, namely, that we are said to be justified by faith because faith is the beginning of a man’s salvation, the basis and source (root) of the whole justification.

D1, II, 3. That faith is trust or confidence is also indicated by the prepositions used.

a) With the Accusative: εἰς, ἐπί, πρὸς

εἰς

Matthew 18:6 If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe *in* me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

John 3:16,18,36 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes *in* him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁸Whoever believes *in* him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed *in* the name of God’s one and only Son. ³⁶ Whoever believes *in* the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.

John 11:25,26 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes *in* me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes *in* me will never die. Do you believe this?”

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed *in* (εἰς + acc.)? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? See also v. 11: As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts *in* him (ἐπί + dative) will never be put to shame.”

Galatians 2:16 [We] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith *in* Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

ἐπί

Matthew 27:42,43 “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe *in* him. ⁴³ He trusts *in* God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Romans 4:5 To the man who does not work but trusts [upon] God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith *in* God.

πρὸς

1 Thessalonians 1:8 The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith *in* God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it.

Philemon 5 I hear about your faith *in* the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.

b) With the Dative: ἐπί, ἐν

ἐπί

1 Peter 2:6 In Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts *in* him will never be put to shame.”

ἐν

John 3:15 Everyone who believes *in* him may have eternal life.

Ephesians 1:15 I heard about your faith *in* the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.

D1, II, 4. Faith is described in Scripture as a matter of the heart. (In this connection it is important to observe the biblical meaning of “heart,” which involves intellect, emotion, and will – that is, the whole inner life of a human being.)

Intellect

Job 17:4 You have closed their minds (ⲓⲛⲧ) to understanding; therefore you will not let them triumph.

Psalms 45:1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

Emotion

Psalms 4:7 You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound.

Psalms 13:2,5 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? ⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

Will

Job 17:11 My days have passed, my plans are shattered, and so are the desires of my heart.

Psalms 7:10 My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.

Psalms 21:2 You have granted him the desire of his heart and have not withheld the request of his lips.

a) With this biblical meaning of heart in mind we observe how faith is said to be a matter of the heart.

Romans 10:9,10 If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Luke 24:25 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!”

Acts 15:9 He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.

Ephesians 3:16-17 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

b) The following clarification regarding faith as trust is in place:

1) Faith may be said to presuppose a certain knowledge and assent.

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

John 3:11,12 I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?

2) Though people may know about Christ, they are called unbelievers if they do not put their trust in him.

2 Corinthians 4:3,4 Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Romans 11:23 If they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

John 3:18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

Quenstedt: The *materia ex qua* (the stuff of which something is made), as it were, are the material parts of faith, of which there are three: knowledge, assent, and confidence (*TDP*, pars IV, cap. VIII, sect. 1, thes. V, p 282).

Edward W. A. Koehler (d. 1951): A faith without knowledge is an impossibility. But a bare intellectual knowledge of the gospel is not faith; it is a prerequisite, but it is not a part of faith. [?] The fact that a person is well versed in the doctrines of the Bible does not prove that he also believes them. Nevertheless, such knowledge is necessary, inasmuch as it is the means through which the Holy Spirit works on the heart to produce faith. For no truth can touch and affect the heart unless it first be in the mind. “All who wish to be saved ought to hear this preaching of God’s Word. For the preaching and hearing of God’s Word are the instruments of the Holy Spirit, by, with, and through which He

desires to work efficaciously, and to convert men to God, and to work in them both to will and to do”
(*A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, p 137-138, and citing FC, TD, Art. II, 52, p 901).

D1, II, 5. Faith governs and controls understanding.

a) This truth is expressed in a number of ways.

2 Corinthians 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Philippians 4:7 The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

1 Corinthians 1:5 In him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge.

2 Corinthians 3:14-16 Their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Matthew 13:10-17 The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” ¹¹ He replied, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: ‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’ ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. ¹⁷ For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.”

b) Because faith governs understanding, knowledge is sometimes used as a synonym for faith.

1) Blessings acquired through faith are also ascribed to knowledge.

John 17:3 This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Luke 1:76-77 You, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, ⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.

2) Knowledge is sometimes described as an experiencing of the truth.

John 7:17 If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

Philippians 3:8 I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

1 Timothy 2:4 [God our Savior] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:18 Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Ephesians 4:13 . . . until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

c) To demonstrate how faith influences and governs understanding, the Bible often refers to the knowledge of faith as enlightenment and as spiritual wisdom.

Enlightenment

2 Corinthians 4:6 God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Ephesians 1:18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

Ephesians 5:8 You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

Matthew 4:16 The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Luke 1:76, 79 You, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, ⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

1 Peter 2:9 You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Spiritual wisdom

Ephesians 1:7-8 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Ephesians 1:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

Colossians 1:9 Since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

D1, II, 6. Faith also influences and governs the will.

a) This may explain why faith itself is sometimes called obedience, that is, submission to the gracious will of God.

Romans 1:5 Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith (εις υπακοην πιστεως).

Romans 10:16 Not all the Israelites accepted the good news (υπηκουσαν τω ευαγγελιω). For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

Romans 15:18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done.

Romans 16:19,26 Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. ²⁶ but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him (εις υπακοην πιστεως).

2 Corinthians 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

b) The impact of faith on the will is prominent in the producing of sanctification or holy living as a fruit of faith.

Romans 6:12-14 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Galatians 5:16,22-25 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Apology, Art. III, Triglotta, p 204, par. 183: Furthermore, if any sophist cavils that righteousness is in the will, and therefore it cannot be ascribed to faith, which is in the intellect, the reply is easy, because in the schools even such persons acknowledge that the will commands the intellect to assent to the Word of God. We say also quite clearly: Just as the terrors of sin and death are not only thoughts of the intellect, but also horrible movements of the will fleeing God's judgment, so faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will, i.e., it is to wish and to receive that which is offered in the promise, namely, reconciliation and remission of sins.

D1, II, 7. The Roman Catholic Church denies the description of faith given above.

a) The Church of Rome often speaks of saving faith as a mere intellectual (submissive) assent to the dogmas of the church combined with good works.

Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Canon XII: If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing but trust in the divine mercy which forgives sins for Christ's sake, or that we are justified by this faith alone, let him be damned.

Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274): To believe is an act of the intellect according to which it is moved by the will to accept something as true. Therefore love, coupled with reverence, is the foundation (principal thing) of faith... Now it is evident from what has been said (Article 1), that the act of faith is directed to the object of the will, i.e. the good, as to its end: and this good which is the end of faith, viz. the Divine Good, is the proper object of love (charity). Therefore love is called the form [essence] of faith in so far as the act of faith is perfected and formed by love... Charity is called the form of faith because it quickens the act of faith (*Summa*, II, II, q4).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 143, 144: By faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God. With his whole being man gives his assent to God the revealer. Sacred Scripture calls this human response to God, the author of revelation, "the obedience of faith." To obey (from the Latin *ob-audire*, to "hear or listen to") in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself. Abraham is the model of such obedience offered us by Sacred Scripture. The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 181: "Believing" is an ecclesial act. The Church's faith precedes, engenders, supports and nourishes our faith. The Church is the mother of all believers. "No one can have God as Father who does not have the Church as Mother" (St. Cyprian, *De unit.* 6: PL 4, 519).

b) Various Roman Catholic distinctions regarding faith illustrate what they believe and teach.

1) They contrast assent without knowledge with assent with knowledge

-a) Implicit faith (*fides implicita* or *carbonaria*; *Koehlerglaube*), that is, simple assent to the doctrines of the church even without any knowledge of them.

Gabriel Biel (d. 1495): *Fides implicita* (implicit faith) by which a believer believes what the church believes is most useful for a believer (See Quenstedt, *TDP*, pars IV, cap. VIII, sect. 1, thes. V, antithes. I, p 289).

Bellarmino (d. 1621): The mysteries of faith that go beyond our reason we believe. We do not understand them, and by this [criterion] faith is distinguished from knowledge and is better defined as ignorance than as knowledge (See Quenstedt, *TDP*, cap. VII, 11, p 409).

Hieronymus Kromayer (d. 1670), referring the doctrine of Rome: Faith is not knowledge but rather ignorance (*Theol. pos. pol.*, art. XI, thes. IX, antithes., p 654).

Quenstedt, referring to the doctrine of Rome: Implicit faith [is the faith] by which we believe those things about which we know nothing but which we think are known to those about whose faith we consider it a crime to have doubts (*TDP*, pars IV, cap. VIII, sect. 1, thes. V, antithes. I, p 288).

-b) Explicit faith (*fides explicita*), that is, assent coupled with knowledge.

Vatican I, Chap. 3: The assent of faith is by no means a blind movement of the soul.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 155: "In faith, the human intellect and will co-operate with divine grace: 'Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command of the will moved by God through grace'" [St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 2, 9; cf *Dei Filii* 3; DS 3010].

2) Assent without works vs. assent with works

-a) "Unformed" faith (*fides informis*), that is, faith not animated by love, mere intellectual assent that does not save.

Galatians 5:6 In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love (πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη= faith working itself out in love; the Roman Catholic interpretation is: faith worked by love).

Council of Trent, VI, cap. 6: Believing that the things which are divinely revealed and promised are true, and this first of all: that the ungodly are justified by God through his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

The Catholic Encyclopedia: Since our Divine adoption and friendship with God is based on perfect love of God or charity, dead faith devoid of charity (*fides informis*) cannot possess any justifying power. Only such faith as is active in charity and good works (*fides caritate formata*) can justify man, and this even before the actual reception of baptism or penance, although not without a desire of the sacrament (cf. Trent, Sess. VI, cap. iv, xiv). But, not to close the gates of heaven against pagans and those non-Catholics, who without their fault do not know or do not recognize the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance, Catholic theologians unanimously hold that the desire to receive these sacraments is implicitly contained in the serious resolve to do all that God has commanded, even if His holy will should not become known in every detail (Online Edition, "Faith").

-b) Faith “formed” by love (*fides caritate formata*) and therefore active in producing love and thus able to save.

Vatican I: Therefore faith in itself, even if it does not work through love, is a gift of God, and what it does is a work that has something to do with salvation. By it a man offers free obedience (the obedience of his free will) to God himself by assenting and cooperating with His grace which he could resist.

Vatican II: The same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts (*Documents*, p 114).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1991: Justification is . . . the acceptance of God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness (or 'justice') here means the rectitude of divine love. With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.

Compare with Socinus (d. 1604): Justifying faith is to obey the commandments of God and to believe that those things which Christ has said are true. Works cannot in any way be separated from the faith by which we are justified, but they are the soul or essence of faith, we might say, and even its very life (*De Christo servatore, pars IV, cap XI, XII*).

Compare with Racovian Catechism: But what is the faith which necessarily obtains salvation? It is trust in God through Christ. From that it is clear that this faith in Christ includes two things, one, that we trust not only in God but also in Christ; the second, that we obey God. “Therefore you include obedience under faith?” Yes, that's the way it is (Cited in *Hoenecke III*, p 327).

Compare with Wayne Grudem: It is contrary to the New Testament to speak about the possibility of someone accepting Christ “as Savior” but not “as Lord,” if that means simply depending on him for salvation but not committing oneself to forsaking sin and to be obedient to Christ from that point on (*ST*, p 714).

Compare with the Islamic definition of faith by Al-Risala (Maliki Manual): Surely, faith (*iman*) consists of a pronouncement with the tongue, sincerity of heart, and deeds with the limbs. It increases through an increase in good works. It decreases through their decrease. A decrease or increase in faith is dependent upon the volume of good works. Mere pronouncement of faith is incomplete except when coupled with the good works.

Contrast with Luther's axiom: Love is not the essence of faith, but faith is the essence of love (On Ga 5:6; *LW* 27, p 28ff).

Contrast with Luther: My love, or the works that follow after faith, neither give the proper form to my faith nor do they adorn it, but my faith gives love its proper form and adorns it (*Commentary on Galatians*, at 2:19).

c) Outside the Roman Church, the faith of infants can cause difficulties especially to those who over-emphasize the activity of the intellect (logical thinking) or the human will in connection with faith.

1) Roman Catholics baptize children “only in the faith of the church because they themselves do not do any believing” (Council of Trent, Session VII, Canon XIII).

Catechism of Rome (1563), II, 2, 32: They (i.e., infants) are protected by the faith of their parents, if the parents are believers; but if they are not, by the faith of the whole congregation of saints.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1282: Since the earliest times, Baptism has been administered to children, for it is a grace and a gift of God that does not presuppose any human merit; children are baptized in the faith of the Church.

2) Reformed theologians include in the church the children of believing parents.

Westminster Confession (1646), XXV, 2: The visible church . . . consists of all those . . . who profess the true religion together with their children, and it is the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the household and family of God.

Calvin: From this it follows that the children of believing parents are baptized not for this reason that they who before this were outside the church might then first become children of God, but rather for this reason that they might by this solemn sign be received into the church, because, by virtue of the promise, they already before [baptism] belonged to the body of Christ (*Institutes*, Bk. IV, ch. 15, art. 22).

Gallic Confession (1559), 35: Although baptism is the sacrament of faith and repentance, nevertheless, since God considers, together with the parents, also their children to be in the church, we affirm that infants born to holy parents should be baptized by the authority of Christ.

The Presbyterian: We hold that just as by birth a child becomes a member of a particular family, and just as by birth a child becomes a citizen of a particular state, so by birth the child of believers becomes a member of the church of Jesus Christ. When therefore, we baptize a child, we do it not to make it a member of a church, but as a formal recognition of its birthright membership, so that the question that confronts such a child when it comes to years of discretion is not whether it will join, but whether it will leave the church of Christ (August 16, 1928 issue).

Contrast and compare with Wayne Grudem: Those who argue for infant baptism at this point resort to what seems to the present author to be vague language about infants being adopted "into the covenant" or "into the covenant community," but the New Testament does not speak that way about baptism. Rather, it says all of those who have been baptized have been buried with Christ, have been raised with him, and have put on Christ . . . In the new covenant it is appropriate that infants *not* be baptized, and that baptism only be given to those who give evidence of genuine saving faith, because membership in the church is based on an internal spiritual reality, not on physical descent (ST, p 971, 977).

3) The Bible, however, clearly asserts that children can believe.

Matthew 18:3,6 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁶ But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."

Mark 10:15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.

D1, II, 8. Paul Tillich's (d. 1965) views on the subject of faith are speculative and muddled, the fruit of religious philosophy rather than study of the Scriptures.

Faith is the state of being ultimately concerned. . . If faith is understood as belief that something is true, doubt is incompatible with the act of faith. If faith is understood as being ultimately concerned, doubt is a necessary element in it. . . . If doubt appears, it should not be considered as the negation of faith, but as an element which was always and will always be present in the act of faith. Existential doubt and faith are poles of the same reality, the state of ultimate concern. . . . Many Christians, as well as members of other religious groups, feel anxiety, guilt and despair about what they call "loss of faith." But serious doubt is confirmation of faith (*Dynamics of Faith*, p 1, 18, 22).

Doubt is not the opposite of faith; it is an element of faith (*S.T.*, II, p 116).

D1, III. Faith appropriates the merits of Christ.

D1, III, 1. Faith is the proper attitude towards Christ's work of redemption.

a) Justification through Christ's merits is an absolutely finished product (objective justification). A person's faith does not add to its saving value.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Galatians 5:2-4 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. ³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Romans 4:6,7 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered."

b) The gospel is a proclamation (cf. κηρύσσειν). Therefore faith is the proper way of receiving it.

2 Corinthians 5:19 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Mark 16:15f He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Isaiah 40:2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

c) God's message of salvation is often designated as a promise, ἐπαγγελία. Again, the proper response to a promise is faith.

Romans 4:15,16,21 Law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. . . . ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Galatians 3:22 The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

D1, III, 2. Faith appropriates or receives Christ and his merits.

a) This truth is directly stated in Scripture.

John 1:12 To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Colossians 2:5-7 Though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. ⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Galatians 3:26,27 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

b) The believer applies the general truth of the gospel (universal grace) to himself individually (special or personal faith). Unbelief spurns this truth.

Job 19:25 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

1 John 5:9-11 We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. ¹⁰ Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Luke 7:30 The Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.

c) For this reason faith is called a receiving instrument (ὄργανον ληπτικόν), while the gospel is designated as a giving instrument (ὄργανον δοτικόν).

Faith receives blessing

Romans 5:11 Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Romans 9:30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith.

John 1:12 To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Colossians 2:6 Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him.

Galatians 3:14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

The gospel gives results

Isaiah 55:5 Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.

Isaiah 2:2,3 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. ³ Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

John 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Chemnitz: Faith is assent to the whole Word of God set before us, and in this Word to the free promise of reconciliation given for the sake of Christ, the Mediator. Therefore it remains firm and settled that the proper and principal object of justifying faith, in respect to which and by the apprehension of which it justifies, is the free promise of the mercy of God who forgives sins, adopts and accepts believers into eternal life for the sake of Christ the Mediator (*Examen, de fide justificante*, p 159).

Quenstedt: The general object of faith is Scripture, or the things revealed in Scripture; the special object of faith is the doctrine of the gospel. But as far as justifying faith as such is concerned, the proper and special object of faith is the grace and mercy of God promised in the Word to individual believers and merited by the active and passive obedience of Christ. This we prove by Romans 3:24,25, where the apostle says that the object of faith is Christ, not viewed in any which way, but as the ἰλαστήριον, the appeasement or appeaser of the wrath of God, set before us in his blood (*TDP*, thes. XIII, not. I, p 285).

Calov: Justifying faith has as its object not everything which God has revealed, but the grace and mercy of God, or the gospel promise concerning the grace of God, specifically, the suffering and death of Christ (by which redemption and salvation were won for us), his righteousness and obedience (*Apodixis, de fide justif.*, art. XXI, p 298).

d) In this way salvation becomes the possession of the believer.

Romans 1:17 In the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν), just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Galatians 2:16 [We] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 3:22 The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

D1, III, 3. A characteristic of faith is assurance, the sure conviction of possessing salvation.

a) This truth is directly stated in Scripture.

Hebrews 11:1 Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XX, Triglotta p 55, par. 23-26: Men are also admonished that here the term “faith” does not signify merely the knowledge of the history, such as is in the ungodly and in the devil, but signifies a faith which believes, not merely the history, but also the effect of the history—namely, this article: the forgiveness of sins, that is, that we have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins through Christ. Now he that knows that he has a Father gracious to him through Christ, he truly knows God; he knows also that God cares for him, and he calls upon God; in a word, he is not without God, as the heathen. For devils and the ungodly are not able to believe this article: the forgiveness of sins. Hence, they hate God as an enemy, call not upon him, and expect no good from him. Augustine also admonishes his readers concerning the word “faith,” and teaches that the term “faith” is accepted in the Scriptures not for knowledge such as is in the ungodly but for confidence which consoles and encourages the terrified mind.

b) Assurance is a characteristic even of weak faith, that is, in so far as it is faith. The imperfection is due to the sinful weakness of the believer who permits doubt to lodge in his heart (Old Adam).

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Romans 4:18-21 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead.²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Romans 8:38 I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers ... will be able to separate us from the love of God, that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Timothy 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

Mark 9:24 Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

The Council of Trent, VI, Cap 9, disagrees with this: No one can know with a certainty of faith which cannot be subject to error that he has obtained the grace of God.

Chemnitz: The point at issue between us and the papists is that they teach that the sinner cannot and must not stand in sure confidence that he is in grace and that his sins have been remitted to him. . . . They come up with the notion that faith in a general way establishes that the divine promises are true and that in a general way we are not to have doubt concerning the mercy of God, the merit of Christ, of the efficacy of the sacraments, but concerning the special application to individual sinners . . . here faith must not establish anything certain even when it relies on the Word of God, but remains suspended in doubt. These arguments of the papists arise primarily from confusion of law and gospel. For they teach that the grace of the remission of sins must be merited or at least applied to us by our own works. . . . Thus they really teach only and totally law, that is, that merit or at least the application of the remission of sins and eternal life to ourselves depends on our own works. But because the conscience can never determine that it has sufficient works for the promise of grace to be merited or applied, not only does it remain in constant doubt, but finally in real agony it must take the route of despair (*Loci*, II, p 506).

c) This assurance is the product of the testimony of the Holy Spirit. It is not our own achievement.

1) Bible statements make the truth clear.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

1 John 5:6,9-11 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.⁹ We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.¹⁰ Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

2) Some statements can be misunderstood in this regard.

2 Peter 1:10 Be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure (σπουδάσατε βεβαίαν ὑμῶν τὴν κλήσιν καὶ ἐκλογὴν ποιῆσθαι). For if you do these things, you will never fall.

Philippians 2:12,13 Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose (μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε· ¹³θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας).

d) This assurance of having salvation is not to be confused with carnal security.

Mark 14:29-31 Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not."³⁰ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times."³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

Romans 11:20 They were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

1 Corinthians 10:12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

D1, III, 4. Faith is not in itself (that is, as the act of believing) a meritorious cause of salvation.

a) Faith is indeed an ethical act of man (though not produced by man); that is, people do believe, but this is the result of God's work.

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

John 6:29,44 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent. . . . No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Romans 10:16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

Romans 15:18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.

Quenstedt: Faith can be called an active ... work, if the word "work" is understood generically to denote any action, whether relative or absolute, but not when it is understood in the specific sense to denote such a good moral (meritorious) work which is commanded in the law; for understood in this way "work" is always in the process of justification opposed to "faith." Faith is in no way our work except subjectively, because it receives something and does something. For that reason not the Holy Spirit, but man is said to believe (*TDP*, s.1, th. 17, f. 1343).

b) Faith is not a condition to be fulfilled by us nor a work by which justification is merited.

1) Faith does not merit justification, which is a gift of grace. Note how the Bible clearly distinguishes faith from works.

Ephesians 2:8,9 It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Romans 4:4-5 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 11:6 If by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Romans 3:28 We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

2) Faith is merely instrumental in receiving justification.

-a) "By faith" is expressed by the instrumental dative.

Acts 15:9 He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.

Romans 3:28 We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

-b) "By faith" is expressed by the preposition ἐκ.

Romans 1:17 In the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 3:30 There is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by (ἐκ) faith and the uncircumcised through (διὰ) that same faith.

Romans 4:16 The promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

Romans 5:1 Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 9:30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith.

Romans 10:6 The righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down).

Galatians 2:16 [We] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith (διὰ πίστεως) in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith (ἐκ πίστεως) in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 3:8,24 The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."²⁴ So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

-c) "By or through faith" is expressed by the preposition διὰ with the genitive.

Romans 3:22,25,30 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—³⁰ since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by (ἐκ) faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

Galatians 2:16 [We] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 3:14,26 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. ²⁶ You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8 It is *by* grace you have been saved, *through* faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

Ephesians 3:12,17 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. . . ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Philippians 3:8-9 I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Colossians 2:12 [You have been] buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 6:12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

Note that the NIV is not always consistent in rendering these terms.

-d) Never in Scripture do we find διὰ πίστιν (on account of or because of faith).

Heerbrand (d. 1600): Faith is not a condition, nor is it required as a condition, properly speaking. Because justification is not promised nor offered because of the worth or merit of faith or insofar as faith is a work. For faith is also imperfect, but it is, we might say, the way in which we receive the benefit which is offered and given through and because of Christ (*Compendium, loc. de evangelio*, p 165).

c) And so it is not the act of believing, but the object or content of faith, that saves.

1) For confessional statements, consider these:

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. III, p 918, 13: For faith justifies, not for this cause and reason that it is so good a work and so fair a virtue, but because it lays hold of and accepts the merit of Christ in the promise of the holy gospel; for this must be applied and appropriated to us by faith, if we are to be justified thereby.

Apology, Art. IV (II), p 146, 86: But since we receive remission of sins and the Holy Spirit by faith alone, faith alone justifies, because those reconciled are accounted righteous and children of God, not on account of their own purity, but through mercy for Christ's sake, provided only they by faith apprehend this mercy. Accordingly, Scripture testifies that by faith we are accounted righteous, Rom. 3:26. We, therefore, will add testimonies which clearly declare that faith is that very righteousness by which we are accounted righteous before God, namely, not because it is a work that is in itself worthy, but because it receives the promise by which God has promised that for Christ's sake he wishes to be propitious to those believing in him, or because he knows that Christ of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, 1 Co. 1:30.

Calov: The mediate or instrumental cause of justification is faith, and indeed it is the only instrumental cause. However, it is never alone, nor does it exist separately (*Theol. pos.*, pars. III, sect. IV, cap V, p 494).

Calov: Faith does not justify essentially (i.e., by making us righteous in essence) nor by producing a righteous attitude in us (not because faith gives us a certain attitude or makes us worthy) or even as a cause or an indispensable condition. But it justifies as an instrument or as that by which we make the grace of God and the righteousness of Christ our own. But faith does not effect justification, nor does it merit it. It does not even begin it, but it accepts the free remission of sins and the righteousness of Christ and makes its own what is offered in the Word (*Apodixis fidei, de salutis consequendae modo*, art. XVII, p 289).

Quenstedt: Faith does not justify because of its worthiness as a work, action, or quality, but insofar as it applies and appropriates to itself the merit of Christ, to which alone that worthiness belongs (*TDP*, thes. X, p 518).

2) It is faith in Christ and his work that justifies (not, for example, reliance on God's providence).

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Acts 16:31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

Romans 4:3 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

3) Being saved does not become reality only when there is a consciousness or visible evidence of faith. The reality of faith does not depend on a person's consciousness of it.

-a) We say this not to deny that there are discernible evidences of faith. The church has long noted how a faith that lays hold of its object (*fides directa*) often becomes a faith that is subjectively aware of its presence (*fides reflexa*).

1 John 2:3 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

Romans 7:19,24 For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

-b) We say this to clarify that the reality of faith doesn't depend on discernible evidences, and that perceived "evidences" aren't always reliable.

Matthew 18:3 I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Romans 8:26,27 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

1 John 3:16, 18-20 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.¹⁹ This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything (NIV).¹⁹ And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things (NKJV).

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. II, p 902, 56: For concerning the presence, operation, and gifts of the Holy Spirit we should not and cannot always judge *ex sensu* [from feeling], as to how and when they are experienced in the heart; but because they are often covered and occur in great weakness, we should be certain from, and according to, the promise, that the Word of God preached and heard is truly an office and work of the Holy Spirit, by which he is certainly efficacious and works in our hearts, 2 Cor. 2:14ff; 3:5ff.

4) Because our believing is not a cause or condition for salvation, we seek to avoid using language that easily gives that impression.

1 Corinthians 4:7 Who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Compare Wayne Grudem: We may now appreciate that when a person comes to trust in Christ, all three elements must be present. There must be some basic knowledge or *understanding* of the facts of the gospel. There must also be *approval* of, or agreement with, these facts. . . . But all this still does not add up to true saving faith. That comes only when I make a decision of my will to depend on, or put my *trust* in, Christ as *my* Savior. This personal decision to place my trust in Christ is something done in my heart, the central faculty of my entire being that makes commitments for me as a whole person (ST, p 712).

Compare John Calvin: We must also notice here [Romans 1:5] what faith is; the name of obedience is given to it, and for this reason – because the Lord calls us by his gospel; we respond to his call by faith. . . . Faith is properly that by which we obey the gospel (*Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, p 48).

D2. The Means of Grace

D2 A. General Remarks

D2 A, I. The means of grace are the instruments appointed by God to proclaim the righteousness of Christ to a sinner and to create and maintain saving faith.

D2 A, I, 1. Since salvation has been accomplished, God devised ways and means for conveying and applying it to sinners.

a) **After the Fall, all people are by nature not only ignorant of the reconciliation, but distort its meaning and oppose it as ruinous folly.**

1 Corinthians 1:18,23 The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Romans 9:32,33 They pursued [righteousness] not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." ³³ As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

Romans 3:8 Why not say—as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved.

Acts 17:6,18 When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here." ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

b) **So in applying salvation to people, God must make the first move.**

Romans 9:16 It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

Romans 11:32 God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

c) **God did so by instituting and providing the means of grace.**

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Corinthians 1:21 Since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

D2 A, I, 2. The means of grace serve a double purpose.

a) **The first function of the means of grace is to offer and proclaim to sinners pardon for Christ's sake.**

Word

Mark 16:15,16 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 3:9 If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

Baptism

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.

Ephesians 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

Lord's Supper

Luke 22:19,20 He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

Matthew 26:26-28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

1 Corinthians 10:16-17 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?¹⁷ Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art.II, p 902, 57: But if a man will not hear preaching nor read God's Word, but despises the Word and congregation of God, and thus dies and perishes in his sins, he neither can comfort himself with God's eternal election nor obtain his mercy; for Christ, in whom we are chosen, offers to all men his grace in the Word and holy Sacraments and wishes earnestly that it be heard, and he has promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name and are occupied with his holy Word, he will be in their midst.

b) The second function of the means of grace is to effect (create, maintain, strengthen) saving faith in Christ.

Romans 10:17 Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

John 20:31 These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

1 Peter 1:23 You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Luke 22:19 He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. II, p 902, 55,56: Now, although both the planting and watering of the preacher and the running and willing of the hearer would be in vain, and no conversion would follow them, if the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit were not added to them—the Spirit who enlightens and converts the hearts through the Word preached and heard, so that men believe this Word and assent thereto, nevertheless, neither preacher nor hearer is to doubt this grace and efficacy of the Holy Spirit, but should be certain that when the Word of God is preached purely and truly according to the command and will of God, and men listen attentively and earnestly and meditate upon it, God is certainly present with his grace, and grants, as has been said, what otherwise man can neither accept nor give from his own powers. For concerning the presence, operation, and gifts of the Holy Spirit we should not and cannot always judge *ex sensu* [from feeling], as to how and when they are experienced in the heart; but because they are often covered and occur in great weakness, we should be certain from, and according to, the promise, that the Word of God preached and heard is truly an office and work of the Holy Spirit, by which He is certainly efficacious and works in our hearts, 2 Cor. 2:14ff; 3, 5ff.

Augsburg Confession, Art. V, p 44, 1-4: That we may obtain this faith, the ministry of preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, who works faith; where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the gospel, which is that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake. They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that the Holy Spirit comes to men without the external Word, through their own preparations and works.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XIII, p 48, 1-3, Of the use of the sacraments they teach that the sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the sacraments. They therefore condemn those who teach that the sacraments justify by the outward act, and who do not teach that, in the use of the sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

Hollaz: The means of salvation are the divinely ordained means through which God by grace offers the salvation won by Christ the Mediator to all men who have fallen into sin, and gives them true faith and preserves it. The power of the divine Word is not only one that sets that salvation before us (*objectiva*) or that points it out (*significativa*) to us, as the power of a statue of Mercury which points out the way but does not cause the traveler to walk on it; but it is a power that is effective, since the Word of God not only points out the way to salvation but it causes souls to be saved (*Examen*, 992).

c) It is to be noted that the means of grace have their power inhering in themselves; it is not added to them in their application.

Jeremiah 23:29 "Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"

Hebrews 4:12 The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

James 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Karl Barth (d. 1968), opposing the Lutheran doctrine of the efficacy of God's Word even prior to and aside from its use (*efficacia Verbi divini etiam ante et extra usum*): The Bible is God's Word so far as God lets it be his Word, so far as God speaks through it.... The Bible therefore becomes God's Word in this event, and it is to its being in this becoming that the tiny word "is" relates, in the statement that the Bible is God's Word. It does not become God's Word because we accord it faith, but, of course, because it becomes revelation to us (*CD*, I, 1:123–124).

Compare Robert Reymond: The problem with this Lutheran insistence that the written and preached Word intrinsically carries within itself all the power necessary to convert all men is that this view cannot explain in a way that harmonizes with the Scripture's teaching on salvation why all men who read or hear the Word are not immediately and without exception converted thereby. ... The Lutherans deny the irresistibility of the very intrinsic power to convert which they claim for the written and preached Word (*NST*, p 915).

D2 A, II. Faith is produced by God only through the means of grace.

Note: In saying this we do not wish to be understood that God could not create faith immediately in human hearts, or could not have devised other ways and means for doing it if he had seen fit to do so; but that he did not. "Since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

D2 A, II, 1. Faith not based on the objective means of grace is imaginary, deceptive, and illusory.

a) God grants faith through the means of grace. Recall the double purpose of the means, expressed in the following passages.

John 17:20 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.

1 Peter 1:23 You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 10:14,17 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

1 Corinthians 4:15 Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. II, p 900, 48,50,52: For this reason we shall now relate, furthermore, from God's Word how man is converted to God, how and through what means (namely, through the oral Word and the holy Sacraments) the Holy Spirit wants to be efficacious in us, and to work and bestow in our hearts true repentance, faith, and new spiritual power and ability for good, and how we should conduct ourselves towards these means, and how we should use them. . . Therefore God, out of his immense goodness and mercy, has his divine eternal law and his wonderful plan concerning our redemption, namely, the holy, alone-

saving gospel of his eternal Son, our only Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, publicly preached; and by this preaching collects an eternal Church for himself from the human race, and works in the hearts of men true repentance and knowledge of sins, and true faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. And by this means, and in no other way, namely, through his holy Word, when men hear it preached or read it, and the holy Sacraments when they are used according to his Word, God desires to call men to eternal salvation, draw them to himself, and convert, regenerate, and sanctify them. ... Now, all who wish to be saved ought to hear this preaching of God's Word. For the preaching and hearing of God's Word are instruments of the Holy Spirit, by, with, and through which he desires to work efficaciously, and to convert men to God, and to work in them both to will and to do.

b) Note the instructions to Christians to testify and to preach the gospel to bring about conversion.

John 15:27 You also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

Acts 1:8 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 5:32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.

Matthew 28:19 Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:15,16 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

c) Those without the Word are described as being without light and in ignorance.

Luke 1:76-79 You, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, ⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven ⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

Isaiah 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Isaiah 60:2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.

D2 A, II, 2. The Holy Spirit's converting and saving work is inseparably tied up with the means of grace.

a) This truth is clearly expressed in Scripture.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Galatians 3:2,5 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου), or by believing what you heard (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως)? ⁵ Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου), or because you believe what you heard (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως)?

1 Corinthians 2:4,5 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

b) One possible exception in Scripture has been identified and discussed.

Luke 1:15,44 He will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, p 496, 12: Neither was John the Baptist conceived without the preceding word of Gabriel, nor did he leap in his mother's womb without the voice of Mary.

c) Despite this inseparable connection between the Spirit's work and the means of grace, there are "enthusiasts" (*Schwärmer*) who believe and teach otherwise.

1) **Enthusiasts despise the means of grace and expect an immediate action of the Holy Spirit.**

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, p 494, 4-5, 9-10: For indeed the Papacy also is nothing but sheer enthusiasm, by which the Pope boasts that all rights exist in the shrine of his heart, and whatever he decides and commands with [in] his church is spirit and right, even though it is above and contrary to Scripture and the spoken Word. All this is the old devil and old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts, and led them from the outward Word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit, and nevertheless he accomplished this through other outward words. In a word, enthusiasm inheres in Adam and his children from the first fall to the end of the world, its poison having been implanted and infused into them by the old dragon, and is the origin, power, life, and strength of all heresy, especially of that of the Papacy and Mohammad. Therefore we ought and must constantly maintain this point, that God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken Word and the sacraments.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. II, p 788, 13: Also, we reject and condemn the error of the Enthusiasts, who imagine that God without means, without the hearing of God's Word, also without the use of the holy Sacraments, draws men to himself, and enlightens, justifies, and saves them. (Enthusiasts we call those who expect the heavenly illumination of the Spirit without the preaching of God's Word.)

2) **The attempt to sever subjective faith from the objective means of grace invariably leads to a founding of faith on a person's own achievements.**

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, p 494, 6: Just as also our enthusiasts at the present day condemn the outward Word, and nevertheless they themselves are not silent, but they fill the world with their pratings and writings, as though, indeed, the Spirit could not come through the writings and spoken word of the apostles, but first through their writings and words he must come. Why then do not they also omit their own sermons and writings, until the Spirit himself come to men, without their writings and before them, as they boast that he has come into them without the preaching of the Scriptures? But of these matters there is not time now to dispute at greater length; we have elsewhere sufficiently urged this subject.

D2 A, II, 3. It is God's revealed desire to deal with sinners through the means.

1 Corinthians 1:21 Since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. .

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, p 494, 3: And in those things which concern the spoken, outward Word, we must firmly hold that God grants his Spirit or grace to no one, except through or with the preceding outward Word, in order that we may thus be protected against the enthusiasts, i.e., spirits who boast that they have the Spirit without and before the Word, and accordingly judge Scripture or the spoken Word, and explain and stretch it at their pleasure, as Muenzer did, and many still do at the present day, who wish to be acute judges between the Spirit and the letter, and yet know not what they say or declare.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. XI, p 1086, 76: Moreover, the declaration, John 6:44, that "no one can come to Christ except the Father draw him" is right and true. However, the Father will not do this without means, but has ordained for this purpose his Word and sacraments as ordinary means and instruments; and it is the will neither of the Father nor of the Son that a man should not hear or should despise the preaching of his Word, and wait for the drawing of the Father without the Word and sacraments. For the Father draws indeed by the power of his Holy Spirit, however, according the order decreed and instituted by himself, by the hearing of his holy, divine Word, as with a net, by which the elect are plucked from the jaws of the devil.

Luther: Outwardly God deals with us through the oral word of the gospel and through material signs, that is, baptism and the sacrament of the altar. Inwardly he deals with us through the Holy Spirit, faith, and other gifts. But whatever their measure or order, the outward factors should and must precede. The inward experience follows and is effected by the outward. God has determined to give the inward to no one except through the outward. For he wants to give no one the Spirit or faith outside of the outward Word and sign instituted by him, as he says in Luke 16:29, "Let them hear Moses and the prophets" (LW 40, p 146).

D2 A, III. Any error in the doctrine of salvation corrupts the doctrine about the means of grace.

D2 A, III, 1. The Roman Catholic error regarding the way of salvation illustrates this.

a) **Catholics ultimately teach that Christ merited for sinners the ability to work out their own salvation.**

Council of Trent, VI, Cap. 7: Justification is not only the forgiveness of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man by a voluntary [one that takes place through man's free will] reception of grace [i.e., infused grace] and gifts [i.e., the ability to do various good works]. As a result of this a righteous man is made out of an unrighteous one.... The single essential cause is the righteousness of God ... by which he makes us righteous, by which, namely, when we are endowed by him with this grace and these gifts, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only looked upon as righteous, but are truly righteous in name and in fact, as people who have received righteousness within ourselves, each one in accord ... with his own attitude and cooperation. For although no one can be righteous except the man to whom the merits of earned by the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ are given, nevertheless in the justification of the ungodly

this happens when, by the merit of his most holy passion the love of God is poured out by the Holy Spirit into the hearts of those who are justified, and this love becomes an inhering quality.

Council of Trent, Canon 32 : If any one says that he who is justified ... does not by good works himself ... merit an increase of grace ... let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 654: The Paschal mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life. This new life is above all Justification that reinstates us in God's grace, "so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." Justification consists in both victory over the death caused by sin and a new participation in grace.

b) In this Catholic system of thought the purpose of the means of grace is quite different from what the Bible teaches.

- 1) **They do not offer forgiveness of sins to faith, and thereby produce faith; they confer (infuse) grace by the work performed (*ex opere operato*) on those who are not placing a hindrance (*obicem non ponentibus*) by a mortal sin [Sacramentalism].**
- 2) **Furthermore, the efficacy of the means of grace depends on the intention of the person who administers them.**

Council of Trent, VII, Can. 11: If anyone says that when ministers celebrate and give the sacraments it is not required that they should have the intention at least of doing what the church is doing, let him be damned.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1256: The ordinary ministers of Baptism are the bishop and priest and, in the Latin Church, also the deacon. In case of necessity, any person, even someone not baptized, can baptize, if he has the required intention. The intention required is to will to do what the Church does when she baptizes, and to apply the Trinitarian baptismal formula.

c) The result of this kind of teaching is doubt, the opposite of faith.

Council of Trent, VI, Can. 15: If anyone says that a regenerated and justified person is bound by faith to believe that he is certainly one of the elect, let him be damned.

Chemnitz: The point at issue between us and the papists is that they teach that the sinner cannot and must not stand in sure confidence that he is in grace and that his sins have been remitted to him (*Loci*, II, p 506).

D2 A, III, 2. The Calvinist error regarding the way of salvation also corrupts the doctrine about the means of grace.

a) Calvinists teach a particular or special saving grace (*gratia particularis*) that God gives only to the elect.

Canons of Dordt (1619), Cap. 1,6: The fact that some are in time endowed with faith and others are not is a result of God's own eternal decision (decree).

Helvetic Consensus Formula (1675) Can. 19: God devised no eternal plan of salvation without a decision about the persons who would be saved, and therefore Christ did not die for each and every one but only for the elect who were given to him.

Charles Hodge (d. 1878): In addition to the grace of salvation to the elect, the Bible speaks of a divine grace to every man. ... This is what in theology is called common grace. . . . This common grace is distinguished from the efficacious operation of the Spirit to which the Scriptures ascribe the regeneration of the soul (*ST*, 1988, ch. XIV, Art. 3, p 426-427).

b) If there is no real grace for the non-elect, it is self-contradictory to accuse them of rejecting the common grace offered to them in the means of grace.

Westminster Confession of Faith: Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word and may have some common [nonsaving] operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved (Art. X, i-ii; cited by Reymond, *NST*, p 712).

Charles Hodge: The Scriptures refer to this general influence of the Spirit varied religious experiences which are not attended by genuine conversion or regeneration. . . . These common influences of the Spirit are all capable of being effectually resisted (*ST*, 1988, ch. XIV, Art. 3, p 427).

Wayne Grudem: We must realize that common grace is different from saving grace. Common grace does not change the human heart or bring people to genuine repentance and faith – it cannot and does not save people. ... Common grace restrains sin but does not change anyone's foundational disposition to sin, nor does it in any significant measure purify fallen human nature. We must also recognize that the actions of unbelievers performed by virtue of common grace do not in themselves merit God's approval or favor (*ST*, p 663).

c) In Reformed thought, even for the elect there are no real means of grace since the Spirit is said to work conversion without instruments.

Charles Hodge: "All second causes being excluded," and the "infusion of a new life into the soul being the immediate work of the Spirit," the means merely "attend the work of regeneration" (*ST*, Vol. II, p 684f).

Charles Hodge: Regeneration itself, the infusion of a new life into the soul, is the immediate work of the Spirit. There is here no place for the use of means (*ST*, Vol II, p 685).

d) Alleged Scripture proofs for the immediate working of the Spirit include the following points (drawn from A. Hodge's *Outlines of Theology*, p 338f. See Pieper, III, p 149-150).

1) The influence of the Spirit is distinguished from that of the Word.

John 6:45,64,65 It is written in the Prophets: "They will all be taught by God." Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. ⁶⁴Yet there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."

1 Thessalonians 1:5,6 Our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

In response, we say they are distinguished—but not separate.

John 6:63,68 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

2) A divine influence is declared to be necessary to the reception of the truth.

Psalms 119:18 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

Ephesians 1:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

In response, we say that influence is found in the Word itself.

Psalms 119:104,105 I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Ephesians 1:13 You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

3) Working spiritual life is an internal operation attributed to God.

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Ephesians 2:8 It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

2 Timothy 2:25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.

In response, we agree but also say that God's internal work is accomplished through the Word.

Philippians 1:14-18 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. ¹⁵ It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶ The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. ¹⁸ But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice.

4) The gift of the Spirit is distinguished from the gift of the Word.

John 14:16 I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.

In response, we say according to the context the Spirit is here distinguished from Christ.

John 14:26 The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

5) The nature of divine influence is evidently different from that effected by the truth.

Ephesians 1:19 . . . his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,

Ephesians 3:7 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

In response we say the context attributes the same result indiscriminately to both causes.

Ephesians 1:13 You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 3:6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

6) People are by nature dead in sin and need a direct intervention of supernatural power.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.

In response, we say the intervention of supernatural power is certainly required; but to assume that this must be immediate is begging the question. It does not follow.

F. Pieper: There is not even the semblance of Scripture proof for the Reformed teaching of the means of grace. Examination of the Scripture proof these men attempt to adduce reveals that the proof is nothing but a *petitio principii*, that from the outset they always assume as proved and certain that the Holy Spirit needs no *vehiculum*, yes, that God's honor is assailed if his "efficacious grace" is bound to the means of grace (*CD*, III, p 148).

7) Add to this list of arguments the much-quoted analogy: "Man sees by the light. Without light vision is impossible. Yet the eyes of the blind are not opened by means of the light" (Chas. Hodge, *ST*, Vol. II, p 685).

In response, we say an analogy is never conclusive. In reality, according to divine revelation, there is a sight-giving light. The Word is both a sight-giving tool and a guiding light. Let us therefore use it as such.

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.

Acts 26:17-18 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

e) Calvinists promote and praise the means as signs and testimonials of immediate grace, but they acknowledge only this feature of the means.

1) The means themselves, however, testify to the illegitimacy of immediate grace.

Jeremiah 22:29 O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD!

Jeremiah 8:9 The wise will be put to shame; they will be dismayed and trapped. Since they have rejected the word of the LORD, what kind of wisdom do they have?

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

Luke 7:30 The Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.

Luke 16:31 He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

2) To speak of a life-giving grace that requires outside testimony for its presence is self-contradictory.

Luke 24:32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Augsburg Confession, Art. XIII, p 48, 1-3: Of the use of the sacraments they teach that the sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the sacraments. They therefore condemn those who teach that the sacraments justify by the outward act, and who do not teach that, in the use of the sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven is required.

Gottlieb Wernsdorf (d. 1729): Scripture, therefore, teaches us about the essence and will of God and it teaches us these things for our salvation. For, in order that it might be able to do this, it is endowed with a special power which is active in enticing, drawing, influencing and leading the minds of men to faith and love. For we are not only instructed and taught by the Word, but we are also regenerated, improved, and changed so that the Word not only has the power to admonish and persuade, but also to effect and do something in us, and it can do this because of the perpetual influence of the Holy Spirit, by which the Word, as it were, is made a living and very efficacious thing. Because of this power conferred on it, it is called "spirit" and "life" in Jn 6:63, 68 (*Disp. de verbo Dei*, Art. 47, p 278).

D2 A, III, 3. The Synergistic error regarding the way of salvation also corrupts the doctrine about the means of grace.

- a) **Synergists ascribe to people, as free moral agents, the ability to cooperate in producing their own faith.**
- b) **In that case the means of grace are reduced to mere stimulating agents or to ordinances demanding correct conduct on the part of man.**

Wayne Grudem: Since Jesus commanded his church to baptize (Matt. 28:19), we would expect that there would be a measure of blessing connected with baptism, because all obedience to God by Christians brings God's favor with it. (*ST*, p 953) In addition to baptism, the other ordinance or ceremony that Jesus commanded the church to carry out is participation in the Lord's Supper (*ST*, p 954).

Contrast with Wernsdorf: For the Word not only teaches and admonishes us that we ought to be enlightened, regenerated, converted, justified, renewed, reunited with God, etc., but it also produces these things and regenerates a man, (1 Pe 1:23; Jac 1:18), enlightens (Ps 19:9), unless it is hindered by the stubbornness and resistance of men.... The reason for this is that the Holy Spirit is continually present with it (the Word). As the sainted Hunnius says, He coexists with it and therefore communicates his infinite strength and power to it and by his continual influence gives power and life to the word (*Disp. de verbo Dei*, Art. 54, 55, p 279).

D2 A, III, 4. As we note the errors of others regarding the means of grace, we also do well to mark some weaknesses in our personal Christianity. The following failings, among others, merit self-examination.

- **Negligence in using the means of grace**
- **Regarding their use as a meritorious work.**
- **When assailed by doubt, looking into our own heart and judging God's grace by our own thoughts and emotions rather than by his objective declarations.**

D2 A, IV. The God-appointed means of grace are: the word of the gospel and the sacraments (the gospel in word and sacrament). Note that the definition and number of the "means of grace" varies, especially among Evangelicals.

Larger Catechism, Westminster Assembly: What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation? Answer: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his redemption are all his ordinances; especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation (Question 154; cited in Reymond, *NST*, p 912).

Wayne Grudem: We may define the means of grace as follows: The means of grace are any activities within the fellowship of the church that God uses to give more grace to Christians. . . The following list may not be exhaustive, but it does include most of the means of grace that believers have access to within the fellowship of the church: 1. Teaching of the Word' 2. Baptism, 3. The Lord's Supper, 4. Prayer for one another, 5. Worship, 6. Church discipline, 7. Giving, 8. Spiritual gifts, 9. Fellowship, 10. Evangelism, 11. Personal ministry to individuals (*ST*, p 950-951).

D2 A, IV, 1. The term "word of the gospel" must not be restricted to the audible word. It includes any way of conveying a thought.

- a) **The word of the gospel includes the spoken word.**

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Romans 10:17 Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

b) The word of the gospel includes the written word.

John 5:39,46 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me. ⁴⁶If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.

John 20:31 These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

1 John 1:3,4 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴We write this to make our joy complete.

Colossians 4:16 After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

1 Thessalonians 5:27 I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

c) The word of the gospel includes the thought expressed by symbols such as the crucifix or stained glass windows.

John 3:14,15 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

d) The word of the gospel includes the truth pondered in the heart.

Romans 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming.

Luke 2:19,51 Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

D2 A, IV, 2. There are two rites instituted of God and accompanied by outward signs through which he would convey his grace. These are commonly called sacraments.

a) One is the sacrament of baptism.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 22:16 What are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

b) The other is the sacrament of communion.

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 22:19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

c) The extent of the term "sacrament" depends on its definition.

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 308, 3 & 4: If we call sacraments "rites which have the command of God, and to which the promise of grace has been added", it is easy to decide what are properly sacraments. For rites instituted by men will not in this way be sacraments properly so called. For it does not belong to human authority to promise grace. Therefore signs instituted without God's command are not sure signs of grace, even though they perhaps instruct the rude children or the uncultivated, or admonish as to something as a painted cross. Therefore Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Absolution, which is the Sacrament of Repentance, are truly sacraments. For these rites have God's command and the promise of grace, which is peculiar to the New Testament. For when we are baptized, when we eat the Lord's body, when we are absolved, our hearts must be firmly assured that God truly forgives us for Christ's sake.

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 309, 11: But if ordination is understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises, Rom. 1, 16: "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes." Likewise, Is. 55, 11: "So shall My Word be that goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please."

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 309, 14-17: Matrimony was not first instituted in the New Testament, but in the beginning, immediately on the creation of the human race. It has, moreover, God's command; it has also promises, not indeed properly pertaining to the New Testament, but pertaining rather to the bodily life. Wherefore, if any one should wish to call it a sacrament, he ought still to distinguish it from those preceding ones, which are properly signs of the New Testament and testimonies of grace and the remission of sins. But if marriage will have the name of sacrament for the reason that it has God's command, other states or offices also, which have God's command, may be called sacraments, as, for example, the magistracy. Lastly, if among the sacraments all things ought to be numbered which have God's command and to which promises have been added, why do we not add prayer, which most truly can be called a sacrament? For it has both God's command and very many promises; and if placed among the sacraments, as though in a more eminent place, it would invite men to pray. Alms could also be reckoned here, and likewise afflictions, which are, even themselves signs, to which God has added promises. But let us omit these things. For no prudent man will strive greatly concerning the number or the term, if only those objects still be retained which have God's command and promises.

Large Catechism, Infant Baptism, p 750, 74: And here you see that Baptism, both in its power and signification, comprehends also the third Sacrament, which has been called repentance.

Large Catechism, Of Baptism, p 752, 1: We have now finished the three chief parts of the common Christian doctrine. Besides these we have yet to speak of our two sacraments instituted by Christ, of which also every Christian ought to have at least an ordinary, brief instruction, because without them there can be no Christian.

Large Catechism, Short Preface, p 578, 20: Now, when these three parts are apprehended, it behooves a person also to know what to say concerning our sacraments, which Christ himself instituted, Baptism and the holy body and blood of Christ, namely, the text which Matthew 28, 19ff and Mark 16, 15f record at the close of their gospels when Christ said farewell to his disciples and sent them forth.

d) The Roman Catholic Church demands acceptance of seven sacraments.

Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 1: If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law (i.e., the New Testament) have not all been instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, or that there are more or fewer than seven, namely, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Ordination, and Matrimony, or even that some of these seven are not really and properly sacraments, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1210: Christ instituted the sacraments of the new law. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony. The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's life of faith. There is thus a certain resemblance between the stages of natural life and the stages of the spiritual life.

D2 A, IV, 3. All means of grace serve the same purpose: they offer the grace of God, and produce and strengthen faith.

a) There is no difference in their purpose.

1) Baptism produces regeneration; so does the Word.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:23, For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

2) The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to convey forgiveness. There is nothing in Scripture that indicates it is to nourish physically a so-called resurrection body.

Luke 22:19 He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Compare Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386): Wherefore with full assurance let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ: for in the figure of Bread is given to you his Body, and in the figure of Wine his Blood; that you by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, may be made of the same body and the same blood with him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because his Body and Blood are distributed through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, we became partakers of the divine nature. . . . Give us this day our substantial bread. This common bread is not substantial bread, but this Holy Bread is substantial, that is, appointed for the substance of the soul. For this Bread goes not into the belly and is cast out into the draught, but is distributed into thy whole system for the benefit of body and soul (*The Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. VII, Catechetical Lectures XXII and XXIII, p 151, 155).

Compare Gregory of Nyssa (d. ca. 395): The body comes into fellowship and blending with the Author of our salvation in another way. . . . For, in the manner that, as the Apostle says, a little leaven assimilates to itself the whole lump, so in like manner that body to which immortality has been given it by God, when it is in ours, translates and transmutes the whole into itself. . . . He disseminates himself in every believer through that flesh, whose substance comes from bread and wine, blending himself with the bodies of believers, to secure that, by this union with the immortal, man, too, may be a sharer

in incorruption (*The Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. V, Great Catechism, ch.. XXXVII, p 505-506).

Koenig: This assertion [that the reception of communion produces an essential union of Christ with the communicant, a union that has a physical effect] is of such a nature that we cannot assent to it with a good conscience for the following reasons: 1. It has no foundation at all in Scripture. . . . 2. The Sacrament confers on us what is promised in the Word. . . . But nowhere is [an essential union with Christ] promised to us. . . . 3. If the communicants are united essentially with Christ by the mere use of the Supper of our Lord, also the unbelieving should be acknowledged participants in this union . . . but . . . the conclusion is absurd (*Cases of Conscience*, p 484, cited in Walther-Baier, *Compendium*, III, p 526f.).

Hermann Sasse: That the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are anticipations of the future, of our resurrection, and the complete union with Christ, is the doctrine of the New Testament. *How* the sacrament can have such effects, the Bible does not tell us. That is the reason why Luther never attempted to answer this question which was discussed also by the schoolmen. He was satisfied to know that a connection does exist between our receiving Christ's body and blood and our future glory (*This Is My Body*, p 185-186).

b) The variety in the ways of proclaiming grace serves the purpose of giving stronger assurance.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. IV, p 490: We will now return to the gospel, which not merely in one way gives us counsel and aid against sin; for God is superabundantly rich and liberal in his grace and goodness. First, through the spoken Word by which the forgiveness of sins is preached in the whole world; which is the peculiar office of the gospel. Secondly, through Baptism. Thirdly, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourthly, through the power of the keys, and also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brothers, Matt. 18, 20: "Where two or three are gathered together," etc.

D2 A, IV, 4. Prayer is not to be classed with the means of grace.

a) There is an essential difference between the act of praying and the means of grace.

1) **Prayer is an expression on our part of a desire for grace from God.**

2) **The means are instruments that God uses to convey and confer his grace on us.**

b) Calvinists and Arminians, assuming an immediate working of the Spirit, are prone to refer a terror-stricken conscience to prayer for reassurance.

Romans 8:26,27 The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Charles Hodge (d. 1878): The means of grace, according to the standards of our Church, are the word, sacraments, and prayer (*ST*, Vol II, Part III, p 466).

R. Reymond: When one considers (1) that prayer "brings us near to God, who is the source of all good," (2) that "fellowship with him, converse with him, calls into exercise all gracious affections, reverence, love, gratitude, submission, faith, joy, and devotion" [Charles Hodge, *ST*, 3:708], it seems altogether appropriate to treat prayer, although it is surely a fruit of grace, as itself also a means of grace (*NST*, p 912, fn).

c) Coordinating prayer with the means of grace easily leads to the concept that prayer itself is meritorious.

Matthew 6:7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

Walther (quoting and then commenting on words of J.P. Fresenius, Lutheran Pietist): "All depends on three rules which the sinner must observe. They are derived from the inmost nature of the divine order of salvation and are such that, if faithfully applied, the worst slaves of the devil are helped by them. The first rule is: Pray for grace. The second: Be watchful lest you lose grace. The third: Meditate upon the Word of God in a proper manner." He should have said, "He must hear the Word of God." But that he has put into his third rule. His whole scheme makes conversion dependent on man's own effort to obtain grace (*Law and Gospel*, p 143-144).

D2 A, V. The Old Testament means of grace had the same purpose as the New Testament means do. There were differences, however, in the way God designed and used them.

D2 A, V, 1. The purpose of both Old and New Testament means of grace is the same: to proclaim Christ and produce faith in justification for Christ's sake.

a) Old Testament writings speak of Christ.

Romans 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

John 5:45-47 Do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?

Luke 24:25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"

b) Old Testament ceremonies prefigure Christ.

Colossians 2:16,17 Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Hebrews 8:5 They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

Hebrews 9:11 When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation.

Hebrews 4:9,10 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Compare with Leviticus 25:10: Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan.

c) The Old Testament proclaims salvation through faith in Christ.

Genesis 15:6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Romans 4:1-3 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Galatians 3:6-9 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." ⁷ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ⁸ The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." ⁹ So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Hebrews 11:26 [Moses] regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

D2 A, V, 2. The Old Testament means of grace differed from the New Testament means in the ways they were structured and presented to people.

a) The Old Testament writings and sacred ceremonies presented Christ in the form of predictive prophecy, while the New Testament proclaims their fulfillment.

Matthew 11:2-3 When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Acts 18:5,28 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ²⁸ For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

b) The Old Testament used the form of covenant ordinances and stipulations to predict and prefigure Christ, while the New Testament presents the gospel primarily in the form of unconditional promise.

1) The Mosaic Law or "old covenant" did not abolish or annul the gospel promise that had been previously given.

Galatians 3:17,19 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. ¹⁹ What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.

Galatians 4:1-5 What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. ² He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. ³ So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. ⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

2) Rather, the legal stipulations served God’s people in anticipation of Christ. They were designed to keep the people of the promise distinct from other peoples and to help maintain their focus on the messianic hope.

Galatians 3:23-25 Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁴ So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.

Exodus 19:5,6 “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

Joshua 24:2 Joshua said to all the people, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods.’”

Romans 3:1-2 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.

c) The Old Testament prophecies were also less distinct in presenting information on the chronology and accompanying circumstances of the Messiah’s work than the New Testament statements are.

1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Heerbrand: As far as essence and effect are concerned there is no difference between Old Testament and New Testament sacraments, but so far as manner is concerned there is some difference. For always the doctrine of the gospel concerning the coming Savior was made more and more clear and set before people more plainly as certain circumstances were added by which it was explained more fully (*Compendium, loc. de evangelio*, p 318).

Quenstedt: We grant that there is a difference in the degrees and manner of revelation. For in the Old Testament the promises of the gospel were gradually proclaimed and explained more clearly until finally the full light rose in the New Testament (*TDP*, pars IV, sect. II, qu. I, obj. dial. VII, p 63).

Augustine: The New Testament in the Old lies concealed;
the Old Testament in the New is revealed
(*Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, 2, 73).

D2 A, V, 3. Two Old Testament rites demand particular mention.

a) One of these Old Testament rites is circumcision.

1) Circumcision was an expression of the gospel promise.

Genesis 17:7,10-14 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. ¹⁰ This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹² For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. ¹³ Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.

Compare with Jeremiah 31:31-34 “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Romans 4:11 [Abraham] received the sign (σημεῖον) of circumcision, a seal (σφραγίς) of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

Acts 7:8 [God] gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

Colossians 2:11-12 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

2) Circumcision was also regulated by covenant law.

Leviticus 12:3 On the eighth day the boy is to be circumcised.

John 7:22,23 Because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. ²³ Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath?

Galatians 5:3 I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.

3) Circumcision as a legal requirement is no longer binding on us.

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

See Acts 15:5-29. The debate here centered in whether “the Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses” (v. 5). The decision of the Jerusalem council was not to impose the rite of circumcision on the Gentiles (vv. 19-21, 28-29).

1 Corinthians 7:18,19 Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. ¹⁹

Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God’s commands is what counts.

b) The other Old Testament rite that demands mention is Passover.

Exodus 12:13,23,24 The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. ²³ When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down. ²⁴ Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

1 Corinthians 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

1 Peter 1:18-19 You know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

Note: For additional information on the unique nature of the Passover sacrifice and its fulfillment in Christ, see Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple and its Services* (Revell, 1874, 1908), p 177-195, and Ceil and Moishe Rosen, *Christ in the Passover* (Moody Press, 1978).

D2. The Means of Grace

D2 B. The Word

D2 B, I. The Word of God is essentially the divine truths conveyed to us in the form of human speech.

D2 B, I, 1. God is the fountain of truth.

- a) **“Truth” may refer to conformity of a statement or proposition to fact or reality, or “truth” may be used by metonymy to denote the facts themselves.**

Deuteronomy 17:4 [If] this has been brought to your attention, then you must investigate it thoroughly. If it is true and it has been proved that this detestable thing has been done in Israel . . .

Ruth 3:12 Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I.

Genesis 42:16 Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If you are not, then as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!

Mark 5:33 Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

- b) **The ultimate reality of God's truth is his grace for Christ's sake.**

- 1) **God in all his ways is truth and love.**

Note that the NIV is not consistent in its rendering for “truth.”

Genesis 24:27 Praise be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה) to my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the journey to the house of my master's relatives. (Compare NASB: Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his lovingkindness and his truth toward my master; as for me, the LORD has guided me in the way to the house of my master's brothers.)

Psalms 25:10 All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful (אֱמֻנָה) for those who keep the demands of his covenant. (Compare KJV: All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.)

Psalms 57:10 For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה) reaches to the skies.

Psalms 43:3 Send forth your light and your truth (אֱמֻנָה), let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.

Psalms 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה) go before you.

Psalms 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה).

Psalms 117:2 For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה) of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD.

- 2) **The great lie, that God is not loving and that self-righteousness is necessary, was introduced into the world by the devil.**

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Romans 1:18,25 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God

for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Romans 10:3 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Apology, Art. III, p 196, 144: But works become conspicuous among men. Human reason naturally admires these, and because it sees only works, and does not understand or consider faith, it dreams accordingly that these works merit remission of sins and justify. This opinion of the law (*opinio legis*) inheres by nature in men's minds.

3) Christ came to restore the truth.

John 1:17 The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6,16,17 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

c) It is God's will that all people should know and enjoy this truth.

Psalms 86:11 Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

Isaiah 59:14,15 So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. ¹⁵ Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The LORD looked and was displeased that there was no justice.

John 8:32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Galatians 2:5,14 We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. ¹⁴ When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

1 Timothy 2:4 [God our Savior] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Timothy 2:18,25 [Hymenaeus and Philetus] have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. ²⁵ Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Timothy 3:7,8 [In these last days some are] always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.

1 John 1:6,8 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. ⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Luther: Take away assertions, and you take away Christianity (*Bondage of the Will, LW 33, p 21*).

Contrast the biblical assurance that we have the truth with the following:

Carl Braaten: Luther believed that the literal meaning of Scripture is identical with its historical content; things happened exactly as they were written down. Today it is impossible to assume the literal historicity of all things recorded. What the biblical authors report is not accepted as a literal transcript of the factual course of events. Therefore, critical scholars inquire behind the text and attempt to reconstruct the real history that took place (*CD, I, p 76-77*).

Paul Tillich (d. 1985): Biblical research in Protestantism has shown the many levels of Biblical literature and the impossibility of considering the Bible as containing the infallible truth of faith.... [The Protestant principle] does not accept any truth of faith as ultimate except the one that no man possesses it. (*Dynamics of Faith, p 98*).

Note: Conservative writers sometimes refer to the "Protestant principle" as the shared conviction that the Bible alone is the written Word of God, and as such is the infallible, definitive standard for doctrine in the church. Tillich, however, means something quite the opposite. In his own words: The Protestant principle, in name derived from the protest of the "Protestants" against decisions of the Catholic majority, contains the divine and human protest against any absolute claim made for a relative reality, even if this claim is made by a Protestant church (*The Protestant Era, ch. 11, p 175*).

Tillich: Truth transcends all human fixation, even the letters of a sacred book (*The Protestant Era*, p 177).

G. Ernest Wright (d. 1994): No system of propositions can deal adequately with the inner dynamics of Biblical faith (*God Who Acts*, p 36).

D2 B, I, 2. God's truth is conveyed to people through his Word.

a) God makes known his truth by proclaiming it.

Psalm 40:10 I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly.

Exodus 34:5-6 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness (יהוה).

John 5:33 You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth.

John 8:40,45,46 As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴⁵ Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! ⁴⁶ Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

b) His Word is the word of truth, revealing and conveying the truth.

Psalm 119:43 Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws.

Ecclesiastes 12:10 The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true.

Ephesians 1:13 You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

Colossians 1:5 [We have heard of your] faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel.

2 Timothy 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

James 1:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

c) His Word is in every instance identical with the truth.

2 Samuel 7:28 O Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your words are trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant.

1 Kings 17:24 Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth."

Psalm 119:86,142,160 All your commands are trustworthy; help me, for men persecute me without cause. ¹⁴² Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true. ¹⁶⁰ All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

D2 B, I, 3. In and of themselves, the sounds or syllables are not the Word in the strict sense.

a) These external vehicles of thought may be destroyed, while the Word is enduring.

Jeremiah 36:27-28 After the king burned the scroll containing the words that Baruch had written at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁸ "Take another scroll and write on it all the words that were on the first scroll, which Jehoiakim king of Judah burned up."

Psalm 119:89 Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

1 Peter 1:23-25 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the

field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,²⁵ but the word of the Lord stands forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.

Gerhard: By the term *Scripture* we have in mind not so much the outer form or the signs, that is, the particular letters, the act of writing, and the words with which the divine revelation has been written down, but the subject matter itself and the thing signified, namely, that which is meant and designated by the writing, the Word of God, which teaches us of his nature and will. Some have expressed it this way: The Word of God may be viewed essentially as the very thoughts God expresses, or non-essentially and accidentally as preaching and writing. In other words, as in any other writing done by an intelligent and rationale agent, so also in the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures two things should be borne in mind: first, the letters, syllables, and words that are written and are outer symbols indicating and expressing the ideas of the mind; and second, the thoughts themselves, which are the things signified, expressed with the symbols of letters, syllables, and words. Accordingly, in the term *Scripture* we include both of these, but especially the latter (*Loci Theologici*, I, 14).

Quenstedt: The name “Holy Scripture” is used either *essentially* [in its real essential meaning] as a name for the divine sense expressed in the spoken words or the writing or in so far as it is a divine Word (in this sense, eternity is ascribed to Scripture Is 40:8; 1 Pe 1:23,25), or it is used *materially* [with reference to the stuff of which Scripture is made], as a name for the spoken words themselves, the letters and characters, or the writing itself, insofar as it the meaning God intends to convey, the divine sense is recorded in letters. Note VIII: The *formale* (essence) of Scripture is the divine message revealed in it; the *materiale* (the stuff of which it is made) is the letters, the words, the writing. — Thesis V: The essence of Scripture is, on the one hand, internal, on the other, external. The *internal essence*, or that which makes Scripture be what it is, namely, to be the word of God, i.e., that which makes it be the Word of God and distinguishes it from any other writing is the inspired meaning of Scripture, which in general is the concept existing in God's mind concerning the mysteries of God and our salvation, a concept that was formed in eternity and revealed in time and communicated to us in writing, or the $\theta\epsilon\omicron\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\iota\alpha$ itself, i.e., the divine inspiration, 2 Tm 3:16, as that by which the Word is made divine and distinguished from a human word. The *external essence* is the character of the speech, or style and idiom, in the Old Testament the idiom of the Hebrew language and in part, the Aramaic, in the New Testament of the Greek language (*TDP*, pars I, cap. IV sec.I, thes. I, nota VII, p 54).

b) If the sounds, letters, or syllables were the essence of God's Word, translations of the Word would be impossible.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”

Acts 2:8,11 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? ¹¹ We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!

c) However, thoughts cannot be conveyed except by certain linguistic forms and expressions.

1) Therefore the original forms are of utmost importance.

Luther: Let us be clear on this: we are not likely to retain the gospel without the languages. The languages are the scabbards in which the sword of the Spirit is held. They are the keg in which the drink is kept. They are the pantry in which this food is stored. ... Therefore it is certain that where the languages do not remain, the gospel itself will ultimately perish (*To the Councilmen of Germany*, LW 45, p 360).

Luther: In the measure that we love the gospel, so let us place strong emphasis on the languages. For it is not without reason that God wrote the Scriptures in the two languages Hebrew and Greek. That language which God did not despise but rather chose above all others for the final revelation of his Word is the language which we also should honor above all others (*To the Councilmen of Germany*, LW 45, p 359).

2) To the degree that translations of Scripture reproduce God's truth in a different language, they are truly the Word of God. This should be remembered even though they dare not be placed on a par with the original.

Compare the status of the Vulgate in the Roman Catholic Church. In 1546 the Council of Trent made the Vulgate the official version of the Catholic Church, and in 1592 the official text with no variants was promulgated by Clement VIII. Subsequent editions of the Vulgate published with the church's imprimatur represent this Clementine edition.

Compare Henry E. Jacobs' (d. 1932) misleading argument: It is only the Scriptures as written in the original languages that are inspired. Even the best translation is only a human explanation or interpretation of the inspired words, however well the inspired thought may be conveyed in other language (*Elements of Religion*, p 31f).

Compare any translation of John 3:16 with the original. E.g., *Sic enim Deus dilexit mundum, ut Filium suum unigenitum daret: ut omnis qui credit in eum non pereat, sed habeat vitam aeternam.*

Consider the weaknesses of inaccurate paraphrases like these from the *Living Bible*: 2 Samuel 12:27, "Joab sent messengers to tell David, 'Rabbah and its beautiful harbor are ours!'"

Luke 8:13, "The stony ground represents those who enjoy listening to sermons, but somehow the message never really gets through to them and doesn't take root and grow. They know the message is true, and sort of believe for awhile; but when the hot winds of persecution blow, they lose interest."

1 Corinthians 11:29, "For if he eats the bread and drinks from the cup unworthily, not thinking about the body of Christ and what it means, he is eating and drinking God's judgment upon himself; he trifling with the death of Christ."

Consider the deficiencies of translations that reflect theological bias, e.g., the *New World Translation* at John 1:1, "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god."

d) Even the purely grammatical construction (*materia Scripturae*) is in the last analysis no more than a vehicle for the divine truth (*forma Scripturae*).

2 Corinthians 3:14-16 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Consider the use of "The Fatherhood of God" in Lodges, the use of the Trinitarian formula among Mormons, or the use of "This is my body" among Evangelicals.

D2 B, II. God gave us his Word in Scripture by inspiration.

D2 B, II, 1. Scripture is rightly and accurately called the Word of God.

a) Regarding the Old Testament Scriptures, we have clear testimony.

Luke 16:27-31 He answered, "Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment." ²⁹ Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them." ³⁰ "No, father Abraham," he said, "but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent." ³¹ He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

2 Peter 1:19-21 We have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 1:1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.

Romans 1:1-2 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— ²the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:15-16 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ.

1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

b) Regarding the New Testament we also have clear testimony.

1) What the apostles preached was the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικᾶ συγκρίνοντες).

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 13:3 You are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

Revelation 22:18-20 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes

words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. ²⁰He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Matthew 10:19-20 When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 We also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

2) The apostolic writings agree with their oral testimony.

1 John 1:2-4 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We write this to make our joy complete.

Philippians 4:9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

1 Corinthians 15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.

1 Corinthians 14:37 If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

3) The apostolic writings are called Scripture.

2 Peter 3:16 [Paul] writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain" and "The worker deserves his wages" (Dt 25:4 and Lk 10:7).

c) Scripture is the revealed truth of God, the Word of God.

1) Consider these theological statements of the fact.

Hollaz: In the definition of Holy Scripture "Word of God" essentially means the thought of God or the concept of the divine mind concerning the salvation of men, made known, directly to the prophets and apostles and indirectly by their ministry to the whole human race (that is, through their preaching and writing) (*Examen*, 77).

Gerhard: By the name "Scripture" we must understand not so much the external form or the signs, i.e., the points of the letters, the act of writing, and the words with which the divine revelation is written down, but rather the material itself or that which is meant by the words, and therefore that very thing which is denoted and meant by the writing, namely, the Word of God itself which teaches us about the essence and will of God.... In this prophetic and apostolic Scripture two things are to be kept in mind, namely, first the letters, syllables and words themselves, which are written and are the external symbols which signify and express the thoughts of the mind; secondly, the thoughts themselves, which are, as it were, indicated, being expressed in those external symbols consisting of letters, syllables and words. Therefore both of these are included in this name "Scripture," and the latter indeed principally (*Loci Theologici*, II, p14).

2) The written form is non-essential or incidental (*accidens*).

Gerhard: That there is no real difference between "the Word of God" and "the Holy Scripture" understood in the material sense is proved 1) from the *materia* of Scripture, 2) from the equal connotation of the two terms 3) from the logical rule that a non-essential (an accident, a characteristic) does not change the essence of a thing. It is a non-essential for the Word of God whether it is expressed vocally or committed to writing. It is one and the same Word of God whether it is made known to us in a spoken or written way, since neither the principal efficient cause, nor the material, nor the internal essence, nor the purpose is changed, but there is a difference only in the way it is made known, depending on which organ (i.e., the mouth or the hand) is used (*Loci Theologici, de Scriptura sacra*, Art. 7).

D2 B, II, 2. We use the term "inspiration" to describe the process by which God called and empowered men to write Scripture. We use the term "inspired" to describe the writings that were produced in this manner.

a) The chosen writers were called and carried along by the Holy Spirit in the task of proclaiming and writing God's Word.

2 Peter 1:21 Prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. οὐ γὰρ θελήματι ἀνθρώπου ἠνέχθη προφητεία ποτέ, ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι ἐλάλησαν ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἄνθρωποι

Ezekiel 1:3 The word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the LORD was upon him.

Exodus 17:14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

Exodus 34:27 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."

Jeremiah 30:2 This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: "Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you."

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God . . .

Romans 15:15,18 I have written you quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me. ¹⁸ I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done.

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead . . .

Revelation 1:11 Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

b) The resultant writings are identified as God's Word, as divinely inspired words.

1) This truth is clearly stated many times.

2 Timothy 3:15-16 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful (πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος) for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

2 Peter 1:19-21 We have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Zechariah 7:12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through (τῶν) the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

Acts 1:16 Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus.

2 Samuel 23:2 The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

2) Use of sources, study, investigation, and meditation were not excluded, but were guided and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Titus 1:12 Even one of their own prophets has said, "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons" (Epimenides, ca 600 BC).

Luke 1:3 Since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus.

Daniel 9:2 In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

Ecclesiastes 1:13 I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 9:1 I reflected on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God's hands, but no man knows whether love or hate awaits him.

Ecclesiastes 12:9,10 Not only was the Teacher wise, but also he imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. ¹⁰ The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true.

1 Corinthians 2:11-12 Who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

c) **This divine inspiration of the Scriptures extends to the choice of the very words.**

1) **This truth is revealed many times.**

1 Corinthians 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες).

Matthew 5:18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen (ἰῶτα ἢ ἓν ἢ μία κεραία), will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Matthew 10:19-20 When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it (πῶς ἢ τί). At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

John 10:35-36 If he called them "gods," to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken— ³⁶ what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, "I am God's Son"?

Galatians 3:16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

2) **For this reason the holy writers may be called "writing instruments" (*amanuenses, calami*). But this does not require that we understand the process as some sort of mechanical dictation.**

Psalms 45:1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen (ὑψ) of a skillful writer.

Compare the Council of Trent IV: The written books and the unwritten traditions which, received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the apostles themselves, the Holy Spirit dictating (*Spiritu Sanctu dictante*).

Compare Leo XIII in his encyclical, *Providentissimus Deus*, 1893: All the books and the whole of each book which the church receives as sacred and canonical were written at the dictation of the Holy Spirit.

Note: *dictare* can be used in a wider sense than "dictate" and may mean "say again, repeatedly" or even "get something written down" in some way.

Contrast Barth (d. 1968): We have to resist and reject the 17th century doctrine of inspiration as false doctrine.... [The Bible] became a "paper Pope" (*CD*, I, 2:525).

Contrast Emil Brunner (d. 1966): The equation of the "Word" of the Bible with the "Word of God" ... produced the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, with all its disastrous results (*Dog.*, I:28). The leaders of the Reformation ... returned to the Catholic idea of revelation, according to which the revelation guaranteed the infallible doctrine contained in Scripture, and the Scripture guaranteed the divine revelation, which is therefore the infallible source of this doctrine.... Now the way led ... to the "paper-Pope" (*Revelation and Reason*, p 10f).

Contrast Carl Braaten: Churches that claim the heritage of Luther and the Reformation still affirm the Bible as the Word of God. This is not meant in the fundamentalistic sense that everything in the Bible stands directly as the Word of God. ... The Bible is the Word of God as a whole, in its total import and impact, because it conveys the message of eschatological salvation. ... Luther believed that the literal meaning of Scripture is identical with its historical content; things happened exactly as they were written down. Today it is impossible to assume the literal historicity of all things recorded (*CD*, I, p 76).

D2 B, II, 3. The citations and arguments for verbal inspiration are reassuring only for a Christian.

- a) For an unbeliever they are merely begging the question.
- b) For a Christian, however, they are conclusive.

1) **A believer has experienced the divine power of the Word.**

Psalm 119:92 If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 Our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

2) **Hence the believer rightly puts implicit faith in all statements of Scripture.**

Psalm 119:43,81,95-100,105 Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws. ⁸¹ My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your word. ⁹⁵ The wicked are waiting to destroy me, but I will ponder your statutes. ⁹⁶ To all perfection I see a limit; but your commands are boundless. ⁹⁷ Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. ⁹⁸ Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. ⁹⁹ I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. ¹⁰⁰ I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

John 7:17 If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

John 8:47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.

D2 B, II, 4. There are many objections to verbal inspiration, but they are all invalid.

- a) **Some objections to verbal inspiration are based on the differing styles of the various writers.**

1) **The same writer may indeed use different styles, such as narrative, poetry, and oratory.**

2) **This may be caused by varying subject matter, such as history, doctrine, threats, and exhortation.**

3) **This may reflect, in part, the training and life experience the men received from God himself.**

Consider: Amos 1:1, 7:14: The words of Amos, one of the shepherds of Tekoa . . . Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees.

Consider the varied backgrounds and experiences of Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, Paul, or Peter.

4) **This may also reflect, in part, the manner in which the writer obtained the desired information.**

Luke 1:3 Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,

1 Corinthians 1:11 My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you.

- b) **Some objections to verbal inspiration are based on variations in the reports of the same events by different writers, for example, in the Easter story.**

1) **The variations may be caused by a particular aim of the writer.**

Consider the account of Saul's conversion and the hearing of Christ's voice:

Acts 9:3-7 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice (ἤκουσεν φωνήν) say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." ⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound (ἀκούοντες τῆς φωνῆς) but did not see anyone.

Acts 22:6-9 About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice (ἤκουσα φωνῆς) say to me, "Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?" ⁸ "Who are you, Lord?" I asked. "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁹ My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice (τὴν φωνὴν οὐκ ἤκουσαν) of him who was speaking to me.

Acts 26:12-14 On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³ About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell to the ground,

and I heard a voice (ἤκουσα φωνήν) saying to me in Aramaic, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”

Consider variations of the superscription on the cross:

Matthew 27:37 Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Mark 15:26 The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Luke 23:38 There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

John 19:19-20 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

2) The variations serve to supplement each other, not to contradict each other.

c) Some objections to verbal inspiration are based on supposed contradictions.

1) Alleged contradictions often disappear upon closer investigation.

2 Samuel 24:24 But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.

1 Chronicles 21:25 David paid Araunah six hundred shekels of gold for the site.

2) The variations might be intended to make a point.

1 Samuel 13:1 presents a special problem.

The MT says: “Saul was the son of a year in his reign and two years he ruled over Israel.”

The NIV supplies numbers: Saul was [thirty] years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel [forty-]two years.

The verse is not in the LXX, except in editions by Origen & Lucian.

Some think the short version of the text is correct and teaches a spiritual lesson about Saul’s changing attitudes. Compare with 1 Samuel 10:9, “As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul’s heart, and all these signs were fulfilled that day.” Compare with 1 Samuel 13:13,14, “You acted foolishly,” Samuel said. “You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. ¹⁴ But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD’s command.”

The possibility of textual lacunae in the Samuel manuscripts seems to be the more likely explanation, but what impact, if any, would this have on divine inspiration? Also recall the point made by A.T. Robertson (d. 1934): Even a possible explanation is sufficient to meet the objector.

d) Some objections to verbal inspiration are based on alleged historical inaccuracies, but there are responses to all of them.

Objection: There are many historical errors in the Bible.

Response: In no case where modern research (excavations, etc.) has shed any light has the Bible account been genuinely discredited. We acknowledge that we have limited information in some cases, but the absence of evidence regarding historical accuracy is not to be understood as the evidence of absence regarding historical accuracy.

Objection: The list of kings in Genesis 14 is not historical.

Response: Negative critics question the historicity of the chapter and of Mesopotamian kings mentioned. More recent archeological evidence has supported the plausibility of the names and therefore the credibility of such events. See G. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p 177ff.

Objection: According to 2 Kings 19:9 Sennacherib received a report that Tirhakah, the Cushite (Ethiopian, Nubian) king of Egypt, was marching out to fight against him. There have been objections to the accuracy of this passage partly based on the chronology involved (that Tirhakah or Tirhaqah was not yet king), and partly because he is called a “Cushite” ruler of Egypt.

Response: There is ample evidence, however, to question the correctness of the earlier assumed chronology of this Egyptian dynasty. Furthermore, the reference to Tirhakah as king may be proleptic. Tirhaqah belonged to the 25th Egyptian dynasty, which is acknowledged to be Ethiopian. See Edward Young, *Isaiah*, II, p 553-555, and Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, p 414-419, 438.

Objection: Isaiah 20:1-2 In the year that the supreme commander, sent by Sargon king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and attacked and captured it— ² at that time the LORD spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz. Since extra-biblical references to Sargon II, king of Assyria from 722-705 BC and father of Sennacherib, were for a long time virtually nil, many saw the biblical reference as unhistorical.

Response: Excavations of his palace at Dur Sharrukin [Khorsabad] in the 1920s and 1930s changed all that and confirmed his identity.

Objection: Daniel 5 says Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon. The mention of King Belshazzar was long seen by critics as unhistorical. See G. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p 426ff. for a brief discussion of the issues and potential resolutions to the supposed problem.

Response: Extant inscriptions say that while Nabonidus was king, his son Belshazzar was a coregent and in charge of the city. This would also explain why Daniel was “third highest” in the realm (Daniel 5:29).

Objection: Luke 2:1,2 says “In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor (ἡγεμονεύοντος) of Syria.”

The career of Publius Sulpicius Quirinius is fairly well documented but there is no record of his being “governor” of Syria until about 6 AD, about ten years later than the event described by Luke.

Response: The word used by Luke, however, may signify the exercise of military command other than holding a formal gubernatorial office. Shortly after Quirinius became a consul in 12 BC he was given the task of bringing to order the rebelling Homanadensians of Asia. In 3 BC he became proconsul of Asia. In the intervening years, going about his work, he could have assumed military governorship of the surrounding provinces including Syria.

e) **Some objections to verbal inspiration based on supposed errors by the author.**

1) **A number of examples may be briefly considered.**

-a) **An apostolic memory lapse?**

1 Corinthians 1:16 I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.

F. Pieper: The objection against the inspiration of Scripture taken from 1 Cor. 1:16 is due to a confusion of two things which have nothing in common. It has been said that since the Apostle in this passage concedes the possibility of a *lapsus memoriae* with regard to the number of those whom he baptized personally, his epistles could not have been written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, since the Holy Spirit is not subject to *lapsus memoriae*. This objection has been answered briefly and pointedly: As inspiration did not make the holy writers personally sinless in their lives, so it did not make them infallible or omniscient as to their past lives (*CD*, I, p 261).

-b) **Jeremiah or Zechariah?**

Matthew 27:9 Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: “They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel.”

Zechariah 11:12,13 I told them, “If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it.” So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. ¹³ And the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—the handsome price at which they priced me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD to the potter.

Jeremiah 32:6-15 Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me: ⁷ ‘Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.’ ⁸ Then, just as the LORD had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. Since it is your right to redeem it and possess it, buy it for yourself.’ I knew that this was the word of the LORD; ⁹ so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰ I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. ¹¹ I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy— ¹²and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard. ¹³ In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions: ¹⁴ ‘This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. ¹⁵ For this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.”’

Consider: Matthew blends two prophecies into one and may have legitimately used the name of Jeremiah or Zechariah or both of them. Perhaps he simply chose to use the more prominent name. Another explanation that has been advanced is that the Jewish arrangement of the books latter prophets placed that of Jeremiah first, and Matthew was merely designating the collection of books by the name of the first.

-c) **Abraham or Jacob?**

Acts 7:2, 15,16 He replied: “Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran.” ¹⁵ Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our fathers died. ¹⁶ Their bodies were brought back to

Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought from the sons of Hamor at Shechem for a certain sum of money.

Genesis 50:13 They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field.

Joshua 24:32 And Joseph's bones, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the tract of land that Jacob bought for a hundred pieces of silver from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. This became the inheritance of Joseph's descendants.

Consider: One perceived difficulty here is that Genesis tells us Jacob was buried with his father and grandfather at Machpelah, but Stephen's words are supposed to indicate he was buried at Shechem. But Acts 7:16 doesn't necessarily say Jacob was buried at Shechem. "They" might refer only to "our fathers" and likely has reference to the sons of Jacob, the fathers of the tribes of Israel. This is also in agreement with rabbinic tradition. Another perceived difficulty is that Joshua says Jacob purchased Joseph's burial place at Shechem while Stephen says that Abraham bought the parcel of land. A fully satisfactory explanation is that both men purchased the land, something that was necessitated by the interval of many years between them and the period of absence of the patriarchs from that immediate area.

-d) This number or that?

1 Corinthians 10:8 We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.

Numbers 25:9 Those who died in the plague numbered 24,000.

Consider: It is possible that both Moses and Paul were using round numbers and the actual number was between the two numbers used. It is also possible that the lower number, 23,000, referred to those who died by the plague on the stated day, and the higher number of 24,000 included those who were executed by Moses and Israel's leaders as stated in Numbers 25:5: So Moses said to Israel's judges, "Each of you must put to death those of your men who have joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor."

-e) Long or short sojourn in Egypt?

Exodus 12:40 Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years (Hebrew: אֲשֶׁר וְשֵׁבוּ בְּמִצְרָיִם; LXX adds also καὶ ἐν γῆ Χανααν, and in Canaan)

Genesis 15:13 Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years."

Acts 7:6 God spoke to him in this way: "Your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years."

Galatians 3:17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.

Consider: The starting point of the Israelite stay in Egypt has been debated for a long time, as the LXX text of Ex 12:40 might indicate. In Acts 7 Stephen seems to take the round number used already in Gen 15 while the 430 years given in Exodus is obviously more precise. The main perceived difficulty is that Paul seems to reckon the time from Abraham to the Exodus as 430 years. Some prefer simply to say he used the figure because it was provided in the OT and familiar to his readers even though it was "an understatement" (Lenski). Others point out that the reference to the establishment of the patriarchal covenant need not refer to the original giving of the covenant to Abraham, but could also refer to the repetition and affirmation of it to Jacob as he brought his household to Egypt (See Gen 46:3-4). Since the extant Septuagint is post-New Testament, it might have been adjusted to agree with Galatians.

-f) Staff or bed?

Hebrews 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff [as in the LXX, ῥάβδος is used].

Genesis 47:31-48:2 "Swear to me," he said. Then Joseph swore to him, and Israel worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff (מִטָּה). ¹Some time later Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. ²When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph has come to you," Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed (מִטָּה).

Consider: One explanation that quickly comes to mind is that of a copyist error that has more to do with the transmission of MSS rather than the inspiration of the original text. Perhaps that is

satisfactory. It may also be said that Jacob's use of his bed (הַטֵּמֶן) while blessing Joseph's sons does not rule out his leaning on his staff (הַטֵּמֶן) at the same time. Perhaps both are true.

-g) Ears or body?

Psalm 40:6 Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced (דַּוְּלָא לִי דַּוְּלָא); burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.

Hebrews 10:5 Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said:

"Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me (σῶμα δὲ κατηρίσω; the LXX has σῶμα or ὠτία δὲ κατηρίσω μοι)

Consider: While some manuscripts of the LXX and the New Testament translation in Hebrews differ from the imagery of the MT of Psalm 40, the basic meaning and emphasis has not changed. The Messiah's total, unswerving attention and devotion to the LORD is the clear point. The apostles often paraphrase OT phrases and frequently opt for LXX translations that adequately repeat the intended thought of the text and that were perhaps more familiar to Greek-speaking Jews of the first century AD. Some Bible students include a reference to Exodus 21:5-6 at this point: "But if the servant declares, 'I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,'⁶ then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear (וְנִתְּנָה עַל אָזְנוֹ) with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life." Again, the main point is voluntary and complete devotion with obedience, although the verb used is different from that used in Psalm 40.

2) In considering these supposed errors in the biblical text, we appropriately ask: Is our ignorance of a solution proof that the author is guilty of an error?

1 Corinthians 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

3) The Bible statements about its own inspiration and inerrancy remain conclusive for the believer.

John 10:35-36 If he called them "gods," to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken—³⁶ what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, "I am God's Son"?

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Large Catechism, Infant Baptism, p 746, 57: Thus we do also in infant baptism. We bring the child in the conviction and hope that it believes, and we pray that God may grant it faith; but we do not baptize it upon that, but solely upon the command of God. Why so? Because we know that God does not lie. I and my neighbor and, in short, all men, may err and deceive, but the Word of God cannot err.

Large Catechism, Sacrament of the Altar, p 770, 76: Therefore, if you cannot feel it, at least believe the Scriptures; they will not lie to you, and they know your flesh better than you yourself. Yes, St. Paul further concludes in Rom. 7:18: I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. If St. Paul may speak thus of his flesh, we do not propose to be better nor more holy.

Contrast Carl Braaten: Fundamentalist biblicism is rejected by most theologians and is out of favor in most of the seminaries that train clergy for the parish ministry. They reject biblicism not merely because historical science has disclosed errors and contradictions in the biblical writings, but rather because the authority of the Bible is elevated at the expense of Christ and his gospel. Non-fundamentalist Protestants also accept the Bible as the Word of God in some sense, but they point out that the concept of the Word of God . . . cannot be confined to the Bible. We cannot say that the Bible is the Word of God in a simplistic way, for the concept of the Word of God bears many diverse meanings in the classical Christian tradition (CD, I, p 74-75).

f) Some objections to verbal inspiration are based on statements alleged to be inappropriate or incongruous with the idea of inspiration.

1) Passages that have been cited in this connection include these:

2 Timothy 4:13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.

1 Timothy 5:23 Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

Proverbs 11:22 Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.

2) In response we offer the following questions.

-a) Who are we to judge propriety in the matter of inspiration?

-b) Might not something that under some circumstances is considered trivial be of utmost importance under other circumstances?

g) Some objections to verbal inspiration are based on evident corruptions of the text in transmission. In reality these do not affect the doctrine of inspiration.

1) Copyists and printers were not inspired.

Consider the so-called *Narrenbibel*, a German edition in which *Narren* (Fool) was accidentally printed in place of *Herren* (Lord); or *The Wicked Bible*, a English edition in which the “not” was accidentally left out of the Sixth Commandment. There were also attempts to produce deliberate falsifications, for example, the efforts of the Samaritans or Marcion (ca. 100-160).

2) Evidence of corruptions must be established in each case by proper methods of textual criticism.

-a) God, who gave us his Word, in loving-kindness carefully watched over its preservation.

-b) The vast majority of variant readings affect only minor matters, such as orthography.

-c) No variant exists that in any way would alter the truth of the gospel.

John 1:13 [They believe on his name], who (οἱ) were born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

[They believe on his name], who (variant ὁς) was born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

1 John 5:7,8 For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement (“The “Johannine Comma”—reference to the Trinity is not in any reliable Greek manuscript).

Siegbert Becker: Those who see the variant readings as an excuse for the denial of verbal inspiration and inerrancy are not motivated by true scholarly concern for the facts. They have a theological ax to grind. Any honest examination of the evidence will show that the facts do not support them. . . . True orthodox Lutheranism has nothing to fear from the variant readings. The message brought to us in the holy Scriptures is not distorted or vitiated by any of them that could conceivably be correct (“Verbal Inspiration and the Variant Readings,” *WLQ*, July, 1974, p 184, and *OGH*, I, p 182).

D2 B, II, 5.

Neo-orthodoxy confuses inspiration with conversion and enlightenment.

Karl Barth: We cannot speak of the inspiration of the Bible without that royal act of the original inspiration in which the risen Christ gave his own a part in his own divine Spirit. But no more can we speak of it without that other royal act—which is only a continuation of the first—in which the inspiration is imparted to us, in which here and now we are forced out of our position as spectators of the word and work of the biblical writers, in which the calling of the prophets and apostles becomes an event to us by the ministry of their word and work (*CD*, I, 2:522).

Barth: The *theopneustia* is the act of revelation in which the prophets and apostles in their humanity became what they were, and in which alone in their humanity they can become to us what they are (*CD*, I, 2:507).

Barth: Verbal inspiration does not mean the infallibility of the biblical word in its linguistic, historical and theological character as a human word. It means that the fallible and faulty human word is as such used by God and has to be received and heard in spite of its human fallibility (*CD*, I, 2:533).

Barth: What matters is to do the will of God if we are to know his grace and truth—for that is the inspiration of the Bible (*CD*, I, 2:533–534).

Barth: We have to understand the inspiration of the Bible as a divine decision continually made in the life of the Church and in the life of its members (*CD*, I, 2:534–535).

George S. Hendry: When the Word of God creates faith in us, this is God’s own work, His miracle, His in-spirit-ing. It is not in our power to make it happen. At the best we can pray for it. This, in all its simplicity, is the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible (*Reformation Old and New*, p 152).

Paul Tillich: The inspiration of the Bible writers is their receptive and creative response to the potentially revelatory facts. This inspiration of the writers of the New Testament is their acceptance of Jesus as the Christ and with him of the New Being, of which they became witnesses (*S.T.*, I, p 159).

D2 B, II, 6.

Lutheran writers have sometimes used the term “inspiration” is a looser way, referring to the Holy Spirit’s guiding the users of Scripture.

Franz Pieper: Mylius (d. 1607) and Hutter (d. 1616) and some later Lutheran theologians spoke of an inspiration of the Lutheran Symbols. They did not mean, of course, to place the Symbols on a plane with Scripture, but they merely wanted to state that the Symbols were produced under the special guidance and assistance of the Holy Ghost. Hollaz has shown from their own words that Mylius and Hutter used the term *inspiration* in a wider sense (*sensu latiori*). But even with these precautions the Symbols should not be called “inspired.” It is certainly better to reserve the term for the writings of the Apostles and Prophets (*CD*, I, p 358).

D2 B, III. Scripture has divine authority. It is sufficient, and it is clear.

D2 B, III, 1. The authority of the Scriptures, both causative and normative, is divine.

(“Causative authority” refers to the power to bring sinners to faith and save them; “normative authority” refers to the power to be the source and judge of theology.)

a) Scripture claims divine authority to teach.

Psalm 94:12 Blessed is the man you discipline, O LORD, the man you teach from your law.

Luke 16:29,31 Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.”³¹ He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

Romans 15:4 Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

b) Scripture claims the authority to judge doctrine.

Deuteronomy 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder,² and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, “Let us follow other gods” (gods you have not known) “and let us worship them,”³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.⁴ It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him.⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

Acts 17:11 The Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 26:22 I have had God’s help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen.

1 Timothy 6:3-4 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching,⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing.

c) The authority of Scripture, being absolute, cannot rest on any authority outside of Scripture.

1) The following passages bring out this truth.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

Luke 16:29-31 Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.”³⁰ “No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.”³¹ He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

Galatians 1:8 Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

2) The authority of Scripture rests on the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures.

1 Thessalonians 1:5,6 Our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 We also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

1 John 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

Gerhard: The first is the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit who, just as he gives testimony to the spirit of believers that they are the children of God (Ro 8:16), so he also powerfully convinces them

that in the Scriptures the voice of the heavenly Father is heard and that only God is a fit and authentic witness (*Locī*, tom. II, art. XXXVI, p 37).

Quenstedt: But the final reason for which and on account of which we believe with God-given and unerring faith that the Word of God is the power and efficacy itself which is intrinsic in the divine Word and the testimony and seal of the Holy Spirit who speaks in and through Scripture. Because the bestowal of faith, by which we not only believe the doctrines, but by which we also believe the Scripture, which shows and proclaims the doctrines, is a work that comes from the Holy Spirit as the highest cause (*TDP*, par. I, cap. IV, sect. II, qu. IX, thes., p 97).

Hollaz: By “the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit” this is meant: it is the supernatural act of the Holy Spirit who through the Word of God, when it is read with attention or perceived with the ear, by virtue of his divine power communicated to the Holy Scripture moves, opens, enlightens, and bends the heart of man to the obedience of faith, so that the man who has been enlightened truly believes for internal, spiritual reasons that the Word which has been proclaimed to him truly came from God, and for that reason gives unshakable assent to it (*Examen*, prol., cap. III, qu 31, p 136).

3) Various external criteria may be mentioned, for example, antiquity, preservation, the consistency of the witness, and the accuracy of predictive prophecy.

Hollaz: We have adduced external criteria because the minds of unbelieving men who are to be converted are prepared by them for reading and meditating on the Holy Scripture with diligence and a desire to learn. . . . It is necessary, first of all, that unbelievers should be moved by the adduced external criteria to think that it is not unlikely that Scripture traces its origin back to God, and that they may for that reason begin to think highly of it, read it, and meditate on it (*Examen*, prol., cap., qu. 28-30, p 124).

Franz Pieper (d. 1931): A word on the rational proofs for the Christian religion, as employed in apologetics. The Christian apologist is in a position to show any rational man, particularly if he have a well-trained mind, that after all it would be more reasonable to accept the claims of Christianity as true than to reject them as false. But he must ever keep in mind that his real business is not to demonstrate the truth of the Christian religion to the unbeliever, but to uncover the insincerity of unbelief, for all who reject Christianity do so, consciously or unconsciously, because of their evil will and not because of their pretended “intellectual honesty” (*CD*, I, p 110).

Compare/Contrast with Henry Morris: Skill at persuasion and argumentation is no substitute for prayer and sincere concern for souls, and certainly no substitute for the use of the Word of God itself. At the same time, it is a serious mistake to teach, as many do, that the use of Christian evidences . . . is unnecessary. In a world of almost universal hostility to Bible Christianity, where unbelief in the Bible is only exceeded by ignorance of the Bible, it is obvious that to most people at least, the testimony of Scripture and personal experience alone . . . will be pointless. Some basis must also be given for believing the Bible to be true and the experience to be more meaningful than experiences offered by other religions (*Many Infallible Proofs*, p 4).

d) Since the authority of Scripture is absolute, Scripture is its own interpreter.

Luther: Scripture itself by itself is its own surest, best, and clearest interpreter (*Erl. Ed.*, 36:160-161).

Quenstedt: To the Holy Spirit, as the original Author of Scripture, belongs the interpretation of it. And since he speaks to us today only in and through Scripture, it follows that the legitimate interpretation of Scripture is to be sought from Scripture itself (*TDP*, I:138).

Quenstedt: The more obscure passages which need explanation can and ought to be explained by other more clear passages of Scripture. And thus Scripture itself gives the interpretation of the more obscure passages, by comparing them with the clearer ones, so that thus Scripture is explained by Scripture. For generally speaking, there are certain biblical sayings that are like suns with respect to others, which, like planets, are illuminated by them (*TDP*, I:137).

1) Each passage has one intended meaning, unlike the intentional ambiguity in the pronouncements of ancient oracles.

Luther: The Holy Spirit is the most simple writer and speaker in heaven and earth; therefore his words have only one sense, the most simple one, which we call the literal sense (*LW* 39, p 178-179).

-a) It is necessary that each passage to be taken in the natural sense indicated by the context.

2 Peter 1:20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation.

2 Peter 1:19 We have the word of the prophets made more certain (καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον), and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Luther: You shall not give your own interpretation. The Holy Spirit himself must expound Scripture. Otherwise it must remain unexpounded. Now if anyone of the saintly fathers can show that his interpretation is based on Scripture, and if Scripture proves that this is the way that Scripture should be interpreted, then the interpretation is right. If this is not the case, I must not believe him. (*LW* 30, p 166).

Consider the importance of this truth in interpreting Revelation 20.

-b) The allegorical approach to the interpretation of Scripture is not acceptable. It violates the simple sense of the words of the sacred text as indicated by the context.

-1) The ancient fourfold approach to biblical interpretation ignored the context of the passage.

The literal interpretation teaches what was done;
the allegorical, what you should believe;
the moral, what you should do;
the anagogical, what you should hope.

Honorius of Autun (12th century); Scripture is interpreted and understood in four ways: historically, typologically, tropically, and anagogically. This is expressed by the table for the presentation of the bread in the ark [sic], which is supported by four feet. The ark presents the church,...the table represents Scripture,...the four feet are the four kinds of meaning. ...

It is history that Solomon is called peaceable and that he built the temple in seven years. It is allegory that Solomon is called peaceable and that he is Christ...who made the church as a temple for himself.... It is tropology that just as Solomon made the temple out of planks and stones, so each believer makes in his soul a temple of God.... It is anagogy ...that Christ establishes a temple in the heavenly Jerusalem out of living stones, that is, the elect (*Commentary on Songs*, Intro.)

-2) Samples of allegorical interpretation illustrate its weakness:

Epistle of Barnabas, 10:3 [With reference to Deuteronomy 14:8, The pig is also unclean; although it has a split hoof, it does not chew the cud. You are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses]: He mentioned the swine for this reason: you shall not consort, he means, with men who are like swine, that is to say, when they have plenty they forget the Lord, but when they are in want they recognize the Lord, just as the swine when it eats does not know its master, but when it is hungry it cries out, and after receiving food is again silent. (Kirsopp Lake translation, 1912).

Donald Fortner: *Ruth* represents all who are saved by the grace of God. *Boaz* represents the Lord Jesus Christ, our Kinsman-Redeemer. He is the owner of all things. All the fields of the world belong to him. . . . *The field* in which Ruth gleaned represents the Word of God. The *young men*, the reapers, represent those who preach the gospel of Christ. As Boaz commanded his young men to let fall some of the grain on purpose for Ruth, so the Lord Jesus Christ commands his servants, those who preach the gospel, to let fall precious truths on purpose for chosen sinners (*Discovering Christ in Ruth*, p 95).

-3) Consider these evaluations of allegorizing.

Calov first cites a passage from the *Philologia Sacra* of Glassius: "The mystical sense is the sense which is not directly signified by the words themselves but by the thing which is signified by the words," and then he says: "If anyone wishes to speak very carefully, the meaning of the words or statements of Scripture is one thing, and the typical significance which God has in mind in something described in Scripture or in some historical account is something else. For God can have something in mind that he wants to tell us through a certain historical account, but while that thing is described in that historical account, it does not follow that the words in which it is described have a double meaning, one literal, the other mystical. But those words have a single meaning, but through the thing itself which is described in these words God wished at the same time to set something else before the eyes of men, but he did not want to do that through the words which describe it" (*Systema*, tom. I, cap. IV, sec. II, qu. XVIII, p 664, which quoted Salomon Glassius (d. 1656).

Quenstedt: We must distinguish between 1) an accommodation or mystical application of things said and done in Scripture which is "in-Scripturated" (εγγραφον) and divine or which is handed down in Scripture itself, as when St. Paul in Ga 4:24 by means of the two sons of Abraham points out the two covenants of God [that is, an interpretation that is found in the text of Scripture and that God himself makes], and 2) a non-Scriptural (αγραφον) accommodation or mystical application which is brought in or invented by human effort. We must distinguish between allegories and types which Christ himself or the apostles built on the literal sense in the Scripture itself, and allegories and types which

Scripture itself does not point out (*TDP*, pars. I, cap. IV, sect., II, qu. XIII, ecthes. X, p 130).

-c) Biblical texts are not to be torn out of their context.

Genesis 19:20 (KJV) Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. [CS Spurgeon (d. 1892) reportedly based a sermon on the second half of the verse to mimic and dissuade those who would trifle with little sins.]

Colossians 2:21 Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch! [The words have been used to support temperance ideology and to prescribe abstinence from all alcoholic beverages. In reality, this text condemns such views.]

Luke 22:38 The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." "That is enough," he replied. [Used by Roman Catholicism for the use of spiritual and temporal power by the church.]

Ezekiel 44:2 The LORD said to me, "This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered through it. [Alleged evidence for the perpetual virginity of Mary]

2) The Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church do not allow the Scripture to be its own interpreter.

Bellarmino: We and our adversaries agree that the Scriptures ought to be understood by that spirit by whom they were produced, i.e., the Holy Spirit. The whole question therefore hinges on this point, Where is this Spirit? For it is our settled opinion that this Spirit, although he is often given to many private persons, nevertheless is surely to be found in the Church, that is, in the council of the bishops confirmed by the highest pastor of the whole Church, or in the highest pastor together with the council of the other pastors.—But in this matter we say in general that the judge of the Scripture's true meaning and of all controversies is the Church, i.e., the pope together with the council (*Disputationes*, tom. I, lib. III, cap. III, Art. 11 & 12, p 82).

Gregory of Valentia (d. 1603) The main point is this, if at any time a controversy about doctrine should arise, the church cannot stray from the truth in defining the doctrine. However, this infallible authority of the Church for defining doctrines does not belong to individual believers, for they obviously are able to err as individuals. Nor does it even belong to all believers together. For it would be given to them in vain since it would hardly be possible for an authoritative opinion to be spoken by them all. But the highest authority of the church is vested in the vicar of Christ, the Supreme Pontiff, whether he wants to settle the matter together with the council of bishops, or without the council (Cited by Aquinas in his *Summa*, then in *Calov, Systema*, tom. I, p 378).

Quenstedt [with reference to 2 Peter 1:20: Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation]: If Peter wanted to teach that there is a double authority in the church, the first, the authority of the Holy Scripture which proclaims the heavenly truth to us, and the second, the authority to interpret the Scripture, the admonition of Peter would lack coherence. For how are these things combined: the believers ought to take heed to the most sure prophetic Word and at the same time to know that the light of interpretation by which the prophetic Word is to be understood does not rise out of the Word. Do not these things mutually annul one another? (*TDP*, qu XIV, thes. beb. II, obs. 9, p 140).

Council of Trent, Sess. IV, Decret. II: No one, relying on his own skill, shall—in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine—wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy mother Church—whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures—has held and does hold.

Vatican II: All of what has been said about the way of interpreting Scripture is subject finally to the judgment of the Church, which carries out the divine commission and ministry of guarding and interpreting the word of God (*Documents*, p 121).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 85 [citing Vatican II]: The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware: It is from the Church that the Bible ultimately derives its authority, for it was the Church which originally decided which books form a part of the Holy Scripture; and it is the Church alone which can interpret the Scripture with authority. There are many sayings in the Bible which by themselves are far from clear, and individual readers, however sincere, are in danger of error if they trust their own personal interpretation . . . Orthodox, when they read the Scripture accept the guidance of the Church. When received into the Orthodox Church, a convert promises, "I will accept

and understand Holy Scripture in accordance with the interpretation which was and is held by the Holy Orthodox Catholic Church of the East, our Mother" (*The Orthodox Way*, p 199-200).

Luther: If what they claim were true, why have the Holy Scripture at all? Of what use is Scripture? Let us burn the Scripture and be satisfied with the unlearned gentlemen at Rome who possess the Holy Spirit.... Their claim that only the pope may interpret Scripture is an outrageous fancied fable (*LW* 44, p 134).

3) Those with evolutionary presuppositions who interpret Genesis 1 according to the geological "record of the rocks" fail to let the natural sense of a passage stand.

Henry M. Morris: The standard system of orthodox historical geology has been entrenched in scientific literature for over a hundred years and is the real strength of the evolution model. The idea that the earth is billions of years old and the forms of life on earth have been gradually changing and increasing in complexity during those vast ages seems to be *prima facie* evidence of evolution and against the Bible. The almost universal indoctrination in this geologic-age concept is beyond question the major barrier against acceptance of the divine inspiration of the Bible and the truth of Christianity. People have numerous moral and spiritual reasons for rejecting Christ, but their main intellectual justification will usually be found, if one probes deeply, in the assumption that the early chapters of the Bible have been proved scientifically false. The geologic-age system, as presently structured . . . obviously seems to be a powerful evidence for evolution. . . . The fossil record does, of course *suggest* evolution, though it certainly does not *prove* evolution (*Many Infallible Proofs*, p 273-274).

4) Neo-orthodox and modernist "demythologizing" applies the principles of rationalism to biblical interpretation.

Bultmann: The cosmology of the New Testament is essentially mythical in character. The world is viewed as a three-storied structure, with the earth in the centre, the heaven above, and the underworld beneath.... All this is the language of mythology.... To this extent the kerygma is incredible to modern man, for he is convinced that the mythical view of the world is obsolete.... Man's knowledge and mastery of the world have advanced to such an extent through science and technology that it is no longer possible for anyone seriously to hold the New Testament view of the world—in fact, no one does.... There is no longer any heaven in the traditional sense of the word. The same applies to hell.... Now that the forces and laws of nature have been discovered, we can no longer believe in spirits, whether good or evil.... What a primitive mythology it is, that a divine Being should become incarnate, and atone for the sins of men through his own blood! (*Kerygma and Myth*, p 1–7).

5) The historical-critical method of interpretation treats Scripture, not as the inspired Word of God, but as a legitimate subject for human criticism (as do gospel reductionism and the documentary hypothesis).

Immanuel Kant (d. 1804): Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is the tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!* "Have the courage to use your own reason!" – That is the motto of enlightenment (*An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment?"* 1784 newspaper essay).

Roy Harrisville & Walter Sundberg: Historical criticism of the Bible originated in the opposition between church dogma and the new liberal political philosophy of emergent modern Europe in the seventeenth century. This in turn led to a concerted effort in the eighteenth century to uncover the original message of Jesus apart from church tradition. Historical criticism sought to measure the meaning of Jesus' message according to the standards of Enlightenment morality and rationality. . . . What the Bible reports and what it means are conceived to be two different matters, the latter especially to be determined by scholarship operating under presuppositions of modern culture. The result has been to assess the Bible according to measures that scholars deem fit and to treat church tradition and its reading of biblical texts with a hermeneutic of suspicion (*The Bible in Modern Culture*, p 2).

Edgar Krentz, summarizing principles originally articulated by Ernst Troeltsch and still held to be valid by contemporary historical-critical scholars: The historical method of thought and explanation has three principles: (1) the principle of criticism or methodological doubt, which implies that history only achieves probability. Religious tradition must also be subjected to criticism. (2) The principle of analogy makes criticism possible. Present experience and occurrence become the criteria of probability in the past. This "almighty power" of analogy implies that all events are in principle similar. (3) The principle of correlation (or mutual interdependence) implies that all historical phenomena are so interrelated that a change in one phenomenon necessitates a change in the causes leading to it and in the effects it has. Historical explanation rests on this chain of cause and effect. The third principle rules out miracle and salvation history. Historical method is the child of the Enlightenment (*The Historical-Critical Method*, p 55).

D2 B, III, 2. Scripture is sufficient for bringing sinners to salvation.

a) By means of Scripture salvation is actually attained.

1) This comforting truth is affirmed many times:

John 20:31 These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Gerhard: We never say that Scripture is perfect in this sense that everything that we need to know for faith and life is *αὐτολεξεί* or *κατὰ ῥητόν*, that is, literally or in so many words stated in Scripture, but some things are stated in substance and some literally, or, to state the same thing in a different way, we say that some things are contained in them explicitly but others implicitly so that they can be drawn from what is said in Scripture by a legitimate and sure process of deduction (*Locī*, II, 286).

Adolf Hoenecke: Whether in theology one can actually draw logical conclusions—The answer must be: In the full sense not; only in a very limited way, insofar as only analytical conclusions are permissible which in fact and truth only draw out of Scripture what God himself actually put into it and clearly testifies has been put into it (*ELD*, III, p 71).

Adolf Hoenecke: But what is a legitimate conclusion? One 1) which does not violate the laws of logic; 2) which does not in the least contradict what Scripture says; 3) which takes its premises from Scripture itself; 4) which does not draw a conclusion which is not implicit in Scripture (*ELD*, I, p 334).

Quenstedt: We do not agree with the papists that Scripture is perfect implicitly: that it contains all things necessary for faith as in a bulb, as in a seed, as a universal principle, as in an outline, in such a way that it indeed itself does not contain all things, but nevertheless shows whence and where we ought to look for them, reference being made to the church and its traditions, from which the lack of those doctrines which are desired can be supplied (*TDP*, I, 102).

2) **On the force of Paul's word *ὠφέλιμος* (2 Tm 3:16) consider these words:**

Adolf Hoenecke: In regard to 2 Tm 3:15–17 Bellarmine says that this passage does not prove the sufficiency of Scripture, for this word “it is useful” however much it may be twisted by Chemnitz, nevertheless never means, “it is sufficient.” Let us hear Chemnitz himself as he responds, “‘But what,’ you ask, ‘will you prove from that passage (2 Tm 3:15ff)? For there is no one, who denies that the Scripture, also that of the New Testament, is useful. But one cannot draw a firm conclusion by arguing from usefulness to sufficiency.’ ... I answer: I confess that if Paul's statement would say only, ‘Scripture is useful for doctrine, etc.,’ that would not be enough to infer from it the sufficiency of Scripture. But Paul says that all Scripture is in such a way useful for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (Bellarmine, *Disputationes*, Art. 23, p 122; Chemnitz, *Examen, de epist. Apostol.*, p 35; both cited in *Hoenecke*, I, p 399-400)

b) **Scripture, with a solemn curse, forbids additions, subtractions and alterations.**

1) **There are various statements that make this point.**

Deuteronomy 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Proverbs 30:6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Luke 16:29-31 Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.” ³⁰ “No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.” ³¹ He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

Galatians 1:8 Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

Revelation 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

2) **No additional inspired Scriptures are to be expected. There is no hint of promise that there will be other sacred Scriptures. God's use of the prophets and apostles, whose writings serve as the foundation of the church, has concluded.**

Hebrews 1:1,2 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

John 17:20 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.

Ephesians 2:19-20 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

Acts 1:21,22 It is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.

3) The Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Church declare the parity or even the superiority of "tradition" over Scripture.

Council of Trent, Sess. IV, Decr. 1: The sacred and holy ecumenical general Synod of Trent ... seeing that this truth and discipline are contained in written books and unwritten traditions, which were received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or which have come down to us from the apostles themselves, handed down, as it were, from hand to hand, under the dictation of the Holy Spirit, the Synod following the example of the orthodox fathers, receives and venerates with an equal feeling of piety and reverence all the books of the Old Testament as well as of the New, since one God is the author of both, and no less the traditions themselves, both those pertaining to faith and those pertaining to morals, which have been spoken orally by Christ himself or dictated by the Holy Spirit and preserved in the Church Catholic by the continuous succession of the bishops.

Bellarmino: Therefore the controversy between us and the heretics consists in two things. The first is that we assert that not all the doctrine which is necessary either for faith or morals is expressly contained in the Scriptures, and therefore besides the written Word of God, also the unwritten Word of God, that is, the divine and apostolic traditions, is required.—“The Necessity of the Traditions is Shown”: Now, that we may come to the proof, we will try to demonstrate three things. First, that the Scriptures without the traditions have in themselves been neither necessary nor sufficient. Secondly, that apostolic traditions not only concerning morality but also concerning faith are extant. Finally, we will show how we can be sure about true traditions (*Disputationes, de verbo Dei non Scripto*, lib. IV, cap. III, I, p 101).

Vatican II: Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church (*Documents*, 117).

Vatican II: This tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit (*Documents*, 116).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 80-82: Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together, and communicate one with the other. For both of them, flowing out from the same divine well-spring, come together in some fashion to form one thing, and move towards the same goal. Each of them makes present and fruitful in the Church the mystery of Christ, who promised to remain with his own “always, to the close of the age”. Sacred Scripture is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit. And Holy Tradition transmits in its entirety the Word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit. It transmits it to the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound and spread it abroad by their preaching. As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, “does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.”

Vladimir Lossky: An advance is made toward a purer notion of tradition if this term is used to designate solely the oral transmission of faith. The separation between tradition and Scripture still subsists, but instead of isolating two sources of revelation, one opposes two modes of transmitting it: oral preaching and writing. It is then necessary to put in one category the preaching of the apostles and of their successors, as well as all preaching of faith performed by a living teaching authority, and in another category the Holy Scripture and all other written expressions of the revealed truth (these latter differing in the degree of their authority recognized by the church). This approach affirms the primacy of tradition over Scripture, since the oral transmission of the apostles' preaching preceded its recording in written form in the canon of the New Testament. It even might be said that the church could dispense with the Scriptures, but she could not exist without tradition (“Tradition and Traditions” in *Eastern Orthodoxy Theology*, p 128).

Michael Pomazansky: Sacred Tradition is also necessary because some truths of the faith are expressed in a completely definite form in Scripture, while others are not entirely clear and concise and therefore demand confirmation by the Sacred Apostolic Tradition (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 34).

Consider Middler Dogmatics Notes, p 15ff., regarding Scripture as the only true source of theology.

c) **Alleged Scripture proof for the necessity of “tradition” is imaginary and fabricated.**

1) **One argument is that some authoritative books have been lost.**

-a) **Cited as instances are books mentioned in the biblical record.**

Numbers 21:14 That is why the Book of the Wars of the LORD says. . . .

Joshua 10:13 So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar.

2 Samuel 1:18 [David] ordered that the men of Judah be taught this lament of the bow (it is written in the Book of Jashar).

1 Kings 11:41 As for the other events of Solomon’s reign—all he did and the wisdom he displayed—are they not written in the book of the annals of Solomon?

1 Kings 14:19,29 The other events of Jeroboam’s reign, his wars and how he ruled, are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel. ²⁹ As for the other events of Rehoboam’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah?

1 Chronicles 27:24 Joab son of Zeruiah began to count the men but did not finish. Wrath came on Israel on account of this numbering, and the number was not entered in the book of the annals of King David.

1 Chronicles 29:29 As for the events of King David’s reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer,

2 Chronicles 9:29 As for the other events of Solomon’s reign, from beginning to end, are they not written in the records of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat?

2 Chronicles 12:15 As for the events of Rehoboam’s reign, from beginning to end, are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer that deal with genealogies?

1 Corinthians 5:9 I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.

Colossians 4:16 After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

-b) **In response to this argument, we offer these questions.**

-1) **Were these books inspired? Scripture quotes books which were not inspired.**

Acts 17:28 “For in him we live and move and have our being.” As some of your own poets have said, “We are his offspring.” [Paul quotes the Cretan poet Epimenides, ca. 600 BC, and the Cilician poet Aratus, ca. 315-240 BC, who were not inspired.]

Titus 1:12 Even one of their own prophets has said, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.” [The Cretan poet Epimenides, ca. 600 BC, is here quoted by Paul.]

-2) **Does the sufficiency of Scripture depend on the number of biblical books?**

Gerhard: The perfection of Scripture is to be judged not by the number of books, but by whether there are enough of the doctrines that men must know to be saved. That which was written in any period of the church’s history served as a perfect canon (rule of faith) since in those books (the ones extant at that period of history) the divine revelation was set forth perfectly in respect to that time. Thus when only the books of Moses were extant, Scripture was perfect, namely if that period of the church is kept in view, when many revelations which God wanted to have recorded in writing were not yet extant (*Locii*, II, 286).

2) **Another argument used is that Scripture itself points to traditions.**

-a) **The following passages are cited.**

2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you (τὰς παραδόσεις ἃς ἐδιδάχθητε), whether by word of mouth or by letter.

1 Corinthians 11:23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you (παρέδωκα ὑμῖν): The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread . . .

1 Corinthians 11:34 If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions (τὰ λοιπὰ).

-b) **In response, we note that in such passages Paul refers to truths taught elsewhere in Scripture or to details for implementing local plans.**

1 Timothy 6:20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted (τὴν παραθήκην) to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge.

2 Timothy 1:13,14 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

2 Timothy 2:1,2 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

D2 B, III, 3. Scripture is clear.

a) God's Word calls for repeated, diligent attention and study.

1 Timothy 4:13 Until I come, devote yourself to (πρόσεχε) the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.

John 5:39 You diligently study (ἐρουνᾶτε) the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.

Luke 8:18 Therefore consider carefully (βλέπετε) how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him.

Acts 17:11 The Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined (ἀνακρίνοντες) the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

b) The testimony regarding the overall clarity of the Bible is abundant.

Psalms 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

Psalms 119:104,105,130 I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. ¹³⁰ The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

2 Peter 1:19 We have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

c) This does not say that all things in Scripture are always clear to every one (subjective clarity).

Psalms 119:18 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

Acts 8:30-31 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. ³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?"

2 Peter 3:16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Gerhard: It should be kept in mind that when we say that Scripture is clear we do not want this to be understood as though we mean that in their entirety all the things which are set before us in the Holy Scriptures are composed [the word "*comparata*" is very likely a reference to 1 Cor 2:13: "comparing spiritual things with spiritual words"] in such a way that they are at first glance fully and clearly understood by everyone. No, rather we confess that there are some things in Scripture which are spoken in a less clear way and are more difficult to understand. But this is what we say and in every way try to prove, that the clarity of Scripture is such that from it can be gained a certain sure and firm opinion concerning the doctrines which anyone must know if he is to be saved. ... Some things in Scripture are more clearly expressed than others; and things which are said in a more obscure way in one place are explained more clearly somewhere else (*Locī*, tom. I, loc. I, art. LXVIII—LXX, p 26).

Quenstedt: We teach the clarity of Scripture in such a way that at the same time we do not at all exclude (consider unnecessary) devout prayers for the enlightening of our intellect and for a saving understanding, pious and daily diligence applied in the reading and meditating on Scripture, earnestness in comparing unclear passages with those that are clear, and the enlightenment which comes from the Holy Spirit (*TDP, ecthes. XV*).

d) Nor does the truth of the clarity of Scripture mean that people, by nature, can properly understand or appreciate Scripture.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Luke 24:25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"

Matthew 22:29 Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God."

2 Corinthians 3:14-16 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Apology, Art. IV (II), p 152, 107: Truly, it is amazing that the adversaries are in no way moved by so many passages of Scripture, which clearly ascribe justification to faith.

Quenstedt: If nothing can be said to be clear except that which cannot be understood in a perverted way or interpreted in a bad sense by anyone, nothing in the universe can be said clearly and plainly (*TDP*, pars. I, cap. IV, sect. II, qu. XII, f.s. VI, p 124).

Huelsemann (d. 1661): It is very absurd to deny the clarity of some statement or doctrine just because some shoemaker, tailor, tanner, or anyone else who is already tainted by an opposite heresy only says that he does not recognize it as evident (*Praelect. in Form. Conc.*, art. I, cap. IV, par. 4; cited in Quenstedt, *TDP*, p 119).

Gottfried Hoffmann (d. 1712): For although the words of Scripture are so clear that by their very nature they really force the true meaning on anyone, nevertheless no one can look deeply into the clarity of such sublime things except the man for whom the Holy Spirit takes the veil away (2 Cor 3:14ff) (*Synopsis Theol., de sac. Script.*, par IX, p 97).

Baier: Certainly the man who does not take a close look at the words themselves, but gives himself up to his own previously formed opinions and twists the words of Scripture to fit these prejudices will also be able to err when he seeks to study the clear passages and their true meaning (*Compendium, De principio theol.*, Art. XLV, (m), p 103).

e) The truth of the clarity of Scripture does not deny that there is a certain progressive clearness in Scripture itself.

Augustine: The New Testament in the Old is concealed;
the Old Testament is in the New revealed.
(*Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, 2, 73).

f) The truth of the clarity of Scripture also does not deny that there should be progress in a person's understanding of Scripture.

Gerhard: The clarity of Scripture is a double one, as Luther says, "one is external, found in the ministry of the Word, the other is located in the knowledge of the heart. If you [sc. Erasmus] are speaking about internal clarity, no man understands one iota in the Scripture by the natural powers of his innate ability, except the man who has the Holy Spirit. All men have a darkened heart. The Holy Spirit is needed if we are to understand the whole Scripture and any one of its parts. If you are speaking of external clarity nothing is left obscure and ambiguous, but everything is most clearly brought into the light by the Word" (*Loc. I*, 26).

g) The truth of the clarity of Scripture is not to be understood as implying that in heaven no increased illumination is possible.

2 Corinthians 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

1 Corinthians 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

D2 B, III, 4. God, not the church, has established the canon of the Scriptures.

a) Only those books are canonical which have been given by inspiration of God.

1) The Old Testament canon includes only those books that were recognized by the Jews in the days of Jesus and the apostles as God's Word.

Luke 16:29 Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them."

Luke 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.

Romans 3:1-2 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew? . . . ² Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.

2 Timothy 3:15 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2) The New Testament canon includes only those books that were given by inspiration of God and recognized by external and internal evidence as inspired.

-a) External evidence is commonly linked to apostolic authorship, i.e., that books were written by an apostle or a disciple of an apostle.

Ephesians 2:20 [You have been] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

1 Corinthians 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες).

2 Peter 3:16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

-b) External evidence and the testimony of the ancient church remind us how the church received the canon.

Consider the listing of categories of New Testament writings from Eusebius (d. ca. 340):

- *Homologoumena*: generally accepted books
- *Antilegomena*: contested books (Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation)
- *Apocrypha* and *pseudepigrapha*: non-inspired writings

The Old Testament Scriptures also had what might be called “antilegomena,” e.g., Esther, Song of Songs. The primary question asked was not “Are the books canonical?” but “Why are they in the canon?” There were also Old Testament apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings that were not considered canonical.

-c) The internal evidence is the self-authenticating power of the inspired writings (αὐτοπιστία).

Luke 24:32 They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

John 7:17 If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

-d) Closely related to this self-validating power of the inspired writings are other features.

-1) The chosen writers’ claim to inspiration testifies to Scripture.

2 Samuel 23:1-2 These are the last words of David: “The oracle of David son of Jesse, the oracle of the man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob, Israel’s singer of songs: ² The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.”

Psalms 45:1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

1 Corinthians 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες).

-2) The chosen writers’ performance of miracles testifies to Scripture in some cases.

Exodus 4:1-5,30,31 Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you?’” ² Then the LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” “A staff,” he replied. ³ The LORD said, “Throw it on the ground.” Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. ⁴ Then the LORD said to him, “Reach out your hand and take it by the tail.” So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. ⁵ “This,” said the LORD, “is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of

Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you.”³⁰ Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people,³¹ and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

Exodus 7:11, 8:19. 9:11 Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts . . . The magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said. . . The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils that were on them and on all the Egyptians.

Mark 16:17,18,20 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.²⁰ Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

2 Corinthians 12:12 The things that mark an apostle—signs, wonders and miracles—were done among you with great perseverance.

-3) The fulfillment of predictive prophecy testifies to Scripture.

Exodus 3:12 And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death.²¹ You may say to yourselves, “How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?”²² If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

Jeremiah 28:9 The prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true.

Daniel 9:1-2 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom —² in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years (See Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10).

-4) Agreement with the previously given Word is a testimony to Scripture.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder,² and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, “Let us follow other gods” (gods you have not known) “and let us worship them,”³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.⁴ It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him.⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

Isaiah 8:19-20 When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?²⁰ To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

-e) The testimony of the Holy Spirit is the basis for divine certainty concerning the canon. This is our conviction, as the following statements declare.

Baier: [For divine certainty] the testimony of the church alone is not enough, but also here the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, or his working, his efficacy through the Scriptures must be active also (*Compendium*, proleg., cap. II, par. 34, p 75).

Chemnitz: Scripture therefore has canonical authority (the ability to speak with convincing certainty about matters of faith and life) above all else from the Holy Spirit, by whose impulse and inspiration it was produced. Then it also has canonical authority from the writers to whom God himself gave sure and extraordinary evidences of the truth. After that it has canonical authority from the early church, as from the witness in whose time those writings were produced and approved (*Examen*, pars. I, p 47).

Wisconsin Synod Proceedings, 1959: Scripture being the Word of God, it carries its own authority in itself and does not receive it by the approbation of the Church. The Canon, that is, that collection of books which is the authority for the Church, is not the creation of the Church. Rather, the Canon has, by a quiet historical process which took place in the worship life of the Church, imposed itself upon the Church by virtue of its own divine authority (p 199).

Formula of Concord, Summary, p 776, p 1,2 : We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone, as it is written Ps. 119:105: "Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." And St. Paul: "Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1: 8. Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses, which are to show in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this pure doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved.

b) The Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Church claim the church ultimately determines the canon. They also demand that other books be acknowledged as canonical or see them as authoritative.

Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware: It is from the Church that the Bible ultimately derives its authority, for it was the Church which originally decided which books form a part of the Holy Scripture; and it is the Church alone which can interpret the Scripture with authority (*The Orthodox Way*, p 199).

Council of Trent, IV, after naming the books Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Sirach), Baruch, Story of Susanna, Song of the Three Children, Story of Bel and the Dragon, 1 & 2 Maccabees as canonical: If anyone, however, does not accept as holy and canonical the whole books themselves together with all their parts just as they have been customarily read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Vulgate Latin edition, and if he knowingly and deliberately despises the aforementioned traditions, let him be damned.

Clarifying note: The Council of Trent failed to give a complete list of all apocryphal books that the Roman Catholic Church considers canonical. Two books of Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh, for example, were not listed for formal adoption. This has not troubled Catholic theologians. The Catholic Encyclopedia offers an interesting comment on their prevailing mindset: During the deliberations of the Council there never was any real question as to the reception of all the traditional Scripture. . . . In the mind of the Tridentine Fathers they had been virtually canonized, by the same decree of Florence (1442), and the same Fathers felt especially bound by the action of the preceding ecumenical synod. The Council of Trent did not enter into an examination of the fluctuations in the history of the Canon. Neither did it trouble itself about questions of authorship or character of contents. True to the practical genius of the Latin Church, it based its decision on immemorial tradition as manifested in the decrees of previous councils and popes, and liturgical reading, relying on traditional teaching and usage to determine a question of tradition (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03267a.htm>, *Catholic Encyclopedia* Online). [In reality, they probably just left the three books out by mistake.]

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 120: It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books. This complete list is called the canon of Scripture. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count Jeremiah and Lamentations as one) and 27 for the New.

The Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi. [Underling and italics added. Underlining marks additional books. Italics books with additions.]

Michael Pomazanski: The Church recognizes 38 books of the Old Testament. . . . These books, which were entered at some time into the Hebrew canon, are called "canonical." To them are joined a group of "non-canonical" books. . . . The Church accepts these latter books also as useful and instructive and in antiquity assigned them for instructive reading not only in homes but also in churches, which is why they have been called "ecclesiastical." The Church includes these books in a single volume of the Bible together with the canonical books. As a source of the teachings of the faith, the Church puts them in a secondary place and looks on them as an appendix to the canonical books (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 26-27).

Daniel Clendenin: A measure of uncertainty remained as to the exact status of the "longer canon" of the Old Testament; books like Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus – which were not a part of the Hebrew canon, but only of the Septuagint, and which are called Apocrypha in the West. . . . Even today, Orthodox theologians refer to them as deuterocanonical books. They are considered part of Scripture and are read in church liturgically, but occupy somewhat of a marginal place in the canon. This rather detached Orthodox attitude toward the

problem of the scriptural canon shows clearly that for them the Christian faith and experience can in no way be compatible with the notion of *Scriptura sola* (*Eastern Orthodox Theology*, p 82).

D2 B, IV. The Word of God works in both a psychological and supernatural manner.

D2 B, IV, 1. As ordinary speech does, the Word of God appeals to the psychological nature of human beings.

a) The Word of God appeals to the human intellect.

2 Peter 1:19 We have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

2 Corinthians 4:6 God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Luke 24:45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Psalms 119:104,130 I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. ¹³⁰ The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Ephesians 3:18,19 [I pray that you] may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

b) The Word of God appeals to human emotion.

Psalms 119:32 I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

Romans 10:9,10 If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Psalms 119:72,103,120 The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. ¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! ¹²⁰ My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws.

c) The Word of God appeals to the human will.

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

1 Thessalonians 4:10 And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Thessalonians 2:11,12 You know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

Titus 2:15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Colossians 1:28 We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

d) For statements from our dogmaticians, consider the following.

Huelsemann: When the Word of God is understood in its original sense, when it is applied to a suitable subject [a person capable of being taught] as an instrumental cause, it exercises its divine power to enlighten the darkened minds of men with the knowledge of divine things, to turn the will from evil to good, from hatred against God to trust in him, etc., indeed, *not in a physical way*, by contact with the agent, as opium, rhubarb root, poison, fire, and so on work in a physical way in a suitable subject [e.g. you cannot poison a stone], but it works *in a psychological way (moraliter)* by enlightening the mind, by moving the will, by cleansing the emotions, etc. For the phrase “in a psychological way” here is not to be understood as opposed to a supernatural contact and influence but only as a repudiation of any concept of physical contact and influence (*Praelect. in Form. Conc.*, sect. I, part 2, par. 2).

Huelsemann: The Word of God has this in common with ordinary human words that just as a man's word is a representation or an indication of what is in his mind, by means of which he indicates to another man the ideas of his mind, either to seek those things which he desires or to share those things which he has, so the Word of God is an indication of God's will, by which God makes known to us what he wants us to believe and to do (*De auxiliis gratiae*, disp. III, IV, p 178).

D2 B, IV, 2. In each of these psychological activities the Holy Spirit fills the Word with divine power.

a) No purely human word could bring about the radical change of a man's views, feelings, and desires into their very opposite.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1 Corinthians 12:3 I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

1 John 5:4 Everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Huelsemann: The Word of God has a power of its own which goes beyond the most persuasive words of men because it persuades the hearers to believe those things which do not agree with the senses of man, nor with the intellect, which gets its knowledge through the senses, nor with the will, which measures what is desirable or undesirable by agreement with the senses (*De auxiliis gratiae*, disp. III, qu. VI, par. 9, p 255).

Valentin Loescher (d.1749): When, however, the best writers say that the act of conversion is a “natural” one, they do not intend to ascribe to conversion a mechanical or some other physical way of operating. This meaning of the word “natural” we also reject. But they argue against the Pelagians, who hold that conversion is nothing more than psychological persuasion (who therefore place the converting power of the Scriptures only in its specific doctrine of conversion), and they only point out this that there are no powers left in fallen man by which he could yield to psychological persuasion (*Praenotiones theologicae*, p 223).

b) The Word of God is an instrument through which the power of God works faith.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Hebrews 4:12 The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

James 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

c) According to God's decree the Word is the instrument of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

Ephesians 6:13,17 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

James 1:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

Gerhard: We have never held that the Word of God is an instrumental cause of conversion in this way, as if there were subjectively inhering in it some natural force to produce this effect, but it is such an instrumental cause because it pleased God to set up the external Word as a cause which acts as an instrument to produce that divine result, namely the conversion and salvation of men. It pleased him not to deal with men

immediately (without means) but mediately in the matter of salvation. Whatever therefore is attributed to the external word in this matter, that is entirely and totally a result of God's decision (*Loci*, tom. XIII, de fine ministerii, loc. XXIV, cap. VI, sect. I, par. CCLIII, 5, p 74).

Chemnitz: It is true beyond all argument that this virtue and power is not in the syllables as they are printed on the page (literally, as characters, e.g., as the words written on an amulet or charm). Nor do we want to say this that the fading voice of the preacher is so powerful that it can by itself bring this about. For to kindle and convert hearts, to begin and to produce repentance, faith, and the new obedience are powerful works of God alone, which he produces in man by his almighty power. And without this power of the Spirit the Scriptures are nothing but dead letters. But the Holy Spirit does not want to exercise this power without means, but he decided that the Word and the sacraments should be the appointed means, which he uses as his external tools and instruments in order that through them he might produce, increase and preserve the things mentioned above in the hearts of men (*Enchiridion praecipuorum capitum coelestis doctrinae, etc.*, 1569; *An Enchiridion*, p 43).

d) The power of the gospel does not work magically or automatically by mere contact or ritual. It is the power of the divine truth and the Holy Spirit, accomplishing what God wants.

Psalm 50:16,17 But to the wicked, God says: "What right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips? ¹⁷ You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you."

Isaiah 1:13 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies.

Isaiah 29:13 The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men."

2 Timothy 3:5 [Many in the last days will be have] a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

Quenstedt: The Holy Scripture does not act or work physically or naturally, in the strict sense of these words, or in a natural and physical way, namely, through physical contact, as poison works physically (*TDP*, pars I, cap. IV, sect. II, qu. XVI, ecthes., 12, p 172).

Quenstedt: Indeed, in the early church certain unlearned and superstitious women became so insane that they ascribed a certain averting or magical power to the very letters, syllables and words of Scripture, and they thought in regard to the speaking, wearing, hanging, or some other use of these that effects greater than those produced by human power could be produced, for example, that sicknesses, demons, ghosts, and other evils could be put to flight or cast out (*TDP*, par I, cap. IV, sec. II, qu XVI, ecthes., I, p 169).

Chemnitz: When we dispute about the power and efficacy, we must with care and concern be on our guard lest we take away from God those things which properly belong to the grace of the Father, the efficacy of the Spirit, and the merits of the Son of God and transfer them to the sacraments; for this would be the sin of idolatry.... Therefore, just as the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes not because a certain magical power inheres in the letters, syllables, or sound of the words, but because it is the means, the tool and instrument through which the Holy Spirit is efficacious, in setting forth, offering, showing, distributing and applying the merits of Christ and the grace of God for salvation to everyone who believes, so also power and efficacy is ascribed to the sacraments, not because we are to seek grace leading to salvation in the sacraments outside of or beside the merit of Christ, the mercy of the Father, or the efficacy of the Holy Spirit.... In this way God's glory remains his, so that grace is not sought anywhere else than from God the Father, the price and cause of the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life are not sought anywhere else than in the death and resurrection of Christ, the working of rebirth leading to salvation is not sought anywhere else than in the working of the Holy Spirit (*Examen, de sacramentorum efficacia et usu*, p 19).

Loescher: Against the Naturalists (Rationalists) we must carefully defend the proposition that conversion and the rest of the acts which belong to God's way of salvation do not take place mechanically but in a way which is proper for spiritual beings and which is beyond nature (*Praenotiones theologicae*, p 223).

Compare Donald Bloesch: Revelation must be proclaimed, but in an intelligent way. One must understand the words of the preacher before believing the message. The gospel should be related to the cultural situation in which people find themselves, for in this way it takes on specificity and concreteness. It must be put in the language of the people. Our presentation must be as logically coherent as possible if our hearers are to understand. Yet communication means more than making it knowable. But only the Holy Spirit can do that; therefore the success of our preaching rests on the One whom we proclaim and not basically on the way in which we proclaim (*A Theology of Word and Spirit*, p 222-223).

e) Since Word and Spirit are inseparable, it would be useless to speculate about the character of the instrument as such. We would maintain, however, that the Word is not a dead instrument.

Isaiah 55:10,11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Jeremiah 23:29 “Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”

Hebrews 4:12 The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

1 Peter 1:23 You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

2 Peter 1:19 We have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Michael Behm (d. 1650): The Word of God, from the viewpoint of its external proclamation and its use in the order of salvation, is and can be called an instrument. Nevertheless up to the present time we have tried to avoid calling the divine power internally communicated to the Word an instrument.... For the power of God predicated of the gospel is not something else than the power of God himself, but it is the very power of God. Who, however, would call this power of God an instrument? (Quoted in Quenstedt, *TDP*, part I, cap. IV, sect. II, qu. XVI, font. sol., 15, p 185).

Chemnitz: Although the Word does not attain its effect by itself and by its own power, yet by the principal cause (i.e., the Holy Spirit) it is raised beyond its own natural power to produce this effect (*Disp. de Gratuita Justif*, par 18, quoted in Baier-Walther, *Compendium*, Proleg, II, 39, p 160).

D2 B, IV, 3. We reject all views that regard Scripture as a mere human record of, witness to, or medium of God's Word (revelation). This error is commonly affirmed in neo-orthodoxy, dialectical theology, theology of crisis, and existentialism.

a) Representatives of this error are Barth, Brunner, Tillich, and their schools of thought.

Karl Barth: A witness is not absolutely identical with that to which it witnesses In the Bible we meet with human words written in human speech, and in these words, and therefore by means of them, we hear of the lordship of the Triune God. Therefore when we have to do with the Bible, we have to do primarily with this means, with these words, with the witness, which as such is not itself revelation, but only—and this is the limitation—the witness to it (*CD*, I, 2, p 463)

Emil Brunner: Those who take this view (that the word of the Bible is the Word of God) do not understand that there is only an indirect identity between the word of the Bible and the Word of God; that even the word of the Bible is only the means of the real Word of God, Jesus Christ, and that therefore, in spite of its priority as the original witness, fundamentally it stands upon the same level as the testimony of the Church (*Revelation and Reason*, p 145).

Brunner: The New Testament is not a book of doctrine, but it is a collection of apostolic confessions of faith and historical records which have been written down in order to awaken and strengthen faith. . . . All Christian doctrine, even in its primitive form in the New Testament, in this twofold sense, is merely a pointer to something outside itself; it is the pointer to “him, himself,” and it is a pointer to that which He discloses concerning himself, which human-speech or teaching, “reproduces,” or repeats, or expresses in human language. The Biblical expression for this twofold character of Christian doctrine as a “pointer” is called: “Witness.” The Apostles ... know themselves to be witnesses to the divine revelation (*Christian Doctrine of God*, p 12,15).

Tillich: It is obvious that the word as a medium of revelation, the “Word of God,” is not a word of information about otherwise hidden truth. . . . The term Word is applied to the document of the final revelation and its special preparation, namely, the Bible. But if the Bible is called the Word of God, theological confusion is almost unavoidable.... Probably nothing has contributed more to the misinterpretation of the Biblical doctrine of the Word than the identification of the Word with the Bible (*ST*, I, p 124, 159).

b) This error is compatible with the theology of Rome.

Pontifical Biblical Commission: The Bible does not present itself as a direct revelation of timeless truths but as the written testimony to a series of interventions in which God reveals himself in human history (*Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*,” quoted in *Origins*, January 6, 1994, p 524).

c) Scripture is, indeed, a “witness” of the prophets and apostles, but it is not a mere human witness.

1) The biblical writers were witnesses.

Luke 24:48 You are witnesses of these things.

John 15:27 You also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Acts 22:15 You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.

1 John 1:1-4 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ² The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We write this to make our joy complete.

2) The biblical writers were more than mere human witnesses.

John 14:26 The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 15:26,27 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:13,14 When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

Acts 5:32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.

1 Peter 1:10,11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

d) The view that Scripture is a mere human witness to divine revelation is to be condemned and avoided as damaging to Christian faith. This regards Holy Scripture not as the infallible Word of the infallible God, which it actually is, but rather as the fallible word of fallible men.

Barth: To the bold postulate, that if [the prophets and apostles] word is to be the Word of God they must be inerrant in every word, we oppose the even bolder assertion, that according to scriptural witness about man, which applies to them too, they can be at fault in every word, and have been at fault in every word, and yet according to the same scriptural witness, being justified and sanctified by grace alone, they have still spoken the Word of God in their fallible and erring human word (*CD*, I, 2, p 529f).

Barth: The prophets and apostles as such, even in their office, even in their function as witnesses, even in the act of writing down their witness, were real, historical men as we are, and therefore sinful in their action, and capable and actually guilty of error in their spoken and written word.... Here fallible men speak the Word of God in fallible human words (*CD*, I, 2, p 528f).

Barth: The vulnerability of the Bible, i.e., its capacity for error, also extends to its *religious* or *theological* content (*CD*, I, 2, p 509).

Brunner: The Scripture ... is a word inspired by the Spirit of God; yet at the same time it is a human message; its human character means that it is colored by the frailty and imperfection of all that is human (*Christian Doctrine of God*, p 34).

Brunner: The habit of regarding the written word, the Bible, as the "Word of God" exclusively—as is the case in the traditional equation of the "Word" of the Bible with the "Word of God"—an error which is constantly on the verge of being repeated—is actually a breach of the Second Commandment: it is the deification of a creature, bibliolatry (*Revelation and Reason*, p 120).

Barth: [This is] perhaps the worst of all idols. (*CD*, I, 2, p 237)

William Temple (d. 1944): There is no single deed of His of which we can be perfectly sure that He said or did precisely this or that (*Revelation*, ed. John Baillie and Hugh Martin, p 114).

William Temple: No single sentence can be quoted as having the authority of a distinct utterance of the All-holy God (*Nature, Man and God*, p 350).

Hans Küng: There is no a priori infallible teaching book in Christendom. . . . And even though there are no propositions in the Bible which are a priori free from error, nevertheless there are in fact true propositions attesting the gospel. Truth of Scripture therefore means more than simply truth as conformity of intellect with reality, as it has been defined in the light of Greek philosophy from the middle ages onward. The more recent doctrine of inerrancy, just like Protestant orthodoxy's doctrine of inspiration, is a product of rationalism, which sought to make a divine origin of Scripture clear and distinct, illuminating and evident, in its propositions: which, however, sooner or later could not fail to be turned into a domination of reason over scripture. Truth of Scripture means in the last resort truth beyond all true propositions; "truth" (*emet*, *aletheia*) means, over and above the truth of words and sentences, fidelity, constancy, reliability: the fidelity, that is, of the God of the covenant to his word and promise.... In this sense Scripture, which is by no means free from error, attests unrestrictedly the truth as the perpetual fidelity of God (*Infallible? An Inquiry*, p 219, 220f).

e) **Closely allied with this heresy is the denial that the Bible *is* the Word of God and the claim that it only *becomes* the Word of God through an *event* (*Ereignis*), an existential experience which God must again and again bring about.**

Barth: God's revelation is the event of Jesus Christ (*CD*, I, 2:49).

Barth: It takes place as an event, when and where the word of the Bible becomes God's Word, i.e., when and where the word of the Bible functions as the word of a witness . . . when and where by means of its word we also succeed in seeing and hearing what he saw and heard (*CD*, I, 1:127).

Barth: We said of church proclamation, that from time to time it must become God's Word. And we said the same of the Bible, that it must from time to time become God's Word. Now "from time to time" had to do, not with human experience (as if our being affected by this event and our attitude to it could be constitutive of its reality and content.), but, of course, with the freedom of God's grace. *Ubi et quando visum est Deo* (*CD*, I, 1:131f).

Barth: The statement, "The Bible is the word" . . . is a statement which we allow to be true as a description of the act of God in the Bible, whatever the experience may be which we have or do not have in that connection. But this is just precisely the faith which in this way sees and reaches beyond itself and all experiences bound up or not bound up with it to the act of God, namely, to the fact that this act of God upon man has become an event, therefore not to the fact that man has reached out to the Bible, but to the fact that the Bible has reached out to man. The Bible, therefore, becomes God's Word in this event, and it is to its being in this becoming that the tiny word "is" relates, in the statement that the Bible is the Word of God. It does not become God's Word because we accord it faith, but, of course, because it becomes revelation for us (*CD*, I, 1:123f).

Note Klaas Runia: An infallible Bible would mean that man has the Word of God. But this is never so, according to Barth. God in His sovereign grace has to make it His Word time and again. Revelation is always the revealing God, God in His act of revealing. It is never a static *datum*, but always an event, a divine act. We could say it in this way: It is never a *datum* (that which has been given), but always a *dandum* (that which must be given again and again, in an always-new divine act) (*Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture*, p 108).

Note J. P. Meyer pointing out that the Bible has its power *ante et extra usum*, and quoting Runia, p 197, with approval: "[Christ] again and again appeals to the Old Testament Scriptures as the final authority. They do not become authoritative because He appeals to them, but He appeals to them because they are authoritative." Well spoken!... In the Bible and by means of the Bible God confronts us with His Word. Thus it ever is, to use that expression, both a *datum* and a *dandum* (*WLQ*, July, 1964, p 219).

Gustaf Wingren (d. 2000): When Barth speaks of "the Word of God in three forms"—proclaimed in preaching, written in the Bible, and "revealed" in Christ—it is important to note that only this last, "the revelation," is really "divine Word." The spoken and written words are "signs" (*Theology in Conflict*, p 124).

Brunner: Revelation is certainly not a "Something," or a "thing"; but it is a process, an event, and indeed an event which happens to us and in us. Neither the prophetic Word of the Old Testament, nor Jesus Christ, nor the witness of the Apostles, nor of the preachers of the Church who proclaim him, "is" the revelation; the reality of the revelation culminates in the "subject" who receives it.... All objective forms of revelation need the "subject" in whom they become revelation (*The Christian Doctrine of God*, p 19).

Brunner: [The Bible] becomes to me the word of God through the fact that God, through His Spirit, permits it to dawn on me as the word of His truth (*Reason and Revelation*, p 169).

Suggested for Further Reading:

- J. P. Meyer, "Inspiration," *WLQ*, Oct. 1951.
- Armin Schuetze, "Neo-Orthodoxy," *WLQ*, April & Oct. 1963 (Also in *OGH*, I, p 203-231)

f) We reject the false idea that the Bible contains contradictory theologies.

Luke 24:27,44 Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. ⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.

John 16:13 When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

2 Peter 3:15,16 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶ He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Ephesians 2:20 [You have been] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

Contrast Carl Braaten: Critical attention to what the texts actually say has exploded the notion that one orthodox dogmatics can be mined out of Scripture. There are different theological tendencies and teachings in the various texts. Ecumenically this has led to the practical conclusion that the traditional demand for a complete consensus of doctrine may be wrong-headed, if even the Scriptures fail to contain such a consensus. (*CD*, I, 77)

Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson: Although all of us stand within the Lutheran tradition, the differences among us and the consequent inconsistencies in the book are considerable. ... At some points the authors simply disagree, and this disagreement occasionally reaches the point of contradiction. We leave it to the readers to discover the places where it occurs. (I, xvii)

g) We reject the false idea that God's truth cannot be expressed in propositions that express reality. We believe it can be and is expressed in this way.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

2 Timothy 1:13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

Luther: Take away assertions, and you take away Christianity (*LW* 33, p 21).

Contrast Hans Küng: Articles of faith are propositions. Formulas of faith, professions of faith, and definitions of faith, are propositions—simple or complex—and are not *a priori* free from the laws that govern propositions. ... Propositions of faith participate in the problematic of human propositions in general. . . .

- 1) Propositions fall short of reality. This is fundamental. I can never totally capture reality either by a word or by a proposition, simple or complex.
- 2) Propositions are open to misunderstanding.
- 3) Propositions can be translated only up to a point.
- 4) Propositions are in motion.... Language is not a static shape, but a dynamic event.... Words and sentences can completely change their meaning.
- 5) Propositions are ideology prone (*Infallible?* p 157, 158f).

Contrast Warren Quance (ALC, d. 1979): Since human language is always relative, ... there can be no absolute expression of the truth even in the language of theology.... The words of the Bible must not be absolutized (*Theology in the Life of the Church*, R. Bertram, ed., p 25,31).

D2 C. Law and Gospel

D2 C, I. Scripture clearly differentiates a twofold word of God.

D2 C, I, 1. Since God is essentially one and unchangeable, his truth is also undivided and unchanging.

a) God's essence is immutable.

Psalm 102:26,27 [The created earth and heavens] will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. ²⁷ But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

1 Timothy 6:16 [God] who alone is immortal (ἄχων ἀθανασίαν) and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

b) God's word is also immutable.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

Malachi 3:6 I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

1 Samuel 15:29 He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.

Romans 3:3 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

Romans 11:29 God's gifts and his call are irrevocable (ἀμεταμέλητος).

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

D2 C, I, 2. Scripture speaks of two kinds of word, law and gospel.

a) Scripture admonishes us to handle the Word properly.

2 Timothy 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth (ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας).

Consider the use of רָשׁוּׁ in the Piel ("make smooth, make straight"), which the Septuagint renders with ὀρθοτομεῖν.

Proverbs 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 11:5 The righteousness of the blameless makes a straight way for them, but the wicked are brought down by their own wickedness.

b) Scripture points out the two kinds of word.

John 1:17 The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:5-11 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶ He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ⁷ Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? ⁹ If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! ¹⁰ For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. ¹¹ And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

Galatians 3:2,5,17,21 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? ⁵ Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard? ¹⁷ What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. ²¹ Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

D2 C, I, 3. Both law and gospel have many points in common.

a) Both are given by divine revelation. Both are fully the word of God.

1) The law is the word of God.

Exodus 20:1 And God spoke all these words:

Deuteronomy 5:4-6 The LORD spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain. ⁵ (At that time I stood between the LORD and you to declare to you the word of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain.) And he said: ⁶ “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.”

2) The gospel is the word of God.

Genesis 3:14,15 So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Genesis 12:1,2 The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.”

Galatians 3:18 If the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.

b) Both law and gospel are universal in application. They are God’s word to all mankind.

1) The law is addressed to all mankind.

Romans 3:9, 19 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. ¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”

2) The gospel is addressed to all mankind.

John 3:16 God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 Timothy 2:4 [God our Savior] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Romans 3:23,24 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

c) Both law and gospel are spiritual in nature. They have to do with our spirit, our relation to God, and they are from the Holy Spirit.

1) The law is spiritual in nature.

Romans 7:14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.

Consider the Sermon on the Mount, demonstrating how obedience to divine law is to be expressive of spiritual life.

2) The gospel is spiritual in nature.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

d) Both law and gospel were originally intended to promote life.

1) The law was intended to bring life to mankind.

Romans 7:10,12,13 I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. ¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

Luke 10:25,28 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Genesis 2:16,17 The LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Hollaz: The purpose of the moral law is a) the glory of the Lawgiver; b) eternal life promised on condition of perfect obedience; c) the incidental outcome is eternal death (Ro 7:10) (*Examen*, pars III, sect. II, cap I, qu. 25, p 471).

Quenstedt: The first purpose of the moral law is eternal life, which is promised conditionally (Lv 18:5; Ezk 20:11; Ro 10:5; Ga 3:12); the subsequent purpose is a knowledge of our own inability by which the law is weakened (Ro 8:3), and to drive us to seek a physician (Ga 3:24) (*TDP*, pars IV, cap I, sect. I, thes. XXXII, p 9).

Jacob Heerbrand (d. 1600): The purpose of the law is that the rational creature may from it get to know the will of God, conform to it, and worship and honor him according to this norm (*Comp., de lege*, p 288).

2) The gospel is intended to bring life to mankind.

John 3:16 God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

D2 C, II. The law in the strict sense may be defined as the word of God by which he demands that man, both in conduct and nature, conform to his requirement of moral conduct. The law may also be defined as the word of God that pronounces a curse on the transgressor.

D2 C, II, 1. These are Lutheran definitions of divine law based on Scripture.

a) Consider the following confessional statements.

The Apology, Art. IV (II), p 121, 5-8: All Scripture ought to be distributed into these two principal topics, the law and the promises. . . . Moreover, in this discussion, by law we designate the Ten Commandments, wherever they are read in the Scriptures. Of the ceremonies and judicial laws of Moses we say nothing at present. . . . Now, the Decalog requires not only outward civil works, which reason can in some way produce, but it also requires other things placed far above reason, namely, truly to fear God, truly to love God, truly to call upon God, truly to be convinced that God hears us, and to expect the aid of God in death and in all afflictions; finally, it requires obedience to God, in death and all afflictions, so that we may not flee from these or refuse them when God imposes them.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. V, p 800, 3,4: We believe, teach, and confess that the law is properly a divine doctrine, which teaches what is right and pleasing to God, and reproves everything that is sin and contrary to God's will. For this reason, then, everything that reproves sin is, and belongs to, the preaching of the law.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. V, p 956, 17: Therefore we shall set forth our meaning: we unanimously believe, teach, and confess that the law is properly a divine doctrine, in which the righteous, immutable will of God is revealed, what is to be the quality of man in his nature, thoughts, words, and works, in order that he may be pleasing and acceptable to God; and it threatens its transgressors with God's wrath and temporal and eternal punishments. For as Luther writes against the law-stormers [Antinomians]: "Everything that reproves sin is and belongs to the law, whose peculiar office it is to reprove sin and to lead to the knowledge of sins," Rom. 3:20; 7:7; and as unbelief is the root and well-spring of all reprehensible sins and all sins must be censured and reprov'd, the law reproves unbelief also.

August Pieper: The law, in its essential nature, is the demand of the holy God on our person in regard to our personal relationship with him and even more. Truly, the law is no abstraction; here the personal God himself comes against us ordering, commanding and forbidding, requiring, demanding, and threatening. Where the law encounters sin, it turns into wrath, curse, and damnation because of sin. . . . The law is truly a most serious matter for sinners, not merely a story about wrath and curse. Just as its demand is no game, so its threat is no mere shadowboxing. No, it brings wrath, curse, and damnation with it *in concreto* [that is, the law does not merely announce God's judgment; it brings God's judgment with it]. The law of God is actually grabbing and getting hold on sinners spiritually. The law puts sinners into real spiritual handcuffs and brings them to trial. *In concreto* it convicts, sentences, and hands them over to punishment, that is, to death and to eternal agony (Heb 4:12; Gal 3:10; Ge 2:17; Rom 5:12; 2:8,9). In short, the law's office is to preach damnation, to judge the sinner and award him damnation as his rightful lot (2 Co 3:9) ("The Proper Distinction of Law and Gospel," *The Wauwatosa Theology*, II, p 20).

b) Consider these statements of Scripture.

Galatians 3:10,12 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."¹² The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them."

Romans 3:19,20 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

D2 C, II, 2. Besides this strict sense, the term law (הַתּוֹרָה, νόμος) is used with various meanings. The context of a particular use determines the meaning.

a) “Law” may refer to God's Word in general.

Psalm 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 19:7,8 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. ⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

Psalm 119:97-105 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. ⁹⁸Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. ⁹⁹ I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. ¹⁰⁰I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. ¹⁰¹ I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. ¹⁰²I have not departed from your laws (דְּבָרֵי צִוְיֹתֶיךָ), for you yourself have taught me. ¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! ¹⁰⁴I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

b) “Law” may refer to the Old Testament portion of Scripture.

John 10:34 Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are gods?’” (Quotes Psalm 82:6)

John 12:34 The crowd spoke up, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this ‘Son of Man’?” (Refers to Psalm 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”)

John 15:25 This is to fulfill what is written in their Law: “They hated me without reason.” (Refers to Psalm 35:19 Let not those gloat over me who are my enemies without cause; let not those who hate me without reason maliciously wink the eye. Psalm 69:4 Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head; many are my enemies without cause, those who seek to destroy me.)

1 Corinthians 14:21 In the Law it is written: “Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me,” says the Lord. (Refers to Isaiah 28:11,12 Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people, ¹² to whom he said, “This is the resting place, let the weary rest”; and, “This is the place of repose”— but they would not listen.)

John 7:49 No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them.

c) “Law” may refer to the Pentateuch.

Luke 24:44 He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

Luke 16:16 The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

John 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

Acts 13:15 After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak.”

Acts 24:14 I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets.

Acts 28:23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

Romans 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

d) “Law” may refer to the Mosaic covenant stipulations.

1) The reference may be to Mosaic commandments in general.

John 1:17 The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 7:19 Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?

Acts 13:39 Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

Galatians 3:17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.

2) The word may refer moral law.

Matthew 22:35-40 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Also: Luke 10:25-28).

Romans 2:13-15 For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)

Romans 13:8-10 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Galatians 5:14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

3) “Law” may refer to ceremonial law.

Acts 15:5,24 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.” ²⁴ We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said.

1 Corinthians 9:20,21 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law.

4) “Law” may also refer to civil law.

John 7:51 Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing? (Deuteronomy 1:17 Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it. Dt 19:15 One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.)

Acts 23:3 Then Paul said to him, “God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!” (Refers to Deuteronomy 25:1-3)

e) “Law” may also be used generally, to denote any rule or order, principle or standard (as in “law of nature”).

Romans 3:27 Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.

Romans 7:21,23,25 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁵ Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 8:2 Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

f) “Law” may even be used to refer to the gospel.

Isaiah 2:3 Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 42:3,4 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice. ⁴ he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope.

Psalm 19:7,8 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

Psalm 119:18,29,92,97,142,174 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. 29 Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me through your law. 92 If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. 97 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. 142 Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true. 174 I long for your salvation, O LORD, and your law is my delight.

D2 C, III. The gospel is the word of God by which he, out of free grace for Christ's sake, promises forgiveness and pronounces the transgressor of the law righteous.

D2 C, III, 1. On the basis of Scripture this is the Lutheran definition of gospel.

a) Consider these confessional definitions.

The Apology, Art. IV (II), 5, p 121: All Scripture ought to be distributed into these two principal topics, the law and the promises. For in some places it presents the law, and in others the promise concerning Christ, namely, either when in the Old Testament it promises that Christ will come, and offers, for his sake, the remission of sins justification, and life eternal, or when, in the gospel in the New Testament, Christ himself, since he has appeared, promises the remission of sins, justification, and life eternal.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. V, p 800, 5: But the gospel is properly such a doctrine as teaches what man, who has not observed the law and therefore is condemned by it, is to believe, namely, that Christ has expiated and made satisfaction for all sins and has obtained and acquired for him, no merit of the sinner intervening, forgiveness of sins, righteousness that avails before God, and eternal life.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. V, p 956, 20,21: However, now that man has not kept the law of God, but transgressed it, his corrupt nature, thoughts, words, and works fighting against it, for which reason he is under God's wrath, death, all temporal calamities, and the punishment of hell-fire, the gospel is properly a doctrine which teaches what man should believe, that he may obtain forgiveness of sins with God, namely, that the Son of God, our Lord Christ, has taken upon himself and borne the curse of the law, has expiated and paid for all our sins, through whom alone we again enter into favor with God, obtain forgiveness of sins by faith, are delivered from death and all the punishments of sins, and eternally saved. For everything that comforts, that offers the favor and grace of God to transgressors of the Law, is and is properly called the gospel, a good and joyful message that God will not punish sins, but forgive them for Christ's sake.

August Pieper: What is the gospel? It is the joyful message, revealed from heaven, of the gracious forgiveness of sins for eternal life through faith in Christ. . . . This is the substance of the gospel. We see that it is a completely different teaching from the law. Here there is nothing more about commandment, demand, threat, or curse, but the opposite of all these. The gospel is a story, a history, an account, a message. It tells us what God, out of eternal love, did for those who were lost, who had fallen away from him, who were under the curse of the law and sentenced to hell. The gospel announces what God, out of great, heartfelt compassion, has done for our deliverance, our salvation. It tells how, out of his great love, God gave up his Son for us; how he did away with the guilt of our sin through him; how he does not count sin against the world anymore, but has absolved and forgiven them all. It tells how he has sent the word of reconciliation out into the world, how he calls on all the world to be of good cheer and come to him, to believe in Christ and be saved through faith with no strings attached, at no charge ("The Proper Distinction of Law and Gospel," *The Wauwatosa Theology*, II, p 37,41).

b) Consider these statements of the scriptural view.

Acts 20:24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Romans 1:16,17 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 10:15 How can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Ephesians 1:13 You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

D2 C, III, 2. The term gospel is also used in Scripture with other meanings.

a) "Gospel" may designate a written record of the life and work of Jesus.

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

b) "Gospel" may be used for a message that includes the preparatory preaching of the law (synecdoche).

Mark 1:14,15 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. V, p 802, 6: But since the term *gospel* is not used in one and the same sense in the Holy Scriptures (on account of which this dissension originally arose), we believe, teach, and confess that if by the term *gospel* is understood the entire doctrine of Christ which he proposed in his ministry, as also did his apostles (in which sense it is employed, Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21), it is correctly said and written that the *gospel* is a preaching of repentance and of the forgiveness of sins (Also see Formula of Concord, TD, Art. V, p 952, 3-6).

Hoenecke: The *gospel* in the narrowest sense is the message that in Christ, the Son of God who became man, we have the Redeemer from sin. In other words, it is the preaching of the forgiveness of sins in the Redeemer who has appeared. . . . In the wider sense, the *gospel* is the preaching of free forgiveness, without express reference to the *already* incarnate Redeemer. . . . Used in a still wider sense, the word appears in Mark 1:14 and 16:15, as embracing the preaching of both the law and the *gospel* in the narrower sense. . . . It is used in a transferred sense (*improprie*) when it refers to the historical writings of the evangelists (*ELD*, IV, p 39).

D2 C, IV. Law and gospel are opposites (although, as seen above, they have many points in common).

D2 C, IV, 1. Law and gospel are opposites in the mode of revelation.

a) The law is revealed to man in nature.

1) The law was originally written in the heart of mankind, so that they not only knew its content but also approved of and enjoyed it.

Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Romans 7:22 In my inner being I delight in God's law.

Psalms 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; his feet do not slip.

2) The law is still found in the hearts of people so that they feel their obligation and, within certain limits, know what is right.

Romans 2:14,15 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Consider the phrase: τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου = that which the law works.

3) The idea of merited retribution (reward and punishment) governs the whole moral and religious thinking, feeling, and striving of human beings by nature.

Acts 17:23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. (Note: The complete inscription on the altar was: Θεοῖς Ἀσίας καὶ Εὐρώπης καὶ Αἰβύης, θεῶ ἀγνώστῳ καὶ ξένῳ. Cf. Zahn, *Kommentar, Apg.* II, p 874).

Note: The prevalence of this *opinio legis* in all people leads us to be on guard against moralizing, that is, using of the law with its threats and promises to try to motivate others to live an outwardly upright life.

Romans 8:15 You did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

Romans 9:31-32 Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone."

b) The gospel is revealed only through Scripture.

1) The gospel is a total mystery to natural man. It is revealed by the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:6-10 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"— ¹⁰ but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

2) So deep-rooted is the *opinio legis* in natural man that he opposes the gospel as folly.

1 Corinthians 1:18,23 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Romans 9:31-33 Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” ³³ As it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

D2 C, IV, 2.

Law and gospel are opposites with regard to their mediators.

a) The law was delivered through a human mediator.

1) The law was given through Moses.

Exodus 20:19-22 [The people at Sinai] said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.” ²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.” ²¹ The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was. ²² Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites this. . . .

Galatians 3:19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.

2) The moral content of the law given through Moses was, however, essentially the same as that originally written in the hearts of mankind.

Romans 2:14,15 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Romans 5:13 Before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.

Hollaz: The natural law does not differ materially (in the matters dealt with in each) from the moral law, specifically so-called, if, as is the case, the summary of the natural law is contained in the decalog, but it does differ in form. For 1) the natural law is written by nature in the inmost souls of men, while the moral law is proclaimed from outside, being made known by the voice of God and repeated in writing; 2) the natural law is less perfect and more unclear, [while] the moral law is more perfect and clearer. The former controls outward behavior, the latter governs and regulates both the inward and outward actions of men. (*Examen*, 1002)

b) The gospel is established by the Son of God.

1) The Mediator of the gospel is Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 2:5 There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 8:6 The ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 12:24 [You have come] to Jesus the mediator (μεσίτης) of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Hebrews 7:22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee (ἔγγυος) of a better covenant.

2) While Moses was only instrumental in revealing the law, Christ is himself the founder and chief cornerstone of the gospel.

John 1:17 The law was given through Moses (διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη); grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο).

Ephesians 2:20 [You have been] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

1 Corinthians 1:30,31 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 2:2 I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

1 Corinthians 1:18,23f The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ²³ But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.

D2 C, IV, 3. Law and gospel are opposites in their messages to mankind.

a) The law speaks about human works and achievements.

Romans 2:14,15 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Romans 3:28 We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Romans 4:4,5 When a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Galatians 3:2,5 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? ⁵ Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?

b) The gospel speaks of God's grace and creates faith, which appropriates God's grace.

Acts 20:24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Romans 11:6 If by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Philippians 3:9 [Paul's desire is to] be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

D2 C, IV, 4. Law and gospel are opposites in the way they offer blessing.

a) The law tells us what God demands of us.

1) The law makes demands and requires compliance.

Ephesians 2:15 [Christ made peace] by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace.

Exodus 20:3,4,5,7 You shall have no other gods before me. ⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁷ You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

2) The law gives promises (even of eternal life), but only under certain conditions.

Exodus 20:6 [The Lord] showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Leviticus 18:5 Keep my decrees and laws, for the man who obeys them will live by them. I am the LORD.

Deuteronomy 28:1,2 If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. ² All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God.

Matthew 19:16,17 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” ¹⁷ “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.”

3) The law threatens condemnation to the transgressor.

Exodus 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

Deuteronomy 27:26 Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.

Deuteronomy 28:15 However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.

Deuteronomy 32:22 A fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains.

Romans 7:10 I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.

Hollaz: The purpose of the moral law is: a) the glory of the Lawgiver, b) eternal life promised on condition of perfect obedience, c) the incidental outcome is eternal death (Ro 7:10) (*Examen*, pars III, sect. II, cap I, qu. 25, p 471).

b) The gospel tells us what God promises to us.

1) The gospel promises life as a free gift to faith.

Romans 3:24,25 [All sinners] are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

Romans 4:16 The promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

Galatians 3:22 The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

2) This gracious gospel offer may be clothed in the form of a command. This so-called “gospel imperative” is an invitation.

1 John 3:23,24 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

Acts 16:31 They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

3) The gospel promise may be expressed in the form of a conditional promise. Still, the gospel remains an unconditional promise.

Romans 10:9 If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Gerhard: The particle “if” is either etiological or syllogistic, that is, it either designates a cause or a consequence. In the preaching of law, namely: “if you do this, you will live,” the particle “if” is etiological, since obedience is the cause on account of which eternal life is given to those who keep the law; but in the gospel promises, “if you believe, you will be saved,” the particle “if” is syllogistic, for it denotes the divinely appointed way in which salvation becomes ours (the divinely appointed way of application), belonging to faith alone (*Loci*, Vol VI, Loc. XV, Cap. II, par. 26).

Walther: When the Lord says, “Believe,” he does not utter a demand, but issues an urgent invitation to man to take, to apprehend, to appropriate what he is giving, without asking anything in return for it. The gift must, of course, be accepted. Non-acceptance forfeits the gift, but not because there was a condition attached to it. . . . A beggar would be insane if he were to say to the donor: “What? I am still to do the accepting?” and would be told to be gone with his silliness (*Law and Gospel*, p 272).

August Pieper: In defining the essence of the gospel, everything depends on whether it is a conditional or an unconditional message of grace. Does it offer those cursed unconditionally by the law the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation without any and every condition or on the condition of faith? Is the gospel an unconditional or conditional absolution? . . . Note this very well – the question is not whether man's faith is necessary to appropriate the gospel, to make it effective in the case of each individual. About this there is no disagreement. If anything is clear, this is clear in Scripture: Whoever believes will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. . . . In short, faith is

the unconditional ordinance for appropriating the gospel, the good news of grace. But the question is, does the message itself, according to its content, make faith the condition for realizing its promises? Does the gospel plainly say, "Your sins are forgiven," or does it say, "If you believe I will forgive you your sins, then I will forgive them; if you do not believe that, then I will not forgive you." Thank God we know that nothing is more certain than this. The gospel, God's message of grace to all sinners on earth, has no conditions, none at all, not even that of faith ("The Proper Distinction of Law and Gospel," *The Wauwatosa Theology*, II, p 41,42).

D2 C, IV, 5. Law and gospel are opposites in their effects.

a) The purpose and impact of the law is clearly revealed.

1) The law reveals the utter sinfulness of mankind.

Romans 3:20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

2) The law also draws out the sinfulness of mankind.

Romans 5:20 The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more.

Romans 7:7,8,13 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

Galatians 3:19,22 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions (τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη) until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.²² But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

3) The law drives a sinner to despair. It kills and condemns.

Romans 4:15 Law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Acts 16:29,30 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Psalms 32:3 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

Psalms 38:4-6 My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.⁵ My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly.⁶ I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning.

2 Corinthians 3:6,9 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.⁹ If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

Quenstedt: This inability or helplessness assigned to the law (Ro 8:3) does not belong to it *per se* or by its own nature, but it is incidental to it, namely because of our flesh, which makes the law of God weak, although it is holy and good in itself ... (Ga 3:21). This is the reason why inability to save is ascribed to the law (*TDP*, pars IV, cap. I, sect. I, thes. XXXII, nota, 2, p 9).

4) Our Lutheran forefathers speak about the purposes and impact of the law.

Consider the three terms most frequently used to denote the purposes of law: *Spiegel*, *Riegel*, *Regel*, mirror, curb, and rule.

Quenstedt: The use of the moral law is fourfold: political, elenctic (rebuking, exposing), pedagogical, didactic (*TDP*, pars IV, cap. I, sect. I, thes. XXXIII, p 9).

[With caution] Quenstedt: The first use pertains to unregenerate and obstinate sinners, the second and third to men who are to be justified, the fourth to those who have been justified and regenerated (*TDP*, IV, 10).

Hollaz: The political use of the law consists in the preservation of outward discipline, so that wild and untamed men might be kept from the more serious crimes, by the punishments and rewards which are proposed. According to this use, the law is a bit or bridle by which sinners are coerced. The elenctic use is the manifestation and reproof of sins, as well as the pointing out of the most severe

judgment of God (Ro 3:20). According to this use the law is a mirror of sin. The pedagogical use is that by which men are driven indirectly to Christ. For although the law neither knows nor teaches anything formally or directly about Christ, nevertheless, by accusing, convicting, terrifying, it in an indirect way compels the sinner to seek comfort and help in Christ, the Redeemer. And thus the law is our schoolmaster (pedagog) to bring us to Christ (Ga 3:24). The didactic use consists in telling us about and giving us directions in regard to all moral acts, both internal and external. Thus the law is the perpetual rule of life (Mt 5:17) (*Examen*, 1021).

b) The purpose and impact of the gospel is also clearly revealed.

1) The gospel justifies the sinner.

Romans 3:21,28 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²⁸ For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Romans 4:5 To the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Ephesians 2:8-9 It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Galatians 2:16 [We] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

2) The gospel produces faith in this free justification.

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

3) The gospel in this way creates a new life.

1 Peter 1:23 You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

John 20:31 These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Romans 6:23 The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Quenstedt: The purpose of the gospel is either ultimate or intermediate. The ultimate purpose is either absolute or relative. The absolute or simply ultimate purpose is the glory of God (2 Cor 4:4,5). The relatively ultimate purpose is the salvation of human souls (1 Pe 1:9). The intermediate purpose is, on the one hand, regeneration (1 Pe 1:23), on the other, justification (Lk 1:77; Ro 3:21; Eph 6:15), along with the things connected with these (reconciliation, Eph 6:15; the gift of the Holy Spirit, 2 Cor 5:19) (*TDP*, pars IV, sect. I, thes. IX, p 60).

4) A rejection of this saving gospel will result in increased divine condemnation.

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. ¹⁵ For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

2 Peter 2:20-22 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. ²¹ It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. ²² Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

Hebrews 10:26-31 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know

him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people."³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Luke 12:47,48 That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows.⁴⁸ But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Luke 11:26 Then [the evil spirit] goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.

D2 C, IV, 6. Law and gospel are opposites in the persons to whom they apply.

a) The law applies to all people as sinners. It also applies to the Old Adam of believers.

Matthew 19:16-22 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"¹⁷ "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."¹⁸ "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,¹⁹ honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"²⁰ "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"²¹ Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."²² When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Luke 10:25-28 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"²⁷ He answered: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Romans 7:13 Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

b) The gospel comforts the terror-stricken conscience.

1) For an expression of this truth, consider the following passage.

Isaiah 61:1,2 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn. [Quoted in Luke 4:18-19 as fulfilled by Jesus.]

2) Applying the gospel to repentant sinners was the practice of Jesus and his servants.

Luke 7:48 Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

Acts 2:37-39 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"³⁸ Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 16:27-31 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped.²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

1 Corinthians 5:1-3 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife.² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this?

2 Corinthians 2:6-8 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him.⁷ Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.⁸ I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

2 Samuel 12:13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die."

3) In view of this, we speak of the higher authority of the gospel.

-a) The gospel supersedes the verdict of the law.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness (τέλος νόμου εις δικαιοσύνην) for everyone who believes.

Romans 5:20,21 The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more,²¹ so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Corinthians 3:7-11 If the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was,⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?⁹ If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings

righteousness! ¹⁰ For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. ¹¹ And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

Jeremiah 31:31-34 “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Hebrews 8:6-8,13 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. ⁷ For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. ⁸ But God found fault with the people and said: “The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ¹³ By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

1 Corinthians 9:20,21 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law— μὴ ὢν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law – μὴ ὢν ἄνομος θεοῦ ἀλλ’ ἔννομος Χριστοῦ), so as to win those not having the law.

-b) Yet, the gospel doesn’t do away with the law. It just outweighs it.

Romans 3:31 Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

Matthew 5:17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Luther: Now when both law and gospel meet, and the law declares me a sinner, accuses and condemns me, the gospel however says, “Be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven,” “ You shall be saved,” and both are God's Word. Which am I, then, to follow? St. Paul tells you. “But after that faith came,” he says, “we are no longer under a schoolmaster,” the law has come to an end. For as the lesser it should and must give way and place to the gospel. Both are God's Word, the law and the gospel, but the two are not equal. One is lower, the other higher; one is weaker, the other stronger; one is lesser, the other greater. When now they wrestle with each other, I follow the gospel and say, Good-by, Law! (*St. L., IX, p 80*).

Consider comparisons and contrasts between law and gospel:

Law	Gospel
1. The law is written in the heart of man, and is therefore known by nature (Ro 2:15).	1. The gospel is a mystery unknown to man by nature (1 Cor 2:7ff; Ro 16:25).
2. The law demands perfect obedience from people (Gn 17:1; Mt 5:48).	2. The gospel makes no demands but only offers the grace of God to people (Eph 2:8,9).
3. The law promises salvation and life to those who obey all its demands (Lk 10:28).	3. The gospel promises salvation to those who have broken the law (Ac 16:31).
4. The law says that the doers of the law shall be justified (Ro 2:13).	4. The gospel says that those who have not kept the law shall be justified (Ro 4:5), and that a man is justified without the deeds of the law (Ro 3:28).
5. The law says that God will not forgive sin nor acquit the sinner (Jos 24:19; Na 1:3).	5. The gospel says that God has acquitted all men, that he has forgiven the sins of the world (Ro 5:18; 2 Cor 5:19).
6. The law says that every sinner is to be cursed (Ga 3:10).	6. The gospel says that all the families of the earth are blessed in Christ (Gn 22:18; Ga 3:16).
7. The law says that God hates sinners (Ps 5:5; 11:5; Ho 9:15).	7. The gospel says that God loves all people (Jn 3:16).
8. The law says that God is angry with sinners (Na 1:2; Ro 1:18).	8. The gospel says that God is favorably disposed toward all people and reconciled to all people (Tt 2:11; 2 Cor 5:19).
9. The law has the effect of arousing people against God (Ro 4:15).	9. The gospel has the effect of reconciling people with God (2 Cor 5:20).
10. The law terrifies people and is intended to terrify them (Ex 20:18f).	10. The gospel is intended to cast out all fear. “Fear not” (Lk 2:10 et al.).
11. The law must be preached to make the comfortable distressed (Ro 3:20).	11. The gospel must be preached to make the distressed comfortable (Is 40:11).

D2 C, IV, 7.**It is the most difficult part of a minister's work to apply law and gospel properly.****a) The following passages speak of faithfulness and competence in applying God's word.**

Luke 12:42-44 The Lord answered, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? ⁴³ It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. ⁴⁴ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions."

2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal (ικανός) to such a task?

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are competent (ικανοί) in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence (ικανότης) comes from God.

b) The law must be faithfully preached also to Christians.**1) The Christian insofar as he is "new man" needs no law.**

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

1 Timothy 1:9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers.

2) Because of the Old Adam, however, the Christian needs the law in its threefold application.

Romans 3:20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Romans 7:7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."

Titus 2:1-6 You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. ²Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. ³ Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. ⁴ Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, ⁵ to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. ⁶ Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled.

Quenstedt: The use of the moral law is four-fold: political, elenctic, pedagogical, didactic (*TDP*, thes. XXXIII, p 9).

Quenstedt: In the church not only the doctrine of the gospel but also of the law must be preached as the Word of God, not only to the impious and unbelievers, but also to those who are pious and truly believe (*TDP*, part IV, chap. I, qu. VI, thesis, p 46).

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. V, p 804, 2-8: 1. We believe, teach, and confess that, although men truly believing in Christ and truly converted to God have been freed and exempted from the curse and coercion of the law, they nevertheless are not on this account without law, but have been redeemed by the Son of God in order that they should exercise themselves in it day and night, that they should meditate upon God's law day and night, and constantly exercise themselves in its observance, Ps. 1:2, Ps. 119. . . . 2. We believe, teach, and confess that the preaching of the law is to be urged with diligence, not only upon the unbelieving and impenitent, but also upon true believers, who are truly converted, regenerate, and justified by faith. 3. For although they are regenerate and renewed in the spirit of their mind, yet in the present life this regeneration and renewal is not complete, but only begun, and believers are, by the spirit of their mind, in a constant struggle against the flesh, that is, against the corrupt nature and disposition which cleaves to us unto death. On account of this old Adam, which still inheres in the understanding, the will, and all the powers of man, it is needful that the law of the Lord always shine before them. . . . Thus the law is and remains both to the penitent and impenitent, both to regenerate and unregenerate men, one and the same law, namely, the immutable will of God. . . . Accordingly, we reject as a dogma and error injurious to, and conflicting with, Christian discipline and true godliness the teaching that the law in the above-mentioned way and degree is not to be urged upon Christians and true believers, but only upon unbelievers, non-Christians, and the impenitent.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. V, p 962, 5: For although "the law is not made for a righteous man," as the apostle testifies 1 Tim. 1:9, but for the unrighteous, yet this is not to be understood in the bare meaning, that the justified are to live without law. For the law of God has been written in their heart, and also to the first man immediately after his creation a law was given according to which he was to conduct himself. But the meaning of St. Paul is that the law cannot burden with its curse those who

have been reconciled to God through Christ; nor must it vex the regenerate with its coercion, because they have pleasure in God's law after the inner man.

c) Our Lutheran Confessions address the issue of the proper distinction between law and gospel.

Formula of Concord, Ep. Art. V, p 802, 7,10,11: We believe, teach, and confess that the gospel is not a preaching of repentance or reproof, but properly nothing else than a preaching of consolation, and a joyful message which does not reprove or terrify, but comforts consciences against the terrors of the law, points alone to the merit of Christ, and raises them up again by the lovely preaching of the grace and favor of God, obtained through Christ's merit. Yet as long as all this (namely, Christ's suffering and death) proclaims God's wrath and terrifies man, it is still not properly the preaching of the gospel, but the preaching of Moses and the law, and therefore a foreign work of Christ. . . . Accordingly we reject and regard as incorrect and injurious the dogma that the gospel is properly a preaching of repentance or reproof, and not alone a preaching of grace; for thereby the gospel is again converted into a doctrine of the law, the merit of Christ and Holy Scripture are obscured, Christians robbed of true consolation, and the door is opened again to the errors and superstitions of the Papacy.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. V, p 954, 10,11: For since the mere preaching of the law, without Christ, either makes presumptuous men, who imagine that they can fulfill the law by outward works, or forces them utterly to despair, Christ takes the law into his hands, and explains it spiritually, Matt. 5:21ff ; Rom. 7:14 and 1:18, and thus reveals his wrath from heaven upon all sinners, and shows how great it is; whereby they are directed to the law, and from it first learn to know their sins aright—a knowledge which Moses never could extort from them. . . . Therefore the Spirit of Christ must not only comfort, but also through the office of the law “reprove the world of sin,” John 16:8, and thus must do in the New Testament, as the prophet says, Is. 28:21, *opus alienum, ut faciat opus proprium*, that is, he must do *the work of another* (reprove), in order that he may afterwards do his own work, which is to comfort and preach of grace.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. V, p 960, 27: The true and proper distinction between the law and the gospel must with all diligence be inculcated and preserved, and whatever gives occasion for confusion *inter legem et evangelium* (between the law and the gospel), that is, whereby the two doctrines, law and gospel, may be confounded and mingled into one doctrine, should be diligently prevented. It is, therefore, dangerous and wrong to convert the gospel, properly so called, as distinguished from the law, into a preaching of repentance or reproof.

Franz Pieper: Properly to distinguish between law and gospel is a difficult art. Of course, not in theory, for it is easy to say what is law and what is gospel; but in practice the difficulty is present, particularly in one's own heart and conscience. Luther wisely reminds us again and again that the proper differentiation between law and gospel exceeds the power of natural man and is achieved only through the action of the Holy Spirit. The reason lies in man's natural condition. Natural man seeks grace and salvation through the law, that is, he strives to secure through the law what can be obtained only through the gospel. This *opinio legis* is an obsession with him, and continues to be an obsession, until God's grace and power turns his heart from the law to the gospel (*CD*, III, p 241).

Luther: Without the Holy Spirit it is impossible rightly to divide law and gospel. I experience this in my own case, also daily observe it in others, how difficult it is to separate the doctrine of the law from that of the gospel. The Holy Spirit must here be pedagogue and teacher, or no man on earth will ever have the knack of it or be able to teach it. . . . The theory is easy; quickly we can explain how the law is another Word and doctrine than the gospel; but to divide them *practice* and to apply the art to life, that is trouble and toil. St. Jerome, too, has written much about it, but like a blind man about colors (*St. L.*, IX: 802, 806ff.; cited in F. Pieper, *CD*, III, p 243).

d) We do well to note and to remain aware of how frequently law and gospel are confused and misused. We are not immune from committing such errors. Prominent examples of this include the following:

- Seeking or insisting on “degrees of repentance”
- Using legalistic vocabulary when seeking to present the gospel
- Striving to bring about “repentance out of love to God”
- Softening the message of the law by speaking of God's kindness to an impenitent sinner
- Speaking of a Fatherhood of God without Christ
- Presenting faith as a condition of justification
- Moralizing, or seeking mere behavior modification, being satisfied with externally good works, not the fruit of faith and forgiveness
- Emphasizing external organization in place of testifying to the truth.

Recommended for additional reading:

Armin Schuetze, “A Christian and the Law”, *WLQ*, Oct. 1964; also *OGH*, III, p 120ff.

August Pieper, “The Law Is Not Made for a Righteous Man,” *WLQ*, Oct., 1960; also *TWT*, II, p 73ff.

D2 C, IV, 8. The proper, biblical distinction between law and gospel is abolished or blurred by many churches.

a) The law-gospel distinction is effectively annulled by Roman Catholics.

Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Can. 20: If anyone says that the justified person, however perfect he may be, is not obligated to keep the commandments of God and of the church but only to believe, as if in fact the gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of obedience to the commandments, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, Session VI, Can. 21: If any one says that Jesus Christ was given to men by God as a Redeemer in whom they should believe, not also as a lawgiver whom they should obey, let him be anathema.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1965: The New Law or the Law of the Gospel is the perfection here on earth of the divine Law, natural and revealed. It is the work of Christ and is expressed particularly in the Sermon on the Mount. It is also the work of the Holy Spirit and through him it becomes the interior Law of charity.

Contrast Luther: Beware of turning Christ into a Moses, as if he had nothing more for us than precept and example, like the other saints.... The chief thing in the gospel is this, that before you take Christ as your example, you recognize and accept him as God's gift to you (*St. L, XI, p XLf*).

Contrast Heerbrand: Faith is not a condition, nor is it required as a condition, properly-speaking. For justification is not promised or offered because of the worth or merit of faith, or insofar as it is a work. For faith is also imperfect, but it is certainly the way to accept the benefit offered and given through and on account of Christ (*Compendium, loc. de evangelio, p 165*).

Contrast Hoenecke: The orthodox axiom is, "The gospel in its *strict* sense is not a preaching of repentance but of free remission of sins." Whatever punishes sin and preaches repentance is law, not gospel (*ELD, IV, p 44*).

b) The law-gospel distinction is sometimes canceled by Calvinists.

Charles Hodge: Being a proclamation of the terms on which God is willing to save sinners and an exhibition of the duty of fallen men in relation to that plan, it of necessity binds all those who are in the condition which the plan contemplates. [The gospel] is in this respect analogous to the moral law (*ST, II, p 642f*).

Karl Barth objecting to Luther's distinction between law and gospel: We hear the Law of God when we hear the Gospel. The two dare not be separated. This is what concerns me most about the Lutherans (*Freie Reformierte Synode Barmen-Gemarke* (1934), quoted in Sasse, *Here We Stand*, p 163).

c) The law-gospel distinction is obliterated by synergists, who assume a different (better or worse) conduct of natural man toward grace.

Melanchthon: Three causes [of conversion] are conjoined: The Word, the Holy Spirit and the will not wholly inactive, but resisting its own weakness.... God draws, but draws him who is willing. . . and the will is not a statue, and that spiritual emotion is not impressed upon it as though it were a statue (*Locī*, second edition, 1535. See *Triglotta*, p 129-131).

J. Michael Reu refers to "noble souls" who "though not yet in the kingdom of God," are nevertheless "in a place appreciably nearer" (*Christian Ethics*, p 121).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 30: Although man can forget God or reject him, He never ceases to call every man to seek him, so as to find life and happiness. But this search for God demands of man every effort of intellect, a sound will, "an upright heart", as well as the witness of others who teach him to seek God.

Passages frequently misunderstood and misused by synergists:

Matthew 21:31 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you."

Mark 12:34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from (οὐ παρὰν ἀπὸ) the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Acts 26:28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" (KJV: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"— ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθειεις Χριστιανὸν ποιῆσαι).

The often repeated and unmistakable truth of Scripture remains, however.

Romans 3:22-24 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

D2 C, V. God uses his law in various ways.

D2 C, V, 1. In his providential governing of the world, God uses his law to uphold order and decency (*justitia civilis*, civil or civic righteousness).

a) God does this through the agency of civil government.

Romans 13:1-5 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

1 Peter 2:13,14 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

1 Timothy 2:1,2 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Apology, Art. IV (II), p 126, 22-25: Now, we think concerning the righteousness of reason thus, namely, that God requires it, and that, because of God's commandment, the honorable works which the Decalog commands must necessarily be performed, according to the passage Gal. 3:24: "The law was our schoolmaster," likewise 1 Tim. 1:9: "The law is made for the ungodly." For God wishes those who are carnal, gross sinners, to be restrained by civil discipline, and to maintain this, he has given laws, letters, doctrine, magistrates, penalties. And this righteousness reason, by its own strength, can, to a certain extent, work, although it is often overcome by natural weakness, and by the devil impelling it to manifest crimes.

b) God does this through his use of temporal rewards and punishments.

Exodus 20:5,6,12 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. ¹² Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Ephesians 6:2-3, "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

Consider the Book of Proverbs, *passim*.

D2 C, V, 2. With sinful mankind God uses his law to bring sinners to a knowledge of their sinfulness (mirror).

a) The following passages speak about this work of God.

Romans 3:20 No one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Romans 7:7,8 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

2 Corinthians 3:6,9 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ⁹ If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

b) God's ultimate aim in doing this is to supply what the sinner needs through the gospel.

Matthew 5:17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Galatians 4:4,5 When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

c) Thus the law is not against the gospel, but is preparatory to it.

Galatians 3:21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

Romans 7:7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."

D2 C, V, 3. With a Christian God uses his law in three ways.

a) God uses the law as a mirror, to keep the believer in the humble attitude of a sinner desiring nothing but grace.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VI, p 968, 21: So, too, the doctrine of the law, in and with the exercise of the good works of believers, is necessary for the reason that otherwise man can easily imagine that his work and life are entirely pure and perfect. But the law of God prescribes to believers good works in this way, that it shows and indicates at the same time, as in a mirror, that in this life they are still imperfect and impure in us, so that we must say with the beloved Paul, 1 Cor. 4:4: I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified. Thus Paul, when exhorting the regenerate to good works, presents to them expressly the Ten Commandments, Rom. 13:9; and that his good works are imperfect and impure he recognizes from the law, Rom. 7:7ff; and David declares Ps 119:32: *Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri*, I will run the way of your commandments; but enter not into judgment with your servant, for in your sight shall no man living be justified, Ps. 143:2.

b) God uses his law as a rule, to point out and make clear the works that are pleasing to him.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VI, p 968, 20: So, too, this doctrine of the law is needful for believers, in order that they may not hit upon a holiness and devotion of their own, and under the pretext of the Spirit of God set up a self-chosen worship, without God's Word and command, as it is written Deut. 12:8, 28, 32: You shall not do ... every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes, etc., but observe and hear all these words which I command you. You shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VI, p 964, 12: Thereafter the Holy Spirit employs the law so as to teach the regenerate from it, and to point out and show them in the Ten Commandments what is the good and acceptable will of God, Rom. 12:2, in what good works God has before ordained that they should walk, Eph. 2:10.

c) God uses his law as a curb, to restrain the desires of the Old Adam.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

Galatians 5:17 The sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

Mark 9:43-48 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where "their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VI, p 968, 19,24: But as far as the old Adam is concerned, which still clings to them, he must be driven not only with the law, but also with punishments; nevertheless he does everything against his will and under coercion, no less than the godless are driven and held in obedience by the threats of the law, 1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 7:18, 19. . . . For the old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass, is still a part of them, which must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching, admonition, force and threatening of the law, but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles, until the body of sin is entirely put off, and man is perfectly renewed in the resurrection, when he will need neither the preaching of the law nor its threatenings and punishments, as also the gospel any longer; these belong to this mortal and imperfect life.

d) Yet the Christian is not "under law" though he is never to be without the law.

1 Corinthians 9:20,21 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law – μη ὢν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμου), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law – μη ὢν ἄνομος θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἔννομος Χριστοῦ), so as to win those not having the law.

Psalms 119:32 I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

1 Timothy 1:9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,

e) **A special point to be noted here is the abrogation of ceremonial law, including Sabbath law.**

1) **The concept of the Sabbath Day existed prior to and was regulated by the Lord's Sinaitic covenant with Israel.**

Genesis 2:2-3 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Exodus 16:26 Six days you are to gather [manna], but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.

Exodus 20:8-11 Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exodus 31:13,17 Say to the Israelites, "You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy. ¹⁷ It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested."

Exodus 35:2 For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it must be put to death.

Ezekiel 20:12 Also I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the LORD made them holy.

2) **All Sabbath regulations were annulled through Christ's redemptive work which ratified the new covenant. That which was prefigured in the Sabbath rest has become reality in Christ and to be enjoyed through faith.**

Colossians 2:16,17 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Jeremiah 31:31,32 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD."

Galatians 4:9-11 But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? ¹⁰ You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Luke 6:1-5 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. ² Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" ³ Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴ He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." ⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. (Also see Luke 6:6-11, Matthew 12:1-8 and Mark 2:18-28 for parallel lessons.)

Matthew 11:28-30 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Hebrews 4:1-11 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. ² For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. ³ Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, “So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’” And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. ⁴ For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “And on the seventh day God rested from all his work.” ⁵ And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.” ⁶ It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. ⁷ Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. ⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰ for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XXVIII, p 90, 52-63: It is necessary that the chief article of the gospel be preserved, namely, that we obtain grace freely by faith in Christ and not by certain observances or acts of worship devised by men. What, then, are we to think of the Sunday and like rites in the house of God? To this we answer that it is lawful for bishops or pastors to make ordinances that things be done orderly in the Church, not that thereby we should merit grace or make satisfaction for sins, or that consciences be bound to judge them necessary services, and to think that it is a sin to break them without offense to others. . . . Of this kind is the observance of the Lord’s Day, Easter, Pentecost, and like holy days and rites. For those who judge that by the authority of the Church the observance of the Lord’s Day instead of the Sabbath-day was ordained as a thing necessary do greatly err. Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath-day; for it teaches that, since the gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted. . . . There are monstrous disputations concerning the changing of the law, the ceremonies of the new law, the changing of the Sabbath-day, which all have sprung from the false belief that there must be in the church a service like to the Levitical, and that Christ had given commission to the apostles and bishops to devise new ceremonies as necessary to salvation. These errors crept into the church when the righteousness of faith was not taught clearly enough.

Large Catechism, p 602, 79-86: The word holy day (*Feiertag*) is rendered from the Hebrew word *sabbath* which properly signifies to rest, that is, to abstain from labor. Hence we are accustomed to say, *Feierabend machen* [that is, to cease working], or *heiligen Abend geben* [sanctify the Sabbath]. Now, in the Old Testament, God separated the seventh day, appointed it for rest, and commanded that it should be regarded as holy above all others. As regards this external observance, this commandment was given to the Jews alone, that they should abstain from toilsome work and rest, so that both man and beast might recuperate and not be weakened by unremitting labor. . . . This commandment, therefore, according to its gross sense, does not concern us Christians; for it is altogether an external matter, like other ordinances of the Old Testament, which were attached to particular customs, persons, times, and places, and now have been made free through Christ.

For further reading, the following works are recommended:

Martin Luther, “How Christians Should Regard Moses”, *LW* 35, p 155-175.

Martin Luther, “Against the Sabbatarians” *LW* 47, p 57-92.

Martin Luther, “Sermon on the Third Commandment,” [prelude to the Large Catechism], *LW* 51, p 141-144.

D2 C, VI. The Word of God is a means of grace, not through the law, but through the gospel which it proclaims. By synecdoche (the whole for the part) “God’s Word” is often called a means of grace.

D2 C, VI, 1. The law is, indeed, filled with divine power, but it is a death-dealing power.

2 Corinthians 3:6-9 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ⁷ Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? ⁹ If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

D2 C, VI, 2. It is only the gospel that can create faith and give spiritual life.

Galatians 3:21,22 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²² But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Romans 1:16,17 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

D2. The Means of Grace

D2 D. Sacraments (in general)

D2 D, I. Sacraments are rites instituted by God that employ an “earthly, visible element” in connection with the word and that convey and certify grace to the recipient.

D2 D, I, 1. Scripture does not use the term “sacrament.”

a) It uses the Greek word **μυστήριον** (27 times) to refer to something that needs to be revealed, but does not use it to denote the sacraments.

1) **μυστήριον may refer to the gospel, in whole or in part.**

1 Corinthians 2:7 We speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.

1 Corinthians 4:1 Men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God.

Ephesians 6:19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.

Colossians 1:26,27 [The word of God in its fullness], the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Colossians 2:2 My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ.

Colossians 4:3 Pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.

2) **μυστήριον is also used with reference to the working of Antichrist, to things that require and receive revelation and clarification in order to be understood (such as the meaning of parables), and to things that remain secrets.**

2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

Matthew 13:11 He replied, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.”

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Revelation 17:5,7 This title was written on her forehead: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. ⁷ Then the angel said to me: “Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns.”

1 Corinthians 13:2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 14:2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: In sum, **μυστήριον** is a rare expression in the NT which betrays no relation to the mystery cults. Where there seem to be connections (e.g., in sacramental passages), the term is not used; where it is used, there are no such connections. In spite of certain analogies, there are thus serious objections against bringing Jesus or Paul under the category of the *mystagogue* (at **μυστήριον**).

b) **A factor in the church’s eventual use of the term was the Vulgate’s use of *sacramentum* as its usual translation for **μυστήριον** in the following passages.**

Ephesians 5:32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Ephesians 1:9 He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.

Ephesians 3:3,9 . . . the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. . . ⁹ to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Colossians 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

c) **The New Testament speaks of various customs and ceremonies.**

1) **Examples of these would be the imposition of hands and the bestowing of holy kisses.**

The laying on of hands:

Acts 8:18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money.

Acts 13:3 After they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others.

2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

Mark 5:23 [Jairus] pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." Compare with verse 41: He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!")

Acts 9:17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Compare with 10:44: While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.

The use of a holy kiss:

Romans 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings.

1 Corinthians 16:20 All the brothers here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

2 Corinthians 13:12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

1 Thessalonians 5:26 Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

1 Peter 5:14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

2) **Two rites, however, stand out from the rest, forming a class by themselves because of divine commands and promises attached to them.**

-a) **One of these is baptism.**

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

-b) **The second is the Lord's Supper.**

Matthew 26:26-28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (See also Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19,20; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

-c) **Yet Scripture nowhere designates these two rites by a common name.**

d) **On the ecclesiastical use of the word *sacramentum*, consider the following.**

Quenstedt: The word "sacrament" is understood 1) in the most general way for anything incomprehensible, or hidden, or secret . . . (1 Tm 3:16; Eph 5:32; Col 1:26; Eph 3:3. Thus the fathers also called any mystery or

any sacred doctrine that was not clear on the surface a sacrament, as the sacrament of the Trinity, of the incarnation, of faith. 2) "Sacrament" in a more restricted sense is used for any external symbol of a sacred or heavenly thing. Thus the seed, the grain, the pearl, etc. are "sacraments" or symbols of the kingdom of heaven (Mt 13:23,31,46). [Augustine in this sense calls the sign of the cross a sacrament.] 3) "Sacrament" is used in a very restricted sense, for a sacred, hidden, symbolic thing, which not only signifies but also at the same time confers the thing which it signifies, in which through an external and visible sign invisible benefits are graciously offered, conferred and guaranteed (cp. AC, XIII). (*TDP*, part IV, chap. III, sect. I, thesis III, p 73).

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (at μυστήριον): Since *sacramentum* is a technical term for the soldier's oath, the question arises how it could become a translation of μυστήριον. The possibility is created by both the Latin and the Greek terms. Taking an oath has originally the character of an initiation, a *devotio* to beings under the earth. It is an *occultum sacrum*, in which there is no place for the unworthy, like the state-persecuted followers of the Bacchus mysteries. The mystery rites also help inasmuch as initiation often entailed an oath, and the view that the ministry of initiates was a *sancta militia* must have been fairly widespread. Originally, then, *sacramentum* is an initiatory act and means much the same as μυστήριον. The terms first become full equivalents only in Christian texts, since the Romans conscripted *sacramentum* for military use. Tertullian and some later writers applied the military use to the Christian concept of the *sacramentum*. The content in this case is the rule of faith to which the Christian is engaged at baptism. By this application of *sacramentum* to the contents of faith Tertullian is able to differentiate once again between μυστήριον and *sacramentum*, and to ascribe to the pagan *mysteria idolorum* only the *res sacramentorum*, i.e., not in this case the true character of a sacrament. This distinction on the basis of the military image is found again only in Cyprian, Arnobius and occasionally Ambrose, and it fades out completely after the 4th century.

Vatican II, which applies the term "sacrament" to the church: By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind (*Doc.*, p 15). The church is "the universal sacrament of salvation" (*Doc.*, p 79). The church is sacramental because of "continuously joining together the visible and the invisible. That is why the Church is also called the 'primordial sacrament'" (Josef Jungmann, *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. I, p.12).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Church's mission is not an addition to that of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but is its Sacrament: in her whole being and in all her members, the Church is sent to announce, bear witness, make present, and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity. . . The Holy Spirit, whom Christ the head pours out on his members, builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church. She is the Sacrament of the Holy Trinity's communion with men (Par. 738, 747).

D2 D, I, 2. Only two rites, baptism and the Lord's Supper, possess the same combination of three traits.

a) The three distinguishing marks are here listed.

1) Christ's institution of the rite

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 308, 3: If we call sacraments *rites which have the command of God, and to which the promise of grace has been added*, it is easy to decide what are properly sacraments. For rites instituted by men will not in this way be sacraments properly so called. For it does not belong to human authority to promise grace. Therefore signs instituted without God's command are not sure signs of grace, even though they perhaps instruct the rude children or the uncultivated, or admonish as to something as a painted cross.

2) A visible element prescribed by Christ to be used with his word

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 408, 69: The sacraments are signs of God's will toward us, and not merely signs of men among each other; and they are right in defining that Sacraments in the New Testament are signs of grace. And because in a sacrament there are two things, a sign and the Word, the Word, in the New Testament, is the promise of grace added. The promise of the New Testament is the promise of the remission of sins, as the text, Luke 22, 19, says: This is my body, which is given for you. This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

3) The attached promise of forgiveness of sins through divine grace

Apology, Art. XII (V), p 260, 42: Meanwhile this faith is nourished in a manifold way in temptations, through the declarations of the gospel, the hearing of sermons, reading, and the use of the sacraments. For these are seals and signs of the covenant and grace in the New Testament, i.e., signs of propitiation and the remission of sins. They offer, therefore, the remission of sins, as the words of the Lord's Supper clearly testify, Matt. 26, 26, 28: This is my body, which is given for you. This is the cup of the New Testament, etc. Thus faith is conceived and strengthened through absolution, through the hearing of the gospel, through the use of the sacraments, so that it may not succumb while it struggles with the terrors of sin and death.

b) Our Lutheran forefathers have provided more elaborate statements on the distinguishing marks of these two sacraments.

Baier: In general a sacrament can be defined as an action divinely instituted by the grace of God on account of the merit of Christ which uses an external element perceivable by the senses, through which, when the

word of institution is added, the grace of the gospel concerning the forgiveness of sins for eternal life is conferred and sealed (guaranteed) to men (*Compend.*, Part III, Cap. VIII, Art. XI, p 509).

Gerhard: A sacrament is a sacred and solemn act instituted by God, by which God by means of the ministry of man under a visible and external element through a specific word dispenses heavenly blessings in order to offer the gospel's own promise concerning the free remission of sins to individuals who use the sacrament and to give and seal this promise to those who believe (*Loci*, tom. VIII, loc. XIX, cap. II, art. XI).

Chemnitz: Therefore, for anything truly and properly to be a New Testament sacrament, just as baptism and the Lord's Supper are, requires that:

- a) It should have some external material or physical and *visible element or sign*, which is dealt with, shown, and used in a definite external ritual.
- b) The element or sign and its definite ritual should have an *express divine command*, or a divine institution.
- c) The institution and *command should be in the New Testament*.
- d) It should *not* be instituted *for a time*, but "*until the end of the world*" as it is written concerning baptism (Mt 28:20), and until the Son of God comes again for judgment, as St. Paul says concerning the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:26).

And these things are required in regard to the element or sign of a sacrament in the New Testament.

- e) For a sacrament a *divine promise concerning the grace*, the effect or the benefit of the sacrament is required.
- f) That promise must not simply, barely, and by itself alone have a testimony in the Word of God, but it must by divine ordination be joined to the sign of the sacrament, and, as it were, be clothed in it.
- g) The promise must not be concerning any gifts of God, whether bodily or spiritual, but it must be the promise of grace or justification, that is, of free reconciliation, of the forgiveness of sins and, in summary, concerning the total benefit of redemption.
- h) And that promise in the sacrament is not only signified or announced in a general way, but by the power of God it is also offered shown, applied and sealed to the individuals who use the sacraments in faith.

These things are true, manifest and certain (*Examen*, part II, topic I, sect. I, art. II, de sacramentorum numero, para. 23, p 8).

Gerhard: We say therefore that for a sacrament properly so called two things are especially required, namely, the Word and the element, according to that common saying of Augustine: "The Word comes to the element and it becomes a sacrament." By the "Word" is understood, first, the command and divine institution, by which the element, because it has received the call of God, as Irenaeus says (*lib. IV, Cap. 34*), is set apart from common use and appointed for sacramental use; then the word of promise, namely, that promise which is peculiar to the gospel, to be applied and sealed by the sacrament (*Loci*, vol. VIII, loc. XIX de sacramentis, chap. II, para. XI, p 207).

D2 D, I, 3. A definition of sacrament with fewer criteria and a greater number of instances would not necessarily conflict with Scripture (see above, pages 52,53).

a) Our confessions assume the possibility of different definitions.

1) They speak of two sacraments using a definition that requires three distinguishing marks.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. V, p 490: Baptism is nothing else than the Word of God in the water, commanded by his institution, or, as Paul says, "a washing in the Word"; as also Augustine says: Let the Word come to the element, and it becomes a sacrament.

Art VI, p 492: Of the Sacrament of the Altar we hold that bread and wine in the Supper are the true body and blood of Christ, and are given and received not only by the godly, but also by wicked Christians.

Large Catechism, p 578, 20: Now, when these three parts are apprehended, it behooves a person also to know what to say concerning our sacraments, which Christ himself instituted, baptism and the holy body and blood of Christ, namely, the text which Matthew 28, 19ff and Mark 16, 15f record at the close of their gospels when Christ said farewell to his disciples and sent them forth.

Large Catechism, p 732, 1: We have now finished the three chief parts of the common Christian doctrine. Besides these we have yet to speak of our two sacraments instituted by Christ, of which also every Christian ought to have at least an ordinary, brief instruction, because without them there can be no Christian; although, alas! Till now no instruction concerning them has been given.

Large Catechism, p 736, 18: Hence also it derives its essence as a sacrament, as St. Augustine also taught: *Accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*. That is, when the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament, that is, a holy and divine matter and sign.

2) They also allow a definition that omits one of the specific marks.

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 308, 4.11.12.16.17: Therefore *Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Absolution*, which is the Sacrament of Repentance, are truly sacraments. For these rites have God's command and the promise of grace, which is peculiar to the New Testament. For when we are baptized, when we eat the Lord's body, when we are absolved, our hearts must be firmly assured that God truly forgives us. . . . But if ordination is understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises. . . . If ordination is understood in this way, neither will we refuse to call the imposition of hands a sacrament. For the church has the command to appoint ministers, which should be most pleasing to us, because we know that God approves this ministry, and is present in the ministry, and God will preach and work through men and those who have been chosen by men. Lastly, if among the sacraments all things ought to be numbered which have God's command, and to which promises have been added, why do we not add prayer, which most truly can be called a sacrament? For it has both God's command and very many promises; and if placed among the sacraments, as though in a more eminent place, it would invite men to pray. Alms could also be reckoned here, and likewise afflictions, which are, even themselves signs, to which God has added promises. But let us omit these things. For no prudent man will strive greatly concerning the number or the term, if only those objects still be retained which have God's command and promises.

Apology, Art. XII (V), p 260, 41: And absolution, that blessed word of comfort, properly can be called a sacrament of repentance, as also the more learned scholastic theologians speak.

Large Catechism, p 750, 74-79: And here you see that baptism, both in its power and signification, comprehends also the third sacrament, which has been called repentance, as it is really nothing else than baptism. For what else is repentance but an earnest attack upon the old man that his lusts be restrained and entering upon a new life? Therefore, if you live in repentance, you walk in baptism, which not only signifies such a new life, but also produces, begins, and exercises it. For therein are given grace, the Spirit, and power to suppress the old man, so that the new man may come forth and become strong. Therefore our baptism remains forever; and even though some one should fall from it and sin, nevertheless we always have access to it, that we may again subdue the old man. But we need not again be sprinkled with water; for though we were put under the water a hundred times, it would nevertheless be only one baptism, although the operation and signification continue and remain. Repentance, therefore, is nothing else than a return and approach to baptism, that we repeat and practice what we began before, but abandoned.

Luther: Nevertheless, it has seemed proper to restrict the name of sacrament to those promises which have signs attached to them. The remainder, not being bound to signs, are bare promises. Hence there are, strictly speaking, but two sacraments in the church of God—baptism and the bread. For only in these two do we find both the divinely instituted sign and the promise of forgiveness of sins. The sacrament of penance, which I added to these two, lacks the divinely instituted visible sign, and is, as I have said, nothing but a way and a return to baptism (*LW 36, p 124*).

Chemnitz: Our theologians have often testified that they would not argue but gladly agree that absolution, because it applies the general promise to the individuals who use this service, could be counted among the sacraments. But nevertheless this is certain that absolution does not have, by divine institution, a certain external element, sign, or ritual, divinely commanded. And even if either the laying on of hands or some other external ritual is used, nevertheless it lacks a sure, specific, and express command of God. Nor is there a promise that God through any such external ritual wishes to be efficacious for the application of the promise of the gospel. We indeed have the promise that through the Word he wants to be efficacious in believers, but for something to be a sacrament, not only the naked promise in the Word is required, but it is required that it should by divine appointment or institution be clothed in some external sign or in a ritual divinely commanded. But the announcement or recitation of the promise of the gospel is not such a sign, for in this way the general preaching of the gospel would be a sacrament. . . . Absolution is therefore not really and properly a sacrament in the same way as baptism and the Lord's Supper; but if, when this explanation and difference is added, anyone wishes to call it a sacrament on account of the individual application of the promise, the Apology of the AC says that it does not want to argue about this (*Examination, II, p 14*).

b) On the best procedure for arriving at a correct definition of sacrament, we offer these words.

Chemnitz: We will not quarrel about the definitions of this or that man, either ancient or more modern, but we take the position which is beyond dispute and confessed by all. For according to the confession of all, Baptism and the Eucharist are truly and properly sacraments (*Examination, II, p 14*).

Baier: Thus, therefore, from the common concepts of those acts which are undoubtedly sacraments, in which these agree, it is recognized that those things that perhaps are called sacraments but do not have those common requisites, are not sacraments of the same kind or reality as those which are properly so called, but they are called sacraments in an equivocal way (*Compend., p 641*).

- c) **The Roman Catholic Church insists on seven sacraments.**
- 1) **They place human tradition on the same level with divine institution when they declare several of these rites sacred.**
 - 2) **Only by citing tradition rather than Scripture are they able to identify a special grace to be derived from each of their sacraments. As catalogued by Bonaventura (Franciscan, d. 1274) the grace received is negative. As classified by Thomas Aquinas (Dominican, d. 1274) the grace received is positive.**

<u>Sacrament</u>	<u>Bonaventura</u>	<u>Thomas</u>
Baptism	vs. original sin	regeneration.
Confirmation	vs. weakness	strengthening.
Eucharist	vs. willful sins	nourishment.
Penance	vs. mortal sins	spiritual healing.
Unction	vs. venial sins	spiritual and bodily healing.
Order	vs. ignorance	spiritual building of the church.
Matrimony	vs. lust	physical building of the church.

Schleiermacher (d. 1834): The poor laity have no sacrament against ignorance, and the poor priests have none against lust (cited in Hoenecke, IV, p 47).

- 3) **They demand recognition of their definitions and anathematize those who deny them.**
Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 1: If any one says that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ, our Lord, or, that they are more, or less, than seven, namely, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony; or even that any of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be anathema (damned).
- d) **The Eastern Orthodox Church also recognizes seven (or more) sacraments.**
Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware: We must realize, however, that the Orthodox never limited the Sacraments to seven. The number seven is rather symbolic and is used to indicate the perfection of grace. . . To place a limitation on the number of sacraments is to view them from a very narrow perspective. If a sacrament happens whenever God's grace is mediated to man through matter, then there is no limit to the number of Sacraments. Indeed the whole creation becomes a sacrament. Fr. Thomas Hopko states: "Traditionally the Orthodox understand everything in the church to be sacramental. All of life becomes a sacrament in Christ who fills life itself with the Spirit of God" (*The Orthodox Way*, p 124).

D2 D, II. The sacraments are powerful means of grace.

D2 D, II, 1. The sacraments convey divine grace with its saving power to regenerate and renew sinners.

- a) **They offer, give, and certify the forgiveness of sins.**
 - 1) **Holy Baptism has clear promises attached to it:**
Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 22:16 What are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.
 - 2) **The Lord's Supper has clear gospel attached it:**
Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Mark 14:24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

Luke 22:19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Romans 11:27 This is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.
- b) **The sacraments create and strengthen saving faith.**
John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Romans 6:3,4 Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Luke 22:19 He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11:24,25,26 When he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XIII, 1.2, p 48: Of the use of the sacraments they teach that the sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the sacraments.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XXIV, 30, p 66: But Christ commands us, Luke 22, 19: This do in remembrance of me; therefore the mass was instituted that the faith of those who use the Sacrament should remember what benefits it receives through Christ, and cheer and comfort the anxious conscience. For to remember Christ is to remember his benefits.

Apology, Art. XII (V), p 260, 42: Meanwhile this faith is nourished in a manifold way in temptations, through the declarations of the gospel the hearing of sermons, reading and the use of the Sacraments. For these are seals and signs of the covenant and grace in the New Testament, i.e., signs of propitiation and the remission of sins. They offer, therefore, the remission of sins, as the words of the Lord's Supper clearly testify.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 400, 49: But if the use of the sacrament would be the daily sacrifice, nevertheless we would retain it rather than the adversaries, because with them priests hired for pay use the sacrament. With us there is a more frequent and more conscientious use. For the people use it, but after having first been instructed and examined. For men are taught concerning the true use of the sacrament that it was instituted for the purpose of being a seal and testimony of the free remission of sins, and that, accordingly, it ought to admonish alarmed consciences to be truly confident and believe that their sins are freely remitted. Since, therefore, we retain both the preaching of the gospel and the lawful use of the sacrament, the daily sacrifice remains with us.

D2 D, II, 2. The sacraments have this power by virtue of their divine institution.

a) This power they have in common with the Word.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

1 Corinthians 1:21 Since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

b) The sacraments differ from the Word only in form.

1) The Word conveys grace through hearing; the sacraments through the divinely instituted rite that appeals to other senses as well as the ear.

2) The sacraments are thus also called "visible Word" (Augustine).

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 308, 5: And God, at the same time, by the Word and by the rite, moves hearts to believe and conceive faith, just as Paul says, Rom. 10:17: "Faith cometh by hearing." But just as the Word enters the ear in order to strike our heart, so the rite itself strikes the eye, in order to move the heart. The effect of the Word and of the rite is the same, as it has been well said by Augustine that a sacrament is a visible word, because the rite is received by the eyes, and is, as it were, a picture of the Word, signifying the same thing as the Word. Therefore the effect of both is the same.

Quenstedt: To the word of the gospel God added, as another means bestowing salvation, the sacraments, which are the visible Word (IV, 73).

Chemnitz: Because in those things which pertain to our salvation, God wants to deal with us through certain means, therefore he himself appointed and instituted for this purpose the Word of the gospel promise, which sometimes is set before us just by itself or naked, but at other times clothed or made visible in certain rites or sacraments instituted by God (*Exam.*, II, 35).

D2 D, II, 3. Sacraments are not empty signs or mere symbols of an immediate grace.

a) The Zwinglian, Arminian, and Calvinist errors empty the means of grace, particularly the sacraments, of their God-given virtue.

Zwingli: I believe, yes, I know that the sacraments are so far from conferring grace that they do not even bring or dispense it (*Fidei Ratio* to Emperor Charles V, 1530).

Wayne Grudem: Since water baptism is an outward symbol of inward spiritual baptism by the Holy Spirit, we may expect that the Holy Spirit will ordinarily work alongside the baptism, giving to believers an

increasing realization of the benefits of the spiritual baptism to which it points. . . . As with baptism, therefore, we should expect that the Lord would give spiritual blessing as we participate in the Lord's Supper in faith and in obedience to the direction laid down in Scripture, and in this way it is a "means of grace" which the Holy Spirit uses to convey blessing to us (ST, p 953, 954).

J. Rodman Williams: It is significant to observe, however, that in relation to regeneration, water and the Spirit are not of equal importance...Both regeneration and renewal are *by* the Holy Spirit. Baptism in all of these cases points symbolically to the inward cleansing and renewal of the Holy Spirit (*Renewal Theology*, II, p 38).

b) If sacraments are mere signs, any efficacy or validity of the sacraments would ultimately depend on the faith of the recipient. This is the Evangelical conception of the sacraments.

Consensus Tigurinus (1549) The signs are administered to the reprobate just as they are to the elect; however, the truth of the signs comes only to the latter (Pt 17).

Westminster Larger Catechism (defining a sacrament): an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his church, to signify, seal, and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace, the benefits of his mediation . . . and to distinguish them from those that are without (Question 162; cited in Reymond, *NST*, p 919).

Heinrich Heppé (d. 1879): The efficacy of the sacrament does not depend on the power of the sign (in which no specific power of grace inheres), but only on the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, who is active in the outward sacramental action in such a way that a distinction must be made between it and the invisible action of the Holy Spirit. The eyes of faith must therefore not be fixed on the outward side of the sacrament; but rather the sacrament, which as a sign and witness does not testify about itself but about the crucified and risen Christ, wants to direct our faith to the death and merit of Christ and to the gifts of grace mediated by the Holy Spirit. The sacrament also does not want to be a cause of justification, but only sure sign of the righteousness which is granted to faith. Therefore the sacraments are also intended only for a believer as one who has a share in the covenant of grace. For unbelievers they are totally meaningless, because the unbeliever has no connection whatever with the covenant of grace. God, of course, offers also to unbelievers the grace which is promised in the sacrament, but these close their hearts against it and reject it (*Dogmatik der evang. - ref. Kirche*, p 428f).

Contrast the Large Catechism, p 756, 15-19: Hence it is easy to reply to all manner of questions about which men are troubled at the present time, such as this one: Whether even a wicked priest can minister at and dispense the sacrament , and whatever other questions like this there may be. For here we conclude and say: Even though a knave takes or distributes the sacrament, he receives the true sacrament , that is, the true body and blood of Christ, just as truly as he who receives or administers it in the most worthy manner. For it is not founded upon the holiness of men, but upon the Word of God. And as no saint upon earth, yes, no angel in heaven, can make bread and wine to be the body and blood of Christ, so also can no one change or alter it, even though it is misused. For the Word by which it became a sacrament and was instituted does not become false because of the person or his unbelief. For he does not say: If you believe or are worthy, you receive my body and blood, but: Take, eat and drink; this is my body and blood. Likewise: Do this (namely, what I now do, institute, give, and bid you take). That is as much as to say, No matter whether you are worthy or unworthy, you have here his body and blood by virtue of these words which are added to the bread and wine. Only note and remember this well; for upon these words rest all our foundation, protection, and defense against all errors and deception that have ever come or may yet come.

Large Catechism, p 744, 52-53: Further, we say that we are not so much concerned to know whether the person baptized believes or not; for on that account baptism does not become invalid; but everything depends upon the word and command of God. This now is perhaps somewhat acute, but it rests entirely upon what I have said, that baptism is nothing else than water and the word of God in and with each other, that is, when the word is added to the water, baptism is valid, even though faith be wanting. For my faith does not make baptism, but receives it. Now, baptism does not become invalid even though it be wrongly received or employed; since it is not bound, as stated, to our faith, but to the word.

D2 D, II, 4. The sacraments do not receive their efficacy from the intention of the person administering them.

a) This is the Roman Catholic error.

Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 10,11: If anyone says that all Christians have the power to administer the Word and all the sacraments, let him be damned. If anyone says that when ministers celebrate and give the sacraments they do not need to have at least the intention of doing what the church does, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Celebrated worthily in faith, the sacraments confer the grace that they signify. They are efficacious because in them Christ himself is at work; it is he who baptizes, he who acts in his sacraments in order to communicate the grace that each sacrament signifies. The Father always hears the prayer of his Son's Church which, in the epiclesis of each sacrament, expresses her faith in the power of the Spirit. As fire transforms into itself everything it touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms into the divine life whatever is subjected to his power (Par. 1127).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: This is the meaning of the Church's affirmation that the sacraments act *ex opere operato* [literally: "by the very fact of the action's being performed"], i.e., by virtue of the saving work of Christ, accomplished once for all. It follows that "the sacrament is not wrought by the righteousness of either the celebrant or the recipient, but by the power of God." From the moment that a sacrament is celebrated in accordance with the intention of the Church, the power of Christ and his Spirit acts in and through it, independently of the personal holiness of the minister (Para. 1128, quoting Thomas Aquinas, *STh*, III, 68, 8).

Contrast Augsburg Confession. VIII, p 46: Although the Church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless, since in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful (*licet*) to use sacraments administered by evil men, according to the saying of Christ: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat," etc. Matt. 23, 2. Both the sacraments and word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men. They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable and of none effect.

Apology, Art. VII & VIII (IV), p 226, 3: For this reason we have added the Eighth Article, lest any one might think that we separate the wicked and hypocrites from the outward fellowship of the church, or that we deny efficacy to sacraments administered by hypocrites or wicked men. Therefore there is no need here of a long defense against this slander. The Eighth Article is sufficient to exculpate us. For we grant that in this life hypocrites and wicked men have been mingled with the church, and that they are members of the church according to the outward fellowship of the signs of the church, i.e., of Word, profession, and sacraments, especially if they have not been excommunicated.

b) Officiating ministers are merely "stewards" or executors of the sacraments.

1 Corinthians 4:1 Men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with (οἰκονόμοι) the secret things of God.

1 Corinthians 3:5,7 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

Philippians 1:15-18 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶ The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. ¹⁸ But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice.

Quenstedt: The sacraments do not belong to the man who dispenses them but to God in whose name they are dispensed, and therefore the gracious power and working of the sacrament comes from and depends on God alone (1 Cor 3:5), and not from the character of the minister. The question about the intention of the minister is more involved. It is seemly that he who brings the sacrament to the altar should offer the good intention of doing what God instituted and that the mind should not be wandering but alert. It is necessary to carry out the intention of Christ in the outward act. I say, in the outward act, for the intention of the minister to do what the church does is never necessary (IV, 74).

Quenstedt: The worthiness or unworthiness of the minister adds nothing to and takes nothing away from the sacraments, nor is his intention required for the integrity of the sacraments nor does he do anything to make them efficacious (*TDP*, part IV, sect. II, qu. I, thesis, p 78).

c) When a person or group retains the outward form of the words of institution but at the same time empties the words of their real meaning, only the outward form of the sacraments remains. The necessary word of God is not mere sounds and syllables, but the divine truth conveyed to us in the form of human speech (See above, pp. 66ff.).

Luther: The enthusiasts make mere bread and wine of the sacrament, peel out the kernel and give them the husks (*LW* 38, p 110).

Luther: Sooner than have mere wine with the fanatics, I would agree with the pope that there is only blood (*LW* 37, p 317).

Formula of Concord, *TD*, Art. VII, p 982, 32: After this protestation, Doctor Luther, of blessed memory, presents, among other articles, this also: In the same manner I also speak and confess (he says) concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, that there the body and blood of Christ are in truth orally eaten and drunk in the bread and wine, even though the priests who administer the Lord's Supper or those who receive it should not believe or otherwise misuse it. For it does not depend upon the faith or unbelief of men, but upon God's Word and ordinance, unless they first change God's Word and ordinance and interpret it otherwise, as the enemies of the Sacrament do at the present day, who, of course, have nothing but bread and wine; for they also do not have the words and appointed ordinance of God, but have perverted and changed them according to their own false notion.

D2 D, III. For spiritual blessings and a profitable use of the sacraments faith is required on the part of the recipient.

D2 D, III, 1. The reality of the sacrament does not depend on the faith of the recipient.

- a) **The Savior's word of institution guarantees the capacity to produce God's desired result.**
Romans 3:3,4 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? ⁴ Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."

Matthaeus Hafenreffer (d.1619): One must carefully distinguish between the essence of baptism and its benefits. For a hypocritical man, if he is baptized, receives indeed a true baptism, so far as its essence is concerned. This essence consists in the legitimate administration of the sacrament according to the words of institution and in the divine promise of grace. But as long as he remains in his hypocrisy and unbelief he lacks its saving benefit and effect, which comes only to those who believe. God therefore seriously offers his grace and the forgiveness of sins to the man who is baptized. On his part he wants to keep that covenant firm and unbroken perpetually and without any change in such a way that in the covenant the promised grace is never unavailable to him who has been baptized, and just as soon as a man again comes to repentance, he can enjoy it; but as long as he remains a hypocrite and impenitent, he does not possess it. (*Loci*, 499)

Large Catechism, p 744, 52: Further, we say that we are not so much concerned to know whether the person baptized believes or not; for on that account baptism does not become invalid; but everything depends upon the Word and command of God.

- b) **Sacraments have an impact also on unbelievers or on those who may participate in an unworthy manner.**

1 Corinthians 11:29 Anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. ¹⁵ For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

D2 D, III, 2. Faith is the organ for receiving the blessing of the sacraments.

- a) **Faith is required for a beneficial reception of the sacraments.**

- 1) **This truth is consistently mentioned in connection with the sacraments.**

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

1 Corinthians 11:24-26 When he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

- 2) **Justification, offered in the sacraments, is appropriated by faith.**

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 1:17 In the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 4:3 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Romans 10:10 It is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

- 3) **Sacraments, as seals or certifications of a promise, require faith as the proper response.**

Romans 4:16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

Galatians 3:22 The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

4) **Our Lutheran confessions and church fathers repeatedly make this point about faith.**

Augsburg Confession, Art. XIII, p 48, 1-2: Of the use of the sacraments they teach that the sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the sacraments.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XXIV, p 66, 28.29.3: Scripture also teaches that we are justified before God through faith in Christ, when we believe that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. Now if the mass takes away the sins of the living and the dead by the outward act justification comes of the work of masses, and not of faith, which Scripture does not allow. Therefore the mass is to be used to this end, that there the Sacrament may be administered to them that have need of consolation; as Ambrose says: Because I always sin, I am always bound to take the medicine. Therefore this sacrament requires faith, and is used in vain without faith.

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 312, 19.20: And yet this impious and pernicious opinion is taught with great authority throughout the entire realm of the Pope. Paul contradicts this and denies, Rom. 4:9, that Abraham was justified by circumcision, but asserts that circumcision was a sign presented for exercising faith. Thus we teach that in the use of the sacraments *faith* ought to be added, which should believe these promises and receive the promised things, there offered in the sacrament. And the reason is plain and thoroughly grounded. This is a certain and true use of the Holy Sacrament, on which Christian hearts and consciences may risk to rely. The promise is useless unless it is received by faith. But the sacraments are the signs and seals of the promises. Therefore, in the use of the sacraments faith ought to be added, so that, if anyone uses the Lord's Supper, he should use it thus.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 408, 70-71: The word offers the remission of sins. And a ceremony is, as it were, a picture or seal, as Paul, Rom. 4: 11, calls it, of the word, making known the promise. Therefore, just as the promise is useless unless it is received by faith, so a ceremony is useless unless such faith is added as is truly confident that the remission of sins is here offered. And this faith encourages contrite minds. And just as the word has been given in order to excite this faith, so the sacrament has been instituted in order that the outward appearance meeting the eyes might move the heart to believe and strengthen faith. For through these, namely, through word and sacrament, the Holy Spirit works. And such use of the sacrament, in which faith quickens terrified hearts, is a service of the New Testament, because the New Testament requires spiritual dispositions, mortification and quickening. For according to the New Testament the highest service of God is rendered inwardly in the heart. And for this use Christ instituted it, since he commanded them thus to do in remembrance of Him.

Luther: When have you ever heard from us that we eat Christ's Supper, or teach that it should be eaten, in such a way that there is only an outward, physical eating of the body of Christ? Have we not taught in many books that in the Supper two things are to be kept in mind? One, which is the supreme and most necessary point, consisting of the words, "Take, eat, this is my body," etc.; the other is the sacrament or physical eating of the body of Christ. Now, of course no one can drive these words through the throat into the stomach, but he must take them to heart through the ears. But what does he take to heart through these words? Nothing else than what they say, viz., "the body which was given for us," which is the spiritual eating. We have said, further, that if anyone physically eats the sacrament without these words or without this spiritual eating, it is not only of no avail to him, but even harmful, as Paul says (1 Cor 11:27), "Whoever eats the bread in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body of the Lord" (LW 37, p 86).

Gerhard: Meanwhile, nevertheless, we add that a salutary use of the sacraments on our part requires faith or a believing heart, which is the receiving instrument by which the grace offered in the sacraments is to be made our own and accepted. From this arises the axiom: The sacraments do not profit those who use them without faith (*Locī*, vol. VIII, loc. XIX de sacramentis, para. LXXVIII, p 287).

- b) **It is important that we understand that this faith which receives the blessings of the sacraments (1) is not merely a general belief in God and his providence; (2) nor merely a belief in the real presence in the sacrament (as the Roman Catholic Church has taught); but (3) is trust in the justification offered through the sacrament. This faith that receives sacramental blessings is saving faith.**

Small Catechism, Baptism, p 550, 9-10 How can water do such great things? Answer. It is not the water indeed that does them, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water and no baptism. But with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter three: By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.

Small Catechism, Sacrament of the Altar, p 556, 7-8 How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things? Answer. It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, that does them, but the words which stand here, namely: Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins. These words are, beside the bodily eating and drinking, the chief thing in the sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

D2 D, III, 3. For spiritual blessings and a profitable use of the sacraments for the recipients, correct protocol or administration is not sufficient.

a) God always looks at and judges the heart of a person in addition to his outward conduct.

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Romans 2:28-29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹ No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

2 Timothy 3:5 [Godless people in these last days will be] having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

b) To be satisfied with external correctness would lead to the Roman error of *opus operatum*, a kind of formalism or ritualism.

1) The Roman Catholic Church offers statements supporting this view.

Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 6: If anyone says that the sacraments of the new law [the New Testament] do not contain the grace which they signify, or that they do not give this grace to those who do not place a hindrance in the way, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Celebrated worthily in faith, the sacraments confer the grace that they signify. They are efficacious because in them Christ himself is at work: it is he who baptizes, he who acts in his sacraments in order to communicate the grace that each sacrament signifies. The Father always hears the prayer of his Son's Church which, in the epiclesis of each sacrament, expresses her faith in the power of the Spirit. As fire transforms into itself everything it touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms into the divine life whatever is subjected to his power (Par. 1127; the paragraph cross references the "Council of Trent (1547): DS 1605; DS 1606").

2) Scripture vigorously opposes empty formalism.

Jeremiah 7:1-8 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²"Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there proclaim this message: 'Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. ³This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in deceptive words and say, "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!" ⁵If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, ⁶ if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, ⁷ then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your forefathers for ever and ever. ⁸ But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless."

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Apology, Art. III, p 176, 86: The people in the Law [the Israelites] imitated sacrifices with the opinion that by means of these works they would appease God, so to say, *ex opere operato*. We see here how earnestly the prophets rebuke the people: Ps. 50:8: I will not reprove you for your sacrifices, and Jer. 7:22: I spoke not unto your fathers concerning burnt offerings. Such passages condemn not works, which God certainly had commanded as outward exercises in this government, but they condemn the godless opinion according to which they thought that by these works they appeased the wrath of God.

Apology, Art. XIII (VII), p 312, 18: It is still more needful to understand how the sacraments are to be used. Here we condemn the whole crowd of scholastic doctors, who teach that the sacraments confer grace *ex opere operato*, without a good disposition on the part of the one using them, provided he does not place a hindrance in the way.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 386, 11.12: For in our Confession we have shown that we hold that the Lord's Supper does not confer grace *ex opere operato*, and that, when applied on behalf of others, alive or dead, it does not merit for them *ex opere operato* the remission of sins, of guilt or of punishment. And of this position a clear and firm proof exists in that it is impossible to obtain the remission of our sins on account of our own work *ex opere operato* even when there is not a good thought in the heart, but the terrors of sin and death must be overcome by faith when we comfort our hearts with the knowledge of Christ, and believe that for Christ's sake we are forgiven, and that the

merits and righteousness of Christ are granted us, Rom. 5¹: "Being justified by faith, we have peace." These things are so sure and so firm that they can stand against all the gates of hell.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 392, 27: In short, the worship of the New Testament is spiritual, i.e., it is the righteousness of faith in the heart and the fruits of faith. It accordingly abolishes the Levitical services.

Chemnitz: The sacraments are certainly not to be made equal to the Holy Spirit so that they are believed to confer grace in an equal and exactly the same way as the Holy Spirit himself. But should on that account then nothing be ascribed to the sacraments? Certainly that which the statements of Scripture attribute to the sacraments has a little earlier been pointed out in the very words of Scripture. But we must with care and concern be on our guard when we dispute about the power and efficacy of the sacraments lest we take away from God the things which properly belong to the grace of the Father, the working of the Spirit, and the merit of the Son of God and transfer them to the sacraments. For this would be the crime of idolatry.... So also power or efficacy are ascribed to the sacraments not because saving grace is to be sought in the sacraments apart from or beside the merit of Christ, the mercy of the Father, the working of the Holy Spirit. But the sacraments are instrumental causes in such a way that through these means or instruments the Father wants to show forth, give, and bestow his grace, the Son wants to communicate his merit to the believers, and the Holy Spirit wants to exercise His power for salvation to every one who believes.... And in the use of the sacraments faith does not seek or look for any essential power or efficacy which inheres in the external elements themselves, but it seeks, lays hold of, and accepts the grace of the Father, the merit of the Son, and the working of the Spirit in the promise which is attached to the sacrament (*Examen*, Part II, topic I, sect. V, de efficacia et usu sacramentorum, para. 7,8, p 19).

Chemnitz: In this doctrine the instrumental cause is a double one: one is, as it were, the hand of God, by which he, through word and sacraments, in the word offers, sets forth, applies, and seals to believers the benefits of redemption. The second is, as it were, our hand, because by faith, of course, we seek, lay hold of, and accept those things which God offers and sets before us through the word and the sacraments. For the efficacy of the sacraments is never of such a kind, as if God through them infuses and impresses grace and salvation also on unbelievers or those who do not accept them by faith (*Examen*, II, 36).

3) In this connection we note the Roman Catholic distinction between the operation of the Old Testament and the New Testament sacraments.

Gabriel Biel (d. 1495): But the Old Testament sacraments are said to confer grace *ex opere operante* in proportion to merit, namely, that the sacrament, when it has been set forth publicly, does not suffice to confer grace, but in addition to it a good attitude or interior devotion is required in the recipient. Grace is conferred in exact proportion to the recipient's intention as by condign or congruous merit. There is no greater reward on account of the use of the sacrament. A New Testament sacrament is said to confer grace *ex opere operato* in such a way that by the very fact that this work, namely, the sacrament, is set forth, grace is conferred on those who use the sacrament, unless an obstacle of mortal sin hinders it. Thus a good attitude on the part of the recipient is not required in addition to the setting forth of the sign, publicly set forth (*Sententiae*, bk. IV, dist. I, qu. III).

Mensinger: Because the saints in the Old Testament by faith received grace in their use of the sacraments, therefore the sacraments of the New Testament must have greater efficacy, so that they may confer grace *ex opere operato*, even if the active work of the recipient, that is, faith or interior devotion is not present (quoted by Chemnitz, *Examination* II, p 84).

Albert the Great (d. 1280): An *opus operans* (a working work) is a work produced by virtue; an *opus operatum* (a work performed) is the perfection of the outward work without interior activity (i.e., faith) (cited by Chemnitz, *ibid.*).

Bellarmino (commenting on Augustine's definition of a sacrament as a *signum rei sacrae*): It should be noted, however, that this definition can be understood in three ways. First, that the word "sign" may be understood to denote a sign consisting in an action; the "sacred thing" may be understood to denote justifying grace. In this sense the definition properly fits only the sacraments of the new law. It fits the Old Testament sacraments, however, only relatively and by way of analogy, namely, because they were signs dealing with ceremonial cleanness, which only typifies justifying grace (is only a type of justifying grace) as the image of a man is called a man. . . . There is one question therefore about the Old Testament sacraments, with the exception of circumcision, namely whether they justified at least *ex opere operantis*. There are, however, two opinions about this. The first is that of the Master [Peter Lombard] in 4, *Dist. I*, who denies this; for he says that those sacraments did not justify, even if they were received with faith and love, because they were given to be burdens, not to justify. The second opinion is the common one of the theologians, that all those sacraments justified *ex opere operantis*, that is, because of the faith and devotion of the recipient; and this opinion is the truest one. For the statement of the apostle in Romans 2:13, "the doers of the law shall be justified," is generally true. Although this justification is not properly sacramental justification, nevertheless it is the justification which all good works done in love have in common. It is not indeed first, but second,

justification. ... Circumcision is not properly a Mosaic sacrament but a matter of natural law (he refers to Jn 7:22) (*Disputationes*, book I, chap. XII, 14, p 17, and op. cit., chap. XIII, 4, p 85).

Contrast Gerhard: That there is some agreement between the sacraments of both testaments no one has easily denied, since they not only agree 1) in name: both are called "sacraments" but also 2) in their broad classification: both are "sacred acts," 3) in the principal efficient cause: both are instituted by God, 4) in the same kind of final cause, i.e. purpose, namely the offer, application, and seal of grace' 5) in the same kind of matter and essence: a visible element used in a prescribed way, that is, insofar as every sacrament properly so-called is a sacred and solemn act, divinely instituted, which deals with a definite object fixed by a special word of institution and promise, 6) in use, for faith is required for both to be salutary (*Loci, vol. IX, loc. XX, de circumcissione et agno paschali*, para. I, p 1).

4) Calvinists deny the efficacy of the Old Testament sacraments just as they do those of the New Testament.

Calvin: The old sacraments had the same goal in view at which our sacraments now aim, namely, that they might direct us to Christ ... or rather that they might represent him as images (*Institutes*, Bk. IV, chap. XIV, par. 20-23).

D2 D, IV. The sacraments are not absolutely necessary for the spiritual life of a Christian.

D2 D, IV, 1. They are, indeed, not superfluous. They have been established and provided by God for our spiritual well-being. In speaking of their necessity, we observe the following truths.

a) God could have provided adequate substitutes or alternate instruments for our use. He also could have chosen to work without sacraments, immediately.

Matthew 3:9 Do not think you can say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

b) But in his wisdom God saw fit to institute these sacraments. Therefore, willful neglect of them will rob a person of assurances for his faith that God has provided.

1 Corinthians 1:21 Since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

Luke 7:29,30 All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.

c) Nevertheless, the necessity of the sacraments is not absolute. We remain aware that the Word also produces and strengthens the same faith. And we know that children, among others, are without the Sacrament of the Altar. Further, we recall that the Old Testament fathers lived in faith without the New Testament sacraments. We therefore conclude that the necessity of the sacraments is not absolute.

Mark 10:13-16 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Consider Hebrews 11:1-40 By faith many Old Testament saints lived without the New Testament sacraments.

D2 D, IV, 2. Errors concerning the necessity of the sacraments include the following:

a) Calvinists, naturally, admit only a certain kind of necessity.

1) They will speak of a necessity on account of human weakness. They also speak of using the sacraments as matters of duty and obedience, ordinances that we are to perform.

Gallic Confession (1559): We believe that the sacraments have been joined to the Word for the sake of greater certainty, undoubtedly as signs and tokens of the grace of God, by which our weak and imperfect faith is helped (Pt 34).

Calvin: What is a sacrament? ...It is an external symbol by which we, on our part, give testimony of our piety toward the Lord, both before him and the angels as well as among our fellowmen (*Institutes*, Bk. IV, chap.14).

Note: It would be destroying the character of the sacraments as means of grace if anyone performs them with the idea of thereby doing God service.

2) But they will not refer to the sacraments as being necessary as means of grace, as instruments that really convey and give faith and the forgiveness of sins.

Leonhard Riissen (d. 1700): Sacraments are necessary, but not as means (with the necessity of means). For although they are means of salvation instituted by God, they are not on that account

necessary as means without which salvation could not be obtained. They are therefore necessary by the necessity of a precept from a command of God (*Turretini compendium theologiae auctum*, XVII, 10).

Heppe: Whoever therefore is so strong in faith that he can be sure that he is in the state of grace without using the sacraments can do without the sacrament (*Dogmatik der evang.-ref. Kirche*, p 442).
Note: This is the “*contemptus religionis*” of which Augustine speaks below!

b) Roman Catholics wrongly claim an absolute necessity for the sacraments.

1) For statements to this effect consider the following.

Council of Trent, Session VII, Can. IV: If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Testament are not necessary for salvation but superfluous, and that men obtain justifying grace from God by faith alone without the sacraments or without the desire for them, even if not all of them are necessary for each individual, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, Session VII, Canon IV: The Council wishes to teach that for it justification the sacraments are necessarily required, so that, if a man has faith, no matter how great it may be, nevertheless this faith will not justify him unless a sacrament also is present, either in reality or in desire, yes, indeed, the sacrament is more necessary than faith.

2) In response, Lutherans offer these statements.

Quenstedt: Adjuncts of the sacraments are 1) not only the necessity of command but also the necessity of external means; they are necessary not only because God has commanded them but also because they are needed as the external means through which God gives us his grace; nevertheless this necessity is not absolute but conditional; 2) the necessity of circumstance. These circumstances vary according to the difference in the sacraments (*TDP*, part IV, chap. III, sect. I, thesis XVII, p 77).

Gerhard: For we deny that baptism is unconditionally and absolutely necessary for salvation, namely, in a case of necessity in which the performance of the sacrament is omitted not because of contempt of religion but because it is impossible to perform it, as Augustine says in “Against the Donatists,” Book IV, chapter 22: “For not the lack of the sacrament but contempt for it damns,” as Bernhard teaches in “Epistle LXXVII”. We therefore distinguish between those things which are unconditionally and absolutely necessary for justification and salvation, and those which ordinarily and conditionally are necessary. The former, we say, are the grace of God, the merit of Christ, and faith. We say that without these no one in his natural fallen state is ever justified and saved. The latter, we say, are the Word and the sacraments (*Locj*, vol. VIII, loc. XIX de sacramentis, para. LIII, p 242).

D2 D, V. The administration of the sacraments is ordinarily entrusted to persons who have been appointed (called) to do this on behalf of other believers.

D2 D, V, 1. The authority to administer the sacraments is vested in the church, i.e., in the individual Christians.

Matthew 18:15-18 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that “every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

1 Corinthians 11:20-22, 33-34 When you come together, it is not the Lord’s Supper you eat, ²¹ for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. ²² Don’t you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! ³³ So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. ³⁴ If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions.

1 Peter 2:9 You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Hollaz: God has entrusted the right to dispense the sacraments to the church. For the sake of order and decency, the church in turn grants the administration and the exercise of this right to the called and ordained ministers of the divine Word. However, in cases of extreme necessity, in which the sacrament is necessary and can not be omitted without endangering someone’s salvation, any Christian human being can validly perform the sacrament of initiation (i.e., baptism) (*Examen*, part III, sect. II, chap. III, qu. VI, p 522).

Luther: The third function is to consecrate or to administer the sacred bread and wine, Here those in the order of the shorn vaunt themselves and set themselves up as rulers of a power given neither to angels nor the virgin mother. Unmoved by their senselessness we hold that this function, too, like the priesthood, belongs to all, and this we assert, not on our own authority, but that of Christ who at the Last Supper said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24). This is the word by means of which the shorn papists claim they can make priests and give them the authority to consecrate. But Christ spoke this word to all those then present and to those who in the future would be at the table, to eat this bread and drink this cup. So it follows that what is given here is given to all. Those who oppose this have no foundation on which to stand, except the fathers, the councils, tradition, and that strongest article of their faith, namely, "We are many and thus we hold: therefore it is true." A further witness is the word of Paul in I Cor. 11 :23, "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you," etc. Here Paul addresses all the Corinthians, making each of them, as he himself was, consecrators (LW 40, p 24).

D2 D, V, 2. In accordance with God's will and for the sake of order, the church administers the sacraments through specially appointed (called) persons.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

1 Corinthians 14:40 But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

D2 D, V, 3. This public (representative) ministry, carried out on behalf of the church, does not replace or set aside the original ownership of the sacraments as held by the church. Rather, it serves to emphasize it.

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

1 Peter 5:3 [Be shepherds of God's flock] not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

2 Corinthians 4:5 We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

D2 D, V, 4. When there is a case of urgency, therefore, and no question of order is involved, a Christian may and will administer the sacrament of baptism. In doing this he is exercising his original stewardship and must not be considered as a temporary substitute for the regular public minister.

Hollaz: Ordinarily, the ministers of the church, who have been legitimately called and ordained, who are orthodox and blameless in their lives, administer baptism. But extraordinarily in cases of necessity any pious Christian, familiar with the sacred rites, whether male or female, can perform a baptism (*Examen*, 1081).

Gerhard: Here, again, are apparent points of contention: Some claim that the administration of baptism properly belongs to the office of preaching; and because the proclamation of the divine Word is to be done in the common assembly, therefore Holy Baptism also should not be performed anywhere else. Response: 1) Obviously preaching and baptism are to be thus regarded according to the general ordinances. 2) However, in case of an emergency one may indeed deviate from this ordinance, since thereby nothing is done in opposition to any express command of God. 3) Accordingly, just as one speaks comfort from God's Word to the ill also in a home and imparts to them absolution and the Holy Supper, so also one may and should, in case of any emergency, administer Holy Baptism in a private home, so that – inasmuch as it depends on us – the little children do not lose out on the ordained means for rebirth (*A Comprehensive Explanation of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, I, p 223).

D2 D, V, 5. Concerning the administration of the Lord's Supper, we also maintain that when the necessary conditions of good order (1 Co 14:40) and brotherly love (1 Co 16:14) have been observed, a non-ordained Christian layman (e.g., an elder, vicar, student of theology, male teacher or staff minister) who has been properly designated and trained to perform this function may serve.

Augsburg Confession, Art. XIV, p 48: Of Ecclesiastical Order, they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the sacraments unless he be regularly called.

Consider Irwin Habeck, "Who May Officiate at the Lord's Supper," WLQ, July, 1968.

D2. The Means of Grace

D2 E. Baptism

D2 E, I. Baptism is a ceremonial and sacramental washing with water.

D2 E, I, 1. A brief word study will remind us that the Bible uses the term baptism with more than one meaning.

a) The word baptism is used in Scripture for various ceremonial washings (βαπτίζω, βαπτισμός).

Mark 7:4 When [the Pharisees and all the Jews] come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.

Luke 11:38 The Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised.

Hebrews 9:10,13 [Various Old Testament stipulations] are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled (ἀντιζουσα) on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. [See Nu 19 regarding the ashes of a red heifer and the “water of cleansing,” [חַטָּאתִי].]

b) The word baptism is also used metaphorically in Scripture for persecutions and martyrdom (βαπτίζω, βάπτισμα).

Mark 10:38,39 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” ³⁹“We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.”

Luke 12:50 I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed!

c) The word baptism is also used for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (βαπτίζω).

Matthew 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Acts 1:5 John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 11:15,16 As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I remembered what the Lord had said: “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

d) The word baptism is also used in synecdoche for the ministry of John the Baptist (βάπτισμα).

Matthew 21:25 “John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?” They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’”

Acts 10:37 You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached.

Compare with the question put to John in John 1:25, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

e) The word baptism is also used for the sacrament of baptism (βαπτίζω, βάπτισμα – βαπτισμός).

Matthew 3:6 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

Romans 6:4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Hebrews 6:2 [Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ:] instruction about baptisms (βαπτισμῶν, plural—Christ’s and John’s? Jewish ceremonial washings?), the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

D2 E, I, 2. Scripture uses other words to designate the sacrament of baptism. “Water” and “washing” are terms used to denote or allude to baptism.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.”

1 John 5:6,8 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁸ the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Ephesians 5:26 [Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her] to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word (τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι)

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing (διὰ λουτροῦ) of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

D2 E, I, 3. Baptism was prefigured in the Old Testament by a number of rituals and events.

a) Baptism was anticipated by circumcision.

Colossians 2:11,12 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Genesis 17:14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.

Compare Exodus 19:5,6 "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

Romans 3:1,2 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? ² Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.

Deuteronomy 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, circumcise your hearts, you men of Judah and people of Jerusalem, or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done— burn with no one to quench it.

Romans 2:29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

b) Various ceremonial purifications also prefigured baptism: washings dealing with skin diseases, mildew, and body discharges.

Leviticus 13:6,34,54,55 On the seventh day the priest is to examine him again, and if the sore has faded and has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is only a rash. The man must wash his clothes, and he will be clean. ³⁴ On the seventh day the priest is to examine the itch, and if it has not spread in the skin and appears to be no more than skin deep, the priest shall pronounce him clean. He must wash his clothes, and he will be clean. ⁵⁴ He shall order that the contaminated article be washed. Then he is to isolate it for another seven days. ⁵⁵ After the affected article has been washed, the priest is to examine it, and if the mildew has not changed its appearance, even though it has not spread, it is unclean.

Leviticus 14:8,47 The person to be cleansed must wash his clothes, shave off all his hair and bathe with water; then he will be ceremonially clean. After this he may come into the camp, but he must stay outside his tent for seven days. ⁴⁷ Anyone who sleeps or eats in the house must wash his clothes.

Leviticus 15:5-13 Anyone who touches his bed must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. ⁶ Whoever sits on anything that the man with a discharge sat on must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. ⁷ Whoever touches the man who has a discharge must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. ⁸ If the man with the discharge spits on someone who is clean, that person must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. ⁹ Everything the man sits on when riding will be unclean, ¹⁰ and whoever touches any of the things that were under him will be unclean till evening; whoever picks up those things must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. ¹¹ Anyone the man with a discharge touches without rinsing his hands with water must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. ¹² A clay pot that the man touches must be broken, and any wooden article is to be rinsed with water. ¹³ When a man is cleansed from his discharge, he is to count off seven days for his ceremonial cleansing; he must wash his clothes and bathe himself with fresh water, and he will be clean.

c) The figurative use of washing and cleansing terms was common in the Old Testament as well as the New.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Isaiah 4:4 The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire.

Zechariah 13:1 On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

Hebrews 9:10,14 [Various Old Testament ordinances] are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

1 Corinthians 6:11 You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

The same terminology is applied to baptism.

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.

d) The great flood also foreshadowed God's work through baptism.

1 Peter 3:20,21 In [Noah's ark] only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge (ἐπερώτημα, legal claim) of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

e) The passing of Israel through the Red Sea prefigured baptism.

1 Corinthians 10:1,2 I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. ²They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

D2 E, I, 4. The manner of washing or applying water is not specified in Scripture and is therefore immaterial.

a) One legitimate mode of washing is by immersion.

1) This mode of washing is beautifully significant.

Small Catechism, Baptism, p 550, 11.12 What does such baptizing (Latin: *immersio*) with water signify? Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned (Latin: *submergi*) and die with all sins and evil lusts, and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise; who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 748, 64-65 Lastly, we must also know what baptism signifies, and why God has ordained just such external sign and ceremony for the sacrament by which we are first received into the Christian Church. But the act or ceremony is this, that we are sunk under the water, which passes over us, and afterwards are drawn out again. These two parts, to be sunk under the water and drawn out again, signify the power and operation of baptism, which is nothing else than putting to death the old Adam, and after that the resurrection of the new man, both of which must take place in us all our lives, so that a truly Christian life is nothing else than a daily baptism, once begun and ever to be continued. For this must be practiced without ceasing, that we ever keep purging away whatever is of the old Adam, and that that which belongs to the new man come forth.

2) Still, immersion is not the only permissible manner of applying water.

-a) Immersion is not the only meaning of the Greek terms used for baptism.

Mark 7:3-4 The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing (νίπτειν), holding to the tradition of the elders. ⁴ When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash (βαπτίζω; variant reading uses the verb ραντίζω, to spray or sprinkle). And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles (variant reading adds: "and dining couches").

Luke 11:38 But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash (ἐβαπτίσθη) before the meal, was surprised.

Acts 1:5 John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized (βαπτίζω) with the Holy Spirit.

Compare with Acts 2:18: Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out (ἐκχέω) my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

Contrast J. Rodman Williams: Since the word *baptism* is simply a transliteration of *baptisma*, meaning "immersion," it follows that immersion is the normal mode of baptism (*Renewal Theology*, p 225).

-b) It is doubtful that all New Testament sacramental baptisms were performed by immersion.

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 10:47,48 “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.”⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 16:33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.

Contrast Grudem (without adequate Bible evidence): The practice of baptism in the New Testament was carried out in one way: the person being baptized was *immersed* or put completely under the water and then brought back up again. Baptism by *immersion* is therefore the “mode” of baptism or the way in which baptism was carried out in the New Testament (ST, p 967).

Compare Reymond: The fact is that *there is not a single recorded instance of a baptism in the entire New Testament where immersion followed by emersion is the mode of baptism*. The Baptist practice of baptism by immersion is simply based on faulty exegesis of Scripture (NST, p 935).

-c) Nowhere in Scripture is the amount of water used said to be important for spiritual cleansing.

Compare John 13:3-11 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”⁷ Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”⁸ “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.”

Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”

⁹ “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”¹⁰

Jesus answered, “A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

b) Sprinkling or pouring is another legitimate manner of washing.

1) This mode of applying water also has a significant meaning.

Ezekiel 36:25 I will sprinkle (ִרְקַ) clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.

Exodus 24:8 Moses then took the blood, sprinkled (ִרְקַ) it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

Numbers 8:7 To purify them, do this: Sprinkle (ִרְקַ) the water of cleansing on them; then have them shave their whole bodies and wash their clothes, and so purify themselves.

Hebrews 12:24 [You have come] to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

2) Generally the water is applied to the head, but Scripture is silent on this subject.

c) The Didache (ca. 120–150 AD) assumes that immersion is the regular but not the only possible manner of baptism.

The Didache, VII, 1–3: But about baptism—baptize in this way: When all these things have been said, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in running water. But if you do not have access to running water, then baptize with other water. If you can not do it with cold, do it with warm. If you have neither, pour water on the head three times in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Compare Reymond: With the exception of those in the baptistic tradition who regard immersion followed by emersion as the only proper mode of baptism, the catholic (universal) position and practice of the Western church regarding the question of the proper mode of baptism is that “dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person” [Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVIII/iii] (NST, p 930).

D2 E, I, 5. The visible or earthly element of baptism is water.

a) Baptisms were regularly performed with water. The implication and assumption throughout is that only water was used.

Matthew 3:6,11,16 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.¹¹ I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

Acts 8:36,38 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?"³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

- b) **No other element is even remotely suggested in Scripture. The use of any other element would signal a departure from Christ's command and invalidate the sacrament.**

Recall the instructions of *The Didache*, VII, 1–3 (above).

D2 E, I, 6. The classic definition of baptism provided in Luther's Small Catechism and echoed by Lutheran fathers is excellent and unsurpassed.

Small Catechism, Baptism, p 550, 1,2 What is baptism? Answer: Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 732, 6,14 In these words you must note, in the first place, that here stand God's commandment and institution, lest we doubt that baptism is divine, not devised nor invented by men. For as truly as I can say, No man has spun the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer out of his head, but they are revealed and given by God himself, so also I can boast that baptism is no human trifle, but instituted by God himself, moreover, that it is most solemnly and strictly commanded that we must be baptized or we cannot be saved, lest any one regard it as a trifling matter, like putting on a new red coat. From this now learn a proper understanding of the subject, and how to answer the question what baptism is, namely thus, that it is not mere ordinary water, but water comprehended in God's Word and command, and sanctified thereby, so that it is nothing else than a divine water; not that the water in itself is nobler than other water, but that God's Word and command are added.

Gerhard: The essence of baptism consists in an action, namely, dipping the person who is to be baptized into water, or pouring water on the person, which is doing the same thing, and then reciting the words of institution, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Thus, in general, three essential parts of baptism must be prescribed, which cannot be omitted or changed, namely, water, word, and action. The action includes the dipping of the man into water, or the sprinkling of water, and the recitation of the words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." That the essence of baptism consists in an action is clear from the general principle demonstrated above, that the essence of the sacraments consists in something done. It is not enough to speak the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit over the water of baptism, but it is also required that the man be dipped in water or sprinkled with water. Likewise it is not enough to dip the man in water or to sprinkle him with water, but it is required that this be done in the name of the Father, Son, and *Holy Spirit* (*Loc*i, vol. IX, loc. XXI de sacro baptismo, para. LXXXVIII, p 137).

D2 E, I, 7. There is no special spiritual, heavenly element in baptism that corresponds to the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. Although various elements have been suggested, no clear Scripture testimony can be adduced.

- a) **Things that have been suggested include the Trinity, the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the word of God.**

Matthew 28:19 Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:26 [Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her] to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

- b) **If the desire to find a spiritual element in baptism stems from seeking a parallel to a purely spiritual presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper, this desire is wrongly motivated and out of order. (Recall Beza at the Colloquy of Montbeliard with Andreae, 1586.)**

D2 E, II. Baptism was instituted by Christ to be performed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

D2 E, II, 1. Christ instituted Baptism as a means of grace, as an instrument that proclaims the saving work of Christ and creates and strengthens faith.

- a) **The exalted Christ, who had been verified as the Savior of the world, instituted the sacrament with authority.**

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

Philippians 2:9,10 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

Isaiah 53:10 It was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

b) Christ placed baptism on a level with teaching, with both serving the purpose of uniting people to him in faith, of "making disciples" of them.

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. ¹⁹ πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, ²⁰ διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν.

c) The apostles consistently used baptism as a means of grace. It was never used as an afterthought, an optional rite, or as a mere ceremony.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 10:48 He ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 16:33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.

D2 E, II, 2. Being baptized in or into God's name involves being united with God through Jesus, the mediator between the Triune God and mankind.

a) Baptism makes promises to the recipient concerning the reestablished union between the sinner and the Triune God accomplished by Christ.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Numbers 6:22-27 The LORD said to Moses, ²³ "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ²⁴ The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.' ²⁷ So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

b) This significance and value of baptism should be clearly expressed when administering baptism.

1) The Bible clearly testifies to the importance of being united with God as his children and heirs.

Galatians 3:26,27 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

John 1:12 To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

2) The words Christ used in instituting baptism are well suited to offer the recipient this promise and assurance.

Matthew 28:19 Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Adolf Hoenecke (citing Gerhard, critically): According to Gerhard, the formula of baptism means: 1) That baptism is from God, and that the pastor does not act on his own authority, but by the commission of God and in God's place; 2) That the triune God himself is present through his name with his grace, so that the formula "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" says, "I testify that you are received into the covenant of God through this sacrament of grace, that God washes your sins away, and that he makes you his child and heir"; 3) That the one who is baptized is obligated by baptism to honor the triune God according to his Word, and to fight under Christ's flag against the devil, sin, and his flesh. This explanation remains a bit too external in Point 2. And as far as the sacrament is concerned, Point 3 does not belong here at all (*ELD, IV, p 89,90*).

Compare also the Apostles Creed and other ancient *regulae fidei* (rules of faith).

Compare Reymond: When we take our departure from the formula that Jesus used in his institution, namely, "baptizing into the name," . . . it becomes apparent that the formula expresses a relationship to the person into whom or in whose name the person is baptized. Baptism then basically denotes the fact of a relationship. What kind of relationship? When such passages as Romans 6:3-6, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:27-28, and Colossians 2:11-12 are taken into account, it becomes plain that the nature of the relationship is one of union with Christ. . . . Of this basic union baptism is the sacramental sign and seal (*NST*, p 925).

c) Since it is only through the mediating work of Christ that we are brought into God's family as children and heirs, the sacrament may be briefly called a baptism in the name of Christ Jesus.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in (ἐπι) the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 8:16 The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into (εἰς) the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 10:48 He ordered that they be baptized in (ἐν) the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Romans 6:3 Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into (εἰς) Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Galatians 3:27 All of you who were baptized into (εἰς) Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Didache, VII, 1,3: Baptize in (εἰς) the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . . Pour water on the head three times in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Compare IX, 5: Let no one eat or drink from your Eucharist except those who have been baptized in (εἰς) the name of the Lord. For concerning this the Lord also said, "Do not give that which is holy to dogs."

Compare Reymond: One interesting thing to note about the baptisms in Acts is that they are administered "upon," "into," or "in" the name of Jesus and not in the name of the Triune God as specified in the Matthew 28 formula. While some critics believe this proves that Matthew 28:19 is a "later Matthean redaction of a more primitive apostolic commissioning," I would suggest that Luke is simply giving an abbreviated form of the words actually used in the baptismal ceremony, highlighting by his use of Jesus' name alone both the fact that it is through Jesus' mediation that one enters into union with the triune God and the fact that these persons were being admitted into the *Christian* church (*NST*, p 926-927).

D2 E, II, 3. Baptisms performed by religious groups that wrongly use the baptismal formula and the name of God may be invalid.

a) The baptism of churches that retain the essentials (application of water and confession of the Triune God) must be allowed as legitimate.

Council of Arles (314 AD): Concerning the churches of Africa, because they follow a peculiar custom of rebaptizing, it was resolved that if anyone comes to the church from a heretical group, he should be asked for a confession of faith. And if it becomes evident that he was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a hand should only be laid on him that he may receive the Holy Spirit. But if, when he is asked for his confession, he does not answer "this Trinity" (i.e., if he does not give a Trinitarian confession), let him be baptized.

b) The baptisms of any who deny the Triune God are not Christian baptisms. Though these people use the sounds and syllables of God's Word, they have emptied it of its meaning and thus do not have the Word.

c) Many baptisms "in Jesus name" are non-Trinitarian baptisms of Oneness Sabellian Pentecostals.

D2 E, III. Baptism, the sacrament of initiation, promises and confirms to the recipient adoption as God's child.

D2 E, III, 1. Baptism brings the recipient into union with the Triune God.

a) This union is indicated by the preposition εἰς (= ἐν plus dative).

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 6:3 Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

1 Corinthians 1:13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?

Galatians 3:27 All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

b) This union is compared to the status enjoyed by an heir who has attained the full legal age.

John 1:12 To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Galatians 4:1-7 What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. ² He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. ³ So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. ⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

c) Baptism links the recipient to the name of the Triune God.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Numbers 6:22-27 The LORD said to Moses, ²³ "Tell Aaron and his sons, This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ²⁴ The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. ²⁷ So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

Romans 8:14-17 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Revelation 3:12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.

Revelation 14:1 Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 706, 37b: God's name was given us when we became Christians and were baptized, so that we are called children of God and have the sacraments, by which He so incorporates us in himself that everything which is God's must serve for our use.

D2 E, III, 2. The blessings of baptism are designated in Scripture with a variety of terms.

a) The following Bible terms clearly identify blessings received through baptism.

1) Salvation, the application of redemption, is a blessing of baptism.

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Acts 16:30-33 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.

1 Peter 3:21 This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God.

Small Catechism, Baptism, p 550, 5,6: What does baptism give or profit? Answer: It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 736, 23-25: Since we know now what baptism is, and how it is to be regarded, we must also learn why and for what purpose it is instituted, that is, what it profits, gives, and works. And this also we cannot discern better than from the words of Christ above quoted: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Therefore state it most simply thus, that the power, work, profit, fruit, and end of baptism is this, namely, to save. For no one is baptized in order that he may

become a prince, but, as the words declare, that he be saved. But to be saved, we know, is nothing else than to be delivered from sin, death, and the devil, and to enter into the kingdom of Christ, and to live with him forever.

2) Repentance (change of heart and mind) is a blessing of baptism.

Mark 1:4 So John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 3:3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Acts 19:4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

3) Regeneration or rebirth is a blessing of baptism. What is said to be true of the Word of God is true of this sacrament.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Matthaeus Hafenreffer, answering an objector who says: "You say that we are regenerated by baptism, but Peter attributes this to the Word" (1 Pe 1:23). Both are true, for we are born again both by the Word and by baptism. But baptism is at the same time a visible seal of regeneration. "But what about this? If someone has been regenerated by the Word, does he still need to be baptized? And can it be said that for him baptism is a washing of regeneration?" The answer to both questions is yes. For also believers ought to be baptized, unless it cannot be done, unless baptism is made impossible by the circumstances. And when they are baptized, baptism is truly for them a washing of regeneration both because it adds a marvelous increase to the regeneration by the Word [Caution! Regeneration is instantaneous; what is increased is faith.] and because the sacramental action puts a seal on the regeneration to make faith more certain (*Loci*, Book III, stat. IV, loc. VI, p 613).

4) The remission or forgiveness of sins is a blessing of baptism.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 22:16 What are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.

Ephesians 5:26 [Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her] to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

5) A clean conscience is a blessing of baptism.

1 Peter 3:21 This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge (ἐπερώτημα) of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

6) Membership in the communion of saints, the Christian church, is a blessing of baptism.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 732, 2a: In the first place, we take up baptism, by which we are first received into the Christian Church.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 748, 64: Lastly, we must also know what baptism signifies, and why God has ordained just such an external sign and ceremony for the sacrament by which we are first received into the Christian Church.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 690, 51-53: I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms. I am also a part and member of the same, a sharer and joint owner of all the goods it possesses, brought to it and incorporated into it by the Holy Spirit by having heard and continuing to hear the Word of God, which is the beginning of entering it.

7) Being clothed with Christ is a blessing of baptism.

Galatians 3:27 All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ (χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε).

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. II, p 906, 67: Therefore there is a great difference between baptized and unbaptized men. For since, according to the doctrine of St. Paul, Gal. 3:27, all who have been baptized have put on Christ, and thus are truly regenerate, they have now *arbitrium liberatum* (a liberated will), that is, as Christ says, they have been made free again, John 8:36; whence they are able not only to hear the Word, but also to assent to it and accept it, although in great weakness.

8) The gift of the Holy Spirit is a blessing of baptism.

Titus 3:5,6 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Apology, Art II (I), p 112, 35b: [Luther] also added in reference to the material that the Holy Spirit, given through baptism, begins to mortify the concupiscence, and creates new movements, a new light, a new sense and spirit, in man.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 742, 41 Every Christian has enough in baptism to learn and to practice all his life; for he has always enough to do to believe firmly what it promises and brings: victory over death and the devil, forgiveness of sin, the grace of God, the entire Christ, and the Holy Spirit with His gifts.

9) For a summary statement on the benefits channeled through baptism, consider the following:

Hafenreffer: What are the benefits and effects produced by baptism? Regeneration and the remission of sins (Jn 3:5; Tt 3:5; Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3; Ac 2:38; 22:16; Eph 5:26), salvation and participation in all the benefits that come from Christ, to whom we are joined in baptism (Tt 3:5; 1 Pe 3:21; Ro 6:3; Ga 3:27; 1 Co 12:13), a good conscience toward God or certainty of faith regarding the forgiveness of sins (1 Pe 3:21; 2 Co 1:21), and newness of life (Ro 6:3; Col 2:11) (*Locī*, Bk III, Stat IV, p 609).

b) Various churches err in their descriptions of baptismal blessing.

1) The Roman Catholic Church wrongly teaches that through baptism original or inherited sin is totally removed.

Council of Trent, Session V, 5: The question is whether concupiscence, left after baptism and repentance in the regenerate, is truly and properly sin. Answer: This concupiscence, which the apostle sometimes calls sin, the holy synod declares that the Catholic Church has never understood to be sin. . . . If anyone thinks differently, let him be damned. In baptism the essence of original sin is removed; therefore the remnants after baptism, namely, concupiscence, are not really sin; for when the essence is taken away, the thing itself is removed.

Contrast Hollaz: Through baptism the guilt and dominion of sin is taken away, but not the root of and inclination to sin (*Examen*, 1096).

Contrast Gerhard: When it is accordingly asked what sort of wholesome means and medicine baptism is against sin, that is to be answered: 1) Sin is forgiven in holy baptism so that it is no longer imputed. 2) The sinful flesh or old Adam is put to death that it no longer rules. But this killing is not constituted in such a way that henceforth the evil lusts are totally obliterated or no longer are considered sinful in and of themselves; rather, they no longer rule (*Comprehensive Explanation*, Vol. I, p 113).

Apology, Art. II (I), p 112, 35-37: Here our adversaries inveigh against Luther also because he wrote that "Original sin remains after baptism." They add that this article was justly condemned by Leo X. But His Imperial Majesty will find on this point a manifest slander. For our adversaries know in what sense Luther intended this remark that original sin remains after baptism. He always wrote thus, namely, that baptism removes the guilt of original sin, although the material, as they call it, of the sin, i.e., concupiscence, remains. He also added in reference to the material that the Holy Spirit, given through baptism, begins to mortify the concupiscence, and creates new movements, a new light, a new sense and spirit in man. In the same manner, Augustine also speaks, who says: Sin is remitted in baptism, not in such a manner that it no longer exists, but so that it is not imputed. Here he confesses openly that sin exists, i.e., that it remains, although it is not imputed. And this judgment was so agreeable to those who succeeded him that it was recited also in the decrees. Also against Julian, Augustine says: The law, which is in the members, has been annulled by spiritual regeneration, and remains in the mortal flesh. It has been annulled because the guilt has been remitted in the sacrament, by which believers are born again; but it remains, because it produces desires, against which believers contend. Our adversaries know that Luther believes and teaches thus, and while they cannot reject the matter they nevertheless pervert his words, in order by this artifice to crush an innocent man.

2) Those who insist on only the immediate working of the Holy Spirit, deny that baptism actually offers and gives spiritual blessing.

Reymond: In what way does baptism become an effectual means of salvation? In what way does baptism contribute to the salvation of the elect? The answer is plain and simple. . . . Baptism becomes

effectual for salvation in its character as a sign and seal of the spiritual verities of the new covenant. As a sign and seal it is a means of grace (1) to signify and (2) to confirm grace through faith apart from the rite of baptism (NST, p 952).

3) The Pentecostals and Charismatics wrongly downplay water baptism as they teach a “Baptism in the Spirit” as a gift actively to be sought by all Christians.

J. Rodman Williams: Baptism, for all its importance, cannot function as a precondition or prerequisite for the reception of the Holy Spirit. . . . Even less is water baptism portrayed as conferring the gift of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes from the exalted Lord who himself confers the gift and surely does not relegate such to a rite conducted by man (*Renewal Theology*, p 282).

The Assemblies of God, *The Promise of the Father*: All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry. Lk 24:49; Ac 1:4,8; 1 Cor 12:1-3. This wonderful experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth. Ac 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9 (Quoted in F. Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, p 61).

Assemblies of God: *The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost*: The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance. Ac 2:4. The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Cor 12:4–10,28), but different in purpose and use (Quoted in F. Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, p 61).

Larry Christenson (Lutheran charismatic): Beyond conversion, beyond the assurance of salvation, beyond having the Holy Spirit, there is baptism with the Holy Spirit (*Speaking in Tongues*, p 38).

D2 E, III, 3. God alone graciously gives the blessings through baptism.

a) Baptism is not a human work. It is not a work of the law.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 388, 17-18: Theologians are rightly accustomed to distinguish between a sacrament and a sacrifice. Therefore let the genus comprehending both of these be either a ceremony or a sacred work. A sacrament is a ceremony or work in which God presents to us that which the promise joined to the ceremony offers; as, baptism is a work, not which we offer to God, but in which God baptizes us (i.e., a minister in the place of God); and God here offers and presents the remission of sins, etc., according to the promise, Mark 16:16: “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.” A sacrifice, on the contrary, is a ceremony or work which we render God in order to afford him honor.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. IV, p 490: We will now return to the gospel, which not merely in one way gives us counsel and aid against sin; for God is superabundantly rich and liberal in His grace and goodness. First, through the spoken word by which the forgiveness of sins is preached in the whole world; which is the peculiar office of the gospel. Secondly, through baptism. Thirdly, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourthly, through the power of the keys, and also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren, Matt. 18: 20, “Where two or three are gathered together,” etc.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 740, 35-37: But if they say, as they are accustomed: “Still baptism is itself a work, and you say works are of no avail for salvation, what, then, becomes of faith?” Answer: Yes, our works, indeed, avail nothing for salvation; baptism, however, is not our work, but God’s (for, as was stated, you must put Christ-baptism far away from a bath-keeper’s baptism). God’s works, however, are saving and necessary for salvation, and do not exclude, but demand, faith; for without faith they could not be apprehended. For by allowing the water to be poured upon you, you have not yet received baptism in such a manner that it benefits you anything; but it becomes beneficial to you if you have yourself baptized with the thought that this is according to God’s command and ordinance, and besides in God’s name, in order that you may receive in the water the promised salvation. Now, this the fist cannot do, nor the body; but the heart must believe it. Thus you see plainly that there is here no work done by us, but a treasure which he gives us, and which faith apprehends, just as the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross is not a work, but a treasure comprehended in the word, and offered to us and received by faith. Therefore they do us violence by exclaiming against us as though we preach against faith, while we alone insist upon it as being of such necessity that without it nothing can be received nor enjoyed.

b) The power of Baptism does not rest on the water, the amount of water used, or on the manner of applying the water, but on the word of divine institution.

Small Catechism, Baptism, p 550, 9,10: How can water do such great things? Answer: It is not the water indeed that does them, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water and no baptism. But with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter three: By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 736, 22: Therefore I exhort again that these two, the water and the Word, by no means be separated from one another and parted. For if the Word is separated from it, the water is the same as that with which the servant cooks and may indeed be called a bath-keeper’s baptism. But when it is

added, as God has ordained, it is a sacrament, and is called Christ-baptism. Let this be the first part, regarding the essence and dignity of the holy sacrament.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. V, p 490, V, 1-3: Baptism is nothing else than the Word of God in the water, commanded by his institution, or, as Paul says, a washing in the word; as also Augustine says: Let the Word come to the element, and it becomes a sacrament. And for this reason we do not hold with Thomas and the monastic preachers or Dominicans who forget the word, God's institution, and say that God has imparted to the water a spiritual power, which through the water washes away sin. Nor do we agree with Scotus and the Barefooted monks, the Minorites or Franciscan monks, who teach that, by the assistance of the divine will, baptism washes away sins, and that this ablution occurs only through the will of God, and by no means through the word or water.

c) In emphasizing that the power in baptism comes from the divine word rather than by human work, Lutherans are not embracing or endorsing the *opus operatum* idea, as some Reformed falsely claim.

John Henry Heidegger (d. 1698): Baptism does not in a bare way represent these outstanding blessings of the gospel, but when it is properly used, it seals and shows to those who are baptized those things belonging to them by the implications of the promises given in the covenant of grace. But baptism does not produce these blessings by some inhering or assisting cause, but as a seal, a pledge and token which makes faith most certain about those things that have been received or will be received. . . . This error [namely, the error of the *opus operatum*, with which Heidegger charges the Lutherans] turns earthly elements and creatures into causes of grace and changes the sacraments into idols and some sort of magical charms. O that the Augustans [i.e., the Lutherans] would give up this doctrine completely by which they make the sacraments οχήματα of grace, vehicles, or, as it were, a kind of hand, by which God gives His grace. (*Corpus theologiae christianae*, XXV, 42, quoted by Heppe, *Dogmatik der evang.-ref. Kirche*, pp. 444f.). [From our Lutheran perspective this is either a horrible misunderstanding resulting from ignorance, or a shameful slander perpetrated against better knowledge]

Contrast Quenstedt: Also to all hypocrites baptism offers spiritual gifts, such as regeneration and the things that it includes, the gift of faith, forgiveness of sins ... but some adults by active impenitence, hypocrisy, and the obstacle of stubbornness rob themselves of the salutary efficacy of baptism, and therefore, even though these gifts are offered to them, they are not actually conferred on them. Nevertheless baptism meanwhile is and remains a saving instrument and means of regeneration in them, since from the absence of the second act [i.e., the receiving of grace and forgiveness through faith], caused by some fault in the subject, the absence of the first act [i.e., the power of baptism or the serious offer of grace and forgiveness] does not follow (IV, 117).

d) The Calvinist inability to understand baptismal power flows from their erring emphasis on immediate grace.

Heppe: The significance and efficacy of baptism must not be viewed as being derived from some power of the Holy Spirit which is essentially inherent in baptism or the baptismal water and which works in a magical way. This is true because grace is not in essence bound to baptism. The significance and efficacy of baptism is to be derived only from the promise which God has attached to the act of baptism. According to that promise baptism is to be a seal and pledge of the grace bestowed in the new covenant. This promise Christ fulfills in this way in the outward baptismal action [Notice he does not say "through" but "in"]. He is through the Holy Spirit active internally and bestows the grace of baptism without means on those who believe. Baptism is not a means or source of salvation, but only a certification of it (*Dogmatik der evang.-ref. Kirche*, p 444f.).

Reymond: There is nothing in the sacraments *per se* that saves and . . . the piety of their administrator contributes nothing to the sacraments as means of salvation. Rather, the sacraments become effectual means of salvation for the elect only as Christ blesses them and as his Spirit works in them who by faith receive them (*NST*, p 950).

D2 E, IV. Baptism, by assuring the recipient of his adoption by the Triune God, also furnishes the impulse and the ability to lead a new life.

D2 E, IV, 1. Baptism signifies a new life.

a) This is particularly true regarding immersion as a mode of applying the water.

Small Catechism, Baptism, p 550, 11,12: What does such baptizing with water signify? Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts, and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise; who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 748, 64-66: Lastly, we must also know what baptism signifies, and why God has ordained just such external sign and ceremony for the sacrament by which we are first received into the Christian Church. But the act or ceremony is this, that we are sunk under the water, which passes over us, and afterwards are drawn out again. These two parts, to be sunk under the water and drawn out again, signify the power and operation of baptism, which is nothing else than putting to death the old Adam, and after that the resurrection of the new man, both of which must take place in us all our lives, so that a truly Christian life is nothing else than a daily baptism, once begun and ever to be continued. For this must be

practiced without ceasing, that we ever keep purging away whatever is of the old Adam, and that that which belongs to the new man come forth.

b) The flood, a figure of baptism, destroyed all achievements of the former civilization and forced Noah to begin anew.

1 Peter 3:20,21 In [the ark] only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Genesis 9:20 Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard.

D2 E, IV, 2. Baptism also produces the sanctification that it symbolizes.

Matthew 3:8 Produce fruit (καρπὸς) in keeping with (ἄξιος) repentance.

Luke 3:8 Produce fruit (καρπὸς) in keeping with (ἄξιος) repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

Romans 6:1-11 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 750, 75.76 [Repentance] is really nothing else than baptism. For what else is repentance but an earnest attack upon the old man that his lusts be restrained and entering upon a new life? Therefore, if you live in repentance, you walk in baptism, which not only signifies such a new life, but also produces, begins, and exercises it. For therein are given grace, the Spirit, and power to suppress the old man, so that the new man may come forth and become strong.

Compare Gerhard [To be read critically, since Gerhard fails to recognize that in Titus 3:5 “regeneration” and “renewal” are synonyms arranged chiasmatically; Romans 6:3 and Colossians 2:11 would be better used here]:
Regeneration: It includes the bestowal of faith, forgiveness of sins, reception into the covenant of grace, adoption as children of God, being clothed with Christ, deliverance from the power of the devil, and the possession of eternal salvation. Renewal: The Holy Spirit is given to him (i.e., the regenerated man) and he begins to renew the intellect, the will, and all the powers of the soul, so that the lost image of God begins to be restored in him, the inner man is renewed, the old man is put off and the new man put on, the spirit fights against the flesh and rules over it, in order that sin may not gain control in the body. Baptism is a divine and saving means and instrument through which the entire most holy Trinity efficaciously works for man's salvation. However, although the effects of baptism are varied and numerous, yet, following the apostle in Titus 3:5, we will include them all under these two headings, because baptism is according to Paul the washing of regeneration and renewal (*Locī*, Vol. IX, loc. XXI, de sacro baptismo, para. C, p 148).

D2 E, IV, 3. The various purposes and values of baptism may be summarized in this way:

Koenig: The purpose of baptism is either final or intermediate. The final purpose is either absolutely such, namely, the glorification of God's wisdom and goodness, or relatively such, namely, the salvation of souls. The intermediate purpose is either primary or secondary. In infants, the primary purpose is the bestowal of faith and covenant grace. In adult believers it is the confirmation of faith and sealing of grace. As far as all candidates for baptism as a whole are concerned, the primary purpose is to bestow faith and grace, together with all the spiritual gifts that grace brings along with itself. The secondary purpose is 1) to distinguish Christians from the heathen crowd; 2) to warn against natural impurity; 3) to remind us of the love of Christ; 4) to urge us on to newness of life (*Theologia Positiva, de Baptismo*, para. 795-799, p 232-233).

D2 E, V. Children, including infants, are not to be excluded from baptism.

D2 E, V, 1. Christ's command is broad enough to include children.

a) His instructions were that all nations be baptized.

Matthew 28:19 Go and make disciples of all nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:15,16 He said to them, “Go into all the world (εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα) and preach the good news to all creation (πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει). ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

b) He did not qualify his words to exclude certain persons, as the New Testament does with the Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

c) The instructions of Jesus to his disciples were final, leaving room for no possible amendments.

Acts 1:4-9 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about." ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." ⁶ So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority." ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

d) The burden of proof, then, is clearly with those who would exclude children.

D2 E, V, 2. Other Bible statements support the practice of infant baptism.

a) Christ had little children brought to him and spoke of them as members of his kingdom.

Mark 10:13-16 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Luke 18:15-17 People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." ¹⁷ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Matthew 18:1-6,10 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² He called a little child and had him stand among them. ³ And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." ⁴ Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. ⁶ But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. ¹⁰ See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

Matthew 21:15,16 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. ¹⁶ "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?"

Psalms 8:2 From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

b) Circumcision was performed on the eighth day.

1) Circumcision was the Old Testament sacrament of initiation.

Colossians 2:11,12 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Genesis 17:10-14 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹² For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. ¹³ Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.

Exodus 12:48 An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.

2) Circumcision was restricted to male children. There is no parallel restriction with regard to baptism.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 16:15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

c) The New Testament emphasizes that God desires children to enter the kingdom of heaven, but mentions no way for them to enter it other than baptism.

Matthew 18:14 Your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Mark 10:14 Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Baier: That infants are to be baptized is correctly concluded from John 3:5 and Mark 10:14, taken together. That is done in the following way: Those concerning whom it is the will of Christ that they should come to salvation, but who cannot come to life in the ordinary way except by means of baptism, ought to have baptism, as the ordinary way conferred on them. It surely should not be denied to them. But Christ wants infants to be saved. But they cannot come to eternal life in any other ordinary way than by means of baptism [by virtue of the universal dictum found in John 3:5] (*Compendium*, Part III, Cap. X, Art. VII, p 540).

d) There is no explicit mention of infant baptism in the New Testament. The concept of excluding them as recipients of baptism, however, is foreign to the New Testament.

Acts 2:38,39 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 11:14 with 10:48 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 16:15,33 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.

1 Corinthians 1:16 I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.

D2 E, V, 3. There are various objections to infant baptism, none of which have scriptural support.

a) Some who object to infant baptism maintain that children have no need of baptismal grace.

1) This denies that children have guilt in the eyes of God.

Tertullian (d. ca. 220) According to circumstance and disposition and even age of the individual person, it may be better to delay baptism; and especially so in the case of little children. . . . Let them come, then, while they grow up, while they learn, while they are taught to whom to come; let them become Christians when they will have been able to know Christ! Why does the innocent age hasten to the remission of sins? (*Treatise on Baptism*, 18, 4).

Mennonites: The scriptural order was clear and none of it could possibly apply to infants.... Infants cannot understand teaching about salvation, nor can they believe it, repent, and promise to live lives of obedience. Anabaptists rejected the idea that water could become a sacrament that conveyed grace. They maintained that "the water is just water." Primary was the inner baptism of the Spirit (*Who Are the Mennonites*, www.thirdway.com).

Erickson: While the status of infants and those who never reach moral competence is a difficult question, it appears that our Lord did not regard them as under condemnation. . . . There are several indications in Scripture that persons are not morally responsible before a certain point, which we sometimes call "the age of accountability" (*Christian Theology*, p 654).

2) Scripture, however, ascribes sinfulness and guilt to infants.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Genesis 8:21 The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."

Job 14:4 Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one!

Job 15:14 What is man, that he could be pure, or one born of woman, that he could be righteous?

John 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. XII, p 838, 6: [Anabaptist articles that cannot be tolerated in the church include] that children who are not baptized are not sinners before God, but righteous and innocent, who in their innocence, because they have not yet attained the use of reason, are saved without baptism (which, according to their assertion, they do not need). Therefore they reject the entire doctrine concerning original sin and what belongs to it.

Gerhard: We turn the argument around: infants do not have faith, namely, in view of their corrupted nature, because they are flesh on account of their fleshly descent from their parents. Therefore they should be baptized in order to come to faith and salvation (*Comprehensive Explanation*, Vol. I, Ch. 20, Art. 8, p 160).

b) Others who object to infant baptism say that children cannot have saving faith.

1) Many have denied that infants and children can believe in Christ.

Racovian Catechism: We might ask whether infants are suitable for baptism, ... since we have in the Scriptures no command nor example concerning this question, nor are they ... yet able to have ... faith in Christ (1739 Latin Edition, p 555, 556).

Seventh Day Adventism: Infant baptism is not valid. Infants cannot possess the essential conditions for baptism, namely, repentance and faith (Alva G. Huffer, *Systematic Theology*, p 359).

Grudem: In the new covenant it is appropriate that infants *not* be baptized, and that baptism only be given to those who give evidence of genuine saving faith, because membership in the church is based on an internal spiritual reality, not on physical descent (*ST*, p 977).

2) In response, we offer the following truths.

-a) Children are full human beings with a human soul in which God can work faith. They are not unreasoning animals.

Quenstedt: Faith requires as its subject (the person who believes) a soul that can think or reason. For that reason faith cannot be kindled in animals. Nevertheless faith does not depend on the working and the use of it [the soul that can think or reason] (*TDP*, IV, 153).

-b) Faith is best described primarily as a matter of inner trust rather than one of mental activity or conscious deliberation.

Romans 10:10 It is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Consider a child's implicit faith in its mother.

Consider the question: Where is faith in adults during sleep or in a state of unconsciousness?

-c) Scripture testifies expressly to the faith of infants and small children.

Matthew 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones (ἐνὰ τῶν μικρῶν) who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Mark 10:15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child (παιδίον) will never enter it.

Luke 18:15-16 People were also bringing babies (τὰ βρέφη) to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children (τὰ παιδία) come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Luke 1:15 He will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth (ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ).

Psalms 71:5,6 For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי). ⁶ From birth (יְהוָה) I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you.

c) Some Reformed practice infant baptism but place it on an unscriptural basis by assuming that children of Christian parents by their natural birth have become members of the church and are therefore entitled to baptism.

Calvin: From this it follows that the children of believing parents are not baptized for this reason that they, who before this were strangers to the church, might first then become children of God, but rather by this

solemn sign they are received into the church because by virtue of the covenant promise they already before baptism belonged to the body of Christ (*Institutes*, Bk. IV, Ch. XVI, para. 24).

Reymond: Children of covenant parents are expressly represented as possessing status in the covenant community. Reformed paedobaptists therefore believe that the baptism of their infants and young children today is a justifiable deduction (*NST*, p 944).

Contrast Chemnitz: By no means is it to be conceded that infants who are baptized are without faith or that they are baptized in the faith of another person. The faith of others, indeed, either that of the parents or those who bring them, leads little children to Christ in baptism (Mk 10:13) and prays that they may be given a faith of their own. But there is no doubt that through the washing of water by the Word Christ by His Spirit is active and efficacious in infants who are baptized in order that they receive the kingdom of God. We grant that we do not understand how this happens. For baptism is the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. He is poured into those who have been baptized, that being justified they might be heirs of eternal life (Tt 3:5; Mk 10:15). And this is called "the faith of infants" (*Loci*, Part III, de baptismo, sect. II, p 160).

D2 E, V, 4. History establishes the fact that infant baptism was practiced in the early church.

a) Note the following witnesses.

- 1) Justin Martyr (d. ca.165) as cited in the Apology, I, 15, 6, spoke of Christians who were disciples from childhood on (μαθητεύεσθαι ἐκ παιδῶν). In view of Matthew 28:19 this terminology is most satisfactorily understood of baptism, particularly in view of the fact that he regards baptism as the New Testament counterpart of Old Testament circumcision.
- 2) Irenaeus (d. ca. 200; a disciple of Polycarp who was a disciple of John): [Christ] came to save all men by himself, all, I say, who through him are reborn into God, infants, little children, boys, young men and old men (*Against Heresies*, 2:22:4).
- 3) Tertullian (d. ca. 220) opposed infant baptism, but did so in a way that shows it was then an established custom. "Why does the innocent age hasten to the remission of sins?" (*Treatise on Baptism*, 18, 4).
- 4) Origen (d. ca. 254): Every soul that is born into flesh is soiled by the filth of wickedness and sin. . . . In the church, baptism is given for the remission of sins, and, according to the usage of the church, baptism is given even to infants. If there were nothing in infants which required the remission of sins and nothing in them pertinent to forgiveness, the grace of baptism would seem superfluous (*Homilies on Leviticus* 8:3).

Origen: The church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism even to infants. The apostles, to whom were committed the secrets of the divine sacraments, knew there are in everyone innate strains of original sin, which must be washed away through water and the Spirit (*Commentaries on Romans* 5:9).

- 5) Cyprian, reporting the decision of the Synod of Carthage (ca. 253): As to what pertains to the case of infants: You [Fidus] said that they ought not to be baptized within the second or third day after their birth, that the old law of circumcision must be taken into consideration, and that you did not think that one should be baptized and sanctified within the eighth day after his birth. In our council it seemed to us far otherwise. No one agreed to the course which you thought should be taken. Rather, we all judge that the mercy and grace of God ought to be denied to no man born (*Letters*, 64:2).

Cyprian: If, in the case of the worst sinners and those who formerly sinned much against God, when afterwards they believe, the remission of their sins is granted and no one is held back from baptism and grace, how much more, then, should an infant not be held back, who, having but recently been born, has done no sin, except that, born of the flesh according to Adam, he has contracted the contagion of that old death from his first being born. For this very reason does an infant approach more easily to receive the remission of sins: because the sins forgiven him are not his own but those of another (*Letters*, 64:5).

- 6) Augustine (d. 430): Cyprian was not issuing a new decree but was keeping to the most solid belief of the Church in order to correct some who thought that infants ought not be baptized before the eighth day after their birth. . . . He agreed with certain of his fellow bishops that a child is able to be duly baptized as soon as he is born (*Letters*, 166:8:23).

Augustine: What the universal church holds, not as instituted by councils but as something always held, is most correctly believed to have been handed down by apostolic authority. Since others respond for children, so that the celebration of the sacrament may be complete for them, it is certainly availing to them for their consecration, because they themselves are not able to respond (*On Baptism, Against the Donatists*, 4:24:31).

Augustine: The custom of Mother Church in baptizing infants is certainly not to be scorned, nor is it to be

regarded in any way as superfluous, nor is it to be believed that its tradition is anything except apostolic (*The Literal Interpretation of Genesis* 10:23:39).

b) Martin Luther provided a practical discourse on infant baptism.

Large Catechism, Infant Baptism, p 742, 47-63: That the baptism of infants is pleasing to Christ is sufficiently proved from his own work, namely, that God sanctifies many of them who have been thus baptized and has given them the Holy Spirit; and that there are yet many even to-day in whom we perceive that they have the Holy Spirit both because of their doctrine and life; as it is also given to us by the grace of God that we can explain the Scriptures and come to the knowledge of Christ, which is impossible without the Holy Spirit. But if God did not accept the baptism of infants, he would not give the Holy Spirit nor any of his gifts to any of them; in short, during this long time unto this day no man upon earth could have been a Christian. Now, since God confirms baptism by the gifts of His Holy Spirit, as is plainly perceptible in some of the church fathers, as St. Bernard, Gerson, John Hus, and others, who were baptized in infancy, and since the holy Christian Church cannot perish until the end of the world, they must acknowledge that such infant baptism is pleasing to God. For he can never be opposed to himself, or support falsehood and wickedness, or for its promotion impart his grace and Spirit. This is indeed the best and strongest proof for the simple-minded and unlearned.

D2 E, V, 5. Having sponsors or godparents for children who are baptized is a church custom, not a command of Scripture. Not having them does not invalidate the sacrament.

- a) **Sponsors may serve as baptismal assistants to carry the child. They may serve as witnesses, to provide appropriate assurances to the child or the church that a valid baptism was performed. They may also be asked to pray and care for the child spiritually along with or in place of the parents if needed.**
- b) **Any respectable person may serve as witness, but to pray and care for the child spiritually the person should be a Christian whose confession agrees with that of the parents.**
- c) **The use of witnesses has many precedents in Scripture, but it is not absolutely necessary for baptism.**

Numbers 35:30 Anyone who kills a person is to be put to death as a murderer only on the testimony of witnesses. But no one is to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.

Jeremiah 32:10,12,25 I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. ¹² and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard. ²⁵ And though the city will be handed over to the Babylonians, you, O Sovereign LORD, say to me, "Buy the field with silver and have the transaction witnessed."

Matthew 18:16 But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

John 19:35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

Hebrews 6:16 Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument.

Recall the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), at which there were no witnesses other than Philip and the Ethiopian.

D2 E, V, 6. The Order of Baptism may include a number of features that are appropriate but not necessary or essential for a valid baptism.

- a) **There may be the mention of original sin, redemption by Jesus, and the Lord's institution of baptism. The use of the sign of the cross, prayer and the Lord's Prayer, the recitation of Mark 10:13–16, the imposition of hands, admonitions to parents, sponsors, and the church, the renunciation of the devil and his works (exorcism), a confession of faith, and the speaking of a benediction are fitting elements in a baptismal ceremony.**

Consider sample words of exorcism: I adjure you, O unclean spirit, that you come out of this servant of Jesus Christ in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Chemnitz says that whoever omits the exorcism or rejects it with this idea and for this reason, (as the Anabaptists and Sacramentarians do), that they think that infants either do not have sins and therefore are not by nature children of wrath and under the power of the devil, or, even though they are born in sin, yet because of their physical birth from believing parents, they are even before baptism and without baptism not outside the kingdom of heaven nor under the power of darkness these men deserve to be criticized and condemned (Loc. c. Th.,III, 161).

Note: We no longer commonly use words of exorcism in baptismal rites today, at least in part because they can be misunderstood as assuming demonic possession in the case of the baptismal candidate.

b) As long as there is the application of water with the Word, these features are not necessary.

Gerhard: It should not be maintained that such rites belong to the integrity and essence of baptism or are necessary, but they should be considered to be adiaphora (*Loci, de baptismo*, Art. 254).

Gerhard: Justly uprooted are such practices as exorcising the baptismal water with special exorcism, blowing under the baby's eyes, putting salt in the mouth, putting spittle in the nose and ears and saying: Ephatha, be opened, anointing the breast and shoulders with oil, smearing the forehead with chrism, imparting milk and honey into the mouth, etc., and ascribing to each and all these things a special efficacy. All these things are in part superstition, in part foolish, and totally irrelevant for edification – especially the exorcism of the baptismal water (*Comprehensive Explanation*, Vol. I, p 227).

Gerhard: The essence of baptism consists in an action, naming, dipping the person who is to be baptized into water, or pouring water, which is doing the same thing, and then reciting the words of institution, "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Thus, in general, three essential parts of baptism must be affirmed, which cannot be omitted or changed: water, word, and action. The action includes the dipping of the person into water, or the sprinkling of water, and the recitation of the words (*Loci*, Vol. IX, loc. XXI de sacro baptismo, para. LXXXVIII, p 137).

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. X, p 1054, 8.9: But as regards genuine adiaphora, or matters of indifference (as explained before), we believe, teach, and confess that such ceremonies, in and of themselves, are no worship of God, nor any part of it, but must be properly distinguished from such as are, as it is written: In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, Matt. 15:9. Therefore we believe, teach, and confess that the congregation of God of every place and every time has, according to its circumstances, the good right, power, and authority, in matters truly adiaphora, to change, to diminish, and to increase them, without thoughtlessness and offense, in an orderly and becoming way, as at any time it may be regarded most profitable, most beneficial, and best for preserving good order, maintaining Christian discipline and for εὐταξία worthy of the profession of the Gospel, and the edification of the Church. Moreover, how we can yield and give way with a good conscience to the weak in faith in such external adiaphora, Paul teaches Rom. 14, and proves it by his example, Acts 16: 3; 21:26; 1 Cor. 9:19.

D2 E, VI. Although baptism is not to be repeated, it is to the Christian throughout his life a constant source of spiritual comfort and strength.

D2 E, VI, 1. Baptism is not to be repeated.

a) Baptism is the sacrament of initiation.

Matthew 28:19 Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Quenstedt: A baptism that is correctly administered is not to be repeated or done again, 1) because it is the sacrament of initiation; for just as we are born only once, so also we are reborn only once; 2) because no command calling for this repetition, no promise attached to such repetition, no example of such repetition is found in the sacred Scriptures; and 3) because the benefit of baptism lasts forever and the unbelief of man does not make the faithfulness of God without effect (IV, 117).

b) The apostles speak of baptism as something applied only once.

Romans 6:3 Don't you know that all of us who were baptized (ἐβαπτίσθημεν) into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

1 Corinthians 1:13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized (ἐβαπτίσθητε) into the name of Paul?

Colossians 2:12 [In him you were also circumcised,] having been buried with him in baptism (συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισμῷ) and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

c) In this respect baptism is like circumcision.

Colossians 2:11-12 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

D2 E, VI, 2. Baptism remains a potent power throughout a Christian's life.

a) Baptism continuously assures us of great and comforting truths.

1) Baptism assures us that our adoption is a fact that will not be undone.

Galatians 3:26,27 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Isaiah 55:3 Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

2) Baptism assures us that we have a “claim” on God's grace.

1 Peter 3:21 This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge (ἐπερώτημα) of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

b) Baptism is therefore a constant source of strength for a Christian's life. It assures us of our life with Christ. When troubled by our daily shortcomings we need only through repentance to return to our baptism for comfort and strength.

Romans 6:3-14 Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Large Catechism, Baptism, p 750, 74-84: And here you see that baptism, both in its power and signification, comprehends also the third sacrament, which has been called repentance, as it is really nothing else than baptism. For what else is repentance but an earnest attack upon the old man that his lusts be restrained and entering upon a new life? Therefore, if you live in repentance, you walk in baptism, which not only signifies such a new life, but also produces, begins, and exercises it. For therein are given grace, the Spirit, and power to suppress the old man, so that the new man may come forth and become strong. Therefore our baptism abides forever; and even though some one should fall from it and sin, nevertheless we always have access thereto, that we may again subdue the old man. But we need not again be sprinkled with water; for though we were put under the water a hundred times, it would nevertheless be only one baptism, although the operation and signification continue and remain.

Hafenreffer: But do we again often sin after baptism? But this continued sinning does not call for a repetition of baptism. For God, who established his covenant of grace with us in baptism, is unchangeable in his will and in his promises, and he, on his part, seriously and earnestly desires to keep his covenant, once established, inviolate, valid, and unbroken. Only let us return by repentance to him who in baptism has promised us grace and the forgiveness of sins (*Loci*, 497).

c) The Roman Catholic Church errs in a double way when speaking of the benefits of baptism.

1) They falsely claim that baptism imprints an indelible “character” on the soul.

Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 9: If anyone says that in three sacraments, namely, baptism, confirmation and holy orders, a characteristic is not impressed on the soul, that is, a spiritual and indelible sign, so that they cannot be repeated, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Incorporated into Christ by baptism, the person baptized is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible spiritual mark (character) of his belonging to Christ. No sin can erase this mark, even if sin prevents baptism from bearing the fruits of salvation (Para. 1272).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Baptism imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual sign, the character, which consecrates the baptized person for Christian worship (Para. 1280).

2) They also err in denying the lasting power of baptism to assure the sinner of forgiveness.

Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 10: If anyone says that all the sins which are committed after baptism are either forgiven or made forgivable only by remembering and believing in the baptism that has been received, let him be damned.

D2 E, VII.**The baptism of John was essentially the same as Christian baptism.****D2 E, VII, 1.****The baptism of John and Christian baptism have many points in common.****a) Both baptisms were instituted by God.**

Luke 3:2,3 During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. ³ He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 21:24-26 Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁵ John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From men'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet."

Matthew 28:19 Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

b) In both baptisms water is applied in a ceremonial way.

Matthew 3:6,11 Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ¹¹ I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

John 1:26 "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know.

John 3:23 Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.

Acts 8:36, 38 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

c) Both baptisms promise and give spiritual blessings.**1) They both give the forgiveness of sins.**

Mark 1:4 And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 3:3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

2) They both produce regeneration.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Luke 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

3) They both focus on the saving work of Christ and the union with God brought about through him.

Matthew 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

John 1:7,26,27,29-31,34 [John] came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel. ³⁴ I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

Acts 19:4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

D2 E, VII, 2.**There were differences between John's baptism and Christian baptism.****a) During the time of John's baptism Christ's work was still future.****b) We cannot ascertain the baptismal formula used by John and do not know if he baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."**

D2 E, VII, 3. John's work and his baptism were of a transient nature.

a) John's mission was to prepare God's people for the proper reception of the long-expected Messiah.

Luke 1:76 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him.

John 3:27-30 To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' ²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰ He must become greater; I must become less."

b) The work of Jesus before the culmination of his suffering and death was of a similar nature.

Matthew 3:2 and 4:17 [John was saying] "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." ¹⁷ From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

John 3:22-23 After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. ²³ Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.

John 4:1-3 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, ² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³ When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

c) Therefore the question concerning the nature of John's baptism is only of theoretical importance today.

1) At one time there were situations that called for a practical dealing with the question. We cannot envision that happening anymore.

Acts 19:1-6 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

³ So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. ⁴ Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Compare Acts 18:24-26 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

2) Without Bible support, the Roman Catholic Church denies the essential sameness of both baptisms.

Council of Trent, Sess. VII, Can. 1: If anyone says that the baptism of John had the same power as the baptism of Christ, let him be damned.

D2 F. The Lord's Supper

D2 F, I. The Lord's Supper is a sacramental meal established by Christ.

D2 F, I, 1. This character of the sacramental meal is reflected in its names in Scripture.

a) **The meal is called the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Table, and (at times) the breaking of bread.**

1 Corinthians 11:20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper (κυριακὸν δεῖπνον) you eat.

1 Corinthians 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table (τράπεζα κυρίου) and the table of demons.

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

b) **There are additional names for the sacramental meal that have been used in the church.**

1) **The sacramental meal is called the Eucharist (reflecting the biblical use of εὐχαριστεῖν and εὐλογεῖν)**

Matthew 26:26,27 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks (εὐλογήσας) and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks (εὐχαριστήσας) and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

Mark 14:22,23 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks (εὐλογήσας) and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."²³ Then he took the cup, gave thanks (εὐχαριστήσας) and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.

Luke 22:19 And he took bread, gave thanks (εὐχαριστήσας) and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11:24 And when he had given thanks (εὐχαριστήσας), he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 406, 66: We are not ignorant that the mass is called by the Fathers a sacrifice; but they do not mean that the mass confers grace ex opere operato, and that, when applied on behalf of others, it merits for them the remission of sins, of guilt and punishment. Where are such monstrous stories to be found in the Fathers? But they openly testify that they are speaking of thanksgiving. Accordingly they call it a eucharist.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 410, 76 Besides these, expressions are also found concerning thanksgiving, such as that most beautifully said by Cyprian concerning those communing in a godly way. Piety, says he, in thanking the Bestower of such abundant blessing, makes a distinction between what has been given and what has been forgiven, i.e., piety regards both what has been given and what has been forgiven, i.e., it compares the greatness of God's blessings and the greatness of our evils, sin and death, with each other, and gives thanks, etc. And hence the term eucharist arose in the church.

2) **The sacramental meal is called Communion (reflecting the biblical use of κοινωνία).**

1 Corinthians 10:16,17 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation (κοινωνία) in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation (κοινωνία) in the body of Christ? ¹⁷Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Smalcald Articles, Part II, Art. II, p 464, 8: But if any one should advance the pretext that as an act of devotion he wishes to administer the Sacrament, or Communion, to himself, he is not in earnest. He would commit a great mistake and would not be speaking seriously and sincerely. For if he wishes to commune in sincerity, the surest and best way for him is in the sacrament administered according to Christ's institution. But that one administer communion to himself is a human notion, uncertain, unnecessary, yea, even prohibited.

3) **Sacrament of the Altar is another term used for the sacramental meal.**

Hebrews 13:10 We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat.

Small Catechism, p 554, 1.2 What is the Sacrament of the Altar? Answer: It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ himself.

4) The sacramental meal has also been called the Mass.

The source of the term is not certain. One possibility is the expression: *Ite, missa est* (namely, *contio catechumenorum*).

Augsburg Confession, Art. XXIV, 1-5, p 64: Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the mass; for the mass is retained among us and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, except that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. For ceremonies are needed to this end alone that the unlearned be taught what they need to know of Christ. And not only has Paul commanded to use in the church a language understood by the people (1 Cor. 14:2. 9), but it has also been so ordained by man's law. The people are accustomed to partake of the sacrament together, if any be fit for it, and this also increases the reverence and devotion of public worship.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 384, 6: The fact that we hold only public or common mass at which the people also commune, not private mass, is no offense against the church catholic. For in the Greek churches even today private masses are not held, but there is only a public mass, and that on the Lord's Day and festivals. In the monasteries daily mass is held, but this is only public. These are the traces of former customs. For nowhere do the ancient writers before Gregory make mention of private masses.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 412, 84-87: Ridiculous is their inference that, since mention is made in the Holy Scriptures of an altar, therefore the mass must be a sacrifice; for the figure of an altar is referred to by Paul only by way of comparison. And they fabricate that the mass has been so called from אֲלֹתָא, an altar. What need is there of an etymology so far fetched, unless it be to show their knowledge of the Hebrew language?

D2 F, I, 2. The Lord's Supper may be seen as prefigured, to a certain extent, in the Old Testament.

a) We can see a certain connection between the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper.

1) Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper in immediate connection with the Passover meal.

Matthew 26:17-20, 26-28 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"¹⁸ He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'"¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.²⁰ When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve.²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

2) It should be remembered, however, that the Passover celebration prefigured truths that go beyond the focus of the Lord's Supper, such as a commemoration of leaving Egypt and the cleansing of one's lifestyle from the yeast of sin.

1 Corinthians 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

Exodus 12:24-28,43-51 "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants."²⁵ When you enter the land that the LORD will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony.²⁶ And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?'²⁷ then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped.²⁸ The Israelites did just what the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron.⁴³ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the regulations for the Passover: "No foreigner is to eat of it.⁴⁴ Any slave you have bought may eat of it after you have circumcised him,⁴⁵ but a temporary resident and a hired worker may not eat of it.⁴⁶ "It must be eaten inside one house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones.⁴⁷ The whole community of Israel must celebrate it.⁴⁸ "An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.⁴⁹ The same law applies to the native-born and to the alien living among you."⁵⁰ All the Israelites did just what the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.⁵¹ And on that very day the LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions.

Exodus 13:7,8-10 Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders.⁸ On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.'⁹ This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the LORD is to be

on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. ¹⁰ You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year.

b) We may also see a parallel between expressing fellowship while eating and drinking in the old covenant and the eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper.

Exodus 24:9-11 Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up ¹⁰ and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself. ¹¹ But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.

c) Theologians occasionally mention manna as something that prefigured the Lord's Supper.

1) At first glance we may perceive a connection of the eating of the manna with the eating of the bread in the sacrament.

Exodus 16:11-15 The LORD said to Moses, ¹² "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'" ¹³ That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. ¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" [מַן הוּא] For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat."

2) Speaking of manna in connection with the Supper, however, requires great caution lest we blur the distinction between regular physical eating, spiritual eating, and sacramental eating.

John 6:31,35,48-51 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³⁵ Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. ⁵⁰ But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

d) Roman Catholics refer to Melchizedek's meal in their attempt to establish the Lord's Supper as a sacrificial meal. Only external similarities may be found here, however.

Genesis 14:18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High.

D2 F, II. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper must be taken from the words of institution and other clear references to the sacramental meal, not from biblical texts that deal with other subjects.

D2 F, II, 1. There are essentially two proper sources for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper: the words of institution and other obvious references to the sacred meal.

a) The accounts of the institution of the sacrament are clearly sources of doctrine on this subject.

Matthew 26:26-28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Mark 14:22-24 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." ²³ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

Luke 22:19,20 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

b) Other clear references to the sacramental meal also serve as sources of doctrine.

1 Corinthians 10:16,17,21 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

1 Corinthians 11:20-22,26-34 When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, ²¹ for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. ²² Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and

blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. ³² When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. ³³ So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. ³⁴ If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions.

c) Recognizing these sources of doctrine regarding the Lord's Supper is necessary. Rightly using them is also necessary to avoid error.

Chemnitz: Just as any doctrines of the church and individual articles of faith have their proper "seat" in certain passages of Scripture in which they are directly treated and explained, in such a way that the true and genuine sense of the doctrines themselves is to be correctly looked for and established with certainty from those passages, so it is beyond controversy that the right belief about the Lord's Supper has its very own passage and its proper seat or basis in the words of institution. . . . For all the Sacramentarians, no matter how many they may be, take what they want to believe and think about the Lord's Supper not out of the words of institution, understood properly and simply, just as they sound, but they come with presuppositions drawn (*praesumunt*) from other passages of Scripture, most of which say nothing about the Lord's Supper. One chooses one set of passages, another a different set, according to his own analogy which each fashions for himself. And after they have determined from other passages of Scripture what they want to believe about the Lord's Supper, then finally they take up the words of institution. After that they work and labor to force a view that has been formed from other passages on the words of institution by some figurative interpretation that does violence to the text (*Coen. Dom.*, 9).

Luther: Therefore you must not allow anyone to take these words "This is my body," from you or to change them; not as though his body were signified by the bread, as they claim, but just as the words read. This bread is my body, present in its essence. It is not proper to twist the Scriptures in this way according to one's own opinions, but one would need to demonstrate a clear passage that the word "to be" is equivalent to "represent." And even if one could show that this is true in some sentences, that would not be enough. But one would also have to prove clearly that it should and must be understood in this way in this passage. That they will never be able to do. If that can not be done, one should simply surrender as a captive to God's words and understand them as they read (*St. L*, XII, 406,20).

D2 F, II, 2. John 6:22–66 is not a valid source for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Though many people have attempted to formulate a doctrine of the Lord's Supper from this discourse, it is improper to do so.

a) The eating and drinking mentioned in John 6 does not refer to the sacramental eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper.

- 1) The words of John 6 were spoken before the sacramental meal had been instituted. There was no transitional or preparatory rite that would help the people understand sacramental eating. One may point to John's baptism as preparatory for Christian baptism, but there was nothing like this that preceded the Lord's Supper.**
- 2) John 6 contains various statements that clearly show the Lord's Supper is not being spoken of.**

-a) Eternal life is here guaranteed to the one who eats and drinks; that is not true for all who receive the sacrament.

John 6:54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

1 Corinthians 11:27,29 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

-b) Eternal life is here said to be impossible without this eating and drinking, thus indicating that saving faith is meant. It is possible, however, to gain eternal life without the reception of the sacrament.

John 6:53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

Mark 10:13-15 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Matthew 18:2-3,6 He called a little child and had him stand among them. ³ And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁶ But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it

would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.”

Consider Hebrews 11:1-40, with the reminder that many obtained eternal life without any participation in the Lord’s Supper.

-c) In John 6 Jesus always refers to his “flesh” rather than his “body” as he did when he instituted the sacramental meal.

John 6:51,53-56 ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh (σάρξ), which I will give for the life of the world.” ⁵³ Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh (σάρξ) of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Whoever eats my flesh (σάρξ) and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh (σάρξ) is real food and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh (σάρξ) and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.

1 Corinthians 11:24,27,29 When he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body (σῶμα), which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body (σῶμα) and blood of the Lord. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body (σῶμα) of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. (Also see parallels in Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22, and Luke 22:19, where σῶμα is used).

b) The text and context of John 6, therefore, indicate that Jesus meant to impress on the hearts of his hearers that there is no salvation except by faith in him.

1) Jesus points to himself in his work as the bread of life. In giving himself up for us, he gives us his flesh.

John 6:35,48-51 Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. ⁵⁰ But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

2) Thus the forceful “eating his flesh and drinking his blood” is a more emphatic synonymous phrase for “eating him”.

John 6:50,51,57,58 Here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.

3) Both phrases are metaphorical expressions for “believing”.

John 6:35,40,47 Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. ⁴⁰ For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.”

4) The use of this figurative language fit the occasion perfectly.

Consider John 6:4-13 and the feeding of the 5,000 that had taken place.

Then consider John 6:14-15,26,27,31,32 and the lesson Jesus was trying to teach the people. ¹⁴ After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” ¹⁵ Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. ²⁶ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval. ³¹ Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” ³² Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.”

5) At least many of the people, and the apostles, understood (and in part resented) the claim of Jesus.

John 6:41,42,52,60,67,68 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” ⁴² They said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I came down from heaven?’” ⁵² Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” ⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?” ⁶⁷ “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

c) **John 6, in other words, deals with a spiritual rather than a sacramental eating of Christ. Our Confessions offer this clarification:**

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 994, 61,62: There is, therefore, a two-fold eating of the flesh of Christ, one spiritual, of which Christ treats especially John 6:54, which occurs in no other way than with the Spirit and faith, in the preaching and meditation of the gospel, as well as in the Lord's Supper, and by itself is useful and salutary, and necessary at all times for salvation to all Christians; without which spiritual participation also the sacramental or oral eating in the Supper is not only not salutary, but even injurious and damning. But this spiritual eating is nothing else than *faith*, namely, to hear God's Word (in which Christ, true God and man, is presented to us, together with all benefits which he has purchased for us by his flesh given into death for us, and by His blood shed for us, namely, God's grace, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life), to receive it with faith and appropriate it to ourselves, and in all troubles and temptations firmly to rely, with sure confidence and trust, and to abide in the consolation that we have a gracious God, and eternal salvation on account of the Lord Jesus Christ. He who hears these things related from the Word of God, and in faith receives and applies them to himself, and relies entirely upon this consolation (that we have God reconciled and life eternal on account of the Mediator, Jesus Christ),—he, I say, who with true confidence rests in the Word of the gospel in all troubles and temptations, spiritually eats the body of Christ and drinks His blood.

D2 F, II, 3. In harmony with the gospel accounts, Paul points to the fact that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper on the night in which he was betrayed.

a) **The original setting of the institution of the sacrament is significant. The culmination of our Lord's redeeming work was imminent. What the Lord said was not a casual comment, but a solemn declaration.**

1 Corinthians 11:23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread. . . .

Matthew 26:2 As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.

Luke 22:14-15 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

John 13:1 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father.

b) **Recognizing the time and setting of the institution of the sacrament is important for a correct evaluation of the Supper.**

1) **This night was a significant dividing point between the Old and the New Testament. The redemption of mankind was being carried out, and the Supper was an important part of the Savior's work.**

-a) **With the eating of that Passover meal the time of shadows came to an end.**

Colossians 2:17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Hebrews 8:5 [Levitical priests] serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

Hebrews 10:1 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

Matthew 27:51 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split.

-b) **The Supper marks the beginning of the era of realities which will culminate in the marriage feast of the Lamb in heaven.**

Luke 22:15,16 He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

Matthew 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Revelation 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Revelation 19:9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

2) When he instituted the sacrament Jesus knew that his death was at hand. His Supper may therefore be regarded as part of his last will and testament for his people.

Matthew 26:20-25 When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. ²¹ And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." ²² They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?" ²³ Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." ²⁵ Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you."

-a) In that kind of setting it is customary that clear and unmistakable terms be used to avoid misunderstandings or misinterpretations that would frustrate the will of the testator.

-b) Also, once a testament has been properly confirmed, it is to be respected.

Galatians 3:15 Brothers, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case.

3) It is our conviction that these considerations teach us to treat our Lord's words of institution with sacred awe.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 986, 43-47: For since our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, concerning whom, as our only Teacher, this solemn command has been given from heaven to all men: *Hunc audite*, Hear him, who is not a mere man or angel, neither true, wise, and mighty only, but the eternal Truth and Wisdom itself and Almighty God, who knows very well what and how he is to speak, and who also can powerfully effect and execute everything that he speaks and promises, as he says Luke 21:33: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away; also Matt. 28:18: All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,—Since, now, this true, almighty Lord, our Creator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, after the Last Supper, when he is just beginning his bitter suffering and death for our sins, in those sad last moments, with great consideration and solemnity, in the institution of this most venerable sacrament, which was to be used until the end of the world with great reverence and obedience and humility, and was to be an abiding memorial of his bitter suffering and death and all his benefits, a sealing and confirmation of the New Testament, a consolation of all distressed hearts, and a firm bond of union of Christians with Christ, their Head, and with one another, in the ordaining and institution of the Holy Supper spoke these words concerning the bread which he blessed and gave to His disciples: Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you, and concerning the cup, or wine: This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins;—Now, since this is so, We are certainly in duty bound not to interpret and explain these words of the eternal, true, and almighty Son of God, our Lord, Creator, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, differently, as allegorical, figurative, tropical expressions, according as it seems agreeable to our reason, but with simple faith and due obedience to receive the words as they read, in their proper and plain sense, and allow ourselves to be diverted from this express testament of Christ by no objections or human contradictions spun from human reason, however charming they may appear to reason.

D2 F, III. The visible (earthly) elements of the Lord's Supper are bread and wine.

D2 F, III, 1. The first element is constantly and exclusively called bread (ἄρτος). No mention is made and no command is given regarding the kind of bread to be used.

1 Corinthians 11:26,27,28 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

1 Corinthians 10:16,17 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

a) Jesus undoubtedly used unleavened bread at the Passover meal, and for that reason the church has often used unleavened bread. But the use of unleavened bread is not explicitly commanded in Scripture.

Matthew 26:17 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

Exodus 12:15 For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel.

Quenstedt: Unleavened or unfermented bread is chosen because of its purity, because of the authority of the example of Christ, and because of the practice and custom of the early church (*TDP*, Part IV, chap. VI, Sect. I, thesis VII, note I, p 178).

Compare the Roman Catechism (1563): The peculiar suitableness of the consecration of unleavened bread to express that integrity and purity of mind which the faithful should bring to this sacrament we learn from

these words of the Apostle: Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new dough, as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover is sacrificed. Therefore, let us feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. This quality of the bread, however, is not to be deemed so essential that, if it be wanting, the sacrament cannot exist; for both kinds are called by the one name and have the true and proper nature of bread. No one, however, is at liberty on his own private authority, or rather presumption, to transgress the laudable rite of his Church. And such departure is the less warrantable in priests of the Latin Church, expressly obliged as they are by the supreme Pontiffs, to consecrate the sacred mysteries with unleavened bread only (Constituent Parts of the Eucharist, para. 6,7, p 220f.).

b) According to the research of Jacques Sirmond (d. 1651) the use of leavened bread prevailed in the early church.

Philip Schaff, concerning the Eucharist observances of the ante-Nicene church: The elements were common or leavened bread (except among the Ebionites, who, like the later Roman Church from the seventh century, used unleavened bread) and wine mingled with water (*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, p 238).

c) It is irrelevant of what cereal the bread is made.

Walther: It is an adiaphoron whether the bread is leavened or unleavened; whether it is rye, wheat, barley, or oat bread, whether it has this or that shape; as long as it is baked from the flour of some grain and water (*Pastoral Theology*, p 130). Parallel statements are found in John Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, p 122, and Armin Schuetze and Irwin Habeck, *Shepherd Under Christ*, p 90.

Contrast the Roman Catechism (1563): The first element is wheat bread, of which we shall now speak. . . . There are various sorts of bread, either because they consist of different materials, such as wheat, barley, pulse, and other products of the earth, or because they possess different qualities, some being leavened, others altogether without leaven. It is to be observed that, with regard to the former kinds, the words of the Savior show that the bread should be wheat; for, according to common usage, when we simply say bread, we are sufficiently understood to mean wheat bread (Constituent Parts of the Eucharist, para. 2,3, p 220).

Contrast the Catechism of the Catholic Church: The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper (Para. 1412).

d) Communion wafers not only have the essential characteristics of bread, but their use may also, under certain circumstances, become an act of confession.

Recall some of the derogatory terms that Reformed theologians have used in regard to the wafer: *Schaumbrote* (foam- or scum-bread), *Kleisterleim* (paste, glue), *brotlose Pfaffenkuechlein* (breadless clergy-cake), *Papierkuechlein* (paper cake).

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. X, p 828, 6.10 We believe, teach, and confess that in time of persecution, when a plain and steadfast confession is required of us, we should not yield to the enemies in regard to such adiaphora, as the apostle has written Gal. 5, 1: Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.

D2 F, III, 2. The second element is identified in Scripture as “the fruit of the vine” (γένημα τῆς ἀμπέλου).

a) This element is never mentioned directly by name in the words of institution. The word cup (ποτήριον) is used in metonymy for its contents and the contents are identified as “fruit of the vine.”

1 Corinthians 10:16,21 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons.

Matthew 26:27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.”

Mark 14:23 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.

1 Corinthians 11:26-28 Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. ²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

Matthew 26:29 I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father’s kingdom.

Mark 14:25 I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.

Luke 22:18 I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

- b) **“Fruit of the vine” refers to fruit of the grape vine and may be understood as a term wide enough to include grape wine or unfermented grape juice. Other so-called wines or other juices should not be used.**

- 1) **We are quite confident that Jesus used grape wine when he instituted the sacramental meal, and it was likely that he used wine mixed with water. It is permissible but not necessary to dilute the wine with water when using it for the Lord’s Supper.**

Contrast Bellarmine: Mixing water with the wine in the chalice is so necessary that it cannot be omitted without grievous sin (*Disputationes*, Vol. III, de sacramento eucharistiae, book IV, chap. X, 7, p 364).

Contrast the Roman Catechism (1563): With the wine, however, the Church of God has always mingled water. First, because Christ the Lord did so, as is proved by the authority of Councils and the testimony of St. Cyprian; next, because by this mixture is renewed the recollection of the blood and water that issued from his side. Waters, also, as we read in the Apocalypse, signify the people; and hence, water mixed with the wine signifies the union of the faithful with Christ their Head. This rite, derived as it is from Apostolic tradition, the Catholic Church has always observed. But although there are reasons so grave for mingling water with the wine that it cannot be omitted without incurring the guilt of mortal sin, yet its omission does not render the sacrament null. (Constituent Parts of the Eucharist, para. 11-13. p 222).

- 2) **The conclusion that the term “fruit of the vine” is broad enough to cover unfermented grape wine and grape juice is drawn from biblical use of the terminology, not from agreement with those who favor abstinence from the use of alcohol as a matter of conscience.**

Numbers 6:2-4 Speak to the Israelites and say to them: “If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD as a Nazirite, ³ he must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or from other fermented drink. He must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. ⁴ As long as he is a Nazirite, he must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins.”

Judges 13:13,14 The angel of the LORD answered, “Your wife must do all that I have told her. ¹⁴ She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her.”

Compare Walther: It was an error . . . when the Gnostic Enkratites [“Abstainers”] in the second to fourth centuries completely forbade wine and used only water in its place, even in the holy Supper, in which they have recently been followed by certain temperance fanatics [*Schwaermer*] in America (*Pastoral Theology*, p 130).

Compare Armin Schuetze and Irwin Habeck: Since the term used for the contents of the cup is “fruit of the vine,” the use of unfermented grape juice in case of an emergency cannot be considered invalid. Nevertheless, the church will avoid all doubt on the part of its members by using fermented fruit of the vine and may at times do so also as a confessional action over against anyone who claims that the use of any alcoholic beverage is sin (*Shepherd Under Christ*, p 90). Parallel statement in John Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, p 123.

D2 F, IV. The invisible (heavenly) elements of the Supper are the body and blood of Christ.

D2 F, IV, 1. One invisible element in the sacramental meal is the body of Christ.

- a) **With the plain and clear words, “Take, eat, this is my body” (λάβετε φάγετε, τοῦτο ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα μου) Christ promises to give his disciples his body to eat.**

Observe that all parallel accounts of the words of institution (in Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22, Luke 22:19, and 1 Corinthians 11:24) have the same words, τοῦτο ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα μου, with Paul using a slightly different word order, τοῦτο μού ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα.

- b) **Scripture also assures us that the bread remains in the sacramental meal along with the body of Christ. The bread serves as a vehicle of the body.**

- 1) **ἄρτος is masculine and grammatically the neuter τοῦτο does not agree with it. This may simply be a matter of the demonstrative agreeing in gender with the predicate that follows (σῶμα), giving it a greater emphasis than the antecedent. It may also refer to “something here and now, directing attention to it” (BAG, p 600).**

Compare Leonhard Riisen (d. 1700) who denies the presence of Christ’s body: The subject appears here expressed by the demonstrative pronoun *hoc*, which must necessarily refer to the bread, because it is a demonstrative pronoun. A demonstrative pronoun points to something present. But nothing up to that point was present but the substance of bread, which he took, broke, and gave to his disciples (XVII, 51, 7; Heppe, p 639)

- 2) **Paul’s words in particular make it clear that the bread remains in the sacramental meal along with the promised body of Christ.**

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 11:27,28 Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

3) Since both the bread and his body are present in the sacramental meal, Christ might have said: “This bread is my body.” The Lutheran Confessions use this expression to denote the sacramental union.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VI, 1, p 492: Of the Sacrament of the Altar we hold that bread and wine in the Supper are the true body and blood of Christ and are given and received not only by the godly, but also by wicked Christians.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 976, 12-15, 17-19 They confess, according to the words of Irenaeus, that in this sacrament there are two things, a heavenly and an earthly. Accordingly, they hold and teach that with the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ are truly and essentially present, offered, and received. And although they believe in no transubstantiation, that is, an essential transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, nor hold that the body and blood of Christ are included in the bread *localiter*, that is, locally, or are otherwise permanently united therewith apart from the use of the sacrament, yet they concede that through the sacramental union the bread is the body of Christ, etc.

c) The mode of presence of Christ’s body with the bread in the Lord’s Supper is unique. In their attempts to maintain the revealed truth of the real presence our theologians have described the presence of the body as sacramental, real, true, substantial or essential, mystical, supernatural, incomprehensible, but not physical.

d) The relation between bread and body is called a *κοινωνία*, a sharing or a “communion”.

1) This communion affirms the existence of at least two objects and points to a relationship so close that you cannot do anything to the one without in the same act affecting the other.

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 11:27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

Chrysostom on *koinonia*: Why did [Paul in 1 Co 10:16] not say “participation” (*metalepsis* or *metoche*)? Because he intended to express something more and to point out how close the union (*henosis*) was. We communicate not only by participating and partaking, but also by being united. For as that body is united with Christ, so we are also united with him by this bread” (*A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. XII, p 139. For a fuller discussion on this point, see Werner Elert, *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries*, p 27,28, and also Hermann Sasse, *This Is My Body*, p 395).

2) No other relation between bread and body may be assumed.

Calov: We hold that the body and blood of Christ are not in the Supper by *μετουσίαν* or transubstantiation of substance, as the papists think, nor by *συνουσίαν*, or consubstantiation, as the Calvinists slanderously imagine that we say, nor by local inclusion, for example, by impanation, as meat is in a meat pie, or by invination, as they are accustomed to charge, nor by way of a descent from heaven and the right hand of God, which is then again followed by an ascension into heaven and to the right hand of the Father (*Systema*, Vol. IX, p 307).

3) The meaning of the words of institution, which affirm the presence of Christ’s body in the sacramental meal, are discussed at length by the Lutheran Confessions.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 988, 48-50: Now, all the circumstances of the institution of the Holy Supper testify that these words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which in themselves are simple, plain, clear, firm, and indubitable, cannot and must not be understood otherwise than in their usual, proper, and common signification. For since Christ gives this command concerning eating his body, etc., at the table and at supper, there is indeed no doubt that he speaks of real, natural bread and of natural wine, also of oral eating and drinking, so that there can be no metaphor, that is, a change of meaning, in the word *bread*, as though the body of Christ were a spiritual bread or a spiritual food of souls. Likewise, also Christ himself takes care that there be no metonymy either, that is, that in the same manner there be no change of meaning in the word *body*, and that he does not speak concerning a sign of his body, or concerning an emblem, a symbol, or figurative body, or concerning the virtue of his body and the benefits which he has earned by the sacrifice of his body for us, but of his true, essential body, which he delivered into death for us, and of his true, essential blood, which he shed for us on the tree of the cross for the remission of sins. Now, surely there is no interpreter of the words of Jesus Christ as faithful and sure as the Lord Christ himself, who understands best his words and his heart and opinion, and who is the wisest and most knowing for expounding them; and here, as in the making of his last will and testament and of his ever-abiding

covenant and union, as elsewhere in presenting and confirming all articles of faith, and in the institution of all other signs of the covenant and of grace or sacraments, as for example, circumcision, the various offerings in the Old Testament and Holy Baptism, he uses not allegorical, but entirely proper, simple, indubitable, and clear words; and in order that no misunderstanding can occur, he explains them more clearly with the words: Given for you, shed for you.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1004, 92-106 We neither will, nor can, nor should allow ourselves to be led away by thoughts of human wisdom, whatever outward appearance or authority they may have, from the simple, distinct, and clear sense of the Word and testament of Christ to a strange opinion, other than the words read, but that, in accordance with what is above stated, we understand and believe them simply, our reasons upon which we have rested in this matter ever since the controversy concerning this article arose, are those which Dr. Luther himself, in the very beginning, presented against the Sacramentarians in the following words (Dr. Luther in his *Large Confession concerning the Holy Supper*): My reasons upon which I rest in this matter are the following: 1) The first is this article of our faith: Jesus Christ is essential, natural, true, perfect God and man in one person, inseparable and undivided. 2) The second, that God's right hand is everywhere. 3) The third, that God's Word is not false, nor does it lie. 4) The fourth, that God has and knows of many modes of being in any place, and not only the single one concerning which the fanatics talk flippantly, and which philosophers call *localem*, or local. . . . Thus our faith in this article concerning the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper is based upon the *truth and omnipotence* of the true, almighty God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These foundations are strong and firm enough to strengthen and establish our faith in all temptations concerning this article, and, on the contrary, to overthrow and refute all the counter-arguments and objections of the Sacramentarians, however agreeable and plausible they may be to our reason; and upon them a Christian heart also can securely and firmly rest and rely.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 990, 54-57 So also that repetition, confirmation, and explanation of the words of Christ which St. Paul makes 1 Cor. 10:16, where he writes as follows: The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? is to be considered with all diligence and seriousness, accurately, as an especially clear testimony of the true, essential presence and distribution of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper. From this we clearly learn that not only the cup which Christ blessed at the first Supper, and not only the bread which Christ broke and distributed, but also that which we break and bless, is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, so that all who eat this bread and drink of this cup truly receive, and are partakers of, the true body and blood of Christ. For if the body of Christ were present and partaken of, not truly and essentially, but only according to its power and efficacy, the bread would have to be called, not a communion of the body, but of the Spirit, power, and benefits of Christ, as the *Apology* argues and concludes.

D2 F, IV, 2.

The second invisible, heavenly element in the Lord's Supper is the blood of Christ.

a) The real presence of Christ's blood is also made clear by his words. There are two versions of Jesus' words, which are in perfect agreement.

1) Matthew and Mark preserved one form of expression. This corresponds to the words used with reference to the bread (τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμα μου τῆς διαθήκης). The meaning is that the wine is the vehicle for the blood of Jesus.

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Mark 14:24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

2) Paul and Luke preserved the other way of expressing the truth. This reads: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you."

Luke 22:20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινῆ διαθήκῃ ἐν τῷ αἵματι μου)

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." (τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινῆ διαθήκῃ ἐστιν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι)

-a) The new covenant is essentially the forgiveness of sins.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. ³³ "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Romans 11:27 This is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.

Hebrews 10:16,17 “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”¹⁷ Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.”

- b) **“In my blood” means “by means of, on account of my blood.”**
- c) **This cup “is” the new covenant, that is, this cup offers, conveys, and seals forgiveness of sins.**

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.”

- b) **The real presence of Christ’s blood, promised by Christ in his words of institution, is affirmed by the Lutheran Confessions.**

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 990, 52.53: For this reason, too, all three evangelists (Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19) and St. Paul, who received the same the institution of the Lord’s Supper after the ascension of Christ from Christ himself (1 Cor. 11.:24) unanimously and with the same words and syllables repeat concerning the consecrated and distributed bread these distinct, clear, firm, and true words of Christ: “This is my body”, altogether in one way, without any interpretation and change. Therefore there is no doubt that also concerning the other part of the Sacrament these words of Luke and Paul: “This cup is the new testament in my blood,” can have no other meaning than that which St. Matthew and St. Mark give: This (namely, that which you orally drink out of the cup) is my blood of the new testament, whereby I establish, seal, and confirm with you men this my testament and new covenant, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

D2 F, IV, 3. The heavenly element in the sacramental meal is not to be identified with the whole person of Christ nor with the sacrificial virtue of his death.

- a) **Some have wrongly identified the whole person of Christ as the invisible element in the Lord’s Supper.**

- 1) **Calvinists have assumed this synecdoche.**

Helvetic Confession (1536), I, 23 : [The Eucharist] is a mystic Supper in which the Lord truly offers his body and blood, that is, himself to those who are his in order that more and more he might live in them and they in him.

Calvin: The whole person of Christ is offered to us in the Sacrament (*Institutes*, IV, 17, 31).

- 2) **Roman Catholics have also spoken this way in the interest of their doctrine of concomitance, which was used to justify the withholding of the cup from the laity.**

Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, Can. 3: If anyone denies that in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is contained under each kind and under the individual and parts of each kind when a separation has been made; let him be damned.

Contrast the Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VI, p 492, 2-4: [We hold] that not only one form is to be given. For we do not need that high art of specious wisdom which is to teach us that under the one form there is as much as under both, as the sophists and the Council of Constance teach. For even if it were true that there is as much under one as under both, yet the one form only is not the entire ordinance and institution ordained and commanded by Christ.

- 3) **Christ is, indeed, personally present in communion, but what he offers as the object of eating and drinking is his body and blood.**

Matthew 28:20 And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

- b) **Others have wrongly identified the sacrificial virtue or effects of the death of Christ as the invisible element in the Lord’s Supper.**

- 1) **Reformed and Evangelical theologians have done so.**

Riissen (so also Wolleb): The internal element is Christ with his whole satisfaction and merit (Cited in Heppe, *Dogmatik de Ref. - Kirche*, p 466ff.).

Charles Hodge: To receive body and blood as offered in the Sacrament . . . is to receive and appropriate the sacrificial virtue or effects of the death of Christ (*ST*, III, p 646).

Grudem: Certainly Jesus is not speaking of a literal eating of his flesh and blood. But if he is not speaking of a literal eating and drinking, then he must have in mind a spiritual participation in the benefits of the redemption he earns (*ST*, p 990).

Kenneth Taylor, paraphrasing 1 Corinthians 10:16-17: When we ask the Lord’s blessing on our drinking from the cup of wine at the Lord’s Table, this means, doesn’t it, that all who drink it are sharing together the blessing of Christ’s blood? And when we break off pieces of the bread from the loaf to eat there together, this shows that we are sharing together in the benefits of his body (*The Living Bible*).

- 2) **In the light of Christ's words, this idea results in nonsense. The heavenly element is, according to Christ's statement, what he gave into death and poured out for us. Any attempt to substitute "virtue" for body and blood in the words of institution will show the absurdity.**

Theodore Beza (who called men like Westphal and Heshusius "Cannibals", "Cyclops", "Asses", "Sophists" etc.): Certainly it would be very absurd to interpret the words "body" and "blood" to denote the effect and efficacy of the Lord's death or to restrict these words only to the sacrament's spiritual intention. That this may be understood as clearly as possible let us substitute this interpretation for the words "body" and "blood" and say, "This is the efficacy of my death which is given for you", and "This is my spiritual intention which is poured out for you." What is more foolish than such talk? [In his writings Beza takes the copula in a figurative sense.] (*Epistle 5 ad Alemannum*, p 57, cited in Gerhard, *Loci, de sac. Coena*, Art. 76).

D2 F, IV, 4. The body and blood of Christ, which are promised and given in the Lord's Supper, may after Christ's resurrection be described as his glorified body and glorified blood. But even prior to being in his glorified state, the body and blood were the body and blood of the Son of God.

- a) **The glorification of the body of Christ may serve to illustrate the truth of his unlimited ability to be present according to various modes of presence.**

Philippians 3:21 [The Lord Jesus Christ], by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Chemnitz: Christ, therefore, in the Supper offers us his body and His blood, which have been exalted above all miseries, in the glory of the Father in such a way that by these he unites himself with this miserable nature of ours (*Fundamenta*, chap. XI, *quinto*, p 73)

- b) **In reality, however, the glorified state of Christ's body and blood is irrelevant as far as the sacramental presence is concerned.**

- 1) **During the first Supper Jesus was still living in the state of humiliation or exinanition.**

Quenstedt: It is objected that the presence of the body of Christ is in conflict with the circumstances at the first Supper, because at the first Supper Christ was not hidden, concealed invisibly in, under, and with the bread, but he sat visibly at the table. Polanus, Keckermann, Ursinus argue in this way. Likewise, his blood had not yet been poured out of his veins. Zwingli and Beza argued thus (*TDP*, part IV, chap. VI, sect. II, qu. II, *obj. dial.* X, p 201).

Quenstedt: The visible, natural, local sitting of Christ's body at the table does not cancel out his invisible, mystical and sacramental presence. . . . Nor do different temporal circumstances, namely, of the future or the past, in the shedding of the blood, change the thing or substance itself (*TDP*, part IV, chap. VI, sect. II, qu. II, *obj. dial.* XII, p 201).

Walther: The presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper must not be based on the glorification of the body of Christ. The glorification endows the body only with spiritual, not with divine attributes. We believe that Christ's body is present in the Sacrament and received 1) because of the promise of Christ, 2) because Christ's body is the body of the Son of God. . . . It is a mistake to say: Christ can now give us his body in the Lord's Supper because it is glorified. This unsound argument contains the admission that Christ before his glorification could not give his body, a concession that would cancel the first celebration of the Supper (*Lectures*, 1874; cited in F. Pieper, *CD*, III, p 360).

- 2) **The only matter of importance is the promise of Jesus.**

Hutter, paraphrased by Hoenecke: Hutter makes the pertinent observation that in the question of the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, we must distinguish two questions: 1) Does Christ *want* to be present in body and blood? That he does is certain from Christ's words of institution. Therefore also Luther and his successors always cited these words above all else for the presence of the body and blood of Christ. 2) Is Christ *able* to be present in body and blood? On this point, says Hutter, it is certainly right to judge on the basis of the scriptural teaching concerning the person of Christ (*Loci*, p 716; in Hoenecke, *ELD*, Vol. IV, p 122).

- 3) **We may also refer to the hypostatic union, according to which the human nature of Christ fully shares his divine attributes.**

Quenstedt: The philosophical axiom, "A natural body cannot be in many places at one and the same time," is true of a body which is only human but it is not true of the body which is united with the λόγος (*TDP*, part IV, chap. VI, sect. II, qu. II, *obj. dial.* VI, p 200).

Formula of Concord, Ep. Art. VII, p 810, 10-14: The grounds, however, on which we stand against the Sacramentarians in this matter are those which Dr. Luther has laid down in his Large Confession concerning the Lord's Supper. The first is this article of our Christian faith: Jesus Christ is true, essential, natural, perfect God and man in one person, undivided and inseparable. The second: That God's right hand is everywhere; at which Christ is placed in deed and in truth according to His human nature, and therefore being present, rules, and has in his hands and beneath his feet everything that is in heaven and on earth as Scripture says, Eph. 1, 22, where no man else, nor angel, but only the

Son of Mary is placed; hence he can do those things which we have said. The third: That God's Word is not false, and does not deceive. The fourth: That God has and knows of various modes of being in any place, and is not bound to the one which philosophers call *localis* (local) or circumscribed. (Also see Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1004, 92-98,103)

D2 F, IV, 5. Those who receive the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner still receive the body and blood of Christ.

a) This truth is stated expressly by Paul.

1 Corinthians 11:27-29 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord (ἐνοχος ἔσται τοῦ σώματος καὶ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ κυρίου).²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord (μὴ διακρίνων τὸ σῶμα) eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 977, 16: Therefore, as St. Paul says, even the unworthy partake of the Sacrament, they hold that also to the unworthy the body and blood of Christ are truly offered, and the unworthy receive them, if and where the institution and command of the Lord Christ are observed.

b) The sacrament is what Christ declares it to be, the real presence of his body and blood.

1) Christ does not withdraw his promise merely because people do not believe the promise.

Romans 3:3 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

2) Whenever Christ's institution is followed in word and action, though people may misuse the sacrament and forfeit blessing, they do not invalidate Christ's sacrament.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. VII, p 812, 16,17: We believe, teach, and confess that not only the true believers in Christ and the worthy, but also the unworthy and unbelievers, receive the true body and blood of Christ; however, not for life and consolation, but for judgment and condemnation, if they are not converted and do not repent, 1 Cor. 11:27, 29. For although they thrust Christ from themselves as a Savior, yet they must admit him even against their will as a strict Judge, who is just as present also to exercise and render judgment upon impenitent guests as he is present to work life and consolation in the hearts of the true believers and worthy guests.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VI, p 994, 66, 67 All the ancient Christian teachers expressly, and in full accord with the entire holy Christian Church, teach, according to these words of the institution of Christ and the explanation of St. Paul, that the body of Christ is not only received spiritually by faith, which occurs also outside of the use of the Sacrament, but also orally, not only by believing and godly, but also by unworthy, unbelieving, false, and wicked Christians.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1012, 123: We reject also the teaching that unbelieving and impenitent, wicked Christians, who only bear the name of Christ, but do not have the right, true, living, and saving faith, receive in the Supper not the body and blood of Christ, but only bread and wine. And since there are only two kinds of guests found at this heavenly meal, the worthy and the unworthy, we reject also the distinction made among the unworthy, made by some who assert that the godless Epicureans and scoffers at God's Word, who are in the external fellowship of the Church, when using the Holy Supper, do not receive the body and blood of Christ for condemnation, but only bread and wine.

D2 F, V. The visible and the invisible elements are joined together in the sacrament in what is known as sacramental union.

D2 F, V, 1. This term does not attempt to explain the nature of the union, but merely asserts that it is peculiar to the sacrament.

- a) This "sacramental union" should not be confused with the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ, nor with the mystic union of the Triune God with his believers, nor with omnipresence.
- b) This "sacramental union" must not be conceived as impanation or invination (local inclusion of the elements), nor as consubstantiation (implying a physical mixture of the elements). These are inadequate and inappropriate attempts to explain the "how" of the real presence.

D2 F, V, 2. The union of the visible and invisible elements in the sacramental meal is taught by Scripture.

a) An intimate union between the elements is clearly expressed by Paul.

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation (κοινωνία) in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation (κοινωνία) in the body of Christ?

b) The words of institution speak of one undivided act of eating and drinking the visible and invisible elements. Receiving the visible elements unworthily makes one guilty of the body and blood of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:27-29 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Chemnitz: It is certain that not only bread is eaten in the Lord's Supper. For concerning that which is taken and eaten in that supper Christ said, "This is my body." And so in the Supper also the body of Christ is eaten, not, however, with only the mind and spirit by faith alone.... But concerning that which is taken with the mouth in that way the Son of God himself declared: "This is my body." However, it is impossible that one and the same word in the same sentence should have both a literal and figurative meaning at the same time. (*Coen. Dom.*, 19)

Hollaz: Sacramental eating and drinking is a single undivided action, in which we simultaneously in the same moment eat the eucharistic bread and the body of Christ sacramentally united with it. But this one eating and drinking is done in a double way. For although the earthly and heavenly element is taken with one and the same organ, yet this is not done in the same way. Bread and wine are received with the mouth directly (immediately) and in a natural way, the body and blood of Christ in a mediate (by means of bread and wine) and supernatural way (*Examen*, ca. 1130).

c) There is value in reading statements given by our Lutheran fathers on the biblical teaching of the sacramental union.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. VII, p 810, 7: We believe, teach, and confess that the words of the testament of Christ are not to be understood otherwise than as they read, according to the letter, so that the bread does not signify the absent body and the wine the absent blood of Christ, but that, on account of the sacramental union, the bread and wine are truly the body and blood of Christ.

Gerhard: After it has been demonstrated that the words of the Holy Supper should be understood κατὰ τὸ ῥητόν, according to their genuine, literal, and natural meaning, the view of our churches concerning the true, real, and substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper cannot be doubtful or uncertain, because that view flows directly out of the words of institution understood as they read in a literal and proper sense.... This presence is called 1) *sacramental*, because the heavenly element is given and offered to us in this sacrament by means of external sacramental symbols; 2) *true and real* to exclude the figment of a figurative, imaginary, and symbolic presence; 3) *substantial*, to keep the adversaries from taking refuge in a presence of only the efficacy of the body and blood of Christ in this sacrament; 4) *mystical, supernatural, and incomprehensible*, because the body and blood of Christ are present in this sacrament not in any earthly way but in a way that is mystical, supernatural, and incomprehensible. Some of our theologians call it a *bodily* presence, having in mind the object which is present but by no means the manner of the presence. They want to say this, that not only the power and efficacy but the very substance of the body and blood of Christ are present in the Holy Supper. For they use this word *bodily* in opposition to a spiritual presence as that term is defined by the adversaries. But they by no means intend to say that the body of Christ is present in a bodily or quantitative way, with physical dimensions (*Loci*, X, 165)

d) The sacramental union is customarily expressed by the prepositions "in, with, and under".

Gerhard: With these and similar words [the body and blood of Christ are received "in, with, and under" the bread and wine in the sacrament] nothing else is meant than the sacramental union of the consecrated bread and the body of Christ and of the consecrated chalice and the blood of Christ. That is, in the Holy Supper, by means of the blessed bread the true body of Christ is received, and by means of the blessed wine the true blood of Christ is received. The bread and wine in their natural state and essence, not changed or removed according to their natural state; yet, in the sacramental use and reception, not just common bread and wine, but the body and blood of Christ are received by means of the very same elements. How, then, may one differently and more suitably express such sacramental benefit and better guard against all perversions than when one says, the body of Christ is received and eaten in, with and under the consecrated bread and the blood of Christ is received and drunk in, with, and under the consecrated wine? . . . These and similar statements . . . emanate from the sacramental union of the consecrated bread and body of Christ and the consecrated chalice and blood of Christ. Whoever believes this from the heart will have no second thoughts about employing such forms of expression (*Comprehensive Examination*, Vol. II, p 88,89).

D2 F, V, 3. From the sacramental union it does not follow that eating and drinking must be understood in a “Capernaiteic” or cannibalistic sense, as physical chewing and digesting. This faulty understanding of the sacramental eating and drinking rightly acknowledges that we receive Christ’s body and blood through the mouth, but fails to see this is done in a supernatural and incomprehensible rather than a natural, physical way.

a) **Reformed theologians have denounced Lutherans as cannibals or have insinuated that we endorse such a concept.**

Recall the use of terms such as *Fleischfresser* and *Blutsaeufer* used in reference to Lutherans by people such as Theodore Beza.

Charles Hodge: Although the Lutherans reject the idea that the body of Christ in the Lord’s Supper is eaten after the manner of ordinary food, yet the language of Luther on the subject, adopted or defended by his followers, can hardly be understood in any other sense (*ST*, III, p 669).

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. VII, p 810, 15: We believe, teach, and confess that the body and blood of Christ are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually by faith, but also orally; yet not in a Capernaiteic, but in a supernatural, heavenly mode, because of the sacramental union.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. VII, p 816, 41,42: Likewise, we consign also to the just judgment of God all presumptuous, frivolous, blasphemous questions (which decency forbids to mention) and other expressions, which most blasphemously and with great offense to the Church are proposed by the Sacramentarians in a gross, carnal, Capernaiteic way concerning the supernatural, heavenly mysteries of this sacrament. Hence we hereby utterly reject and condemn the Capernaiteic eating of the body of Christ, as though we taught that his flesh were rent with the teeth, and digested like other food, which the Sacramentarians, against the testimony of their conscience, after all our frequent protests, willfully force upon us, and in this way make our doctrine odious to their hearers; and on the other hand, we maintain and believe, according to the simple words of the testament of Christ, the true, yet supernatural eating of the body of Christ, as also the drinking of his blood, which human senses and reason do not comprehend, but as in all other articles of faith our reason is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and this mystery is not apprehended otherwise than by faith alone, and revealed in the Word alone.

b) **The charge of cannibalism cannot rightly be made even against Roman Catholics despite their doctrine of transubstantiation.**

Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) in his hymn *Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem*:

Hear what Holy Church maintaineth,
that the bread its substance changeth
into flesh, the wine to blood.
Does it pass thy comprehending?
Faith, the law of sight transcending,
leaps to things not understood.

Here beneath these signs are hidden
priceless things, to sense forbidden;
signs, not things, are all we see.
Flesh from bread, and Blood from wine,
yet is Christ in either sign,
all entire confessed to be.

And whoe’er of him partakes,
severs not, nor rends, nor breaks:
all entire, their Lord receive.
Whether one or thousand eat,
all receive the selfsame meat,
nor do less for others leave.

D2 F, V, 4. The Reformed and Evangelicals, who deny the real presence of Christ’s body and blood in the sacrament, sometimes still speak of a “sacramental union,” though with a different meaning of the term.

a) **They are not referring to a real or essential union, but to a symbolic union of an external symbol and the object that is signified by the sign. In doing this they act as though this were the union of which the Scripture speaks.**

Helvetic Confession (1536), I, 23: Not because the body and blood of the Lord are naturally united with bread and wine, or locally included in bread and wine, or set before us here in any fleshly way, but because bread and wine are symbols by which a true sharing of His body and blood is displayed.

Scottish Confession (1560), 21: Although the distance between His body now glorified in the heavens and us mortals on this earth, is great, yet none the less we firmly believe that the bread which we break is the communion of the body, etc.

- b) **The Lutheran Confessions identify and reject this understanding of the sacramental union.** Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1012, 117: [We reject and condemn the teaching] that in the Supper the power, efficacy, and merit of the far-absent body of Christ are distributed only to faith, and we thus become partakers of his absent body; and that, in this way just mentioned, *unio sacramentalis*, that is, the sacramental union, is to be understood *de analogia signi et signati* (with respect to the analogy of the sign and that which is signified), that is, as far as the bread and wine have a resemblance to the body and blood of Christ.

D2 F, VI. The text and context of the words of institution do not lend themselves to a figurative interpretation that would deny the sacramental union of the visible and invisible elements in the Lord's Supper.

D2 F, VI, 1. A basic and necessary hermeneutic principle is that any figurative use of words must be clearly indicated by the author.

- a) The following premises of interpretation should be kept in mind.
- 1) Speech serves for the communication of thought.
 - 2) The author of a sentence is the only authoritative interpreter (in case the words themselves would allow more than one connotation or interpretation).
 - 3) The reader's only duty is to grasp the meaning of the sentence.
 - 4) Interpreting a sentence figuratively which was intended in the literal sense is a *quid pro quo*, the substitution of one thing for another.
 - 5) That a figurative understanding makes good sense is not in itself sufficient reason to forsake the literal meaning.
 - 6) That the literal meaning yields a sense that reason has difficulty grasping or involves difficulties that would be avoided by a figurative interpretation is not sufficient reason to forsake the literal meaning.
 - 7) That the word or phrase in question is used in a figurative sense elsewhere in Scripture is not in itself sufficient reason to forsake the literal meaning.
 - 8) The author must clearly show that he is speaking figuratively and wants to be so understood.
 - 9) Or the literal sense must be clearly impossible or contrary to clear and unambiguous Bible statements.
- b) Nothing in the words of institution demands or points to a figurative use.

D2 F, VI, 2. The Roman Catholic Church abandons the literal sense of the words of institution when they substitute the dogma of transubstantiation for the sacramental union. We reject this church dogma.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, ch. 4, can 2: Now once more this holy Synod declares that by consecration of the bread and wine a conversion or change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood takes place. This conversion or change is appropriately and properly called Transubstantiation by the Holy Catholic Church.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: In the epiclesis, the Church asks the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing) on the bread and wine, so that by his power they may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ (Para.1353).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1640; 1651) (Para. 1413).

Contrast the Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1008, 107,108: With heart and mouth we reject and condemn as false, erroneous, and misleading all errors which are not in accordance with, but contrary and opposed to, the doctrine above mentioned and founded upon God's Word, such as 1) The papistic transubstantiation, when it is taught that the consecrated or blessed bread and wine in the Holy Supper lose entirely their substance and essence, and are changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ in such a way that only the mere form of bread and wine is left, or *accidentia sine subiecto* (the accidents without the object); under which form of the bread, which nevertheless is bread no longer, but according to their assertion has lost its natural essence, the body of Christ is present even apart from the administration of the Holy Supper, when the bread is enclosed in the pyx or is carried about for display and adoration. For nothing can be a sacrament without God's command and the appointed use for which it is instituted in God's Word, as was shown above.

D2 F, VI, 3.

The Reformed and Evangelicals abandon the literal sense, denying the real presence of the body and blood of Christ and thus the sacramental union between the visible and invisible elements.

- a) While Reformed and Evangelical theologians may take differing paths and use different arguments, they uniformly deny the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament.**

Zurich Consensus (1549), 21, 25: Every idea of a local presence must be given up. For although the signs are here on earth, seen with the eyes, and touched by the hands, Christ, insofar as he is a human being, is nowhere else than in heaven. Nor is he to be sought in any way but with the mind and the understanding of faith. Therefore it is a perverse and godless superstition to include him under the elements of this world. Because ... the body of Christ, as the nature and mode of a human body demands, is finite and is contained in heaven as a place, therefore it is necessary that it should be distant from us by as great an interval of space as heaven is distant from earth.

Wayne Grudem: How can Christ's physical body, or more generally Christ's human nature, be everywhere present? Is it not true that Jesus in his human nature ascended into heaven and remains there until his return? (*ST*, p 994).

- b) Ulrich Zwingli and others took the word "is" in the words of institution to mean "signifies" and in that way ended up with a figurative interpretation.**

- 1) In an attempt to show this was a valid approach to the text, they pointed to various Scripture passages that admittedly contain figurative expressions.**

- a) They cite passages which contain metaphorical expressions.**

Matthew 5:13 You are the salt of the earth.

John 10:9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

1 Corinthians 10:4 [They all] drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

Isaiah 40:6 A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass **כָּל־אִדְמָה** (הַבְּשָׂר חֲצִיר) and all their glory is like the flowers of the field."

- b) They cite passages that are parables.**

Genesis 41:26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream.

Luke 8:11 This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.

Matthew 13:38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one.

Galatians 4:24 These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar.

- c) Additionally, one passage reportedly suggested to Zwingli by an unidentified advisor in a dream, was used to support the idea of the copula meaning something other than "is."**

Exodus 12:11 This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover.

- 2) An examination of these passages shows that in none of them does the copula change its meaning. The copula simply connects terms. The nature of that connection is determined by the context. The validity of making the word "is" mean "signifies" is not established.**

- a) The first group of passages cited does contain metaphorical expressions, but the figurative language is in the predicate noun, not in the copula. The predicate noun is a metaphor (a new word, with the same sound but different meaning).**

- b) The second group of passages is from parables. Here the figure is provided by the whole parable. The copula still means "is."**

- c) The Exodus passage has sometimes been called Zwingli's "strongest proof" that the copula might mean something other than "is." But again, a closer examination would show that it does not establish this point.**

- 1) In this passage “it” most likely refers, not to the Passover lamb, but to the occasion. (Compare: “Let’s decorate the tree, for it is Christmas.”)
- 2) Even if the reference were to the lamb, “is” could not mean “signifies”. The expression would be on a level with John 11:25 and others that indicate cause or source.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.

- c) **John Calvin and others have taken “my body” to mean “symbol of my body” or “representation my body,” finding a figure of speech in the predicate noun of the words of institution.**
- 1) **This improper approach to the words of institution continues to be persuasive to many people and enjoy wide popularity.**
 The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia, II,1078: A simple illustration affords the clearest answer. Passing through a great gallery of art, some one points to a statue and says, That is Washington; or standing before a portrait he says, That is Lincoln. The language, according to all the ordinary usages of speech, would be perfectly accurate, and no one of intelligence could mistake its significance. The marble or bronze on the one hand, and the canvass and color on the other, represent the two great statesmen. In that upper chamber in Jerusalem, with His human body visible to their eyes and tangible to their hands, Christ takes a piece of bread and says, This is my body. What possible meaning could those words have had to the disciples, except this, that the bread broken represented His body so soon to be broken on the cross?
 - 2) **When this use of figurative language is applied to the words of institution, however, this “clearest answer” is exposed as a fallacy. Consider the following points:**
 - The death of Christ, that is, his body being given and blood being poured out for sinners, was still in the future. If the bread and wine were symbols of this, how would the disciples recognize the similarity?
 - Was the breaking of the bread to be an alleged point of similarity that pointed to the body of Christ on the cross? We know that not a bone of Christ’s body was broken (John 19:31-37).
 - In the illustration given, why does the “marble or bronze” represent Washington? Evidently only on account of the similarity of form. But there is no similarity of form between the bread and Christ’s body.
 - Also in the illustration given, the statue is not a symbol of Washington, but is a marble Washington, a likeness of the historical Washington, a marble reproduction, or copy.
 - What about the words, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood”? Are we to understand the words to mean, “This representation or symbol of my death causes the forgiveness of sins?”
 - In the illustration there is an acknowledged absurdity or impossibility in taking the statue or portrait as identical with Washington or Lincoln. But when the words of institution are taken literally, in their simple and natural sense, no such absurdity or impossibility results. Again, basic principles of interpretation prohibit a departure from the words as spoken.
- d) **The sum and substance of the Reformed and Evangelical doctrine, which is a denial of the real presence of Christ’s body and blood in the sacrament, may be summarized with two major points.**
- 1) **The Reformed and Evangelicals believe that while the communicant receives only bread and wine with his mouth, by the Holy Spirit his faith reaches into heaven to receive the body and blood of Christ, i.e., Christ himself and his blessings.**
 Calvin: If with our eyes and souls we are carried to heaven, that we might seek Christ there in the glory of his kingdom, just as the symbols invite us to come to him in his entirety, so under the symbol of bread we are nourished with his body and under the symbol of wine we are clearly made to drink of his blood (given his blood to drink), so that at last we may enjoy him wholly (*Institutes* IV, 17, 18–19).

 Brandenburg Confession (1614): There are two things to be found there They are to be received in two different ways: The bread and wine with the mouth, the true body and the true blood of Christ with faith (Par. 647).

 Palatine Confession (1577): Spatial distance in no way keeps me [Frederick III, elector of the Palatinate] and all believers from eating that body of Christ and drinking his blood, even though Christ himself in that natural body of his is no longer on earth (Par.152).

 Millard Erickson: The Reformed view holds that Christ is present in the Lord’s Supper but not physically or bodily. Rather, his presence in the sacrament is spiritual or dynamic. . . . The notion that we actually eat Christ’s body and drink his blood is absurd. Rather, true communicants are spiritually nourished by partaking of the bread and the wine. The Holy Spirit brings them into closer connection with the person of Christ (*CT*, p 1127).
 - 2) **In their view, then, since there is only a spiritual reception of Christ that is accomplished through faith, unbelieving communicants do not partake of the body and blood of Christ at all. They merely receive bread and wine through the mouth.**

Brandenburg Confession (1614): And since faith is, as it were, the mouth by which the crucified body of the Lord Christ and his shed blood are received, His Electoral Grace [Johann Sigismund] steadfastly believes that this sacrament does not benefit impenitent unbelievers and that they do not share in the true body and blood of Christ.

Reymond: Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament, yet they receive not the thing signified thereby (*NST*, p 956).

3) The Lutheran Confessions reject these false views that deny the real sacramental presence of the body and blood of the Lord.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1012, 122,123: Likewise [we reject the error] that believers are not to seek, by reason of the words of Christ's institution, the body of Christ with the bread and wine of the Supper, but are directed with their faith away from the bread of the Supper to heaven, to the place where the Lord Christ is with his body, that they should become partakers of it there. We reject also the teaching that unbelieving and impenitent, wicked Christians, who only bear the name of Christ, but do not have the right, true, living, and saving faith, receive in the Supper not the body and blood of Christ, but only bread and wine.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 980, 27: The true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper is established from God's Word; and this presence is understood not only of the believing and worthy, but also of the unbelieving and unworthy.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 976, 16: Secondly, they hold that the institution of this sacrament made by Christ is efficacious in Christendom (the Church), and that it does not depend upon the worthiness or unworthiness of the minister who offers the sacrament, or of the one who receives it. Therefore, as St. Paul says, that even the unworthy partake of the sacrament, they hold that also to the unworthy the body and blood of Christ are truly offered, and the unworthy truly receive them, if where the institution and command of the Lord Christ are observed. But such persons receive them to condemnation, as St. Paul says; for they misuse the holy sacrament, because they receive it without true repentance and without faith.

D2 F, VI, 4.

The fundamental error underlying the Reformed and Evangelical doctrine is that certain principles of natural reason and logic are placed above God's Word.

a) Human reason fails to find the real presence sufficiently motivated.

1) From their perspective the important thing is the spiritual eating and drinking by faith. The sacramental presence and reception of Christ's body and blood are unnecessary.

Wayne Grudem: Jesus is not speaking of a literal eating of his flesh [sic] and blood. But if he is not speaking of a literal eating and drinking, then he must have in mind a spiritual participation in the benefits of the redemption he earns. This spiritual nourishment, so necessary for our souls, is both symbolized and experienced in our participation in the Lord's Supper (*ST*, p 990).

Millard Erickson: If we get bogged down in the technical issues [e.g. the nature of Christ's presence in the sacrament], and do not move on to deal with the practical meaning, we will have missed the whole point of Christ's having established the Supper. Experience of the meaning of the Lord's supper, not just comprehension, is our goal (*CT*, p 1117).

Herzog Encyclopedia: There is absolutely no sufficient reason why we should accept a physical miracle. One can also not expect the Reformed, in the absence of any reason for a bodily presence, to take refuge in the words which Luther spoke at Marburg: If the Lord would lay inedible crab apples before me and tell me to take and eat, I would not dare to ask, "Why?" We, however, believe that we have a right to ask that question, yes, that we should ask it, since God does nothing superfluous (2nd Ed. I, 44).

2) In response, we ask, "Who are we to declare any word of God superfluous?"
b) Human reason also insists on a universal application of the axiom, "Every true body occupies a place" (*Omne corpus verum in loco est*).

1) From their perspective the human body of Christ is and must remain confined to a given location. If true concerning Christ's body, this would rule out its sacramental presence.

Calvin: These two limitations, I say, we will never allow anyone to take from us ... lest something be said of [Christ's] body which is inconsistent with human nature. This happens whenever 1) his body is said to be infinite or 2) when it is located in many places at the same time (*Institutes*, IV, 17, 19).

Millard Erickson: The most natural and straightforward way to render Jesus' words, "This is my body" and "This is my blood" is to interpret them literally. Since it is our general practice to interpret Scripture literally where that is natural, we must be prepared to offer justification if we interpret these words in any other way. . . . If we take "This is my body" and "This is my blood" literally, an absurdity results. If Jesus meant that the bread and wine were at that moment in the upper room actually his body and

blood, he was asserting that his flesh and blood were in two places simultaneously, since his corporeal form was right there beside the elements. To believe that Jesus was in two places at once is something of a denial of the incarnation, which limited his physical human nature to one location (CT, p 1129).

- 2) **In response, we point to those Bible passages that speak of Christ's human nature sharing his divine attributes (the so-called *genus majesticum* or passages that speak of the majestic genus). What may be true of human bodies in general may not be assumed to be true of the body of the Son of God.**

Colossians 2:9 In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

Matthew 28:20 And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 18:20 Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Ephesians 1:23 [The church] which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Compare Francis Pieper: The despot which the Reformed theologians use to tyrannize the Scriptures and themselves is their fixed notion that always only a visible and local presence may be ascribed to the human nature of Christ and that therefore the body of Christ cannot be present in the Lord's Supper invisibly and illocally. All objections of the Reformed to the presence of Christ's body and blood, as it is stated in the words of Christ, are in the last analysis based on this preconceived notion (CD, III, p 323).

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1012, 119,120: Likewise [we reject and condemn] when it is taught that because of his ascension into heaven Christ is so enclosed and circumscribed with his body in a definite place in heaven that with his body he cannot or will not be truly present with us in the Supper, which is celebrated according to the institution of Christ upon earth, but that he is as far and remote from it as heaven and earth are from one another . . . [and] Christ must be received or be circumscribed and enclosed by heaven or in heaven, in such a manner that in his human nature he can or will in no way be with us upon earth. Likewise, that Christ has not promised the true, essential presence of his body and blood in his Supper, and that he neither can nor will afford it, because the nature and property of his assumed human nature could not suffer or admit of it.

- c) **For orthodox Lutheranism, human reason is subjected to the word of Scripture.**

- 1) **It is either ignorance of the truth or slander that says Lutherans construct our doctrine of the real presence to conform with our convictions regarding the person of Christ and the communication of attributes.**

Wayne Grudem: How can Christ's physical body, or more generally Christ's human nature, be everywhere present? Is it not true that Jesus in his human nature ascended into heaven and remains there until his return? . . . In answer to this problem Luther taught the *ubiquity* [sic] of Christ's human nature after his ascension – that is, that Christ's human nature was present everywhere ("ubiquitous"). But theologians ever since Luther's time have suspected that he taught the ubiquity of Christ's human nature, not because it is found anywhere in Scripture, but because he needed it to explain how his view of consubstantiation [sic] could be true. In response to the Lutheran view, it can be said that it fails to realize that Jesus is speaking of a *spiritual* reality using *physical* objects to teach us when he says, "This is my body" (ST, p 994).

- 2) **We draw the doctrines of Christology and of the Lord's Supper from their proper *sedes* in Scripture, and then discover that they are in perfect harmony.**

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1008,106: Thus our faith in this article concerning the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper is based upon the truth and omnipotence of the true, almighty God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These foundations are strong and firm enough to strengthen and establish our faith in all temptations concerning this article, and, on the contrary, to overthrow and refute all the counter-arguments and objections of the Sacramentarians, however agreeable and plausible they may be to our reason; and upon them a Christian heart also can securely and firmly rest and rely.

Leonhard Hutter (d. 1616): It must be kept in mind that in this controversy about the Lord's Supper not one but two different questions are being debated. One of these deals with the will and intention of Christ. Does he really in the Supper want to offer His body to be eaten and His blood to be drunk and thus want to be really present with His body and blood by means of the eucharistic bread and wine? Luther maintains, and we maintain with him, that the answer to this question is certainly to be sought nowhere else than in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper alone. The second question has to do with the power of Christ. Can he really be present with his body and blood in all the places where this sacrament is distributed? Where indeed will there be a stupid fellow who would maintain that the answer to these questions must be sought anywhere else than in the doctrine of the person of Christ (*Loci*, p 716).

D2 F, VII. In a full sacramental action (*actio* or *usus*) of the Lord's Supper there are three component acts, namely, consecration, distribution, and reception (eating and drinking).

D2 F, VII, 1. The consecration of the visible elements has always been a part of the sacramental meal.

a) **Jesus and the apostolic church solemnly set apart the bread and wine for special use and we continue to do the same.**

1) **In reporting the original institution of the sacramental meal the Bible uses the words εὐλογεῖν and εὐχαριστεῖν interchangeably.**

Matthew 26:26-28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks (εὐλογεῖν) and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks (εὐχαριστεῖν) and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Mark 14:22-24 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks (εὐλογεῖν) and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." ²³ Then he took the cup, gave thanks (εὐχαριστεῖν) and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

2) **In the apostolic age it was customary to consecrate the elements by pronouncing a blessing over them.**

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks (εὐλογεῖν) a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

The Didache, IX, 2–4: First, in connection with the cup, "We give you thanks (εὐχαριστεῖν), our Father, for the holy vine of David your son, which you have made known to us through Jesus your Son. To you be glory forever." And in connection with the breaking of bread, "We give you thanks (εὐχαριστεῖν), our Father, for the life and knowledge which you have revealed to us through Jesus your Son; to you be glory forever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountain tops and after being harvested was made one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever."

3) **Today we consecrate the elements in a liturgical service culminating in the recitation of the words of institution.**

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. VII, p 810, 8,9: Now, as to the consecration, we believe, teach, and confess that no work of man or recitation of the minister of the church produces this presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, but that this is to be ascribed only and alone to the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ. But at the same time we also believe, teach, and confess unanimously that in the use of the Holy Supper the words of the institution of Christ should in no way be omitted, but should be publicly recited, as it is written 1 Cor. 10, 16: The cup of blessing which we bless, etc. This blessing occurs through the recitation of the words of Christ.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1012, 121: Likewise, [we reject] when it is taught that not only the Word and omnipotence of Christ, but faith, renders the body of Christ present in the Supper; on this account the words of institution in the administration of the Supper are omitted by some. For although the papistic consecration is justly rebuked and rejected, in which the power to produce a sacrament is ascribed to the speaking as the work of the priest, yet the words of institution can or should in no way be omitted in the administration of the Supper, as is shown in the preceding declaration.

b) **There are a number of purposes involved in the consecration of the elements.**

1) **We consecrate to recall the historical event and provide a narrative of the original institution of the sacrament.**

2) **We consecrate to express our intention of repeating what Jesus commanded when he said, "This do."**

3) **We consecrate to confess our faith in the reality of the sacramental union and the benefits of the whole sacramental meal.**

4) **We consecrate to set apart the visible elements for this special use and to pray for divine power and blessing as we proceed with the sacramental meal.**

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1000, 79-82: In the administration of the Holy Supper the words of institution are to be publicly spoken or sung before the congregation distinctly and clearly, and should in no way be omitted, and this for very many and the most important reasons. First, in order that obedience may be rendered to the command of Christ: *This do* that therefore should not be omitted which Christ himself did in the Holy Supper, and secondly that the faith of the hearers concerning the nature and fruit of this sacrament (concerning the presence of the body and blood of Christ, concerning the forgiveness of sins, and all benefits which have been purchased by the death and shedding of the blood of Christ, and are bestowed upon us in Christ's testament) may be excited, strengthened, and confirmed by Christ's Word, and besides that the elements of bread and wine may be consecrated or blessed for this holy use, in order that the body and blood of Christ may therewith be administered to us to be eaten and to be drunk, as Paul declares in 1 Cor. 10;16: "The cup of

blessing which we bless," which indeed occurs in no other way than through the repetition and recitation of the words of institution.

c) The effect of the words of institution used in the consecration is not magical.

1) Nowhere in Scripture is a rigid formula prescribed. We do not know what words Jesus or the apostolic church used.

Johann Cotta (d. 1763): After the example of the ancient church, the symbols should be designated for sacred use by prayers or the Lord's Prayer (since nothing is known for certain about the form of the prayer of Christ and the apostles). But by the words of institution, when the use is added, the body and blood of Christ are united with the wine. For this reason our theologians have been accustomed to distinguish between total (or unitive) and partial (or destinative) consecration. Partial and destinative consecration takes place through prayer and the words of institution, which should not be recited without internal prayers. But when the words of institution have been repeated and the very action of giving and receiving is added, the total or unitive consecration guarantees the union of the heavenly with the earthly element (*Locí*, Vol. X, loc. XXII *de sacra coena*, chap. XIII, para. CXLVIII, note, p 268).

2) Jesus is present with his Spirit, working through the Word and bringing about what he declared at the original institution.

Baier: The principal efficient cause of this sacrament is Christ who instituted this sacrament and commanded us to use it often. And still today he brings it about that the action which is carried out according to his command in connection with the external symbols has the nature and power of a sacrament. . . . Specifically, in any celebration of the sacrament, so far as the real presence of the body and blood of Christ is concerned, the *institution* of Christ itself serves as the principal impelling cause. The lesser principal impelling cause is the *consecration* of the elements, performed by the minister according to the institution of Christ. . . . Meanwhile it should be noted that the words of institution move the will of Christ, *not* by any power of their own, and as they are spoken by the minister, *but* by the power of the institution itself that comes from Christ (*Compendium*, Part III, chap. XI, para. II and III, and note e, p 546).

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 998, 75-78: The true and almighty words of Jesus Christ which he spoke at the first institution were efficacious not only at the first Supper, but they endure, are valid, operate, and are still efficacious (their force, power, and efficacy endure and avail even to the present), so that in all places where the Supper is celebrated according to the institution of Christ, and his words are used, the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received, because of the power and efficacy of the words which Christ spoke at the first Supper. For where his institution is observed and His words are spoken over the bread and cup [wine], and the consecrated bread and cup [wine] are distributed, Christ himself, through the spoken words, is still efficacious by virtue of the first institution, through his word, which he wishes to be there repeated.

D2 F, VII, 2. The distribution of the consecrated elements is the second main component of the sacramental meal.

a) At the original institution of the meal Jesus broke the bread and gave it to his disciples. Likewise he gave them the cup to distribute among themselves.

b) The breaking of the bread is not an essential act of the sacramental meal even though some writers have made this claim.

1) The breaking of bread was not a sacramental act but a preparatory action done to allow for the distribution.

Isaiah 58:7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry

(פָּרִס לְרַעֲב לַחֲמֵר) and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Lamentations 4:4 Because of thirst the infant's tongue sticks to the roof of its mouth; the children beg for bread, but no one gives it to them

(לָהֶם פֶּרֶשׁ אֵין לָהֶם).

Jeremiah 16:7 No one will offer food (וְלֹא יִפְרֹסוּ לָהֶם) to comfort those who mourn for the dead— not even for a father or a mother—nor will anyone give them a drink to console them.

Matthew 14:19 He directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. (The same phrase is used in the parallel accounts in Mark 6:41, Luke 9:16, and John 6:11).

Matthew 15:36 Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. (The same phrase is used in the parallel account in Mark 8:6, 19).

Luke 24:30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

Acts 27:35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat.

Luther: We must not interpret or use the word “break” according to our own fancies but according to scriptural usage. Now in Scripture the word “breaking,” especially where it is used in reference to bread or eating, is the equivalent of “dividing into pieces” or “distributing” (LW 37:332).

2) Other similar incidental acts done at the original sacramental meal are not considered essential or copied.

John 13:25-26 Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?”²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon.

John 21:20 Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”)

3) The early church kept up the custom of breaking the bread, presumably because they used the same kind of loaf and this was the general custom of the day.

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

4) Calvinist writers have emphasized the breaking of the bread in the interest of their symbolism.

Johann Alting (d. 1644): The breaking of the bread is not an adiaphoron, but it is a necessary ceremony, and therefore it ought never to be left out. It is essential and sacramental and by all means belongs to the purpose and scope and therefore also to the essence of the Holy Supper (*Institutiones theologicae s. locorum communium christianae religionis analysis*, XLVIII, 32).

Riissen (d. 1700): [The Calvinists] do not think that the ceremony of breaking the bread is an adiaphoron but that, from the institution of Christ, it is just as necessary as the taking with the hand, the distribution and communing. Nevertheless they do not want to argue about this so rigidly that no fellowship can be practiced with those who omit it (*Francisci Turretini compendium theologiae*, XVII, 51; cited by Heppe, *Dogmatik der Evang.-Ref. Kirche*, p 465).

Smalz, demonstrating a misunderstanding of what Lutherans teach regarding the doctrine of the real presence: In this way [namely, by breaking the bread] this mask of superstition is taken off and all know that there is nothing hidden there that is like what the Lutherans, together with the papists, not without the great loss of many souls, insist is hidden there (Pareus, *Vom Brotbrechen*, p 198).

Charles Hodge: The use of the wafer was introduced, which is placed unbroken in the mouth of the communicant. This is clearly a departure from apostolic usage, and evinces a departure from apostolic doctrine (*ST*, III, p 619).

Contrast Armin Schuetze and Irwin Habeck: The communion wafers are convenient, and their use has continued partly against the Reformed to demonstrate the liberty the Lord has given in regard to the bread. In an emergency bread in any form may be used (*Shepherd Under Christ*, p 90).

5) The distribution of the fruit of the vine with a common cup is also not an essential part of the sacrament. The use of individual cups for distribution purposes is as much an adiaphoron as is the use of wafers.

Armin Schuetze and Irwin Habeck: Although the common cup can have symbolical significance and its use in the church has a long tradition behind it, there are no theological reasons for rejecting the use of individual glasses. Even as the bread is not broken at the altar but prepared in individual wafers, so the wine may be apportioned in advance in individual cups without effecting the validity of the sacrament (*Shepherd Under Christ*, p 94).

c) To the degree that Roman Catholics still withhold the cup from the laity they have a defective distribution that reflects a defective theology.

1) The Roman Catholic teaching on this subject is clearly stated.

Council of Trent: And so the holy synod itself declares and teaches that there is no divine command that obligates laymen or priests who are not officiating to partake of the sacrament of the Eucharist under both kinds. Nor can it in any way be doubted without harm to faith that for them communion in either kind is sufficient for salvation. . . . If anyone says that by God's command or by necessity for salvation all and each of the believers in Christ ought to receive both kinds of the most holy Eucharist, let him be damned. . . . If anyone says that the Holy Catholic Church has not been led for right causes and reasons to commune laymen and also non-officiating priests only under the form of the bread, or that it has erred in this, let him be damned (Sess. XXI, chap. 1, Canon I and II).

Vatican II: The dogmatic principles which were laid down by the Council of Trent remaining intact, communion under both kinds may be granted when the bishops think fit, not only to clerics and religious, but also to the laity, in cases to be determined by the Apostolic See, as, for instance, to the newly ordained in the Mass of their sacred ordination, to the newly professed in the mass of their religious profession, and to the newly baptized in a Mass following their Baptism (*Documents*, p 156).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace. For pastoral reasons this manner of receiving communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite. But the sign of communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the Eucharistic meal appears more clearly. This is the usual form of receiving communion in the Eastern rites (Par. 1390).

2) As a justification for distributing only one of the visible elements, the Roman Catholic Church offers the idea of concomitance.

Council of Trent, Sess. XXI, Can. 3: If anyone denies that the whole and undivided Christ, the fountain and author of all graces, is received under the one form of bread, because, as some falsely assert, it is not received under both kinds according to the institution of Christ, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace (Par. 1390).

3) The dogma of concomitance as well as the practice of withholding the cup from communicants has no basis in Scripture. Christ's words of institution are clearly against such a practice.

Matthew 26:27 He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.

Compare 1 Corinthians 11:26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Mark 14:23 He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VI, 2-4, p 492: [We hold] that not only one form is to be given. For we do not need that high art (specious wisdom) which is to teach us that under the one form there is as much as under both, as the sophists and the Council of Constance teach. For even if it were true that there is as much under one as under both, yet the one form only is not the entire ordinance and institution ordained and commanded by Christ. And we especially condemn and in God's name execrate those who not only omit both forms but also quite autocratically (tyrannically) prohibit, condemn, and blaspheme them as heresy, and so exalt themselves against and above Christ, our Lord and God opposing and placing themselves ahead of Christ, etc.

Apology, Article XXII (X), p 356: It cannot be doubted that it is godly and in accordance with the institution of Christ and the words of Paul to use both parts in the Lord's Supper. For Christ instituted both parts, and instituted them not for a part of the Church, but for the entire Church.

D2 F, VII, 3. Reception (eating and drinking) is the third major and essential part of the sacramental meal.

a) Some Calvinist writers have insisted that the consecrated elements be received or taken with the hand.

Bucanus: "To receive" or "to take" (λαμβάνειν) is properly understood of the hand. Therefore it is superstitious to forbid the communicants to receive the bread or the eucharistic cup with the hand (*Institutiones theol.*, XLVIII, 33,; cited by Heppe, *Dogmatik der evang.-Ref. Kirche*, p 466).

Charles Hodge: It is contrary to the rule prescribed in Scripture when the communicant does not for himself receive with his own hand the elements of bread and wine (*ST*, III, 619).

b) The manner of taking or receiving, however, is not stipulated in Scripture. Scripture speaks of several ways of "receiving" things.

John 19:29,30 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.³⁰ When he had received (λαμβάνειν) the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 20:22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive (λαμβάνειν) the Holy Spirit."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive (λαμβάνειν) power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

D2 F, VII, 4. Other customs and dogmas connected with the sacramental meal have developed in history.

- a) **Aside from the consecration, distribution, and reception of the sacramental elements, no other acts were instituted by Christ.**
- b) **Roman Catholics pray before and venerate the consecrated wafer. The so-called adoration of the host and the Corpus Christi festival are prominent expressions of this.**

- 1) **The Roman Catholic Church clearly advocates this use of the consecrated element.**

Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, Can. 6: If anyone should say that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored also with external worship of the highest kind, and that therefore he is not to be venerated with a special festal celebration [Corpus Christi, on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, since 1264], nor to be solemnly carried around in processions according to the praiseworthy and universal rite and custom of the Holy Church, or that he is not to be placed publicly before the people for their adoration, or that those who adore are idolaters, let him be damned.

- 2) **For the Passover such customs were nipped in the bud.**

Exodus 12:10 Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it.

2 Kings 18:4 [King Hezekiah] removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.)

- 3) **The Lutheran Confessions comment on these practices.**

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1002, 87: And apart from this use, when in the papistic mass the bread is not distributed, but offered up or enclosed, borne about, and exhibited for adoration, it is to be regarded as no sacrament; just as the water of baptism, when used to consecrate bells or to cure leprosy, or otherwise exhibited for worship, is no sacrament or baptism. For against such papistic abuses this rule has been set up at the beginning of the reviving Gospel, and has been explained by Dr. Luther himself, Tom. IV, Jena.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1008, 108: [We reject and condemn] 1) The papistic transubstantiation, when it is taught that the consecrated or blessed bread and wine in the Holy Supper lose entirely their substance and essence, and are changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ in such a way that only the mere form of bread and wine is left, or *accidentia sine subiecto* (the accidents without the object); under which form of the bread, which nevertheless is bread no longer, but according to their assertion has lost its natural essence, the body of Christ is present even apart from the administration of the Holy Supper, when the bread is enclosed in the pyx or is carried about for display and adoration. For nothing can be a sacrament without God's command and the appointed use for which it is instituted in God's Word.

Compare Luther: We say that one should not condemn people or accuse them of heresy if they do not adore the Sacrament, for there is no command to that effect and it is not for that purpose that Christ is present. Just as we read that the apostles did not adore the Sacrament since they were sitting and eating at the table. On the other hand, one should not condemn and accuse of heresy people who do adore the Sacrament. For although Christ has not commanded it, neither has he forbidden it, but often accepted it [?]. Free, free it must be, according as one is disposed in his heart and has opportunity (LW 36, p 295). ... Nevertheless, you can see that adoration of this sacrament is a dangerous procedure if the Word and faith are not inculcated; so much so that I really think it would be better to follow the example of the apostles and not worship, than to follow our custom and worship. Not that adoration is wrong, but simply because there is less danger in not adoring than in adoring; because human nature tends so easily to emphasize its own works and to neglect God's work, and the sacrament will not admit of that (p 297).

Compare/contrast Tom G. Hardt (d. 1998): Particularly in view of the fact that this adoration is attacked by those people who deny the miracle of the Presence, the free ceremony spontaneously becomes a necessity (*On the Sacrament of the Altar*, p 65).

- c) **Attempts to determine the precise moment and duration of the sacramental union have led some to formulate dogma and advocate practices that go beyond the institution of the sacrament given in Scripture.**

- 1) **Roman Catholics assume a permanent "change in essence" (transubstantiation) that is brought about through the priestly recitation of the words of institution.**

Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, Can. 4: If anyone should say that when the consecration has been performed in the sacrament of the admirable Eucharist it is not the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, but that it is only received in use, and that it is not there either before or after, and that the true body of Christ does not remain in the hosts or consecrated pieces, which are reserved after the communion or left over, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Eucharistic presence of Christ begins at the moment of the consecration and endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist. Christ is present whole and

entire in each of the species and whole and entire in each of their parts, in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ (Par.1377).

2) **Some Lutherans have expressed similar ideas regarding the recitation of the words of institution and the permanency of the sacramental union.**

Hutter: There are even some among ourselves who dream that, when the words of institution have been recited, there results a permanent sacramental union of the bread with the body and the wine with the blood (Cited by Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, p 573).

Tom G. Hardt (d. 1998): According to the doctrine of the real presence, the body of Christ is at one and the same time present in its entirety in every single host on the altar as well as in every part of each host The Word spoken over the created element conveys directly the uncreated eternal power of God (*On the Sacrament of the Altar*, p 32, 49).

Bjarne W. Teigen (d. 2004): Through the words of Christ, spoken by the officiant, the sacramental union has been achieved so that the body and blood of Christ are present on the altar before the distribution and consumption (*The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz*, p 98).

3) **Following the Lutheran Confessions, we refrain from attempting to determine the precise moment of the sacramental union, restricting ourselves to the fact that when the earthly elements are received the heavenly are also received.**

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 976, 14-15: They confess, according to the words of Irenaeus, that in this sacrament there are two things, a heavenly and an earthly. Accordingly, they hold and teach that with the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ are truly and essentially present, offered, and received. And although they believe in no transubstantiation, that is, an essential transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, nor hold that the body and blood of Christ are included in the bread *localiter*, that is, locally, or are otherwise permanently united therewith apart from the use of the sacrament, yet they concede that through the sacramental union the bread is the body of Christ, etc. Apart from the use, when the bread is laid aside and preserved in the sacramental vessel (the pyx), or is carried about in the procession and exhibited, as is done in popery, they do not hold that the body of Christ is present.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 1001, 83-84: However, this blessing, or the recitation of the words of institution of Christ alone does not make a sacrament if the entire action of the Supper, as it was instituted by Christ, is not observed, as when the consecrated bread is not distributed, received, and partaken of, but is enclosed, sacrificed, or carried about, but the command of Christ, "This do" (which embraces the entire action or administration in this sacrament, that in an assembly of Christians bread and wine are taken, consecrated, distributed, received, eaten, drunk, and the Lord's death is shown forth at the same time) must be observed unseparated and inviolate, as also St. Paul places before our eyes the entire action of the breaking of bread or of distribution and reception, 1 Cor. 10:16.

Augsburg Confession, Art. X, p 46: Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat the Supper of the Lord; and they reject those that teach otherwise.

This We Believe: We reject any attempt to set the precise moment within the celebration of the Lord's Supper when the body and blood of Christ become present. We therefore reject the view that one must believe that Christ's body and blood are present as soon as the words of consecration have been spoken and the view that one must believe that Christ's body and blood become present only at the moment of eating and drinking (VI, 10).

D2 F, VIII. The sacrament of the altar serves the purpose of assuring the recipient of the forgiveness of his sins.

D2 F, VIII, 1. This gospel purpose is clear from the words of institution.

Recall the clear emphasis of Christ's words: "This is my body, given for you . . . This is my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. . . . Do this in remembrance of me."

Apology, Art. III, p 178, 89: Thus in the church the Lord's Supper was instituted that by remembrance of the promises of Christ, of which we are admonished in this sign, faith might be strengthened in us, and we might publicly confess our faith, and proclaim the benefits of Christ, as Paul says, 1 Cor. 11: 26: "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show the Lord's death."

Apology, Art. XII (V), p 260, 42: Meanwhile this faith is nourished in a manifold way in temptations, through the declarations of the gospel and the use of the sacraments. For these are seals and signs of the covenant and grace in the New Testament, i.e., signs of propitiation and the remission of sins. They offer, therefore, the remission of sins, as the words of the Lord's Supper clearly testify, Matt. 26:26,28: "This is my body, which is given for you. This is the cup of the New Testament", etc. Thus faith is conceived and strengthened through absolution, through the hearing of the gospel, through the use of the sacraments, so that it may not succumb while it struggles with the terrors of sin and death.

Calov: The chief purpose of the Holy Eucharist on the part of God is the remission of sins and the sealing of grace, on our part it is the proclamation of the Lord's death (*Theologia positiva*, part III, sect. III, chap. VIII, thesis VIII, p 483).

Quenstedt: The purpose is either ultimate or subordinate; the ultimate is either absolutely such, namely, the praise of God's goodness and wisdom, or relatively such, namely, the salvation of man (*TDP*, Part IV, Chap VI, sect. I, thesis XVIII, p 184).

Gerhard: Through baptism we are regenerated. Through the Holy Supper we are fed and nourished for eternal life (Cited in Hoenecke, *ELD*, IV, p 142).

D2 F, VIII, 2. To say the sacrament is a gospel proclamation that gives and assures the sinner of forgiveness is different from saying the sacrament itself is a propitiatory sacrifice that benefits the sinner.

a) The Roman Catholic Church claims that the Eucharist is sacrificial in nature, an unbloody repetition or re-presentation of the sacrifice of Jesus.

1) The Church of Rome has clearly declared this as dogma.

Council of Trent, Sess. XXII, ch. 2: And since in this divine sacrifice, which is performed in the mass, that same Christ, who once offered up himself in a bloody way on the altar of the cross, is present and sacrificed in an unbloody way, the holy synod teaches that that sacrifice is truly propitiatory.

Council of Trent, Sess. XXII: If anyone says that in the mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God, or that what is offered is nothing else than that Christ is given to us to eat, let him be damned. . . . If anyone should say that by those words, "This do in remembrance of me," Christ did not make the apostles priests or that He did not ordain, that they themselves and other priests should offer the body and blood, let him be damned. . . . If anyone should say that the sacrifice of the mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving or only a commemoration of the sacrifice brought on the cross, however, not propitiatory, or that it benefits only the one who partakes of it, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions and other necessities, let him be damned If anyone should say that by the sacrifice of the mass blasphemy is spoken against the most holy sacrifice of Christ brought on the cross or that that sacrifice on the cross is dishonored by this one in the mass, let him be damned (Canon I, II, III, and IV).

Vatican II: As often as the sacrifice of the cross in which "Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed" (1 Cor 5:7) is celebrated on an altar, the work of our redemption is carried on. . . . Through the hands of priests and in the name of the whole Church, the Lord's sacrifice is offered in the Eucharist in an unbloody and sacramental manner until he himself returns (*Documents*, p 16 and 535).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God (Par. 1414).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it applies its fruit: Christ, our Lord and God, was once and for all to offer himself to God the Father by his death on the altar of the cross, to accomplish there an everlasting redemption. But because his priesthood was not to end with his death, at the Last Supper "on the night when he was betrayed," he wanted to leave to his beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice (as the nature of man demands) by which the bloody sacrifice which he was to accomplish once for all on the cross would be re-presented, its memory perpetuated until the end of the world, and its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of the sins we daily commit. . . . The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different. In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner (Par. 1366, 1367).

2) For a scriptural basis for the concept of the sacramental meal as a propitiatory sacrifice they have appealed to the certain Bible events and passages.

-a) Roman Catholics have pointed to Melchizedek's meal and declared it to be a sacrifice. But there is no evidence or suggestion of this in Scripture. Also, Scripture never links the two meals together.

Genesis 14:18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High.

Compare Cajetan: Nothing is written here [i.e., in Gn 14:18] about sacrifice or offering, but it speaks of "bringing out" or "setting forth", which, Josephus writes, was done for the refreshment of the victors. What, however, is given in the Vulgate as a reason for the sacrifice, "For he was a priest," in the Hebrew text is not treated as a clause but as an independent part of the sentence (Cited by Quenstedt, *TDP*, Part IV, chap. VI, Sect. II, qu. IX, obj. Dial., I, p 240).

Quenstedt: Tirinus, in the *Jesuit Index of Controversies*, XXII, 5, argues that it is not appropriate for Christ to be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4; He 7:4, 11) except by way of the eucharistic sacrifice, which he instituted in the Supper, and which he daily offers in the mass through the priests, his ministers. We answer: Although in many places the Epistle to the Hebrews draws comparisons between Christ and Melchizedek in regard to their priesthood, nevertheless nowhere does it mention this imaginary sacrifice, in which the essential part of the activity of Melchizedek has been placed according to the erroneous opinion of the papists.... The epistle says absolutely nothing about the bread and wine brought out by Melchizedek because this was part of his royal bounty and therefore not a priestly function (*TDP*, Part IV, chap. VI, Sect. II, qu. IX, obj. Dial., II, p 240).

-b) Roman Catholics have pointed to the Passover as a basis for the concept of the eucharistic sacrifice.

-1) They observe that the Passover is called a sacrifice.

Exodus 12:27 “Then tell them, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice (פסח) to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.’” Then the people bowed down and worshiped.

-2) One should note, however, that the word פסח, reflecting its etymology, is sometimes used simply to denote something slaughtered. It should also be noted that the Passover regulations differ from those required for propitiatory sacrifices in the Old Testament.

Consider these verses on the wider use of the word פסח:

Genesis 31:54 He offered a sacrifice there in the hill country and invited his relatives to a meal. After they had eaten, they spent the night there.

Proverbs 17:1 Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of *feasting*, with strife.

Ezekiel 39:17 Son of man, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Call out to every kind of bird and all the wild animals: “Assemble and come together from all around to the sacrifice I am preparing for you, the great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood.”

Deuteronomy 12:15 Nevertheless, you may *slaughter* your animals in any of your towns and eat as much of the meat as you want, as if it were gazelle or deer, according to the blessing the LORD your God gives you. Both the ceremonially unclean and the clean may eat it.

Deuteronomy 12:21 If the place where the LORD your God chooses to put his Name is too far away from you, you may slaughter animals from the herds and flocks the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and in your own towns you may eat as much of them as you want.

1 Kings 1:9,19 Adonijah then sacrificed sheep, cattle and fattened calves at the Stone of Zoheleth near En Rogel. He invited all his brothers, the king’s sons, and all the men of Judah who were royal officials. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep, and has invited all the king’s sons, Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant.

Consider these verses on the requirements for propitiatory sacrifices:

Leviticus 21:6 They must be holy to their God and must not profane the name of their God. Because they present the offerings made to the LORD by fire, the food of their God, they are to be holy.

Deuteronomy 12:5-6 But you are to seek the place the LORD your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go; ⁶there bring your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, what you have vowed to give and your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.

Leviticus 4:12,29 All the rest of the bull—he must take outside the camp to a place ceremonially clean, where the ashes are thrown, and burn it in a wood fire on the ash heap. ²⁹ He is to lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and slaughter it at the place of the burnt offering.

-c) Roman Catholics have appealed to the prophecy of Malachi as support for their teaching on the Eucharist as a sacrifice.

-1) Malachi does speak of universal offerings in the New Testament age.

Malachi 1:11 "My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings (הַמִּנְחָה) will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty.

-2) The context and vocabulary, however, indicate that Malachi is not speaking of propitiatory offerings. הַמִּנְחָה has reference to gifts.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 394, 31-32: Of these sacrifices Malachi 1;11 speaks: "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name and a pure offering." The adversaries perversely apply this passage to the mass, and quote the authority of the Fathers. A reply, however, is easy, for even if it spoke most particularly of the mass, it would not follow that the mass justifies *ex opere operato*, or that, when applied to others, it merits the remission of sins, etc. . . . Therefore "incense" and "a pure offering" signify not a ceremony *ex opere operato*, but all those sacrifices through which the name of the Lord becomes great, namely, faith, invocation, the preaching of the gospel, confession, etc.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 388, 19-25: The proximate species of sacrifice are two, and there are no more. One is the *propitiatory sacrifice*, i.e., a work which makes satisfaction for guilt and punishment, i.e., one that reconciles God, or appeases God's wrath, or which merits the remission of sins for others. The other species is the *eucharistic sacrifice*, which does not merit the remission of sins or reconciliation, but is rendered by those who have been reconciled, in order that we may give thanks or return gratitude for the remission of sins that has been received, or for other benefits received. . . . Therefore let this remain established in the case, namely, that the death of Christ alone is truly a propitiatory sacrifice. . . . Now the rest are eucharistic sacrifices, which are called sacrifices of praise, Lev. 3:1f.; 7:11f.; Ps. 56:12f., namely, the preaching of the gospel, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, the afflictions of saints, yea, all good works of saints. These sacrifices are not satisfactions for those making them, or applicable on behalf of others, so as to merit for these, *ex opere operato*, the remission of sins or reconciliation. For they are made by those who have been reconciled.

-d) Roman Catholics have pointed to Paul's comparison of the Lord's table to an altar to justify their concept of the sacramental meal as a sacrifice. The apostle's words, however, simply do not establish this point.

1 Corinthians 10:18,21 Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

Quenstedt: What a conclusion! The table of the Lord is compared to an altar. Therefore it is an altar. The point of comparison here is not the sacrifice, but the participation, there with devils, here with the Lord (*TDP*, Part IV, chap. VI, Sect. II, qu. IX, obj. Dial., VIII, p 243).

b) The concept of the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice conflicts with many clear Scripture statements. It is incompatible with the gospel.

1) The Bible declares that Christ offered himself up once for all.

Hebrews 7:26,27 Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all (ἐφάπαξ) when he offered himself.

Hebrews 9:24-28 Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. ²⁵ Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all (ἄπαξ) at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once (ἄπαξ) to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

2) There is only one priest and mediator for mankind, Christ.

Hebrews 5:5,6 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." ⁶ And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews 7:23,24 Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

3) Christ's self-sacrifice was bloody.

Hebrews 9:12,14,22 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ²² The law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

4) Christ's sacrifice is sufficient for all times.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished" (τετέλεσται). With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins (καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος), he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 5:9 And, once made perfect (τελειωθεῖς), he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Hebrews 10:14 By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy (τετελείωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκῆς τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους).

c) In spite of their sacrificial conception Catholics deny that the principal benefit of the Supper is forgiveness of sins.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, Can. 5: If anyone should say that the chief benefit of the most holy Eucharist is the forgiveness of sins, or that no other effects proceed from it, let him be damned.

D2 F, VIII, 3. Calvinists and Evangelicals, in keeping with their doctrine of immediate grace, deny that forgiveness of sins is conveyed and sealed through the Lord's Supper.

a) In their declarations they sometimes seem to consider the Supper as an actual means of grace.

Belgic Confession (1562), 35: This Supper is a spiritual meal, in which Christ offers himself to us to be shared together with all his benefits. And he brings it about that in it [Note: not "through it"] we enjoy him as well as the merits of his suffering and death. For by the eating [oral? or spiritual?] of his flesh he himself nourishes, strengthens and comforts our miserable and afflicted soul which is destitute of all consolation. Likewise he sustains and refreshes it by the drinking of his blood.

Wayne Grudem: Just as ordinary food nourishes our physical bodies, so the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper give nourishment to us. . . . This spiritual nourishment, so necessary for our souls, is both symbolized and experienced in our participation in the Lord's Supper (ST, p 990).

Millard Erickson: All agree that the Lord's Supper is *sacramental*. It can be a means, or at least an occasion, of spiritual growth in the Lord. . . . Participation leads or contributes to salvation or growth therein (CT, p 1120).

b) Yet their real meaning remains a denial that the sacrament is a true means of grace.

Ulrich Zwingli: I believe, yes, I know, that all the sacraments are so far from bestowing grace, that they do not even bring it or dispense it (*Fidei Ratio*, 1530).

Geneva Catechism (1545): A sacrament is an external testimony of God's good will toward us, which by a visible sign portrays spiritual gifts of grace to put a seal on the promises of God for our hearts. By this the truth of these promises is made more sure. . . . I mean that we are not to cleave to the visible signs so as to seek salvation from them, or imagine that the power of conferring grace is either fixed or included in them, but rather that the sign is to be used as a help, by which, when seeking salvation and complete felicity, we are pointed directly to Christ.

Millard Erickson, allowing this as an adequate explanation of the value of the Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper serves to bring the participants in contact with the living Christ. He is present spiritually, and we benefit from thus encountering him. It is the encounter, however, not the rite itself, which is the source of the benefit. The rite is merely an instrument to foster our relationship with him. It does not constitute the relationship nor convey the attendant blessing (CT, p 1121).

D2 F, VIII, 4. Subordinate to the principal fruit of the sacrament, and flowing from this assurance of forgiveness, are other blessings.

a) Stated in a general way, progress in sanctification is a fruit of the sacrament. Sanctification always flows from justification.

b) Stated more specifically, we may identify particular blessings that are conveyed through the sacramental meal.

1) Through the Lord's Supper God imparts a strengthening of the unity among Christians, a unity in faith, love, and peace, not only external oneness.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because (ὅτι) there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

1 Corinthians 12:13 We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 406, 68: Some clever men imagine that the Lord's Supper was instituted for two reasons. First, that it might be a mark and testimony of profession, just as a particular shape of hood is the sign of a particular profession. Then they think that such a mark was especially pleasing to Christ, namely, a feast to signify mutual union and friendship among Christians, because banquets are signs of covenant and friendship. But this is a secular view; neither does it show the chief use of the things delivered by God. It speaks only of the exercise of love, which men, however profane and worldly, understand. It does not speak of faith, the nature of which few understand.

2) Through the Lord's Supper the Lord allows a clear segregation and distinction between Christians and non-Christians to be highlighted.

1 Corinthians 10:20,21 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

3) Through the Lord's Supper a public confession of Christ and his redemptive work is given.

1 Corinthians 11:26 Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

D2 F, VIII, 5. There is a "worthy manner" of receiving the sacrament, and there is an "unworthy manner" of receiving it. An unworthy manner of reception causes the participants to forfeit intended blessings.

a) The central ingredient of sharing in the Lord's Supper in a "worthy manner" is something God himself gives – faith in his promises.

1 Corinthians 11:24,25 "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Apology, Art. XXIV (XII), p 408, 71-73: Such use of the sacrament, in which faith quickens terrified hearts, is a service of the New Testament, because the New Testament requires spiritual dispositions, mortification and quickening. For according to the New Testament the highest service of God is rendered inwardly in the heart. And for this use Christ instituted it, since he commanded them thus to do "in remembrance of him". For to remember Christ is not the idle celebration of a show, not something that is accomplished only by some gestures and actions, or one instituted for the sake of example, as the memory of Hercules or Ulysses is celebrated in tragedies, but it is to remember the benefits of Christ and receive them by faith, so as to be quickened by them. . . . And this is the principal use of the sacrament, in which it is apparent who are fit for the sacrament, namely, terrified consciences, and how they ought to use it.

Large Catechism, Sacrament of the Altar, p 760, 33-38: Thus we have the entire Sacrament, both as to what it is in itself and as to what it brings and profits. Now we must also see who is the person that receives this power and benefit. That is answered briefly, as we said above of baptism and often elsewhere: Whoever believes it has what the words declare and bring. For they are not spoken or proclaimed to stone and wood, but to those who hear them, to whom he says: "Take and eat," etc. And because he offers and promises forgiveness of sin, it cannot be received otherwise than by faith. This faith he himself demands in the Word when he says: "Given and shed for you." As if he said: For this reason I give it, and bid you eat and drink, that you may claim it as yours and enjoy it. Whoever now accepts these words, and believes that what they declare is true, has it. But whoever does not believe it has nothing, as he allows it to be offered to him in vain, and refuses to enjoy such a saving good.

b) "Unworthy" reception of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament makes a person guilty of sinning against Christ's body and blood.

1) When an unworthy reception involves unbelief and impenitence, the intended spiritual blessings are turned into a curse.

2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

Formula of Concord, Ep., Art. VII, p 812, 16.17: We believe, teach, and confess that not only the true believers in Christ and the worthy, but also the unworthy and unbelievers, receive the true body and blood of Christ; however, not for life and consolation, but for judgment and condemnation, if they are not converted and do not repent, 1 Cor. 11, 27. 29. For although they thrust Christ from themselves as a Savior, yet they must admit Him even against their will as a strict Judge, who is just as present also to exercise and render judgment upon impenitent guests as he is present to work life and consolation in the hearts of the true believers and worthy guests.

2) When an unworthy reception is still accompanied by faith, there is divine judgment and discipline as well as forfeited blessings.

1 Corinthians 11:27,29 Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner (ἀναξίως) will be guilty of sinning (ἔνοχος) against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing (μὴ διακρίνων) the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself (κρίμα ἑαυτῷ).

1 Corinthians 11:30-34 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves (ἑαυτοὺς διεκρίνομεν), we would not come under judgment (οὐκ ἂν ἐκρινόμεθα). ³² When we are judged (κρινόμενοι) by the Lord, we are being disciplined (παιδεύομεθα) so that we will not be condemned (κατακριθῶμεν) with the world. ³³ So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. ³⁴ If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment (κρίμα).

c) There are wrong and inadequate views regarding worthy and unworthy reception of the Lord's Supper that must be avoided.

1) Roman Catholicism greatly distorts the idea of worthiness.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, Can. 11: If anyone says that faith alone is sufficient preparation for partaking of the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, let him be damned. And lest so great a sacrament be taken unworthily and therefore for death and condemnation, the holy Synod itself orders and declares that for those whom conscience troubles because of a mortal sin, however much they may consider themselves to be contrite, if they have access to a confessor, it is necessary that sacramental confession must precede the Eucharist. If anyone, however, teaches, preaches, or stubbornly asserts the contrary, or even presumes publicly to defend his view in debate, he is by that very act excommunicated.

2) Reformed and Evangelical theologians, in recognizing only a spiritual eating and drinking while denying the real presence, deny that the unworthy receive the body and blood of Christ at all.

Brandenburg Confession (1614): Since faith is, as it were, the mouth by which the crucified body of the Lord Christ and his shed blood are received, His Electoral Grace [Johann Sigismund] steadfastly believes that this sacrament does not benefit impenitent unbelievers and that they do not share in the true body and blood of Christ.

Grudem: We must not say that Christ is present apart from our personal faith, but only meets and blesses us there in accordance with our faith in him (ST, p 996).

Contrast Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) in his hymn *Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem*:

Both the wicked and the good
eat of this celestial Food:
but with ends how opposite!
With this most substantial Bread,
unto life or death they're fed,
in a difference infinite.

3) Wrong ideas about worthy and unworthy reception of the sacrament may also be found among us. Patient instruction and the use of accurate terminology are important.

Lutheran Outlook: Our people have been told so often that they must be worthy communicants that they may think of worthy in terms of deserving (January 1951, p 17).

John Schaller: One should pay attention above all that Paul does not say: One ought to examine himself to see whether he is worthy! . . . It is contrary to the spirit of the gospel to point a person to himself, when one instructs him how he can recognize that he stands in a right relationship with God and matters divine. . . . Paul is speaking in context not of people who are unworthy, but of the manner and practice that make one unworthy to enjoy the Lord's Supper. . . . He wants the believers, who by nature all lie in equal guilt and essentially are no more worthy than the unbelievers, to use the Sacrament in a manner worthy of the sacrament. Therefore this admonition for self-examination does directly even to this point: He isn't saying: "Examine yourself to see whether you are worthy" – rather: "Examine yourself, whether you are approaching the sacrament in such a way as is in accord with the design of Jesus and the nature of this valuable means of grace ("Self-examination According to 1 Corinthians 11:28," OGH, II, 363f.).

Large Catechism, Sacrament of the Altar, p 766, 61-63: Therefore such people must learn that it is the highest art to know that our sacrament does not depend upon our worthiness. For we are not baptized because we are worthy and holy, nor do we go to confession because we are pure and without sin, but the contrary, because we are poor miserable men, and just because we are unworthy; unless it be some one who desires no grace and absolution nor intends to reform. But whoever would gladly obtain grace and consolation should impel himself, and allow no one to frighten him away, but say: I, indeed, would like to be worthy; but I come, not upon any worthiness, but upon your Word, because you have commanded it, as one who would gladly be your disciple, no matter what becomes of my worthiness. But this is difficult; for we always have this obstacle and hindrance to encounter, that we look more upon ourselves than upon the Word and lips of Christ. For nature desires so to act that it can stand and rest firmly on itself, otherwise it refuses to make the approach.

Formula of Concord, TD, Art. VII, p 996, 68-71: We must never regard the sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee, but as a pure, wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. For where the soul has recovered, the body also is relieved. Why, then, is it that we act as if it were a poison, the eating of which would bring death? To be sure, it is true that those who despise it and live in an unchristian manner receive it to their hurt and damnation; for nothing shall be good or wholesome to them, just as with a sick person who from caprice eats and drinks what is forbidden him by the physician. But those who are sensible of their weakness, desire to be rid of it and long for help, should regard and use it only as a precious antidote against the poison which they have in them. For here in the sacrament you are to receive from the lips of Christ forgiveness of sin, which contains and brings with it the grace of God and the Spirit with all his gifts, protection, shelter, and power against death and the devil and all misfortune. Thus you have, on the part of God, both the command and the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides this, on your part, your own distress which is about your neck, and because of which this command, invitation, and promise are given, ought to impel you. For he himself says: "They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that be sick;" that is, those who are weary and heavy-laden with their sins, with the fear of death, temptations of the flesh and of the devil.

D2 F, IX. Participation in the sacramental meal is limited by Scripture. Only Christians who have been baptized, are able to examine themselves, profess the same faith with fellow communicants, and are penitent are to be admitted to Communion.

D2 F, IX, 1. The Supper is the sacrament of confirmation, to strengthen the spiritual life of people who have previously been brought to faith in Christ.

a) **There are various evidences that the Lord's Supper is for Christians.**

- 1) **The eating and drinking are to be done "in remembrance" of Christ and his atoning death, so prior knowledge of it is assumed.**
- 2) **Jesus instituted the sacrament in a private setting with his disciples. This is in contrast to his frequent public teaching.**

Luke 22:11,14 Say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

Matthew 26:18,20 Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, "The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house."²⁰ When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

3) **The apostles directed converts to be baptized. Communion followed later.**

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 8:12,36 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?"

Acts 16:33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.

b) **A profitable use of the Lord's Supper presupposes an intelligent use.**

1) **Partakers are to examine themselves.**

1 Corinthians 11:28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

2) **Therefore certain people are normally excluded from participation in the sacramental meal.**

-a) **People who are asleep, unconscious, or unresponsive.**

-b) **People with severe deterioration of intellectual faculties, such as memory, concentration, and judgment (e.g., insanity, Alzheimer's Disease, senile dementia), whose condition makes self-examination impossible.**

-c) **Young children or people suffering from severe mental retardation, due to limitations in self-examination.**

D2 F, IX, 2.

Sharing in Communion is a notable expression of the unity of faith.

- a) **What is true for Christians as they express fellowship in general is particularly significant in sharing the Lord's Supper.**

1 Corinthians 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

- b) **For this reason we cannot commune together with certain people, even with some professing Christians.**

- 1) **We cannot share the sacramental meal with those who do not confess the same faith with us. We determine unity or lack of unity based on a person's public confession. We are also patient with the weak or partially ignorant believers whom we will instruct and serve.**

1 John 4:1 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 Corinthians 11:29 Anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Romans 15:1,2 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. ² Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

- 2) **We cannot share the sacramental meal with those who are giving public offense by impenitence.**

- a) **Any offense, in conduct or in doctrine, interferes with Christian unity and endangers spiritual health.**

1 Corinthians 5:11 I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

Matthew 5:23-24 If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Compare with Romans 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

- b) **The offense is removed (and unity restored) by renouncing the sin and asking forgiveness.**

James 5:16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Matthew 6:15 If you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Mark 11:25-26 When you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. (Some manuscripts: ²⁶ But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your sins.)

- c) **By admitting an offender to Communion before he has removed the offense, we would be in error.**

- 1) **We would become guilty of the same offense.**

1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

- 2) **We would neglect our duty toward the offender himself.**

Ezekiel 33:7-9 Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. ⁸ When I say to the wicked, "O wicked man, you will surely die," and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. ⁹ But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself.

D2 F, IX, 3.

For these reasons we insist on an "exploration" of those wishing to commune with us. This is the practice of "close" or "closed" Communion.

- a) **For those among us who seek to share in the sacrament for the first time, we require a period of instruction and a public confirmation to show that the catechumen has received the necessary instruction.**

b) For those who seek regular participation in the sacramental meal we have orderly ways of “announcement” or “registration” for Communion.

Luther: It is quite true that wherever the preacher administers only bread and wine for the Sacrament, he is not very concerned about to whom he gives it, what they know or believe, or what they receive. . . . However, because we are concerned about nurturing Christians who will be here after we are gone, and because it is Christ's body and blood that are given out in the Sacrament, we will not and cannot give such a sacrament to anyone unless he is first examined regarding what he has learned from the Catechism and whether he intends to forsake the sins which he has again committed. For we do not want to make Christ's church into a pig pen, letting each one come unexamined to the Sacrament as a pig to its trough. Such a church we leave to the Enthusiasts! (Open Letter (1533), WA, 30/III:567.3-15).

Augsburg Confession, Art. XXV, 1, p 68: Confession in the churches is not abolished among us; for it is not usual to give the body of the Lord, except to them that have been previously examined and absolved.

Armin Schuetze and Irwin Habeck: The pastor should warn and admonish as the need arises and not wait until communion announcement. . . . But the custom of announcing does allow the pastor to know in advance who will appear before the altar for communion and gives him opportunity to intervene should a member who is under discipline plan to attend. . . . By announcing in the communion service, either verbally or in the service bulletin, that the congregation practices close communion, and by adding a brief explanation of the requirement for communion announcement, the pastor may deter strangers from approaching the Lord's Table unannounced (*Shepherd Under Christ*, p 85).

Compare and Contrast: Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Eucharist and the unity of Christians. Before the greatness of this mystery St. Augustine exclaims, "O sacrament of devotion! O sign of unity! O bond of charity!" The more painful the experience of the divisions in the Church which break the common participation in the table of the Lord, the more urgent are our prayers to the Lord that the time of complete unity among all who believe in him may return. The Eastern churches that are not in full communion with the Catholic Church celebrate the Eucharist with great love. These Churches, although separated from us, yet possess true sacraments, above all - by apostolic succession - the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in closest intimacy. A certain communion *in sacris*, and so in the Eucharist, given suitable circumstances and the approval of Church authority, is not merely possible but is encouraged. Ecclesial communities derived from the Reformation and separated from the Catholic Church, have not preserved the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Holy Orders. It is for this reason that Eucharistic intercommunion with these communities is not possible for the Catholic Church. However these ecclesial communities, when they commemorate the Lord's death and resurrection in the Holy Supper . . . profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and await his coming in glory. When, in the Ordinary's judgment, a grave necessity arises, Catholic ministers may give the sacraments of Eucharist, Penance, and Anointing of the Sick to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who ask for them of their own will, provided they give evidence of holding the Catholic faith regarding these sacraments and possess the required dispositions (Par. 1398–1401).

D3. Order of Salvation

D3 A. Vocation

D3 A, I. God calls and invites sinners to accept and enjoy the fruits of Christ's redemptive work.

D3 A, I, 1. Human beings have by nature no knowledge of the way of salvation.

a) They are by nature unable to conceive and unwilling to seek salvation by grace.

1) **This is the result of original sin.**

Note: Consider how this reflects both aspects of original sin: both the lack of true fear, love and trust in God and the presence of natural hostility toward him.

Augsburg Confession, II, p 43: Also they teach that since the fall of Adam, all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence.

2) **Scripture is rich in descriptive terms for this natural spiritual condition of mankind.**

-a) **Scripture pictures it as general depravity.**

Psalm 14:2,3 The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. ²All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Psalm 53:3 Everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Romans 3:10-12 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

-b) **Scripture calls this condition darkness or blindness.**

John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

Acts 26:18 [I am sending you] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

Ephesians 4:17,18 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

-c) **Scripture pictures it as hostility.**

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile (ἔχθρα) to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

Colossians 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

-d) **Scripture calls it spiritual death.**

Ephesians 2:1,5 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. ⁵God made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

-e) **Scripture calls it desire that is diametrically opposed to God.**

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

Genesis 8:21 The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."

Galatians 5:17,24 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

Romans 7:8,21,23 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ²¹So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²³But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

3) **Sinful human beings oppose the gospel of free justification.**

1 Corinthians 1:18,23 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ²³But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 2:8,14 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ¹⁴The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

2 Corinthians 4:3,4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Acts 17:6,7,18 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, ⁷and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." ¹⁸A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Isaiah 53:1-3 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

b) **Therefore, if Christ's work of redemption is not to be lost, God himself must bring sinners to acceptance.**

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 2:12,13 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³ This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

2 Corinthians 5:19 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Matthew 11:25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."

D3 A, I, 2. God proclaims salvation and invites sinners to accept and enjoy it.

a) God's overtures to the sinner are often referred to as a call or vocation.

1) Scripture in several places uses this term specifically.

Romans 1:5-7 Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. ⁶ You also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷ To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:28,30 We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel.

Galatians 5:8 That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you.

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 Encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

1 Peter 1:15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

2) God's call or vocation is often presented in Scripture in the form of an invitation.

Matthew 11:28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

John 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Isaiah 55:1,3,5 Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ³ Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. ⁵ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.

Matthew 22:3,9 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. ⁹ "Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find."

3) Since the preaching of the gospel is always the announcement of the great things God has done for sinners, the call or vocation is practically identical with that preaching of the gospel.

-a) Notice how closely the proclamation of the gospel is connected to the call to faith.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 22:4 Then he sent some more servants and said, "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet."

-b) If any distinction is to be made, the gospel call is issued on the basis of the gospel proclamation.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

b) God's means of calling are the means of grace.

1) This is God's ordinary way of calling.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:14-17 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" ¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

2) God, of course, may call directly.

Acts 9:3-5 As he reached Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

Quenstedt: That extraordinary call is special and very rare. It was indeed extended in ancient times in the Old Testament and now and then in the beginning of the New. But today, after the gospel has been preached in the whole world and the church has been established through the apostles, it has clearly been set aside (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. V, sect. I, thesis V, note II, p 462).

3) In a loose sense, anything that causes a sinner to stop and think may be termed a call. This is part of what may often be called “pre-evangelism.”

Acts 17:27 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Romans 2:14,15 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

1 Kings 10:1 When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relation to the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

1 Thessalonians 1:8 The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it.

Quenstedt: The aforementioned types of call, rather than being a call in the proper sense, are certain invitations and inducements to inquire about the true worship of God and about the congregation in which that worship flourishes (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. V, sect. I, thesis III, note II, p 461).

c) God is moved to call sinners.

1) Only his grace moves him to extend this call.

Galatians 1:15 God...set me apart from birth and called me by his grace.

2 Timothy 1:9 [God] has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

Psalms 86:15 But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

2) His grace responds freely to the self-inflicted human misery caused by sin.

Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

d) When Scripture uses the term “call,” it is usually referring to the effective call that brings a sinner to faith.

Note: The gospel is always *efficacious*, that is, it is always able to convert, because the power of the Holy Spirit is always at work in it to create and strengthen faith. Yet the gospel is not always *effective*, that is, it does not always work faith because of the stubbornness of human unbelief. Caution: The bare statement that the gospel is not always effective may be confusing.

D3 A, I, 3. God’s call is serious, efficacious, and universal, but not irresistible.

a) His call remains serious, efficacious, and universal even though all who hear that call are not brought to faith.

1) Clearly, not all who are called are saved.

Isaiah 65:2 All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations.

Matthew 22:14 For many are invited, but few are chosen.

2) The fault is always sinful human nature’s resistance to God’s grace.

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Formula of Concord, Ep., XI, p 834, 11: However, that “many are called and few chosen,” Matt. 22:14, does not mean that God is not willing to save everybody; but the reason is that they either do not at all hear God’s Word, but willfully despise it, stop their ears and harden their hearts, and in this manner foreclose the ordinary way to the Holy Spirit, so that he cannot perform his work in them, or, when they have heard it, make light of it again and do not heed it, for which not God or his election, but their wickedness, is responsible. [2 Pet. 2:1ff ; Luke 11:49,52; Heb. 12:25f.]

3) Therefore, God’s call is not irresistible.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

b) God’s call is never sham.

1) It is always sincere.

1 Timothy 2:4 God wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them, “As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they

turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?”

Formula of Concord, TD XI, p 1072,1074, 29,34: This call of God, which is made through the preaching of the Word, we should not regard as jugglery, but know that thereby God reveals his will, that in those whom he thus calls he will work through the Word, that they may be enlightened, converted, and saved. For the Word, whereby we are called, is a ministration of the Spirit, that gives the Spirit, or whereby the Spirit is given, 2 Cor. 3:8, and a power of God unto salvation, Rom. 1:16. And since the Holy Spirit wishes to be efficacious through the Word, and to strengthen and give power and ability, it is God’s will that we should receive the Word, believe and obey it. ^{34]} However, that many are called and few chosen is not owing to the fact that the call of God, which is made through the Word, had the meaning as though God said: Outwardly, through the Word, I indeed call to my kingdom all of you to whom I give my Word; however, in my heart I do not mean this with respect to all, but only with respect to a few; for it is my will that the greatest part of those whom I call through the Word shall not be enlightened nor converted, but be and remain damned, although through the Word, in the call, I declare myself to them otherwise. *Hoc enim esset Deo contradictorias voluntates affingere*, that is: For this would be to assign contradictory wills to God.

2) The efficacy of God’s call is assured by the efficacy of the means of grace.

Isaiah 55:10,11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Jeremiah 23:29 “Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
 Formula of Concord, Ep., II, p 786, 4-6: God the Holy Spirit, however, does not effect conversion without means, but uses for this purpose the preaching and hearing of God's Word, as it is written Rom. 1:16: "The gospel is the power of God ⁵¹ unto salvation to every one that believes." Also Rom. 10:17: "Faith comes by hearing of the Word of God." And it is God's will that his Word should be heard, and that man's ears should not be closed. Ps. 95:8. With this Word the Holy Spirit is present, and opens hearts, so that they, as Lydia in Acts 16:14, are attentive to it, and are thus converted alone through the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, whose ⁶¹ work alone the conversion of man is. For without his grace, and if he do not grant the increase, our willing and running, our planting, sowing, and watering, all are nothing, as Christ says John 15:5: "Without me you can do nothing." With these brief words he denies to the free will its powers, and ascribes everything to God's grace, in order that no one may boast before God. 1 Cor. 1:29; 2 Cor. 12:5; Jer. 9:23.

3) Calvinism errs in assuming a special call for the elect.

Wayne Grudem: In distinction from common grace, the grace of God that brings people to salvation is often called "saving grace." Of course, when we talk about "common grace" and "saving grace" we are not implying that there are two different kinds of grace in God himself, but only that God's grace manifests itself in the world in two different ways. Common grace is different from saving grace in its *results* (it does not bring about salvation), in its *recipients* (it is given to believer and unbelievers alike), and in its *source* (it does not directly flow from Christ's atoning work, since Christ's death did not earn any measure of forgiveness for unbelievers, and therefore did not merit the blessings of common grace for them either) (*Systematic Theology*, p 657, 658).

Wayne Grudem: In distinction from effective calling, which is entirely an act of God, we may talk about the *gospel call* in general which comes through human speech. This gospel call is offered to all people, even those who do not accept it. Sometimes this gospel call is referred to as *external calling* or *general calling*. By contrast, the effective calling of God that actually brings about a willing response from the person who hears it is sometimes called *internal calling*. The gospel call is general and external and often rejected, while the effective call is particular, internal, and *always* effective (*Systematic Theology*, p 693).

Millard Erickson: Special or effective calling, then, involves an extraordinary presentation of the message of salvation. It is sufficiently powerful to counteract the effects of sin and enable the person to believe. It is also so appealing that the person will believe. Special calling is in many ways similar to the prevenient grace of which Arminians speak. It differs from that concept, however, in two respects. It is bestowed only upon the elect, not upon all humans, and it leads infallibly or efficaciously to a positive response by the recipient (*Christian Theology*, p 944).

Robert Raymond: Nor does the Word have in itself the intrinsic power to convert men and to produce holiness in them, as Lutherans contend. To the contrary, God and God alone is the efficient cause of all salvific grace. Accordingly, he must do his saving work by and with these means immediately in the hearts of men if they would in fact become instruments of grace (*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p 913).

Quenstedt: The Calvinists distinguish between an external and an internal call and they explain them both a) with respect to their origin, because the former comes through the ministry of the Word, whether it is extended outwardly to all or to certain ones, the latter is extended through the Holy Spirit who inwardly enlightens and moves the hearts of the elect; b) with respect to the subjects who are called, because the former is extended both to the elect and the reprobate, but the latter is for the elect alone, so that the reprobates are at no time made participants in the former; c) with respect to efficacy, because the latter alone is efficacious; it alone both irresistibly enlightens the mind and moves the will, and it can never be destroyed or extinguished where it has once taken root in the soul, but the former without the latter is useless for salvation and without power.—We Lutherans agree that such a distinction can be made but in such a way that we do not set the external call in opposition to the internal. Nor do we separate the one from the other, since the external call is the means or organ through which the internal call comes and through the former God is powerfully at work in the hearts of men. If the external call does not correspond in its entirety with the external, if one can be called externally who is not also called internally, it [i.e. the external call] would be useless, deceptive, imaginary (*TDP*, Pt III, p 466).

c) God's call is universal.

1) It is limited only by the extent of sin in mankind.

Matthew 9:13 But go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

Formula of Concord, Ep. XI, p 832, 8 This Christ calls to himself all sinners and promises them rest, and he is in earnest that all men should come to him and suffer themselves to be helped, to whom he offers himself in his Word, and wishes them to hear it and not to stop their ears or despise the Word. Moreover, he promises the power and working of the Holy Spirit, and divine assistance for perseverance and eternal salvation.

2) It is God's will that his call reach every sinner.

-a) This is clearly taught in Scripture.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 Timothy 2:4 God wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Quenstedt: We say, however, that this call is universal, 1) with respect to the intention of God, ... 2) with respect, also, to the command of Christ... To every place therefore to which creation extends the preaching of the Word also reaches... 3) with respect to the preaching itself, for all men in the whole universe have been called. For the voice of the apostles has gone out into the whole world (Mk 16:20; Ro 10:18) (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. V, sect. I, thesis V, note, p 464).

Formula of Concord, TD XI, p 1070, 28: Therefore, if we wish to consider our eternal election to salvation with profit, we must in every way hold sturdily and firmly to this, that, as the preaching of repentance, so also the promise of the gospel is *universalis* (universal), that is, it pertains to all men, Luke 24:47. For this reason Christ has commanded that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among ALL nations. For

God loved the WORLD and gave His Son, John 3:16. Christ bore the sins of the WORLD, John 1:29. He gave His flesh for the life of the WORLD, John 6: 51. His blood is the propitiation for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD, 1 John 1:7, 2:2. Christ says: Come unto me, ALL you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Matt. 11:28. God has concluded them ALL in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon ALL, Rom. 11:32. The Lord is not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance, 2 Pet. 3:9. The same Lord over all is rich unto ALL that call upon him, Rom. 10:12. The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto ALL and upon ALL them that believe, Rom. 3:22. This is the will of him that sent me, that EVERY ONE that sees the Son and believes on him may have everlasting life, John 6:40. Likewise it is Christ's command that to all in common to whom repentance is preached this promise of the gospel also should be offered Luke 24:47; Mark 16:15.

-b) Though there may be differences in the external mode of the call, yet essentially it is everywhere the same.

Hollaz: The ordinary call is equally extended to all in substance, or in so far as it is viewed essentially, but it is unequally extended to all when we consider sequence, manner and degree, time and duration. The ordinary call is equally extended, 1) because we are equally called by saving grace ... 2) because the same powers enabling us to believe are offered to all ... 3) because we are called through the same means, the same Gospel, the same baptism, all equally efficacious, if you keep the intention of God in mind (*Examen*, Pt III, sect. I, chap. IV, p 253).

3) The gospel call has repeatedly gone out to the whole world.

Quenstedt: This universal call, however, has been solemnly extended on three distinct occasions, namely, at the time of our fallen first parents (Gn 3:15); at the time of Noah after the flood (Gn 9:8,9; 2 Pe 2:5) and at the time of the apostles (Mk 16:15,20; Ro 10:18; Col 1:6,23). This threefold call came not only to those who were present, or those to whom it was extended directly, but it pertains also to their descendants (Dt 1:6; 4:11; Gn 17:7,10; cp. also Lk 24:47; Mt 24:14) (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. V, sect. I, thesis XIII, p 465).

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Romans 10:18 But I ask, Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

Colossians 1:6,23 All over the world this gospel is producing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. ²³ This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

4) God often judges and punishes people's contempt for his call by withdrawing it or by allowing delusions to prevail.

-a) Scripture offers specific examples of this judgment.

Amos 8:11,12 "The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine through the land—not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD. ¹² Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it."

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles."

Acts 28:26-28 Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." ²⁷ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them. ²⁸ Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

-b) Yet it is not for us to judge wherever and whenever this judgment has taken place. We cannot in every case fully understand the ways of God.

Koenig: We cannot deny, although the benevolent will of God for the salvation of all men through faith in Christ stands, although the universal merit of Christ also stands, and joined with it His intercession for all men as Mediator, that when the means of salvation are dispensed there are often some things that are not equal, which must be committed to the hidden and unsearchable judgment of God (*Theol Pos*, Par 441, p 187).

Hutter: The meaning of our thesis, therefore, is that children pay for the guilt of their parents and elders in this that they are born outside the church but not in this that on account of the ingratitude of their parents every opportunity to hear the Word of God or salvation itself is cut off and taken away (*Loci*, p 789).

Gerhard: But we grant that we cannot in these and similar special cases search out and set forth exactly why God makes these decisions. Nevertheless, we ought not to resort to any absolute decree of reprobation. Rather let us cling firmly to these universal pronouncements: God wants all men to be saved, etc. (*Loci*, vol XXII, ch V, par III, p 789).

D3 B. Conversion

The transition of a man from the state of sin into the state of faith is variously designated in Scripture as: repentance, regeneration, and illumination. However the term most commonly used is conversion. Repentance describes the change properly; the other expressions are metaphorical.

Note: Many of the terms in this section can be used in a wider or narrower sense. In this section, we are using these terms in their narrow sense for that instant and moment when the Spirit brings the sinner from spiritual death to spiritual life. In the wider sense these terms can be used to include both God's work to bring about conversion in the sinner's heart through law and gospel as well as the daily contrition and repentance of the Christian after the moment of conversion.

D3 B, I. Repentance is a change of heart and mind in which the person regrets his sinfulness and through faith embraces the grace of God.

D3 B, I, 1. Repentance in a broader sense has a double aspect.

a) Scripture speaks of both of these aspects.

1) Terrors of conscience over sin (contrition).

Job 42:6 Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
 Matthew 11:21 Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.
 Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"
 Acts 8:22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.
 2 Corinthians 12:21 I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.
 Hebrews 6:1 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God.
 Revelation 2:21 I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling.
 Friedlieb: Contrition is sincere grief because of sins and their justly deserved punishments (*Medulla Theologiae*, p 1319)
 Calov: Contrition is the suffering of the soul, aroused by the law because of sins and their very severe punishments, which drives us to Christ (*Theol Pos*, Pt III, sect. IV, ch. VII, thesis V, p 500).
 Haffenreffer (d 1619): What is contrition? It is sincere and true sorrow of heart in which when we are made conscious of sins by the Law of God, we tremble in fear before the anger of God and the punishments we have deserved as we grieve over the sins we have committed (*Locis*, Bk III, sect. III, loc V, p 503).

2) **Faith is the principal element of repentance.**

-a) **This is the consistent teaching of Scripture.**

Luke 15:7,10 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 16:31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Revelation 16:9 They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him.

Gerhard: That true faith in Christ, no less [than contrition], is required for repentance that leads to salvation and that it constitutes the second part of such repentance, we show by the following arguments: 1) Repentance is a work that leads to life (Ac 11:18), by which forgiveness of sins (Jr 36:3; Ac 3:19), the grace of God, righteousness is obtained... But now there is no room for [any of] these apart from the faith without which it is impossible to please God (He 11:6). In reality only by faith in Christ are these benefits obtained. Therefore ... 2) That by which true repentance that leads to salvation is distinguished from false repentance that leads to death should not be excluded from the essential parts of true repentance that leads to salvation. But now by faith true repentance that leads to salvation is distinguished from false repentance that leads to death. Therefore ... 3) Whatever is needed as an essential part in describing true repentance that leads to salvation must not be excluded from the number of its parts. But now faith is required as an essential part in describing true repentance that leads to salvation (Mt 21:32; Mk 1:15; Ac 20:21; Mt 3:2; Ac 19:4). Therefore ... 4) If faith is excluded from the number of essential parts of repentance, then there is no *terminus ad quem* in conversion (no goal in the process of conversion), no difference between repentance that leads to salvation and repentance that leads to death, abiding consolation is taken away from terrified consciences, repentance in its totality would be a work of the law and therefore would not be repentance unto life, unto salvation (Ac 11:18; 2 Cor 7:10). Since all these are absurd, it surely cannot be denied that faith is a part of repentance (*Locis*, Vol VI, locus XVI, par XLII, p 236).

Quenstedt: Observe here the theological rule: Whenever the effect of the forgiveness of sins is ascribed to repentance and there is nevertheless no express mention of faith, then the word "repentance" must in those passages be understood as signifying the whole work of conversion (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. IX, sect. I, thesis V, note, p 580).

Chemnitz: Faith is assenting to the whole word of God set before us, and in this Word to the promise of free reconciliation granted to us for the sake of Christ the Mediator . It therefore remains firm and established that the proper and principal object of justifying faith, in respect to which and by the apprehension of which it justifies, is the free promise of the mercy of God who forgives sins, adopts and accepts the believers into eternal life because of Christ the Mediator (*Examen*, de fide justificante, p 161).

Quenstedt: The general object of faith is the Scripture or the things revealed in Scripture; the special [object of faith] is the doctrine of the gospel. But as far as justifying faith as such is concerned, the proper and special object of faith is the grace and mercy of God promised in the Word to individual believers and merited for them by the active and passive obedience of Christ... This we prove from Ro 3:24, 25, where the apostle designates Christ as the object of faith (or, asserts that the object of faith is Christ) not viewed in a general way but as the ἱλαστήριον, the appeasement or appeaser of the wrath of God, set before us in His blood (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. VIII, sect. I, thesis XIII, note 1, p 285).

Calov: Justifying faith has as its object not all the things which God has revealed, but the grace and mercy of God, or rather the gospel promise about the grace of God, and therefore the suffering and death of Christ, by which redemption and salvation have been won for us, as well as his righteousness and obedience (Ac 4:12; Ro 3:24,25; 1 Cor 15:3) (*Apodixis*, de fide justificante, par. XXI, p 298).

-b) **Thus faith follows contrition (logically, not chronologically).**

Torgau Colloquy, 1527: Agricola (who maintained that repentance is worked by the gospel, not the law): Contrition begins with faith in the threats of the law. Melancthon: What else is faith in the threats but fear? Luther said that it was his opinion that the word "faith" is used for the faith which justifies us and consoles us in these terrors. (See the Concordia Triglotta, Historical Introduction, p 163.)

b) **No other elements, other than contrition and faith, are mentioned in Scripture as belonging to the essence of repentance.**

1) **Therefore we speak of these two emotions as constituting repentance.**

Augsburg Confession, XII, p 48, 2–5: Now, repentance consists properly of these ³¹ two parts: One is contrition, that is, ⁴ terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin; the other is faith, which is born of ⁵ the gospel, or of absolution, and believes that for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven.

Apology, XII, p 254, 8: They teach that by contrition we merit grace. In reference to which, if any one should ask why Saul and Judas and similar persons, who were dreadfully contrite, did not obtain grace, the answer was to be taken from faith and according to the gospel, that Judas did not believe, that he did not support himself by the gospel and promise of Christ. For faith shows the distinction between the contrition of Judas and of Peter. But the adversaries take their answer from the law, that Judas did not love God, but feared the punishments. Is not this teaching uncertain and improper things concerning repentance?

Apology, XII, p 258,260, 29,31,32,35-36: From contrition we separate those idle and infinite discussions, as to when we grieve from love of God, and when from fear of punishment. For these are nothing but mere words and a useless babbling of persons who have never experienced the state of mind of a terrified conscience. But we say that contrition is the true terror of conscience, which feels that God is angry with sin, and which grieves that it has sinned. And this contrition takes place in this manner when sins are censured by the Word of God, because the sum of the preaching of the gospel is this, namely, to convict of sin, and to offer for Christ's sake the remission of sins and righteousness, and the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, and that as regenerate men we should do good works. ³¹ And of these terrors Scripture speaks, as Ps. 38: 4,8: "For my iniquities are gone over mine head, as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.... I am feeble and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart." ... ³² In these terrors, conscience feels the wrath of God against sin, which is unknown to secure men walking according to the flesh as the sophists and their like. It sees the turpitude of sin, and seriously grieves that it has sinned; meanwhile it also flees from the dreadful wrath of God.... ³⁵ We therefore add as the second part of repentance, Of Faith in Christ, that in these terrors the gospel concerning Christ ought to be set forth to consciences, in which gospel the remission of sins is freely promised concerning Christ. Therefore, they ought to believe that for Christ's sake ³⁶ sins are freely remitted to them. This faith cheers, sustains, and quickens the contrite, according to Rom. 5:1: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. This faith obtains the remission of sins.": This faith justifies before God, as the same passage testifies: Being justified by faith. This faith shows the distinction between the contrition of Judas and Peter, of Saul and of David. The contrition of Judas or Saul is of no avail, for the reason that to this there is not added this faith, which apprehends the remission of sins, bestowed as a gift for Christ's sake. Accordingly, the contrition of David or Peter avails, because to it there is added faith, which apprehends the remission of sins granted for Christ's sake.

Hafenreffer: How many parts does repentance have? Two, first, contrition, secondly, faith (*Loci*, Bk V, sect. III, locus V, p 502).

Heerbrand: How many parts does repentance have? Two. Which are they? Contrition and faith (*Compendium*, de poenitentia, p 255).

Urbanus Rhegius (d. 1541): The gospel teaches repentance, that is to grieve from the heart over the sins that have been committed, to be truly terrified by the judgment of God, so that the heart becomes crushed (contrite) and humbled, and at the same time to believe firmly that all sins, no matter how many they may be, have been forgiven us by God because of the merits of Christ (*Formulae*, as quoted by Hoenecke, Vol III, p 288).

Quenstedt: That which makes up repentance is of two parts, contrition and faith (Ac 20:21; 26:18; Is 57:15) (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. IX, sect. I, thesis XI, p 581).

2) **The new obedience in good works is not the essence of repentance but is the fruit of repentance.**

Matthew 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Luke 3:8,10-14 "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham." ¹⁰ "What should we do then?" the crowd asked. ¹¹ John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" ¹³ "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. ¹⁴ Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

Acts 26:20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Revelation 2:5 Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

Apology, XII, p 260, 37-38: Neither is love present before reconciliation has been made by faith. For without Christ God's law or the First Commandment is not performed, according to Eph. 2:18; 3:12 and Rom. 5:2: By Christ we have access to God. And this faith grows gradually and throughout the entire life, struggles with sin is tested by various temptations in order to overcome sin and death. ³⁸ But love follows faith, as we have said above. And thus filial fear can be clearly defined as such anxiety as has been connected with faith, i.e., where faith consoles and sustains the anxious heart. It is servile fear when faith does not sustain the anxious heart.

D3 B, I, 2. The sinner's repentance is the work of God.

a) **That repentance is God's work can be seen from several biblical considerations.**

1) **Repentance is the aim of God's calling.**

Matthew 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Mark 6:12 They went out and preached that people should repent.

Luke 5:32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

Acts 20:21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

Acts 26:20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

2) **Repentance is also directly called a work of God.**

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."

2 Timothy 2:25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.

3) The means for repentance are the means of grace.

Matthew 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Luke 5:32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

4) Even the remorse is inflicted by God through the law.

Psalms 32:4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Psalms 119:120 My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws.

Jeremiah 23:29 "Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"

Augsburg Confession, XII, p 48, 3: Now, repentance consists properly of these two parts: One is contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin.

Apology, XII, p 260, 36: This faith cheers, sustains, and quickens the contrite, according to Rom. 5:1: Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. This faith obtains the remission of sins. This faith justifies before God, as the same passage testifies: Being justified by faith. This faith shows the distinction between the contrition of Judas and Peter, of Saul and of David. The contrition of Judas or Saul is of no avail, for the reason that to this there is not added this faith, which apprehends the remission of sins, bestowed as a gift for Christ's sake. Accordingly, the contrition of David or Peter avails, because to it there is added faith, which apprehends the remission of sins granted for Christ's sake.

Chemnitz: But Thomas Aquinas says that just as sin is brought about by the consent of the will, so it is wiped out and forgiven through dissent (when that consent is no longer there). And he adds: By virtue of the merits of Christ baptism has the power to wipe out sin (that is, as an inborn inclination). But in the contrition which results in forgiveness of sins our act of being displeased with sin is also required together with the merits of Christ. This act is meritorious because it lies in the power of our free will.... Scotus therefore says that the sinner by his natural spiritual powers with the help of the common or general prompting of God can look upon the sin he has committed as an act which is against the Law of God, as offensive to God, as bringing upon him wrath and eternal punishments, and for those reasons the natural will is able to hate sin (*Examen*, Pt II, de contritione, p 195).

b) Exhortations to repent are based on the preaching of law or gospel, or both, and always carry with them the power to effect what they call for.

1) When they are a proclamation of the law, they presuppose and declare a person's utter sinfulness.

Smalcald Articles, III, p 486, 488, 30–32: Here comes the fiery angel, St. John, the true preacher of repentance, and with one hurls both those selling and those buying works on one heap, and says: Repent! Matt. 3:2. ³¹ Now, the former imagine: Why, we have repented! The latter say: We need no repentance. ³² John says: Repent, both of you, for you are false penitents; so are these false saints, and all of you on either side need the forgiveness of sins, because neither of you know what true sin is not to say anything about your duty to repent of it and shun it. For no one of you is good; you are full of unbelief, stupidity, and ignorance of God and God's will. For here he is present of whose fullness have all we received, and grace for grace, John 1:16, and without him no man can be just before God. Therefore, if you wish to repent, repent aright; your penance will not accomplish anything. And you hypocrites, who do not need repentance, you serpents' brood, who has assured you that you will escape the wrath to come? etc. Matt. 3:7; Luke 3:7.

2) Their purpose is not to condemn but to rescue.

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Acts 8:22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.

Revelation 2:16 Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

D3 B, I, 3. Roman Catholicism makes of repentance a sacrament (penance) consisting of three parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, Can. 4: If anyone denies that complete and perfect forgiveness requires that in the penitent there be three acts, the stuff of which the sacrament of penance is made, as it were, namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, which are called the three parts of penance; or, if anyone says that there are only two parts in repentance, namely, terrors striking the conscience when sin is recognized and faith which is created by the gospel or absolution, by which a man believes that his sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, Chap. IV: Contrition, which has first place among the above-mentioned acts of the penitent sinner is grief and revulsion over the sin that has been committed together with the intention of not sinning in the future. At all times, however, this feeling of contrition has been necessary for obtaining the forgiveness of sins. And in the man who has fallen after baptism it finally prepares him for the forgiveness of sins, if it is joined with trust in the mercy of God [Notice: not in the gospel promise of forgiveness] and the promise of doing what remains to be done, namely, the works of satisfaction. These things are required for a proper reception of this sacrament. It [that is, the Council] furthermore teaches that although it sometimes happens that this contrition is perfected by love and reconciles a man to God before this sacrament is actually received.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, Canon 5: If anyone says that this contrition which is produced by examining, remembering, and despising sins ... is not true and useful sorrow, that it does not prepare a man for grace, but makes him a hypocrite and a greater sinner, and finally that it is a coerced and not a free and voluntary sorrow, a sorrow produced by free will, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, Canon 5, Chapter 5: From these facts we can conclude that penitent sinners should in confession enumerate all the mortal sins of which they are conscious after diligent self-examination even if these are most secret and committed only against the last two commandments of the decalog.... We can conclude besides that also those circumstances, which change the nature of the sin (that is, from mortal to venial), should be explained in confession.

Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, Canon 6: If anyone denies that sacramental confession is divinely instituted and necessary for salvation by divine right or if he says that the custom [mode] of confessing in secret to the priest alone, which the Catholic Church from the beginning has always observed and still observes, is foreign to the institution and command of Christ, and a human invention, let him be anathema.

Bellarmino: Catholics unanimously teach that after the guilt has been remitted, liability to *temporal* punishment *often* remains, as is clear from Conc. Trid. Sess. VI, Can. XIV; Sess. XIV, Canon XII. (*Disputationes*, Vol III, de sacr. poenitentiae, bk. IV, chap. II, p 615). Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, Canon 12: If anyone says that the whole punishment is always forgiven by God simultaneously with the guilt and that the satisfaction of the penitents is nothing else than the faith by which they lay hold of the fact that Christ has made satisfaction for them, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1450: Penance requires...the sinner to endure all things willingly, be contrite of heart, confess with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1459: Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must make satisfaction for or expiate his sins. This satisfaction is called penance

Note: Daily repentance is a part of Christian sanctification. This is not to be confused with the repentance that takes place at conversion.

D3 B, II. Regeneration is a metaphorical expression describing the beginning of faith as a new birth.

Note 1: There are two points of comparison in this biblical picture. The new attitude of the heart is considered as a new life. This life is produced without any cooperation on the part of the one regenerated.

Note 2: Practically the same ideas are expressed by the terms “vivification” and “quickenings.”

D3 B, II, 1. Regeneration (and vivification or quickening) denotes the beginning of faith.

a) Notice how regeneration is synonymous with becoming a child of God (entering the kingdom of God, gaining the hope of heaven, etc.).

John 1:12,13 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 3:3,5,16-18 In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” ⁵ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.”

1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

Galatians 3:21,22 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²² But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

Ephesians 2:5,8 [God] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

Colossians 2:12 You have been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

b) Therefore, regeneration is an instantaneous act of moving from spiritual death to spiritual life.

Formula of Concord, TD III, p 920, 18-21: However, since the word *regeneratio*, regeneration, is sometimes employed for the word *iustificatio*, justification, it is necessary that this word be properly explained, in order that the renewal which follows justification of faith may not be confounded with the justification of faith, but that they may be properly distinguished from one another. ¹⁹ For, in the first place, the word *regeneratio*, that is, regeneration, is used so as to comprise at the same time the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake alone, and the succeeding renewal which the Holy Spirit works in those who are justified by faith. Then, again, it is sometimes used *pro remissione peccatorum et adoptione in filios Dei*, that is, so as to mean only the remission of sins, and that we are adopted as sons of God. And in this latter sense the word is much and often used in the *Apology*, where it is written: *iustificatio est regeneratio*, that is, Justification before God is regeneration. St. Paul, too, has employed these words as distinct from one another, Titus 3:5: “He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.” ²⁰ As also the word *vivificatio*, that is, making alive, has sometimes been used in a like sense. For when man is justified through faith (which the Holy Spirit alone works), this is truly a regeneration, because from a child of wrath he becomes a child of God, and thus is transferred from death to life, as it is written: “When we were dead in sins, he has quickened us together with Christ,” Eph. 2:5. Likewise: “The just shall live by faith,” Rom. 1:17; Hab. 2:4. In this sense the word is much and often used in the *Apology*. ²¹ But again, it is often taken also for sanctification and renewal, which succeeds the righteousness of faith, as Dr. Luther has thus used it in his book concerning the Church and the Councils, and elsewhere.

Gerhard: Regeneration, properly so called, which accepts the forgiveness of sins, etc. ... can not be described as greater or less any more than physical generation. But renewal can be described as greater or less, because the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16) (*Loci*, Vol VII, par. 226, p 294).

Huelsenmann: Renewal and sanctification take place day by day (2 Cor 4:16; Eph 4:23; 2 Cor 7:1). But quickening and regeneration never are said to take place day by day or by stages nor are they ever described as greater or less so that one man is said to be more regenerated or more alive than another, but the transfer from death to life, namely spiritual (life), takes place in a moment (Jo 5:24) (*Vindiciae*, p.551).

Quenstedt: This bestowal of spiritual life, however, happens by stages, not always momentarily, but gradually and increasingly, and even if the ζωοποίησις or quickening happens at that moment in which faith is kindled in us and Christ, the true Sun of righteousness, rises in our hearts, (2 Pt 1:19), nevertheless this spiritual life shows itself in successive acts (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. VI, thesis XVII, p 482).

Quenstedt: Regeneration so far as the regenerating God is concerned is perfect and cannot be described as greater or less any more than physical birth itself. But so far as the men who receive it are concerned it is imperfect because the sinner does not perfectly receive what the Holy Spirit gives, because moral evil always is present in them, because sin still lives in them, and because faith can grow and increase in them (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. VI, thesis XVII, p 483).

Hoenecke: These dogmatists [Quenstedt and others] call rebirth gradual, even though they take rebirth in the strict sense as the kindling of faith, only because they unintentionally fall into a wider conception of it...In this sense Quenstedt also says concerning the continuation that is ascribed to regeneration as an attribute that it consists in the strengthening, preservation and increase of faith that are stirred up in the regenerated man (*Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics*, Vol III, p 249,250).

c) **Some Evangelicals, in the interest of subtle synergism in conversion, make regeneration merely one step in the “process” of conversion by which God gives to sinful man the ability to choose to believe in Christ.**

Wayne Grudem: We have defined regeneration to be the act of God awakening spiritual life within us, bringing us from spiritual *death* to spiritual *life*. On this definition, it is natural to understand that regeneration comes before saving faith. It is in fact that work of God that gives us the spiritual *ability* to respond to God in faith. However, when we say that it comes “before” saving faith, it is important to remember that they usually come so close together that it will ordinarily seem to us that they are happening at the same time. As God addresses the effective call of the gospel to us, he regenerates us and we respond in faith and repentance to that call. So *from our perspective* it is hard to tell any difference in time, especially because regeneration is a spiritual work that we cannot perceive with our eyes or even understand with our minds (*Systematic Theology*, p 702).

D3 B, II, 2. Regeneration is accomplished by God without any human assistance.

a) **God works regeneration.**

1) **Notice how the Scripture passages speak of God as the one doing the work of regeneration.**

John 1:13 Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. [?]

John 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

1 John 5:1,4 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

2) **The means of this regeneration are the means of grace.**

John 3:5,8 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

James 1:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Notice that even the human agents who dispense this powerful regenerating gospel are called spiritual “parents.”

1 Corinthians 4:15 Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

Galatians 4:19 My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...

3) **God’s merciful saving work in Christ is the only motive for this regenerating work.**

-a) **At times God’s mercy itself is emphasized.**

1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Ephesians 2:4,5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

-b) **At other times the vicarious work of Christ receives the emphasis.**

1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

b) **Man cannot in any way cooperate to bring about his own regeneration.**

John 1:13 Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. [?]

John 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

Ephesians 2:4,5 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ, even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

D3 B, II, 3. Regeneration may be lost.

a) **Spiritual death may again set in.**

Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

Romans 11:20 They were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

1 Corinthians 10:12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!

Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

1 Timothy 1:19 Holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith.

Hollaz: By sins that are committed with deliberate intent and against conscience (lit. laying waste the conscience) the grace of regeneration is lost (*Examen*, p 886).

Formula of Concord, TD XI, p 1076, 42 Thus many receive the Word with joy, but afterwards fall away again, Luke 8:13. But the cause is not as though God were unwilling to grant grace for perseverance to those in whom he has begun the good work, for that is contrary to St. Paul, Phil. 1:6; but the cause is that they willfully turn away again from the holy commandment of God, grieve and embitter the Holy Spirit, implicate themselves again in the filth of the world, and garnish again the habitation of the heart for the devil. With them the last state is worse than the first, 2 Pet. 2:10,20; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 10:26; Luke 11:25.

Beza (d. 1605): David was not again endowed with the Spirit of regeneration whom he had previously lost, but the Spirit who lay asleep in him was divinely awakened by the ministry of Nathan (*Colloquium Mompelgart.*, Pt II, p 74).

Calvin: Meanwhile this must be maintained that however small and weak faith may be in the elect, nevertheless, because the Spirit of God is for them a sure pledge and seal of their adoption, the sculpturing that He had done on their hearts can never be erased (*Institutes*, Bk III, chap. II, 12, p.361).

Bucanus (d. 1603): In the fallen elect faith remains in the same way as reason sleeps and slumbers in those who are drunk and in infants (*Institutiones*, Locus 29, Qu 27).

Robert Reymond: To cite the words of the Westminster Confession once more: backslidden Christians are “never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, their assurance may, in due time, be revived; and by the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair” (XVIII/iv). As he did with backslidden Peter, the Lord will continue to support his wayward children even while he chastens them when they fail to grow or when they fall into sin (Luke 22:31,32, 54-61; 24:34; Mark 16:7; John 21:15-19) (*A New Systematic Theology*, p 793).

b) Lost regeneration may be restored.

Galatians 4:19 My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.

2 Corinthians 2:5-7 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent – not to put it too severely. ⁶ The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him. ⁷ Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overcome by excessive sorrow.

1 Timothy 1:19-20 Hold on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. ²⁰ Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

Hollaz: A lost regeneration can be regained by a penitent sinner.—Regenerated men, helped by the preserving grace of God, are extremely careful lest by repeated sin they maliciously wound their own conscience; and yet, if in spite of this they fall into mortal sins three, four or more times because they are overcome by the tricks of the devil, the allurements of the world, and the promptings of the flesh, they have no doubts at all about the converting and regenerating grace of God (*Examen*, Pt III, sect. 1, chap. 7, ques. 18, p 886).

Formula of Concord, TD XI, p 1080, 54 Thus there is no doubt that God most exactly and certainly foresaw before the time of the world, and still knows, which of those that are called will believe or will not believe; also which of the converted will persevere in faith and which will not persevere; which will return after a fall into grievous sins, and which will fall into obduracy. So, too, the number, how many there are of these on either side, is beyond all doubt perfectly known to God.

D3 B, III. Illumination is a metaphorical expression describing the beginning of faith as the coming out of darkness into light.

D3 B, III, 1. Consider the point of comparison.

a) Darkness and light are used in various ways as metaphors.

1) Darkness often denotes fear, anxiety, and despair. Consider the gloom and darkness Jesus often uses to describe hell.

Matthew 22:13 Then the king told the attendants, “Tie his hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 25:30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

2 Peter 2:4 God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

Job 3:1-7 After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. ² He said: ³ “May the day of my birth perish, and the night it was said, ‘A boy is born!’ ⁴ That day—may it turn to darkness; may God above not care about it; may no light shine upon it. ⁵ May darkness and deep shadow claim it once more; may a cloud settle over it; may blackness overwhelm its light. ⁶ That night—may thick darkness seize it; may it not be included among the days of the year nor be entered in any of the months. ⁷ May that night be barren; may no shout of joy be heard in it.”

Isaiah 8:20,22 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn. ²² Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness and fearful gloom, and they will be thrust into utter darkness.

Lamentations 3:1-2 I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. ² He has driven me away and made me walk in darkness rather than light.

2) **Light often denotes hope, joy, and salvation.**

Psalms 56:13 For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

Psalms 97:11 Light is shed upon the righteous and joy on the upright in heart.

Proverbs 13:9 The light of the righteous shines brightly, but the lamp of the wicked is snuffed out.

Ecclesiastes 11:7 Light is sweet, and it pleases the eyes to see the sun.

Isaiah 58:8-11 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. ⁹ Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, ¹⁰ and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. ¹¹ The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

b) **With faith heavenly peace enters the heart.**

1) **Notice how the light of peace and the joy is intimately connected with faith in the gospel.**

Luke 2:29-32 Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Isaiah 49:6 He says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Psalms 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

2) **Light is also used with the emphasis on the understanding.**

Acts 26:17,18 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Hollaz: So far as the man who receives the heavenly doctrine is concerned, enlightenment is either literal or pedagogical on the one hand or spiritual and completely saving on the other hand. The former is the operation of the Holy Spirit by which He by His grace which helps and prepares the mind externally brings the man who is still unregenerated but who is nevertheless inclining toward regeneration [*Careful!*] to a literal knowledge of the things that must be believed and produces in him an acceptance of the history of the gospel so that he is more and more disposed toward accepting saving faith. The latter is the operation of the Holy Spirit who, by entering and dwelling in the contrite heart of a man, kindles in that heart a saving knowledge of the mercy of God founded on the merits of Christ, produces a trusting acceptance of the gospel and strengthens and certifies the same by his inner testimony (*Examen*, Pt III, sect. I, chap. V, ques. 10, p 267).

Quenstedt: Enlightenment is either παιδαγωγική και γραμματική, (that is), pedagogical, merely literal or external, when someone who has been instructed in the knowledge of God's truth and is convinced in his conscience concerning its certainty but does not yet have this known truth certified in his heart by the seal of the Spirit and confirmed by the gracious indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or it is πνευματική, spiritual, gracious and internal, namely, when someone who is truly reborn not only has a literal (intellectual) understanding of the doctrine of the Gospel but at the same time is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who Himself lives in him with His grace, or when the truth is not only known and recognized but at the same time supported, confirmed, and certified by the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit who dwells in the heart with his grace (*TDP*, Pt II, chap. II, sect. I, thesis 95, note II, p 77).

3) **Light is also used with reference to living a holy life.**

Ephesians 1:18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

Ephesians 5:8,14,15 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ¹⁴ for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." ¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise.

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

1 John 1:5-7 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

D3 B, III, 2. The means of illumination is the gospel.

a) **Notice how the gospel light brings joy and understanding.**

2 Peter 1:19 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Psalms 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

Psalms 119:130 The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Proverbs 6:23 For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life.

Ephesians 3:8,9 Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

Hollaz: The enlightening power with which the Word of God is endowed is not strictly bound to the acts of hearing, reading, or meditating, but the Word which has been heard, read, or conveyed to the mind and retained in it always is powerful with its own enlightening powers (*Examen*, Pt. III, sect. I, chap. V, ques. 7, p 263).

b) We must not confuse this gospel illumination with the illumination which the law provides.

Romans 3:19,20 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Romans 4:14,15 For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless,¹⁵ because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Hollaz: Enlightenment with respect to the enlightening means is either the illumination of the law or of the gospel. The former is the one which shows us our sin, the wrath of God, and the temporal and eternal punishment for sin; the latter is the one which reveals to us the grace of God which is based on the merits of Christ, the righteousness that avails before God, and eternal life (*Examen*, Pt III, sect. I, chap. V, ques. 5, p 262).

c) It is an error of enthusiasts past and present to expect illumination from the Spirit immediately.

Hollaz: The notion that supernatural divine light should be awaited in silence is so far from right that rather the external Word of God, which is a very clear light, should be earnestly preached, diligently heard, frequently read, and attentively studied, and at the same time pious prayers together with sacred songs should be sent to heaven, so that in this way the saving light of knowledge may rise in our hearts and then continue to grow even more. I. When the mystics distinguish between the silence of words, of thoughts and of desires, we certainly approve of the first, namely, the silence of words, for meditations on the Word of God love the silence found behind closet walls; but the silence of thoughts and desires we do not approve. II. Waiting for divine help in silence indeed is becoming for true Christians but not a silent waiting for light which brings immediate revelation. III. The teaching concerning an internal Sabbath is retained and taught in our churches insofar as that term denotes 1) refraining from works of the flesh 2) the repose of the soul in God, 3) meditations on divine benefits, 4) the desire for and expectation of an eternal Sabbath. But the term internal Sabbath is rejected when it denotes a silence not only of words but also of all thoughts and emotions (*Examen*, Pt III, sect. I, chap. V, ques. 15, p 289,290).

Bruce McConkie: Any message whether written or spoken, that comes from God to man by the power of the Holy Ghost is scripture (*Mormon Doctrine*, p 682).

J. Rodman Williams: In the contemporary spiritual renewal there is frequent possession and investment. Whatever may have been the previous relation to God, many people sense a fresh and total claim on their lives. "I may have had the Spirit before, but now the Spirit has me" – such is a typical testimony of participants in the renewal (*Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, Vol II, p 197).

D3 B, IV. Conversion speaks of the beginning of faith as a turning toward God.

D3 B, IV, 1. In the Old Testament we find the word צִוּי.

a) There are various common uses of the term.

1) It may mean simply an ordinary change of direction.

Judges 14:8 Some time later, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to look at the lion's carcass. In it was a swarm of bees and some honey.

Ruth 1:16,22 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."²² So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

Genesis 8:12 He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

2) It may also be applied metaphorically.

Genesis 30:31 "What shall I give you?" he asked. "Don't give me anything," Jacob replied. "But if you will do this one thing for me, I will go on tending your flocks and watching over them."

Exodus 32:12 Why should the Egyptians say, "It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth"? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people.

Isaiah 45:23 By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear.

Jeremiah 4:28 Therefore the earth will mourn and the heavens above grow dark, because I have spoken and will not relent, I have decided and will not turn back.

Leviticus 27:24 In the Year of Jubilee the field *will revert* to the person from whom he bought it, the one whose land it was.

1 Samuel 7:14 The towns from Ekron to Gath that the Philistines had captured from Israel *were restored* to her, and Israel delivered the neighboring territory from the power of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

1 Kings 13:6 Then the king said to the man of God, "Intercede with the LORD your God and pray for me that my hand *may be restored*." So the man of God interceded with the LORD, and the king's hand *was restored* and became as it was before.

b) **נָשׁוּב** denotes turning from sin toward God.

1) **At times the term is used with the *terminus a quo*.**

1 Kings 8:35 When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them.

2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Nehemiah 9:35 Even while they were in their kingdom, enjoying your great goodness to them in the spacious and fertile land you gave them, they did not serve you or turn from their evil ways.

Isaiah 59:20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:14,22 And among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen something horrible: They commit adultery and live a lie. They strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns from his wickedness. They are all like Sodom to me; the people of Jerusalem are like Gomorrah. ²² But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds.

Jeremiah 25:5 They said, "Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the LORD gave to you and your fathers for ever and ever."

Jeremiah 26:3 Perhaps they will listen and each will turn from his evil way. Then I will relent and not bring on them the disaster I was planning because of the evil they have done.

Ezekiel 3:19 But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself.

Ezekiel 33:9,14 But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself. ¹⁴ And if I say to the wicked man, "You will surely die," but he then turns away from his sin and does what is just and right.

Daniel 9:13 Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth.

2) **At other times the term **נָשׁוּב** is used with the *terminus ad quem*.**

Deuteronomy 4:30 When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in later days you will return to the LORD your God and obey him.

1 Samuel 7:3 And Samuel said to the whole house of Israel, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the LORD and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines."

2 Chronicles 30:9 If you return to the LORD, then your brothers and your children will be shown compassion by their captors and will come back to this land, for the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn his face from you if you return to him.

Job 22:23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored: If you remove wickedness far from your tent.

3) **At other times the term is used without mention of either *terminus*.**

Jeremiah 3:12,14,22 Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "Return, faithless Israel," declares the LORD, "I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful," declares the LORD, "I will not be angry forever." ¹⁴ "Return, faithless people," declares the LORD, "for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion." ²² "Return, faithless people; I will cure you of backsliding." "Yes, we will come to you, for you are the LORD our God."

2 Chronicles 6:24 When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you and when they turn back and confess your name, praying and making supplication before you in this temple...

c) **נָשׁוּב** is used also to denote a defection from God.

1) **There are several examples of this usage.**

Jeremiah 11:10 They have returned to the sins of their forefathers, who refused to listen to my words. They have followed other gods to serve them. Both the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the covenant I made with their forefathers.

Isaiah 47:10 You have trusted in your wickedness and have said, "No one sees me." Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, "I am, and there is none besides me."

Jeremiah 50:6 My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains. They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place.

Jeremiah 8:4,5 Say to them, "This is what the LORD says: 'When men fall down, do they not get up? When a man turns away, does he not return? ⁵ Why then have these people turned away? Why does Jerusalem always turn away? They cling to deceit; they refuse to return.'"

Jeremiah 34:16 But now you have turned around and profaned my name; each of you has taken back the male and female slaves you had set free to go where they wished. You have forced them to become your slaves again.

2) **יָחַד is a verb commonly used in the sense of a defection from God.**

Deuteronomy 11:16,28 Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. ²⁸ the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.

Job 34:27 They turned from following him and had no regard for any of his ways.

Psalms 14:3 All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Psalms 125:5 But those who turn (**דִּימְטוּהוּ**) to crooked ways the LORD will banish with the evildoers. Peace be upon Israel.

D3 B, IV, 2. In the New Testament ἐπιστρέφειν is the most common term used for conversion.

a) **This word, which contains a reference to the *terminus ad*, is used both in the literal sense and the common metaphorical senses.**

Matthew 10:13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you.

Matthew 12:44 Then the evil spirit says, "I will return to the house I left." When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order.

Matthew 24:18 Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak.

Mark 5:30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

Mark 8:33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Luke 8:55 Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat.

b) **Our chief concern is its use for conversion.**

1) **The active voice in the transitive sense corresponds to the Hiphil of יָשַׁב.**

Luke 1:16,17 Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

James 5:19,20 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, ²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Nehemiah 9:29 You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen.

Jeremiah 31:18 I have surely heard Ephraim's moaning: 'You disciplined me like an unruly calf, and I have been disciplined. Restore me (**יָשִׁיבֵנִי**), and I will return (**אָשׁוּבָה**), because you are the LORD my God.'

Malachi 2:6 True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin.

2) **The active voice is also used in the reflexive or intransitive sense.**

Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

Luke 22:32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Acts 9:35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

Acts 14:15 Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

Acts 15:19 It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.

Acts 26:18,20 I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. ²⁰ First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Acts 28:27 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

2 Corinthians 3:16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

3) The passive voice, while most often used with a reflexive sense, may, in a least one passage, have some of the passive sense in its use.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 2:25 (TEV) You were like sheep that had lost their way, but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls.

c) Two other verbs from the same root are used for conversion.

1) Once the compound form with ἀπό is used, referring to the terminus a.

Acts 3:26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.

2) Twice we find the simple stem στρέφειν.

Matthew 18:3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

John 12:40 He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn (στραφῶσιν)—and I would heal them.

D3 B, IV, 3. The terminus a and ad of conversion are mentioned in many passages.

a) Either one or the other or both are mentioned specifically.

Acts 3:26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.

Acts 26:20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Acts 14:15 Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

Acts 26:18 I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

b) Conversion is, therefore, in the strict sense, the decisive step of a sinner out of the state of sin into the state of grace through faith.

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. (πολύς τε ἀριθμὸς ὁ πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν)

Quenstedt: Conversion is an act of the applicatory grace of the Holy Spirit by which He, together with the Father and the Son freely, namely, by grace based on the merits of Christ, through the preached Word of God delivers a mature man who is spiritually dead out of the state of sin into the state of grace, by stages, so far as the preparatory acts are concerned, but instantaneously, so far as the final act is concerned, by a power that is indeed supernatural and divine yet resistible, so that he, repenting, obtains forgiveness of sins by faith and becomes a partaker of everlasting salvation (*TDP*, Part III, p 500).

D3 B, IV, 4. Conversion, in this sense, is the act of a moment.

a) Our dogmatists often speak of conversion in this way.

Quenstedt: The translation out of the state of wrath into the state of grace happens in an instant and in a moment, since it is impossible that the same person should even for a moment be at the same time in a state of grace and a state of wrath, simultaneously alive and dead. For the term conversion is used either in a broad sense, namely, insofar as it includes all the preceding emotions directed toward conversion by the grace of God; or in a narrow sense, insofar as it denotes only that final act, namely, the translation from the state of wrath into the state of grace. Understood in the former way, conversion has its preparatory acts, which happen by stages. But this translation itself from death to life, from the state of wrath into the state of grace most properly is and is called conversion. God alone performs this act in an instant or a moment, as we said. (*TDP*, Pt III, chap. VII, sect. I, thesis XXII, note I. p 493).

Otto Eckert: This we shall have to maintain over against the so-called "breakthrough theory" (*Durchbruchstheorie*) of Pietism and Methodism which is completely shot through from end to end with synergism and negates "by grace alone." When these movements speak of the moment (*Augenblick*), they mean something entirely different than we do, as different as day from night, for to them the moment is the time when a process in which man has contributed his own efforts (*Busskampf*) is completed with the *Durchbruch* or break-through accompanied with varying and often intense emotional experiences and

manifestations, a moment before which no one, not even those who have been baptized and reared in the church, should be considered fully regenerated and converted. We, on the other hand, speak of the moment when by God's grace alone a new life comes into being by the gospel without any effort whatsoever on our part (cf. Ephesians 2:8,9) (*Our Great Heritage*, Vol III, p 18).

b) The converted person will ordinarily not be able to specify the precise moment.

John 3:8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

c) Conversion proper may be preceded by a period of preparatory efforts on the part of God.

1) The sinner will feel the impact of the law and gospel which he cannot escape.

Mark 6:20 Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

Luke 4:22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

Acts 24:25 As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you."

Acts 26:24 At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane."

John 16:8-11 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; ¹⁰ in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

2) These impressions the sinner undergoes against his will. They are not in any way his cooperation in conversion.

d) Conversion is at times spoken of as including the new life which follows. Scripture often speaks of a close connection between conversion and the new life that follows. Some have called this "continued conversion" (*conversio continuata*).

Deuteronomy 4:30 When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in later days you will return to the LORD your God and obey him.

2 Kings 23:24,25 Furthermore, Josiah got rid of the mediums and spiritists, the household gods, the idols and all the other detestable things seen in Judah and Jerusalem. This he did to fulfill the requirements of the law written in the book that Hilkiah the priest had discovered in the temple of the LORD. ²⁵ Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.

Psalms 51:13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. [?]

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. [?]

Jeremiah 34:14,15 "Every seventh year each of you must free any fellow Hebrew who has sold himself to you. After he has served you six years, you must let him go free." Your fathers, however, did not listen to me or pay attention to me. ¹⁵ Recently you repented and did what is right in my sight: Each of you proclaimed freedom to his countrymen. You even made a covenant before me in the house that bears my Name.

Matthew 18:3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (?)

Acts 26:20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Acts 15:3 The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad.

Chemnitz: For it is a far different thing to speak of powers before he begins and when he has already begun to be renewed. Also, cleansing and renewal is not a change which is immediately completed and finished, but it has its beginnings and definite steps of progress, by which it grows, is increased and is preserved (*Examen*, Vol I, p 424).

e) The following classification of conversion (and repentance) is made with reference to the previous state of the repenting person.

Quenstedt: Looked at with the subjects in view, conversion is either the first conversion of unbelievers and of the unregenerate, or the continued conversion of those who stand converted, or the repeated or resumed conversion of backsliding believers who once again return to a healthier mind (*TDP*, Part III, chap. VII, sect. 1, thesis III, p 488).

1) As we most commonly use the term, conversion is the first conversion of unbelievers and of the unregenerate.

Psalms 22:27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him.

Acts 9:35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

Acts 14:15 Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

Acts 26:18 I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

2) The term conversion may also be used for the continued conversion of the believer in the sense of daily repentance.

Jeremiah 31:18,19 I have surely heard Ephraim's moaning: "You disciplined me like an unruly calf, and I have been disciplined. Restore me, and I will return, because you are the LORD my God. ¹⁹ After I strayed, I repented; after I came to understand, I beat my breast. I was ashamed and humiliated because I bore the disgrace of my youth." [?]

Lamentations 5:21 Restore us to yourself, O LORD, that we may return; renew our days as of old. [?]

Psalms 51:13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. [?]

Matthew 18:3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

3) The term conversion can also be used for the restoration of faith for those who had fallen away.

Deuteronomy 30:2 When you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today.

Jeremiah 3:7,12,13 I thought that after she had done all this she would return to me but she did not, and her unfaithful sister Judah saw it. ¹² Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "Return, faithless Israel," declares the LORD, "I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful," declares the LORD, "I will not be angry forever. ¹³ Only acknowledge your guilt—you have rebelled against the LORD your God, you have scattered your favors to foreign gods under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me," declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 18:30,32 Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!

Joel 2:12,13 "Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." ¹³ Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

Mark 4:12 They may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!

John 12:40 He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them.

Luke 22:32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

James 5:19-20 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, ²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

D3 B, IV, 5. Conversion is entirely God's work.

a) There is no cooperation between God and the sinner in bringing about conversion.

1) Scripture never declares otherwise.

-a) There are passages which speak about conversion in the reflexive sense. These merely state as a fact that conversion took place.

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

-b) There are passages commanding men to be converted. Yet even these do not establish human cooperation in conversion.

-1) They need not be understood as implying that sinners themselves should do the work.

-2) They simply call for conversion without any reference to the agent effecting it.

-3) If taken as commands of the law, they will have the effect of the law. They create a painful knowledge of sin.

-4) If taken as a gospel call, they carry the gospel power of producing faith.

2) Pelagians and Synergists assume a cooperation in conversion.

Pelagius: By nature all men (Christians, Jews, and heathen) have a free will to the same degree, but only in Christians is it aided by grace. The latter (Jews and heathen) therefore are to be judged and damned because, although they have a free will, by which they could come to faith and merit the grace of God, they use in a bad way the freedom granted to them (*Ad Innocentium*, as quoted in Hoenecke, *III*, p 279-280).

Council of Trent: If anyone says that the free will of man when it is moved and awakened by God cooperates in no way by giving assent to God as he awakens and calls, by which man disposes and prepares himself for the reception of the grace of justification, let him be damned (Session VI, Canon 4, as quoted in Chemnitz, *Examen*, Vol 1, p 410).

Schmalz (Socinian): It is certain that the Holy Spirit does not work at all in the man who does not show himself fit and obedient. Therefore it is clear that free will, even though it is not the primary or most powerful cause of conversion is nevertheless a cause without which there will never be a future conversion (Disputation VII, as quoted in Schertzer, *Collegium Anti-Socinianum*, Disputation LXXV, p 612).

Melanchthon: From this error of the Manicheans minds must be led away and taught that free will does something. Therefore some of the ancients spoke in this way: Free will in man is the ability to respond to grace (*facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*), that is, it hears the promise and tries to assent and renounces sins against conscience. Such things do not happen in devils. Therefore the difference between devils and mankind should be kept in mind. However, these things will become more clear when the promise is considered. Since the promise is universal and there are no contradictory wills in God, it is necessary that there must be in us some cause for the difference, why Saul is rejected and David is saved, that is, it is necessary that these two men must have acted in different ways (*Locis Communes*, p 44).

J. Kenneth Grider: The gift of faith, for Wesley, does not mean a gift bestowed upon people whether or not they will have it so. In many passages in his writings he teaches that everyone confronted with a moral choice “has in himself the casting voice.” This is the way evangelist Bud Robinson saw it, who used to say, “God voted for me, the devil voted against me, and I cast the deciding ballot for myself” (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 353).

Grudem: When a person comes to faith in Christ, all three elements must be present. There must be some basic knowledge or *understanding* of the facts of the gospel. There must also be *approval* of, or agreement with, these facts. Such agreement includes a conviction that the facts spoken of the gospel are true, especially the fact that I am a sinner in need of salvation and that Christ alone has paid the penalty for my sin and offers salvation to me. It also includes an awareness that I need to trust in Christ for salvation and that he is the only way to God, and the only means provided for my salvation. This approval of the facts of the gospel will also involve a desire to be saved through Christ. But all this still does not add up to true saving faith. That comes only when I make a decision of my will to depend on, or put my *trust* in, Christ as *my* Savior. This personal decision to place my trust in Christ is something done with my heart, the central faculty of my entire being that makes commitments for me as a whole person (*Systematic Theology*, p 712).

Grudem: What shall we say about the common practice of asking people to *pray* to receive Christ as their personal Savior and Lord? Since personal faith in Christ must involve an actual decision of the will, it is often very helpful to express that decision in spoken words, and this could very naturally take the form of a prayer to Christ in which we tell him of our sorrow for sin, our commitment to forsake it, and our decision actually to put our trust in him. Such a spoken prayer does not in itself save us, but the attitude of heart that it represents does constitute true conversion, and the decision to speak that prayer can often be the point at which a person truly comes to faith in Christ (*Systematic Theology*, p 717).

b) God performs the work of conversion through his servants by his means of grace.

1) God is ultimately the author of conversion.

Jeremiah 31:18 I have surely heard Ephraim’s moaning: “You disciplined me like an unruly calf, and I have been disciplined. Restore me, and I will return, because you are the LORD my God.” [?]

Acts 11:21 The Lord’s hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

John 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

2) He accomplishes this conversion through his means of grace.

Jeremiah 23:22 But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds.

Acts 14:15 Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

3) Since God applies these means of grace through human agents, this conversion may be ascribed to the person applying the means.

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever.

Malachi 2:6 True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin.

Luke 1:16,17 Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

James 5:19,20 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, ²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

c) God does not force conversion on a sinner against his will.

1) In conversion he changes the perverse will of a man into an obedient one.

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Formula of Concord, TD, II, p 904, 60 And although God does not force man to become godly (for those who always resist the Holy Spirit and persistently oppose the known truth, as Stephen says of the hardened Jews, Acts 7:51, are not converted), yet God the Lord draws the man whom He wishes decreed to convert, and draws him in such a way that his darkened understanding is turned into an enlightened one and his perverse will into an obedient one. And this is what the Scriptures call *creating a new heart*, Ps. 51:10.

Formula of Concord, TD, II, p 912, 87-88: For the conversion of our corrupt will, which is nothing else than a resuscitation of it from spiritual death, is only and solely the work of God (just as also the resuscitation in the resurrection of the body must be ascribed to God alone), as has been fully set forth above and proved by manifest testimonies of Holy Scripture.^{88]} But how God in conversion changes stubborn and unwilling into willing men through the drawing of the Holy Spirit, and that after such conversion, in the daily exercise of repentance, the regenerate will of man is not idle, but also cooperates in all the works of the Holy Spirit which He does through us, has already been sufficiently explained above.

2) **Whenever a sinner is not converted, the fault is all his own.**

-a) **The sinner's responsibility for refusing God's converting grace is evidenced by the fact that God holds the sinner liable to judgment for his refusal.**

Jeremiah 15:7 I will winnow them with a winnowing fork at the city gates of the land. I will bring bereavement and destruction on my people, for they have not changed their ways.

Jeremiah 25:5,7 They said, "Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the LORD gave to you and your fathers for ever and ever. ⁷ But you did not listen to me," declares the LORD, "and you have provoked me with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves."

Jeremiah 35:15,17 Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, "Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers." But you have not paid attention or listened to me. ¹⁷ Therefore, this is what the LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Listen! I am going to bring on Judah and on everyone living in Jerusalem every disaster I pronounced against them. I spoke to them, but they did not listen; I called to them, but they did not answer."

Hosea 11:5,6 Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria rule over them because they refuse to repent? ⁶ Swords will flash in their cities, will destroy the bars of their gates and put an end to their plans.

-b) **Scripture also clearly indicates that the fault is not on God's side of the equation by showing his eager desire for the salvation of those who reject his mercy.**

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

-c) **God's repeated pleas through his messengers to obstinate sinners is further evidence that he is not to blame for such unbelief.**

2 Chronicles 24:19 Although the LORD sent prophets to the people to bring them back to him, and though they testified against them, they would not listen.

2 Chronicles 30:6-10 At the king's command, couriers went throughout Israel and Judah with letters from the king and from his officials, which read: "People of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, that he may return to you who are left, who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷ Do not be like your fathers and brothers, who were unfaithful to the LORD, the God of their fathers, so that he made them an object of horror, as you see. ⁸ Do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were; submit to the LORD. Come to the sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever. Serve the LORD your God, so that his fierce anger will turn away from you. ⁹ If you return to the LORD, then your brothers and your children will be shown compassion by their captors and will come back to this land, for the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn his face from you if you return to him." ¹⁰ The couriers went from town to town in Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun, but the people scorned and ridiculed them.

2 Chronicles 36:13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him take an oath in God's name. He became stiff-necked and hardened his heart and would not turn to the LORD, the God of Israel.

Nehemiah 9:29 You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen.

Jeremiah 5:3-5 O LORD, do not your eyes look for truth? You struck them, but they felt no pain; you crushed them, but they refused correction. They made their faces harder than stone and refused to repent. ⁴ I thought, "These are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of the LORD, the requirements of their God. ⁵ So I will go to the leaders and speak to them; surely they know the way of the LORD, the requirements of their God." But with one accord they too had broken off the yoke and torn off the bonds.

-d) **In particular, God will hold false prophets responsible for the loss of souls under their care.**

Jeremiah 23:14 And among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen something horrible: They commit adultery and live a lie. They strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns from his wickedness. They are all like Sodom to me; the people of Jerusalem are like Gomorrah.

Ezekiel 13:22 You disheartened the righteous with your lies, when I had brought them no grief, and you encouraged the wicked not to turn from their evil ways and so save their lives.

-e) **All that remains when God's converting love is rejected is judgment.**

Hosea 7:16 They do not turn to the Most High; they are like a faulty bow. Their leaders will fall by the sword because of their insolent words. For this they will be ridiculed in the land of Egypt.

Hosea 13:9 You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against me, against your helper.

D3 C. Justification

D3 C, I. Justification is a declaratory act of God, in which he pronounces a sinner righteous for the sake of Christ.

D3 C, I, 1. In Scripture the words for justification denote a judicial (forensic) act.

a) The following terms occur.

1) In the Old Testament we find the Hiphil of $\bar{\gamma}\bar{\tau}\bar{\iota}\bar{\nu}$.

-a) The word is used in the ordinary sense of being acquitted.

Exodus 23:7 Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty.

Deuteronomy 25:1 When men have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty.

2 Samuel 15:4 Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that he gets justice."

1 Kings 8:32 Hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants, condemning the guilty and bringing down on his own head what he has done. Declare the innocent not guilty, and so establish his innocence.

2 Chronicles 6:23 Hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants, repaying the guilty by bringing down on his own head what he has done. Declare the innocent not guilty and so establish his innocence.

Isaiah 5:23 They acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent.

Proverbs 17:15 Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent— the LORD detests them both.

Job 27:5 I will never admit you are in the right; till I die, I will not deny my integrity.

-b) It is also used in the sense of helping a person to enjoy the benefits of a favorable verdict.

Psalms 82:3 Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Isaiah 50:8,9 He who vindicates me is near. Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other! Who is my accuser? Let him confront me! ⁹ It is the Sovereign LORD who helps me. Who is he that will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up.

Isaiah 53:11 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

2) In the New Testament we find the verb $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\bar{\nu}$ (used 38 times).

-a) This word is also used in the ordinary sense of acquitting or of being acquitted.

Matthew 12:37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.

Luke 7:29 All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John.

Luke 10:29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Luke 16:15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight."

Romans 2:13 For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

1 Corinthians 4:4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

-b) It is also used in the full theological sense of justification before God.

Luke 18:14 I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Acts 13:38,39 Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. ³⁹ Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

Romans 3:20,24,26,28,30 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²⁴ All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁶ He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. ²⁸ For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law. ³⁰ There is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

Romans 4:2,5 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God.⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 5:1,9 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

Romans 8:30,33 Those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

1 Corinthians 6:11 That is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Galatians 2:16,17 We know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.¹⁷ If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not!

Galatians 3:8,11,24 The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."¹¹ Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith."²⁴ So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Titus 3:7 He saved us, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

James 2:21,24,25 Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?²⁴ You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

3) In the New Testament we also find noun forms that express this truth of justification.

-a) There is the noun δικαίωμα (used 10 times).

-1) This verbal noun, as its suffix -μα suggests, stresses the product of the judicial process. It is used for the judge's declaration itself, whether favorable or unfavorable.

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree (δικαίωμα) that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 5:16 Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification (δικαίωμα).

Romans 5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness (δικαιώματος) was justification (δικαίωσιν) that brings life for all men.

-2) It is also used to mean requirement or regulation, since a regulation is that which God has declared to be right in his sight.

Luke 1:6 Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.

Romans 2:26 If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised?

Romans 8:4 He condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Hebrews 9:1,10 Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary.¹⁰ They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.

-3) Some propose a meaning of "a performance of righteousness."

Romans 5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

Revelation 15:4 Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts (δικαιώματά) have been revealed.

Revelation 19:8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

Becker: The NIV has translated δικαιώματά with "righteous acts" [in Revelation 19:8]. There is really only one passage in the New Testament where δικαίωμα seems to mean a righteous act, and even this is not entirely certain (Ro 5:18). It is entirely possible to translate δικαίωμα in Romans 5:18 with "a verdict of 'not guilty'" and make perfectly good sense in the context. In fact, it probably makes better sense than the NIV's "one act of righteousness." Though the NIV translation of τὰ δικαιώματα τῶν ἁγίων, "the righteous acts of the saints," does not necessarily support the idea of justification by works, it does seem to imply it. We know from other passages of Scripture that our own good works are in themselves imperfect, but that

they are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. His blood washes away all the stains of sin that mar all the good deeds of the Christian (1 Pe 2:5). If we view the works of the believer as righteous in that sense, we may accept the NIV rendering (*Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song*, p 285).

- b) Another noun used is δικαιώσις. This stresses the state of having been declared not guilty (used only twice).**

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Romans 5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

- c) The third noun used is δικαιοσύνη. This word stresses the status of something/someone that is declared acceptable before God.**

2 Corinthians 3:9 If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

Romans 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 3:21-24 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 4:3,5,6 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.⁶ David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works.

Romans 8:10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. (Jerome—*justificatio*)

Philippians 3:9 I consider them all rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

- b) From this it is evident that justification is a verdict.**

- 1) Justification (unlike regeneration) is not a change worked in the sinner, but it is God's declarative act concerning the sinner.**
- 2) It is not an executive order of God with no legal satisfaction (just cause) as its basis, comparable to a governor's pardoning of a criminal.**
- 3) It is rather the verdict of a judge who after due investigation acquits a defendant because of a prior satisfaction of justice.**

D3 C, 1, 2. Justification is God pronouncing a sinner righteous.

- a) This is stated directly.**

- 1) Some scriptural statements use the term justification.**

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 3:20-24 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.²¹ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

- 2) Other scriptural statements use synonymous expressions.**

Psalms 32:1,2 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.² Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Psalms 143:2 Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you.

John 3:18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Romans 4:6-7 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:⁷ Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Gerhard: The synonymous phrases are also forensic, for "to be justified" is "not to be called into judgment" (Ps 143:2), "not to be condemned" (Jn 3:18), "not to come into judgment" (Jn 5:24), "not to be judged" (Jn 3:18) (*Loci*, Book VII, loc. XVII, par. VII, p 6).

- b) When God pronounces the sinner righteous, this one concept includes both the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.**

- 1) Forgiveness of sins is used as a perfect synonym of justification.**

Acts 13:38,39 Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. ³⁹ Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

Romans 4:6 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works.

Psalms 32:2 Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

2) **Remission of sins is sufficient for salvation.**

Luke 1:77 You will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.

Acts 26:18 I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

Colossians 1:14 In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 10:17,18 Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

3) **Therefore the remission of sins is not one part of justification and the imputation of Christ's righteousness a separate part. The forgiveness of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness are positive and negative expressions for the one concept of justification.**

Apology, Article IV, p 146, 76 To obtain forgiveness of sins is to be justified. (Compare also Pieper, II, 537–541; Hoenecke, III, 330–338).

Calov: The essence of justification is, on the one hand, described negatively as the non-imputation of unrighteousness or sins, on the other, positively, as the imputation of the righteousness and merits of Christ (*TDP*, part III, sect. IV, chap. V, thesis IV, p 493).

Quenstedt: But these parts (if I may call them that) are not different in reality but only in terminology, for the imputation of the righteousness of Christ is for all practical purposes the same thing as the remission of sins, and the remission of sins the same thing as the imputation of Christ's righteousness, so that both terms, used separately, can express the whole nature of justification (*TDP*, part III, chap. VIII, thesis XIV, p 524).

Gerhard: Although the free remission of sins and the free imputation of the righteousness won by Christ are for pedagogical purposes called by some the two parts, as it were, of justification (from the fact that they hold that the formal cause of justification is a double one, negative and positive,—some speak of two kinds of imputation); yet there is in reality either no difference between them, or they certainly cannot be separated from each other... Since the remission of sins has its foundation in Christ's righteousness on account of which, when it is laid hold of by faith, [Caution!] God receives us into grace, forgives our sins, and, in turn, when these sins have been remitted, imputes to us the righteousness of Christ; therefore also no complete definition of the forgiveness of sins is possible without the imputation of righteousness nor of the imputation of righteousness without the forgiveness of sins. But the non-imputation of sins is the imputation of righteousness, and the imputation of righteousness is the non-imputation or forgiveness of sins. Some present it in this way: The remission of sins and the imputation of righteousness are said to be parts of justification not in reality but in our way of thinking about them, that is, they do not make up the whole, as if neither one or the other of these were justification, but they are making a distinction in the one act of being justified in view of the differing terms, just as when a man dresses himself, his nakedness is covered and his clothing is put on in the same act, yet the covering of nakedness and the putting on of clothing are distinct parts of the act of dressing, not in reality but in terminology, so far as the point of origin and the point of end result are concerned, so in the justification of the sinner, which in Scripture is compared to being dressed, the remission of sins and the imputation of righteousness are so-called "parts", which differ from one another in so far as the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* are concerned; even though in reality they are one act of justification (*Loci*, Book IV, loc. XVII, par. CXCIX, p 260).

Baier: Besides we do not deny that a certain variation, a broadening or even a narrowing of the concept of justification is found in the writings of our dogmaticians which is also admitted and explained with examples by the sainted Huelsemann (*Praelect. in F.C.*, art. XI, sect. II, p 545,546) where he deals with the definition, essence, and different ways of speaking of justification. Nevertheless it is certain that when we say that the essence of justification is the forgiveness or non-imputation of sins, this does not exclude the imputation of the righteousness of Christ or of his obedience both active and passive, nor the imputation of faith itself for righteousness. In other words all we have in mind is that the imputation of righteousness and of faith itself as the basis for justification (Caution!) is prior to that forensic act of justification by which men are absolved from the guilt of their sins, because when we are asked, "Why does God justify men?" we answer, for the reason given previously, "Because God imputes to man the righteousness or merit of Christ which he apprehends by faith, or because he judges that it belongs to this man in such a way that because of it he is absolved from the guilt of his sins" (*Compendium*, part III, chap. V, par. 11d, p 457).

Note: It is a confusion to speak of the forgiveness of sins as being based on the imputed and appropriated righteousness of Christ. The righteousness of Christ is certainly the reason for justification, but the imputation of the righteousness of Christ is already justification itself.

D3 C, I, 3. Roman Catholics consider justification as a process. It is the moral transformation of the sinner.

a) **Their confessional statements demonstrate this teaching.**

Council of Trent, session VI, chap. 7: This justification is not only forgiveness of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man through voluntary acceptance of grace and the gifts; hence the man who was unrighteous becomes righteous.

Council of Trent, session VI, chap. III, canon 11: If anyone says that men are justified either alone by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ or alone by the forgiveness of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and love which is poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and which inheres in them, or even that the grace by which we are justified is nothing but the favor of God, let him be damned.

Council of Trent, session VI, chap. III: Unless they are reborn in Christ, they would never be justified since by that rebirth through the merit of his passion the grace by which they are made righteous is bestowed on them.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1989: The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 4:17). Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high. Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man.

Gerhard: The papists, following the opinion of the scholastics, hold that "the grace of God" in the doctrine of justification means a quality infused into us, that is, they change the word grace from a predication of relationship into a predication of quality. Therefore the Council of Trent speaks a word of damnation upon those who hold that the grace by which we are justified is the favor of God (*Loci*, Book VII, loc. XVII, par. XXV, p 23).

b) They consider an imputed justification to be imaginary.

Bellarmino: Therefore the adoption which we now have in the Spirit through justification is truly owed and not imputed (*Disputationes*, Volume IV, de justificatione, book II, chap. III, par. 58, p 453).

Bellarmino: It certainly follows that to be justified by grace is not to be counted just and yet not to be just, but in truth to be just, holy, and unstained (*Ibid*, p 451).

Chemnitz: This explanation casts light on the entire doctrine and refutes many cavilings. Staphylus says: "The Lutherans set forth the righteousness of faith by speaking of a relationship, but a relationship involves an entity of minimal importance, as the dialecticians say. And it must be a matter of great and serious import to which is attributed salvation and eternal life" (*Loci Theologici*, Volume 2, p 530).

Osiander: God would not commit the injustice of declaring a man to be righteous in whom there is nothing whatever of true righteousness (*Disputatio de justificatione*, thes. 74).

Osiander: They err horribly who take the term "justify" to mean only "to regard or declare righteous" and not "to make righteous," which is its true and real meaning (See Pieper, II, p 529).

Brunner: People believed, supposedly in agreement with Luther but actually in contradiction to him, that one must understand the message of justification by faith alone in the sense of the later orthodox doctrine of forensic justification... God not only declares, He creates a new man ... Christ for us corresponds to Christ in us; the righteousness accepted in faith, which in being accepted comes to personal actuality (*The Divine-Human Encounter*, p 100,101).

Quenstedt: The essence of imputation is a real assessment, which absolves the sinning man who believes in Christ [Caution: this could be misleading] from all his sins before the divine tribunal and actually ascribes to him in a judicial way the righteousness of Christ. God's imputation indeed does not cause the righteousness of Christ to become inherent in the believer, yet it is not on that account a fictitious, unreal and imaginary imputation, it is not just a bare opinion concerning the righteous man without any real effect on him, as the papists slanderously assert, but it is a λογισμός or imputation which is sincere and real, a gracious imputation based on Christ and coming upon us, which consists in a gracious assessment of God and a real assignment to and appropriation by the believer of the righteousness of Christ by which the believer is affected in such a way that by it he is made and declared righteous in the judgment of God's mind. Therefore this imputation is real in the highest degree, whether you look at the righteousness itself which is imputed or the act of imputation. The very righteousness or obedience of Christ, consisting in what he did and suffered, which is imputed to us is true and real in the highest degree, since it obviously corresponds exactly to the mind and will of God as he has expressed it in the law. The act of imputing or the imputation itself is likewise real, because its standard is the mind of God which never makes a mistake. It follows that God cannot consider or look upon a man as righteous if true righteousness has not become his possession, nor is it possible that from the will of God, the standard of all goodness, there should issue a statement of approval of an imaginary or fictitious evaluation or righteousness. And so those to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed are truly righteous, even though not inherently or by indwelling, but by imputation; and at least by a naming that comes from outside of them they are such righteous people, for also from that which is outside of us a true naming can take place. And so it is foolish to ask whether on account of that imputation we really are righteous or whether we are only considered righteous. For the judgment of God is always true. Therefore he, who in the judgment of God is considered righteous, is really righteous (*TDP*, part III, chap. VIII, thesis XIX, nota II).

D3 C, I, 4. Eastern Orthodoxy considers justification to be a process with the final result being the deification of the sinner.

Bishop Kallistos Ware: While God's inner essence is forever beyond our comprehension, his energies, grace, life and power fill the whole universe, and are directly accessible to us....When Orthodox Christians speak of the divine energies, they do not mean by this an emanation from God, an intermediary between God and man, or a thing or gift that God bestows. On the contrary, the energies are God himself in his activity and self-manifestation. When a man knows or participates in the divine energies, he truly knows or participates in God Himself, so far as this is possible for a created being...we are able to affirm the possibility of a direct or mystical union between man and God - what the Greek Fathers term *the theosis of man, his deification*....There is union, but not fusion or confusion. Although one with the divine, man still remains man; he is not swallowed up or annihilated, but between him and God there continues to exist an I-Thou relationship of person to person (*The Orthodox Way*, p 27-28).

D3 C, II. In justification God applies to the individual sinner (subjective justification) the universal or general (objective) justification granted to the whole world in Christ.

D3 C, II, 1. Objective or universal justification is the forgiveness of sins that God pronounced upon the whole world in the resurrection of Jesus.

a) Objective justification is identical with objective reconciliation.

Romans 5:8-11,18,19 God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.¹² Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.¹³ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

b) The resurrection of Christ assures us of this justification.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Romans 4:23,24 The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone,²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Romans 10:9 If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 8:11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

Acts 13:33 What God has promised to our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus.

Colossians 2:11-14 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with the circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ,¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

2 Timothy 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel.

Gerhard: It should be noted that Christ accomplishes our justification in three very special ways: 1) meritoriously, for he has won for us the grace of justification by his most holy and most perfect merit; 2) effectively, for he not only set us free from sin, death and the devil, and he not only acquired for us the righteousness that avails before God, but also in the Word of the Gospel he offers to us these precious treasures so dearly won, and makes them ours by faith; 3) essentially, in this very act of making them ours, since we are righteous before God by nothing else than the righteousness won by Christ and imputed to us by faith (*Locj*, part III, chap. VIII, thesis XIIX, par. XXXIII, p 31).

Gerhard: By raising Christ from the dead the Father absolved him from our sins which had been imputed to him, and therefore he also absolved us in him, so that in this way the resurrection of Christ might be the cause and guarantee and completion of our justification (*Annotationes in Epist. ad Romanos*, p 156).

Gerhard: In the resurrection of Christ we were absolved from our sins so that they might no longer be able to condemn us before the judgment seat of God (*Disputationes theologicae*, XX, p 1450).

Calov: If Christ had remained in death, he would not have been the conqueror of death nor would he have been able to make our own the righteousness bought for us at such high cost...With respect to the actual absolution from sin: Just as God in Christ punished our sins, which were laid on him or imputed to him as our substitute, so also by raising him from the dead he by that very fact absolved him from our sins which were imputed to him, and therefore he also absolved us in him (*Biblia illustrata*, on Ro 4:25).

Apology, Article XII, p 268, 281, 62, 94: Therefore, absolution necessarily requires faith. Neither do we see how he who does not assent to it may be said to receive absolution. And what else is the refusal to assent to absolution but charging God with falsehood? If the heart doubts, it regards those things which God promises as uncertain and of no account. Accordingly, in 1 John 5:10 it is written: Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony God has given about his Son.⁹⁴ For Tertullian speaks excellently concerning faith, dwelling upon the oath in the prophet, Ezek. 33:11: As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. For as God swears that he does not wish the death of a sinner, he shows that faith is required, in order that we may believe the one swearing, and be firmly confident that He forgives us. The authority of the divine promises ought by itself to be great in our estimation. But this promise has also been confirmed by an oath. Therefore, if any one be not confident that he is forgiven, he denies that God has sworn what is true, than which a more horrible blasphemy cannot be imagined. For Tertullian speaks thus: "He invites by reward to salvation, even swearing. Saying, 'I live.' He desires that he be believed. Oh, blessed we, for whose sake God swears! Oh, most miserable if we believe not the Lord even when He swears!"

Large Catechism, p 722, 88: Therefore there is here again great need to call upon God and to pray: Dear Father, forgive us our trespasses. Not as though he did not forgive sin without and even before our prayer (for he has given us the gospel, in which is pure forgiveness before we prayed or ever thought about it). But this is to the intent that we may recognize and accept such forgiveness.

D3 C, II, 2. Subjective or individual justification announces and applies to the individual sinner the merits of Christ.

The result is that the sinner through faith recognizes and enjoys this gift as his own possession.

a) It is the individual sinner who is justified.

Matthew 9:2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

Luke 7:47,48 "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

Luke 18:14 I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

b) God declares the sinner innocent in spite of the fact that he is guilty of sin.

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

Isaiah 43:24,25 You have not bought any fragrant calamus for me, or lavished on me the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins and wearied me with your offenses. ²⁵ I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

Isaiah 44:22 I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.

c) In justification, God simply imputes the righteousness of Christ to the sinner.

Jeremiah 23:5,6 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

Jeremiah 33:15,16 In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

Philippians 3:8,9 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Hebrews 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Isaiah 61:10 I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Chemnitz: Christ is Mediator and Savior not only from the standpoint of merit, but also from the standpoint of efficacy. For his merit does not mean that the things pertaining to our justification should be brought about through us or through others, but he also effected them and still effects those things in which our justification and salvation consist, such as our deliverance from sin, the devil, death, and the wrath of God, and the application of these blessings to our hearts. Therefore this is deservedly called an efficient cause (1 Pe 1:18,19; 2:24; 1 Jn 1:9; Heb 2:14; Rev 5:9; Ga 3:13, etc) (*Examination*, Vol I, p 457).

D3 C, III. Justification is by grace.

D3 C, III, 1. It is important to have an accurate biblical definition of grace.

a) Grace is the favorable disposition of God's heart toward us.

1) This is clearly Scripture's definition.

Romans 11:6 If by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Ephesians 2:5,8,9 God made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

2) Catholics take justifying grace as a quality infused in us (*gratia infusa*).

Council of Trent, session VI, chap. III, canon 11: If anyone says that men are justified either alone by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ or alone by the forgiveness of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and love which is poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and which inheres in them, or even that the grace by which we are justified is nothing but the favor of God, let him be damned.

Chemnitz: The papists call it "first justification" when an unregenerate man for the first time is infused with a righteousness that is an inherent [part of his nature], when for the first time he receives the attitude or the infused quality of love. And concerning this first infusion of love they say that no works can merit it as a reward that is owed (*Examination*, Vol I, p 540).

Chemnitz: But they call it "second justification" when the infused love puts its abilities into practice to produce good works. And they say that this second justification can and should be obtained through good works. And they believe that those works merit a righteousness which is greater than that which is infused freely for the sake of Christ in first justification.

Yes, they also say that those works in which their second justification consists finally merit eternal life, which they say is owed as a deserved reward for our good works done in love. So say the Jesuits (*Examination*, Vol 1, p 540).

3) **There is no scriptural support for the concept of infused grace in justification.**

-a) **Some claim to find such support in the following passage.**

Romans 5:5 Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

-b) **The meaning is simply that we are assured of God's love. Notice how the pouring out of God's judgment mentioned in the following passages does not mean there is an "infused wrath."**

Psalm 69:24 Pour out your wrath on them; let your fierce anger overtake them.

Psalm 79:6 Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the kingdoms that do not call on your name.

Jeremiah 10:25 Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the peoples who do not call on your name. For they have devoured Jacob; they have devoured him completely and destroyed his homeland.

Calov: This love is poured out on us not as something that inheres in us, but as a manifestation and an effect and a feeling of it poured into our hearts (*Biblia Illustrata*, Vol. II, annotate. ad Rom., p 90).

b) **Grace is God's motive for justification.**

1) **Salvation in general is attributed to grace.**

Romans 5:2,17,21 Through him we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ²¹ So that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:14,15,23 Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. ¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Corinthians 6:1,2 As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ² For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 12:9 He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel.

Ephesians 1:5,6 In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Ephesians 2:8,9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Philippians 1:7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me.

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Revelation 21:6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life."

Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Isaiah 55:1-3 Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. ³ Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

2) **Specifically, Scripture speaks of justification being by grace.**

Romans 3:24 All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 4:4,5 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 5:17,21 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ²¹ So that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

3) **Justification becomes ours through faith.**

-a) **This is a clear fact of Scripture.**

Romans 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 3:22,28 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. ²⁸ For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 9:30,31,32 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone."

Romans 10:6 The righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down).

Galatians 2:16 We know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 3:24 The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

Galatians 5:5 But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.

-b) **Faith is not a meritorious work, but only the organ for receiving grace.**

Mark 16:15,16 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Romans 4:16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

Galatians 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

-c) **Since faith grasps the grace of God in Christ, it is imputed for righteousness.**

-1) **It is not the act of believing itself that is imputed for righteousness.**

Romans 4:4 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation.

Romans 11:6 If by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Notice that the New Testament never speaks of being justified διὰ πίστεως (because of faith).

-2) **Faith is imputed as righteousness because of the object to which faith clings, the merits of Christ.**

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Formula of Concord, TD, Article III, p 918, 13 For faith justifies, not for this cause and reason that it is so good a work and so fair a virtue, but because it lays hold of and accepts the merit of Christ in the promise of the holy Gospel; for this must be applied and appropriated to us by faith, if we are to be justified thereby.

-3) **Roman Catholicism strongly denies this understanding of the relationship of faith to justification.**

Council of Trent, Session VI, Canon 9: If anyone says that by faith alone the ungodly is justified with the understanding that nothing else is required which works with faith to obtain the grace of justification and that it is not at all necessary for him to be prepared and disposed by an act of his own will, let him be damned.

Canon 24: If anyone says that the received righteousness is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works but that the works are only the fruit and signs of the justification obtained, not also a cause of its increase, let him be damned.

Chemnitz: The papists explain the matter in this way: Faith which is perfected (i.e. given its essential saving characteristic) by love and other virtues is counted for righteousness, that is, that in believers God for Christ's sake accepts the works, which in and by themselves are not worthy, as the kind of righteousness which brings reconciliation with God etc. (*Locī, de justificatione, chap. IV, de vocabulo imputationis, p 274*).

D3 C, III, 2. The sinner's own merits in no way are a factor in justification.

a) **We must understand what it meant by merits in this statement.**

1) **Among the merits we exclude are all the merits of the sinner before justification.**

Luke 18:9-14 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴ I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Philippians 3:4-8 If anyone thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. ⁷ But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

Hoenecke: These seven steps of preparation, namely, faith, fear, hope, love, repentance, intention of Baptism, and intention of the new life form the so-called *meritum de congruo* of the scholastics, i.e., they are not something that are strictly worthy of being valued as merit (thus not *meritum de condigno*) (*Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics*, Vol III, p 340).

Apology, Article IV, p 124, 19,20: Their feigning a distinction between *meritum congrui* and *meritum condigni* [due merit and true, complete merit] is only an artifice in order not to appear openly to Pelagianize. For, if God necessarily gives grace for the *meritum congrui* [due merit], it is no longer *meritum congrui*, but *meritum condigni* [a true duty and complete merit]. But they do not know what they are saying. After this ability to love is present, they imagine that man can acquire merit *de condigno*. And yet they bid us doubt whether there is an ability present. How, therefore, do they know whether they acquire merit *de congruo* or ²⁰ *de condigno* [in full, or half]? But, good God! these are mere inane ideas and dreams of idle, wretched, inexperienced men, who do not much reduce the Bible to practice, who did not know how the remission of sins occurs, and how, in the judgment of God and terrors of conscience, trust in works is driven out of us. Secure hypocrites always judge that they acquire merit *de condigno*, whether the habit be present or be not present, because men naturally trust in their own righteousness; but terrified consciences waver and hesitate, and then seek and accumulate other works in order to find rest. Such consciences never think that they acquire merit *de condigno*, and they rush into despair unless they hear, in addition to the doctrine of the law, the gospel concerning the gratuitous remission of sins and the righteousness of faith. Thus some stories are told that when the Barefooted monks had in vain praised their order and good works to some good consciences in the hour of death, they at last had to be silent concerning their order and St. Francis, and to say: "Dear man, Christ has died for you." This revived and refreshed them in trouble, and alone gave peace and comfort.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article I, p 476, 8: The scholastic doctors have taught... if a man does as much as is in him, God certainly grants him His grace.

2) **Also excluded from merit in justification are all good works of the justified.**

Romans 4:2,3 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Notice that justification is not conditioned on future worthiness, just as it is not given as a reward for past merits.

Hermas III, 2: If you would do something good not required by the commandment of God you would gain for yourself greater glory and be more glorious before God than you would be otherwise.

Didache VI, 2: If you can bear the whole yoke of the Lord you will be perfect; but if you cannot, do as much as you can.

2 Clem. VII, 3: Let us strive that we may be crowned. And if we cannot all be crowned, let us at least come near the crown.

b) **Scripture expressly excludes all merits of man from justification (contra Lodge, Boy Scouts, etc.).**

1) **Note the strong *particulae exclusivae*.**

Romans 3:28 We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Galatians 2:16 Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Ephesians 2:8,9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

2) **Scripture very emphatically denounces any attempt to introduce the sinner's own merits into justification.**

Romans 10:2,3 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Galatians 1:8,9 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

Galatians 2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!

Galatians 3:1,3,10 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ³ Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? ¹⁰ All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Philippians 3:2 Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.

3) **Reason cannot grasp this truth.**

Limborch: Meanwhile, if quarreling about terminology were given up, we would have to confess that in the views of the papists there are many things of which we do not disapprove, and if this would be corrected that righteousness is an infused attitude and if all [ideas of] merit are renounced, it seems by all means that we must hold with them that an indwelling righteousness is required if we are to obtain forgiveness of sins and righteousness from God (*Theol. Christ.*, lib. VI, chap. IV, par. 4).

John Miley: Arminians deny the merit of good works but insist on them as a condition of salvation (*Systematic Theology*, p 373).

Erickson: Saving faith requires correct belief regarding the nature of God and what he has done. Correct belief is insufficient, however. There must also be active commitment of oneself to God (*Christian Theology*, p 959).

4) **This is the error of “analytic justification.”**

John Ankerberg: The second key term for Protestantism [in the matter of justification] is synthetic; for Roman Catholicism it is the word analytic. By the term synthetic, Protestantism means that there is a synthesis or a combining or adding something to the life of the sinner who has placed trust in Christ. Before God’s eyes, the sinner appears clothed in the righteousness of Christ—that is, the righteousness and merits of Christ are imputed to the believer and cover him. Thus, God has declared the sinner just, not from anything in and of himself but from declaring him just in Christ. It is the merits of Christ that establish a man as righteous, not the merits of a man. The contrary word in Catholicism is that justification is analytic; this means that God analyzes or evaluates the condition of the person, finds him to be truly righteous and therefore declares him just (<http://www.ankerberg.com/Articles/roman-catholicism/RC0602W2.htm>). Cf Pieper II, p 537–541; Hoenecke III, p 334–338.

D3 C, III, 3. Such clear teaching about the exclusion of human merit in justification serves a double purpose.

a) **It sets justification on an unshakable foundation, giving the believer certainty of his standing with God.**

1) **Scripture testifies about this certainty.**

Romans 4:16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

John 10:28,29 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.

Romans 8:15,16,38,39 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

2) **Roman Catholic doctrine consistently holds the Christian in suspense.**

-a) **Their doctrinal statements deny that objective assurance of salvation is the possession of every believer.**

Council of Trent, Session VI, Canon 15, 16: If anyone says that a regenerated and justified man is obligated by faith to believe that he is certainly one of the elect, let him be damned....If anyone says with absolute and infallible certainty that he will surely have this great gift of enduring to the end (unless he shall have learned this by a special revelation), let him be damned.

-b) **Catholicism cites the following Scripture passages as proof.**

-1) **They list passages that contain conditional clauses.**

Deuteronomy 4:29 But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.

2 Chronicles 6:38,39 If they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for your Name; ³⁹ then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you.

Ezekiel 18:21 But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die.

Response: These are not conditions, but powerful invitations to find God’s grace in repentance.

-2) **They list passages that declare our guilt.**

Proverbs 20:9 Who can say, “I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin”?

Job 9:20,21 Even if I were innocent, my mouth would condemn me; if I were blameless, it would pronounce me guilty. ²¹ “Although I am blameless, I have no concern for myself; I despise my own life.”

Psalms 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

1 Corinthians 4:4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

Response: These are confessions of sinfulness.

-3) They list passages that speak of grace in the form of a question.

Joel 2:14 Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing—grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.

Jonah 3:9 Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.

Acts 8:22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.

Response: These passages do not speak of doubt about salvation, but they are encouragement to repentance.

b) Refusing to allow for any human merit in justification gives all glory to God.

Ephesians 2:9 It is not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 1:5-7 In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will - ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

D3 C, III, 4. Therefore, a proper understanding of justification requires a clean-cut division between law and gospel.

a) Scripture, indeed, addresses warnings to Christians.

Romans 11:20,21 Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

1 Corinthians 10:12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

b) Yet such warnings are entirely out of place, and omitted by Scripture, when the question of justification is under consideration.

Acts 16:30,31 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

D3 C, IV. God pronounces justification in the means of grace.

D3 C, IV, 1. Strictly speaking, the Word of God is a means of grace only by the gospel it contains.

a) Justification by law is beyond our reach. The demand of a perfect obedience makes it impossible for us to achieve.

Romans 10:5 Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: "The man who does these things will live by them."

b) Justification by faith is near. It is announced in the gospel.

Romans 10:6-9 But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

2 Corinthians 5:19 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

D3 C, IV, 2. Justification is the central doctrine of the gospel.

a) All other doctrines find their purpose in justification.

1) Notice how Scripture speaks of the centrality of this doctrine for preaching and teaching.

1 Corinthians 2:2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (Compare Acts 20:27: For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.)

Galatians 6:14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

2) Note the relation of some doctrines to justification.

-a) Law and sin speak of the necessity of justification.

-b) The doctrine of God shows our God in love preparing it.

-c) Christ and his work lay justification's foundation.

-d) The doctrine of the church presents us with the congregation of the justified.

-e) The means of grace proclaim and seal it.

-f) Sanctification (in all its ramifications) is the fruit of this justification.

-g) The goal is the salvation of mankind and glory of God.

b) Therefore this doctrine truly deserves its place at the heart of Christian doctrine.

1) It is rightly called *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*.

Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article I, p 460, 5: Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered nor can anything be granted or permitted contrary to the same, even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin. "For there is no other name under heaven, given to men by which we must be saved," says Peter, Acts 4:12. "And by his wounds we are healed," Is. 53:5. And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the whole world. Therefore, we must be sure concerning this doctrine, and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us.

2) **All Christians are one in heart concerning this article.**

-a) **Anyone trusting in his own works is no Christian.**

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

-b) **Christians may err in the intellectual conception of justification.**

Romans 8:26,27 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

-c) **Here is a confessional statement on the centrality of justification.**

Apology, Article III, p 224, 268: Good men, indeed, will easily judge these things, if they will think, as often as a passage concerning love or works is cited, that the law cannot be observed without Christ, and that we cannot be justified without Christ, and that we cannot be justified from the law, but from the gospel, that is, from the promise of the grace promised in Christ. And we hope that this discussion, although brief, will be profitable to good men for strengthening faith, and teaching and comforting conscience. For we know that those things which we have said are in harmony with the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures, with the holy fathers, Ambrose, Augustine, and very many others, and with the whole Church of Christ, which certainly confesses that Christ is propitiator and justifier.

c) **A deviation from the truth in this article has the most far-reaching, disastrous results.**

1) **Rejection of this doctrine excludes a person from the church.**

Matthew 21:31 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you."

John 16:9 He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

2) **Failure to understand this doctrine will dull spiritual understanding so that ultimately even the difference between Christian and pagan religion becomes obliterated.**

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 847: Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation.

National Council of Churches: As Christians we recognize that Jesus is not central to other religious traditions. For men and women in other communities, the mystery of God takes many forms. Observing this, we are not led to deny the centrality of Christ for our faith, but to contemplate more deeply the meaning of St. Paul's affirmation: 'Ever since the creation of the world, (God's) eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things [God] has made' (Romans 1:20). Christians disagree on the nature and extent of such 'natural revelation' and its relation to salvation. No matter what our view on this may be, we can be open to the insights of others (*Interfaith Relations and the Churches: A Policy Statement of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.*, as found on the ELCA web site).

D3 C, V. The aim of justification is man's salvation.

D3 C, V, 1. Scripture tells us of two states of sinful human beings.

a) **Before justification our state is wretchedness.**

Psalms 32:3,4 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

b) **The result of justification is blessedness.**

Psalms 32:1,2 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ² Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Romans 4:6-9 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ⁸ Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him." ⁹ Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness.

D3 C, V, 2. Scripture draws a vivid picture of a justified sinner's happiness.

a) **The justified sinner enjoys freedom in Christ.**

1) **Compare this with the servitude of sin.**

Genesis 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

John 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."

Hebrews 2:14,15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

2) There are several aspects to our freedom in Christ.

John 8:32,36 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Exodus 20:20 Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.”

Romans 6:12,14,15,18 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.¹⁴ For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

Galatians 4:9,10 But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?¹⁰ You are observing special days and months and seasons and years!

3) Turning our freedom into a license for sinning is a grotesque travesty of real liberty.

Romans 6:1,2 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

1 Peter 2:16 Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.

b) The justified sinner has been adopted as a full child of God with all the rights and privileges of an adult child.

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

Galatians 3:26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 4:1-5,6 What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate.² He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.³ So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

Romans 8:14-16 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

1 John 3:1,2 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

c) The justified sinner enjoys peace of heart.

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:7 The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:19 Fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith.

1 Peter 3:21 This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

d) The justified sinner sees sanctification not as drudgery but as delight.

Romans 3:8 Why not say—as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—“Let us do evil that good may result”? Their condemnation is deserved.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

1 Peter 5:2,3 Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve;³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

e) The justified sinner may not always recognize his blessedness. Similarly, the unbeliever may not always recognize his wretchedness. There is an objective and subjective quality to both states.

Psalm 73:12-14 This is what the wicked are like – always carefree, they increase in wealth. ¹³ Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence. ¹⁴ All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning.

Walther: Again, young ministers who are very desirous of achieving results and accomplishing something – may there be many of them! – love to speak before worldlings of the blessed state of being a Christian. However, not infrequently they exceed the bounds of propriety by saying: “Oh, those poor worldly people! They are without any joys, any peace, any rest!” That is not true at all. When worldly people hear a statement of that kind, they think: “That preacher is a simpleton, to be sure. What does he know about us? We have joy, peace, and quiet indeed.” The preacher must express himself differently; he must admit that worldly people have their delights and enjoyments, but at the same time he must remind them that they are frequently visited with such thoughts as these: “What if it were true what the Christians are saying? If they are right, what will be my fate?” Amidst their riotous orgies the thought of death suddenly looms like a specter and turns their joys to bitterness. If the preacher addresses them thus, he forces them to acknowledge: “That man can give you a true picture of yourself!” Again, if you are to portray Christians as being exceedingly happy people, utterly without worry and trouble of any kind, you would again not paint a true picture. Christians are in far greater anxiety, worry, and tribulation than worldly people. Yet, spite of all this, the Christian is far happier than worldly men. If God were to come this night and demand his soul from him, he would say, “Praise God! My race is run; soon I shall be with my Savior.” Amidst his tribulations this is his reflection: “Surely, it will not be long before I shall come home to my Father in heaven, and all the misery and woe of this earth will be past and forgotten.” While Christians are weeping, the angels are rejoicing over them. While Christians are in anguish of soul and terror, God is cherishing the most cordial thoughts of love for them and calls them his beloved children (*Law and Gospel*, p 54, 55).

Walther: One who is spiritually dead regards it as foolish to torment himself with former sins. He becomes increasingly indifferent towards all sins. A Christian, however, feels his sin and also the witness of his conscience against him (*Law and Gospel*, p 45).

Walther: When you feel the comfort of the gospel in your heart, that is a glimpse of the light that may come to you on a certain day; but then several days may pass when you will not catch that glimpse again. Always keep this reflection present: “For such poor sinners as I am the gospel – the sweet gospel – has been provided. I have forgiveness of sins through Christ” (*Law and Gospel*, p 49).

D3 C, VI. The church has coined various terms to preclude error and to safeguard the truth.

D3 C, VI, 1. Justification is set off by various exclusive phrases.

a) We speak of justification as being “by grace” (*favor dei, sola gratia*).

Romans 4:13-16 It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring.

Formula of Concord, Ep., III, p 794, 10 We believe, teach, and confess that for the preservation of the pure doctrine concerning the righteousness of faith before God it is necessary to urge with special diligence the *particulae exclusivae*, that is, the “phrases that exclude,” i.e., the following words of the holy Apostle Paul, by which the merit of Christ is entirely separated from our works, and the honor given to Christ alone, when the holy Apostle Paul writes: of grace, without merit, without law, without works, not of works. All these words together mean as much as that we are justified and saved along by faith in Christ.

b) We also speak of justification as being “for Christ’s sake” (*satisfactio vicaria*).

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:24,25 All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

c) We also speak of justification as being “through faith” (*fides specialis, sola fide*).

Romans 4:4,5 Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Formula of Concord, TD, III, p 918, 13: For faith does not justify because it is so good a work and so God-pleasing a virtue, but because it lays hold on and accepts the merit of Christ in the promise of the holy Gospel.

D3 C, VI, 2. Justification is a forensic act. It is not physical or medicinal.

Apology, Article III, p 204, 184: Scripture thus uses the term “faith,” as the following sentence of Paul testifies, Rom. 5:1: “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God.” Moreover, in this passage, to justify signifies, according to forensic usage, to acquit a guilty one and declare him righteous, but on account of the righteousness of another.

Formula of Concord, Ep., Article III, p 792, 794, 4,7,15,19-21: Accordingly, we believe, teach, and confess that our righteousness before God is this very thing, that God forgives us our sins out of pure grace, without any work, merit, or worthiness of ours preceding, present, or following, that he presents and imputes to us the righteousness of Christ’s obedience, on account of which righteousness we are received into grace by God, and regarded as righteous. ⁷ 5. We believe, teach, and confess that according to the usage of Holy Scripture the word *justify* means in this article, to absolve, that is, to declare free from sins. Prov. 17:15: “Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent – the LORD detests them both.” Also Rom. 8:33: “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.” ¹⁵ 3. We reject and condemn that in the sayings of the prophets and apostles where the righteousness of faith is spoken of the words *justify* and *to be justified* are not to signify declaring or being declared free from sins, and obtaining the forgiveness of sins, but actually being made righteous before God, because of love infused by the Holy Spirit, virtues, and the works following them. ¹⁹ 7. We reject and condemn that faith saves on this account, because by faith the renewal, which consists in love to God and one’s neighbor, is begun in us. ²⁰ 8. We reject and condemn that faith has the first place in justification,

nevertheless also renewal and love belong to our righteousness before God in such a manner that they are indeed not the chief cause of our righteousness, but that nevertheless our righteousness before God is not entire or perfect without this love and renewal. ²¹ 9. We reject and condemn that believers are justified before God and saved jointly by the imputed righteousness of Christ and by the new obedience begun in them, or in part by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but in part also by the new obedience begun in them.

D3 C, VI, 3. Justification is by faith *alone* (*sola fide*).

- a) **This is not meant to exclude the grace of God, the redemptive work of Christ, or the means of grace.**
- b) **It is meant rather to rule out any contribution of the sinner's own conduct to his justification.**
- c) **Faith, of course, is never without good works.**
Matthew 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Galatians 5:6 In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

James 2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Hebrews 12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

D3 C, VI, 4. Justification is not a gradual process. It has no degrees. Forgiveness is full and complete for the one who has faith.

- a) **This is the clear testimony of Scripture.**
John 13:10 Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."

Luke 18:14 I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Luke 7:41,42,47 Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more? ⁴⁷ Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.

- b) **Roman Catholicism holds the opposite view.**
Council of Trent, Session VI, chapter 10: Having been justified ... by keeping the commandments of God and of the Church they grow in that very righteousness which has been received through the grace of Christ, as their faith cooperates with good works, and are justified even more.

Canon 24: If anyone says that the righteousness which has been received is not preserved and even increased before God by good works, but that the good works themselves are nothing more than fruits and indications of the justification that has been acquired, and not, however, a cause of its increase, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1989: The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 4:17). Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high. Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man.

- c) **Our confessions clearly state the biblical doctrine that justification is a verdict, not a process.**
Augsburg Confession, Article IV, p 44: Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by his death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in his sight. Romans 3 and 4.

Consider also the Formula of Concord's clear testimony in Article III of both the Epitome and Thorough Declaration.

D3 C, VII. There is also a justification by works.

D3 C, VII, 1. This justification by works is the outward evidence of the justification which we have been considering.

- a) **Good works prove the presence of justification.**
 - 1) **Scripture establishes this fact.**
Matthew 12:37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned. Compare Matthew 12:33 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.

John 13:35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

James 2:24-26 You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. ²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶ As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.
 - 2) **This is a justification which human beings can see.**
Matthew 12:33 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.
- b) **This justification is important.**
 - 1) **This justification by works allows the individual Christian to evaluate his own faith.**
 - a) **This is a proper use of good works.**
Matthew 6:14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

2 Peter 1:5-10 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.

1 John 2:3,4 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. ⁴ The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

Apology, Article III, p 199, 154,155: And yet Christ often connects the promise of the remission of sins to good works, not because He means that good works are a propitiation, for they follow reconciliation; but for two reasons. One is, because good fruits must necessarily follow. Therefore He reminds us that, if good fruits do not follow, the repentance is hypocritical and feigned. The other reason is, because we have need of external signs of so great a promise, because ¹⁵⁵ a conscience full of fear has need of manifold consolation. As, therefore, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs that continually admonish, cheer, and encourage desponding minds to believe the more firmly that their sins are forgiven, so the same promise is written and portrayed in good works, in order that these works may admonish us to believe the more firmly. And those who produce no good works do not excite themselves to believe, but despise these promises. The godly on the other hand, embrace them, and rejoice that they have the signs and testimonies of so great a promise. Accordingly, they exercise themselves in these signs and testimonies. Just as, therefore, the Lord's Supper does not justify us *ex opere operato*, without faith, so alms do not justify us without faith, *ex opere operato*.

-b) For two reasons, great caution is in place in using this assurance through works.

-1) This assurance of faith can easily be distorted in our minds into a cause for justification rather than keeping our eyes focused on Christ.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

Hebrews 12:1,2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

-2) Because of the deceitfulness of the human heart and the imperfection of our sanctified living, our fruits of faith can never be our ultimate source of assurance of our standing with God.

1 John 3:18-20 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and truth. ¹⁹ This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

1 John 3:18-20 My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action. ¹⁹ This, then, is how we will know that we belong to the truth; this is how we will be confident in God's presence. ²⁰ If our conscience condemns us, we know that God is greater than our conscience and that he knows everything. (TEV)

2) This justification by works also serves a purpose for congregations of believers.

-a) It is intimately connected with the proper fulfillment of our task.

Matthew 5:14,16 You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

John 13:35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

-b) It serves as the basis for church discipline.

1 Corinthians 5:13 God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

D3 C, VII, 2. Scripture is not self-contradictory in teaching this justification.

a) Justification before God is by grace.

Luke 7:50 Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

b) Works, as fruits, show this justification before men.

Luke 7:47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.

Luke 7:47 I tell you, her sins – and they are many – have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love. (NLT)

D3 D. Sanctification

D3 D, I. Sanctification is the inevitable result of justification.

D3 D, I, 1. The word is sometimes used in a wider sense.

a) In the wider sense it embraces all phases of the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing a person to faith and maintaining that faith.

1) There are many passages that illustrate this wider use of the term.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit (ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος) and through belief in the truth.

1 Peter 1:2 To God's elect, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit (ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος), for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

John 17:17-19 Sanctify (ἁγιάσον) them by the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify (ἁγιάζω) myself, that they too may be truly sanctified (ἁγιασμένοι).

Romans 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints (ἅγιοι): Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified (ἁγιασμένοι) in Christ Jesus and called to be holy (ἅγιοι), together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours.

2 Corinthians 1:1,2 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints (τοῖς ἁγίοις) throughout Achaia: ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 9:13,32,41 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints (τοῖς ἁγίοις) in Jerusalem." ³² As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the saints (τοὺς ἁγίους) in Lydda. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers (τοὺς ἁγίους) and the widows and presented her to them alive.

Acts 20:32 Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified (ἁγιασμένοι).

Acts 26:18 I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified (ἁγιασμένοι) by faith in me.

2) **At times the term is used with special emphasis on justification.**

1 Corinthians 6:11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified (ἁγιάσθητε), you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Ephesians 5:25,26 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy (ἁγιάση), cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

Hebrews 10:10 By that will we have been made holy (ἁγιασμένοι) through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

3) **Our confessions also use the term sanctification in this broader sense.**

Small Catechism The Third Article (Sanctification): I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Large Catechism, p 678, 6,7: But that it may be most easily and clearly understood as it is to be taught to children, we shall briefly sum up the entire Creed in three chief articles, according to the three persons in the Godhead, to whom everything that we believe is related, so that the First Article, of God the Father, explains Creation, the Second Article, of the Son, Redemption, and the Third, of the Holy Spirit, Sanctification. ⁷¹ Just as though the Creed were briefly comprehended in so many words: I believe in God the Father, who has created me; I believe in God the Son, who has redeemed me; I believe in the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies me. One God and one faith, but three persons, therefore also three articles or confessions.

Large Catechism, p 686, 35-37: This article (as I have said) I cannot relate better than to Sanctification, that through the same the Holy Spirit, with his office, is declared and depicted, namely, that he makes holy. Therefore we must take our stand upon the word *Holy Spirit*, because it is so precise and comprehensive that we cannot find another. ^{36j} For there are, besides, many kinds of spirits mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, as, the spirit of man, heavenly spirits, and evil spirits. But the Spirit of God alone is called Holy Spirit, that is, he who has sanctified and still sanctifies us. For as the Father is called Creator, the Son Redeemer, so the Holy Spirit, from his work, must be called Sanctifier, or One that makes holy. ^{37j} But how is such sanctifying done? Answer: Just as the Son obtains dominion, whereby he wins us, through his birth, death, resurrection, etc., so also the Holy Spirit effects our sanctification by the following parts, namely, by the communion of saints or the Christian church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting; that is, he first leads us into his holy congregation, and places us in the bosom of the church, whereby he preaches to us and brings us to Christ.

b) **In this locus of dogmatics we are using the term sanctification in its narrower sense which denotes the new life, both of the heart and of the conduct, that was begun in regeneration.**

1) **Scripture also uses this term "sanctification" in this more restricted sense.**

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 It is God's will that you should be sanctified (ἁγιασμοῦ): that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy (ἁγιασμῷ) and honorable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; ⁶ and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. ⁷ For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy (ἁγιασμῷ) life.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy (ἁγιωσύνη) in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones (ἁγίω).

1 Thessalonians 5:23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify (ἁγιάσαι) you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness (ἀγιωσύνην) out of reverence for God.

Romans 6:19,22 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness (ἀγιασμόν).²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness (ἀγιασμόν), and the result is eternal life.

2) At times Scripture distinguishes the newness of life in principle and the fruit that this new life produces in our hearts.

Galatians 5:22-23,25,26 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Gottfried Hoffmann (1712): The fruits of sanctification, to the extent that sanctification is looked upon as an indwelling quality, are good works rising out of faith (*Synopsis*, p 773).

Chemnitz: These Scripture passages describe the effects of renewal, such as good works, the worship of God, the fruits of the Spirit (*Loci*, Part III, p 10).

Quenstedt: The goal of renewal on the part of God is his glory (Mt 5:16; 1 Pe 2:12), on our part, good works (Ro 6:2,4,6; Eph 2:10; 4:22; Ga 5:22). The direct effect of renewal is the restoration of the image of God or indwelling holiness; the indirect effect is good works which are the goal of renewal in respect to intention, but they are its effect in respect to carrying out the intention (*TDP*, Part II, Chap. XI, sect. I, thes. XI, XII, p 636).

Formula of Concord, TD, III, p 928, 41: For good works do not precede faith, neither does sanctification precede justification. But first faith is kindled in us in conversion by the Holy Spirit from the hearing of the gospel. This lays hold of God's grace in Christ, by which the person is justified. Then, when the person is justified, he is also renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, from which renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works then follow... This should not be understood as though justification and renewal were sundered from one another in such a manner that a genuine faith sometimes could exist and continue for a time together with a wicked intention, but hereby only the order is indicated, how one precedes or succeeds the other. For what Luther has correctly said remains true nevertheless: "Faith and good works well agree and fit together; but it is faith alone, without works, which lays hold of the blessing; and yet it is never and at no time alone."

Small Catechism, Third Article: I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church he daily and fully forgives all sins to me and all believers. On the Last Day he will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

c) Renewal is usually a synonym for sanctification.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing (ἀνακαινώσει) of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed (ἀνακαινούται) day by day.

Colossians 3:10 Put on the new self, which is being renewed (ἀνακαινούμενον) in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation (καινή κτίσις); the old has gone, the new has come!

Galatians 6:15 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation (καινή κτίσις).

Ephesians 2:15 He has made the two one by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two (κτίσην ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον), thus making peace.

Ephesians 4:24 Put on the new self (τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον), created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Quenstedt: The essence of sanctification in general consists in putting to death the old man and bringing the new man to life, or in the crucifixion of the flesh (Ga 5:24) and the renewing of the spirit. But specifically it lies 1) in the expulsion of the darkness and error of the intellect and the enlightenment of the mind ... 2) in the correction or rectification of the will, and restoration of righteousness and true holiness ... 3) in the restraining of the appetite inclining toward evil, of depraved lust, and of improper emotions and in the purity and chastity of the desires, 4) in the use of the members of the body for doing works of righteousness ... 5) in suppressing the dominion of sin (*TDP*, Part III, Chap. XI, sect. I, thes. X, p 635).

Quenstedt: We speak of an old and a new man not in a physical sense, or insofar as his substance is concerned, but in a mystical (figurative) sense, insofar as his quality is concerned. In the concrete the old man is the nature of man corrupted, the new man is the same nature renewed for obedience to God. But in the abstract the former is the inborn corruption of the nature and the inclination of all the faculties toward evil, or original sin itself; the latter is the "spirit," or the knowledge of God, righteousness and true holiness (*TDP*, Part III, Chap. XI, sect. I, thes. IX, note, p 635).

Formula of Concord, TD, III, p 928, 40,41 In the same manner the order also between faith and good works must abide and be maintained, and likewise between justification and renewal, or sanctification.⁴¹ For good works do not precede faith, neither does sanctification precede justification. But first faith is kindled in us in conversion by the Holy Spirit from the hearing of the Gospel. This lays hold of God's grace in Christ, by which the person is justified. Then, when the person is justified, he is also renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, from which renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works then follow...

D3 D, I, 2. Scripture carefully maintains the distinction between justification and sanctification.

a) It shows sanctification is the result of justification.

1) It does this in direct statements.

Romans 6:14,22 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

1 John 3:6 No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Matthew 7:17,18 Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

Matthew 12:33 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.

2) It makes this distinction by basing its exhortations to sanctification on justification and regeneration.

Romans 6:11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Titus 2:11,12 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.

Titus 3:4-8 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of us mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

1 Peter 1:22,23 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. ²³ For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

1 Peter 2:10,11 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

b) Sanctification flows from the very nature of justification as many scriptural expressions and pictures show.

1) Natural reason fails to see the connection.

Romans 3:8 Why not say—as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

2) Justifying faith knows the love of God and by the power of that love genuine love is created in the believer's heart.

-a) Notice how justification is the ultimate expression of God's love.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Romans 5:8,9 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

-b) Notice the impact of such love on human hearts: love received from God creates love in us.

1 John 4:11,19 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us.

2 Corinthians 5:15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

3) Justifying faith has received the adoption as children of God which inspires a child's freely given obedience.

-a) Notice how the picture of becoming a child of God illustrates what justification has done for us.

Romans 8:15,23 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the time had fully come, God sent his son, born of a woman, born under law,⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

-b) Notice then also how this reception of our place in the family of God produces the joyful child's obedience.

Romans 8:14-17 Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Galatians 4:7-9 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.⁸ Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.⁹ But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Ephesians 5:1,8 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

4) Justifying faith is pictured as receiving a new birth, which will show itself in new living.

-a) Justification imparts such spiritual life where there was death.

John 3:3,5,16-18 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."⁵ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Galatians 3:21,22 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.²² But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

Ephesians 2:5 God made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

-b) This new spiritual life desires to show itself in love.

1 John 5:1-3 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.² This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.³ This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.

1 John 4:7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

5) Therefore, justification and sanctification are inseparable.

-a) The presence of sanctification points to the reality of justification.

John 13:35 All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.

-b) The lack of sanctification – as defined by Scripture - is conclusive evidence of the lack of justification.

James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Note: We must be careful that we do not legalistically dictate what a Christian's sanctification will always "look" like. We must also never forget that much of a believer's sanctified life may be hidden from our eyes.

D3 D, I, 3. In spite of this close connection the two must always be clearly distinguished.

a) The difference is evident.

1) Justification is a declaratory act of God performed outside of man. It imputes to man a foreign righteousness (*aliena iustitia*).

2) Sanctification is a medicinal act of God performed in the heart of man. It produces an inherent habitual righteousness (*propria iustitia*).

b) The order is: justification first, then sanctification

1) This relationship is not a succession in time since they are synchronous.

Johann Benedict Carpzov Jr (1699): Immediately, in the same moment in which faith is kindled in us and in which we are justified by it (namely, faith) insofar as it lays hold of the justifying object offered in the Gospel, we are also renewed in mind and body (*Locii*, p 1135).

2) This relationship is a logical sequence of cause and effect.

Quenstedt: Regeneration, justification, mystic union, and renewal occur simultaneously and are joined to one another more closely than any mathematical point, to such a degree that they cannot be torn apart or separated. Nevertheless according to our way of thinking regeneration and justification are prior in order to this mystic union (*TDP*, Part III, chap. X, sect. I, thesis XVI, p 621).

Formula of Concord, Ep., III, p 928, 41: For good works do not precede faith, neither does sanctification precede justification. But first faith is kindled in us in conversion by the Holy Spirit from the hearing of the gospel. This lays hold of God's grace in Christ, by which the person is justified. Then, when the person is justified, he is also renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, from which renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works then follow... This should not be understood as though justification and renewal were sundered from one another in such a manner that a genuine faith sometimes could exist and continue for a time together with a wicked intention, but hereby only the order of causes and effects, of antecedents and consequents is indicated, how one precedes or succeeds the other. For what Luther has correctly said remains true nevertheless: "Faith and good works well agree and fit together; but it is faith alone, without works, which lays hold of the blessing; and yet it is never and at no time alone."

c) To reverse the order spells ruin for both.

1) Justification would then be by works and out of our reach.

Romans 3:28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Galatians 2:16 We know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

2) True sanctification would also cease to exist.

-a) In place of sanctification there would be nothing but hypocrisy and self-deception.

Luke 18:11,12 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get."

Romans 7:5-11 For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶ But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. ⁷ What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ⁹ Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰ I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.

-b) An honest self-evaluation would lead to despair.

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

-c) Such confusion would place us back under spiritual death and the kingdom of the devil.

Colossians 2:20-23 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

-d) This would also lead to idolatrous ideas of what pleases God.

Acts 17:22,23 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you."

1 Corinthians 10:20 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons.

d) Roman Catholicism makes sanctification part of the process which leads to complete justification.

Council of Trent, Session VI, Canon 24: If anyone says that the righteousness which has been received is not preserved and even increased before God by good works but that the works themselves are only results and evidences of the righteousness that has been obtained, and not a cause of its increase, let him be damned.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1989: The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 4:17). Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high. Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man.

D3 D, II. The Holy Spirit works sanctification through the means of grace. The believer cooperates with the new powers given in regeneration.

D3 D, II, 1. Sanctification is the Spirit's work.

a) **Commonly the work of sanctification is ascribed to the Holy Spirit.**

Romans 8:13,14 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, ¹⁴because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

1 Corinthians 3:16,17 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.

1 Corinthians 6:19,20 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

Galatians 5:16,22-23 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

b) **As is often the case with God's outward works (*opera ad extra*), Scripture ascribes sanctification to the other persons of the Trinity as well.**

John 15:1,2 I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

Hebrews 13:20,21 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹ equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Titus 2:14 Jesus Christ gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

c) **At times sanctification is ascribed simply to God in general without any mention of a specific person of the Trinity.**

1 Thessalonians 4:3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality.

1 Thessalonians 5:23,24 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

D3 D, II, 2. The means for sanctification are the means of grace.

a) **The same means that offer grace and kindle faith also create and strengthen the new life.**

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Colossians 3:12,15,16 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Titus 3:8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

1 John 3:3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

1 Corinthians 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

Quenstedt: The Word of God is the means of our renovation 1) as the conferring means, for by means of the Word of God the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of holiness (Ro 1:4) is conferred on us (Ga 3:2); 2) as the effective and productive means, which on the one hand, brings about and produces a renewed will, and, on the other, incipient righteousness and good works, yes, sanctification in its entirety (Ja 1:18, 21; 1 Pe 1:23; Lk 8:15); 3) as the directing and normative means, because it not only shows us the good things that are divinely commanded and the actions that please God but it also directs the renewed will of man into zeal for good works (Ga 6:16); 4) as a stimulating means inasmuch as by the blessing it bestows we are stimulated to live in newness of life (*TDP*, Part III, chap. XI, sect. I, thesis V, p 633).

b) **The law is of secondary importance for sanctification.**

1) **The law curbs the opposition of the Old Adam in us.**

Romans 7:18,23 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ²³ But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Romans 8:7 The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

Galatians 5:17 The sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

Mark 9:43-48 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you

to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell,⁴⁸ where "their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."

1 Corinthians 9:27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

2 Corinthians 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

Formula of Concord, Ep., II, p 788, 14 We reject also that in conversion and regeneration God entirely exterminates the substance and essence of the old Adam, and especially the rational soul, and in conversion and regeneration creates a new essence of the soul out of nothing.

Formula of Concord, TD, VI, p 968, 19, 24: But as far as the old Adam is concerned, which still clings to them, he must be driven not only with the law, but also with punishments; nevertheless he does everything against his will and under coercion, no less than the godless are driven and held in obedience by the threats of the law, 1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 7:18. 19.²⁴ For the old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass, is still a part of them, which must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching, admonition, force and threatening of the law, but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles, until the body of sin is entirely put off, and man is perfectly renewed in the resurrection, when he will need neither the preaching of the law nor its threatenings and punishments, as also the gospel any longer; these belong to this imperfect life.

2) The law points out the good works pleasing to God.

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Deuteronomy 11:32 Be sure that you obey all the decrees and laws I am setting before you today.

Formula of Concord, TD, VI, p 968, 20 So, too, this doctrine of the law is needful for believers, in order that they may not hit upon a holiness and devotion of their own, and under the pretext of the Spirit of God set up a self-chosen worship, without God's Word and command, as it is written Deut. 12: 8,28,32, You shall not do ... every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes, etc., but observe and hear all these words which I command you. You shalt not add thereto, nor diminish therefrom.

Formula of Concord, TD, VI, p 964, 12: Thereafter the Holy Spirit employs the law so as to teach the regenerate from it, and to point out and show them in the Ten Commandments what is the acceptable will of God, Rom. 12:2, in what good works God hath before ordained that they should walk, Eph. 2: 10. He exhorts them thereto, and when they are idle, negligent, and rebellious in this matter because of the flesh, he reproves them on that account through the law, so that he carries on both offices together: He slays and makes alive; he leads into hell and brings up again. For his office is not only to comfort, but also to reprove, as it is written: When the Holy Spirit comes, he will reprove the world (which includes also the old Adam) of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

3. The law never produces a single good work despite all its commands and threats and promises.

Galatians 3:21,22 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.²² But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

c) God may provide special occasions for reminding us of his Word, or for eliciting good works.

Deuteronomy 4:30 When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in later days you will return to the LORD your God and obey him.

Luke 16:20,21 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

D3 D, II, 3. A Christian may and must cooperate in his own sanctification,

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

2 Corinthians 6:1 As God's fellow workers (Συνεργοῦντες) we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.

a) The Christian has been raised to new life.

Romans 6:13 Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

Quenstedt: However, the Holy Spirit works our renewal in such a way that man cooperates with the powers of grace by which he is able... Therefore the reborn man is a subordinate cause of his renewal when moved by God, so that he renews himself day by day through the powers he receives from above. The Holy Spirit produces in man the ability for doing good, the nearest power, and the first act of sanctification without the agreement of man; but for the second act of sanctification, or the exercise and continuation of sanctification once begun, man agrees through the Holy Spirit, not through natural powers, but supernatural powers; and thus through powers divinely granted man becomes a co-worker with God in his continuing renewal (*TDP*, Part III, chap. XI, sect. 1, thesis III, p 633).

b) Yet it is not by our own power that sanctification is produced.

John 15:4-5 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Formula of Concord, TD, II, p 906, 65,66: From this, then, it follows that as soon as the Holy Spirit, as has been said, through the Word and holy Sacraments, has begun in us this his work of regeneration and renewal, it is certain that through the power of the Holy Spirit we can and should cooperate, although still in great weakness. But this cooperate does not occur from our carnal natural powers, but from the new powers and gifts which the Holy Spirit has begun in us in conversion, ^{66]} as St. Paul expressly and earnestly exhorts that as workers together with him we receive not the grace of God in vain, 2 Cor. 6:1. But this is to be understood in no other way than that the converted man does good to such an extent and so long as God by his Holy Spirit rules, guides, and leads him, and that as soon as God would withdraw his gracious hand from him, he could not for a moment persevere in obedience to God. But if this were understood thus that the converted man cooperates with the Holy Spirit in the manner as when two horses together draw a wagon, this could in no way be conceded without prejudice to the divine truth.

Hoffmann: In the first act of sanctification, or the ability to do good works, a man cooperates no more than he does in regeneration and conversion itself, and therefore so far as the receiving of the power to lead a holy life is concerned a man is only acted upon (purely passive). Therefore also God alone is said to give man a new heart (Eze 36:26). But in the second act, or the use of the powers that have been granted, and in the continuation of the sanctification that has been begun, the renewed man actively cooperates, not indeed by powers of nature, but by supernatural powers, and insofar as he is born of God (*Synopsis*, p 764).

D3 D, III. Sanctification involves a constant struggle against the sinful nature.

D3 D, III, 1. A Christian possesses a dual nature.

a) As a Christian he is a new creature.

1) Scripture clearly states this fact.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Ephesians 4:24 Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Colossians 3:10 You have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

2) By regeneration the Christian receives a new spiritual nature and is often called spirit or a spiritual being.

-a) This is his nature.

John 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment.

1 Corinthians 3:1 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

-b) This spiritual nature is the guiding principle of his life. The new self is the true "I" of the Christian.

Romans 7:6 But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

Romans 7:20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

Galatians 5:25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

b) Yet the old self (flesh) clings to the believer until death.

Ephesians 4:22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self (τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον), which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.

Romans 6:6 For we know that our old self (ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος) was crucified with him so that the body of sin (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἀμαρτίας) might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature (τῆ σαρκί μου). For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

D3 D, III, 2. The flesh hinders sanctification. Its goal is to regain control.

a) When the sinner was brought to faith this dominion has been wrenched from the flesh.

1 John 5:4 For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Romans 6:2,6,11,14,18,22 We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but

under grace. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

Romans 7:5,6 For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶ But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

b) Nevertheless the flesh is constantly seeking to regain that control.

Romans 7:18-23 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Galatians 5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

c) Understanding this struggle gives the believer a plan of action in sanctification.

1) The goal is always to put to death the flesh. It is never to educate the flesh.

Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

Galatians 5:24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Colossians 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

1 Corinthians 9:27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

2) At the same time the goal is also to exercise the corresponding virtues of the spirit.

Romans 6:13 Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Ephesians 4:25-32 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸ He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. ²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 5:1,2 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Colossians 1:10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.

Colossians 3:10,12 You have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

1 Timothy 6:18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

D3 D, III, 3. A Christian is not left without comfort in the struggle.

a) The struggle is severe and painful.

Matthew 5:29,30 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Romans 7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

b) There are several aspects to the Christian's comfort in this struggle.

1) The struggle itself proves faith to be alive.

Romans 7:18-23 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work in my members.

Ephesians 4:17, 20-24 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ²⁰You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. ²¹Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

2) **All saints underwent the same attacks from their flesh.**

1 Peter 5:9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Romans 7:18,21,23 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ²¹So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²³But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

3) **We have the promise of sure victory.**

Romans 8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

2 Corinthians 4:8-11 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

2 Corinthians 12:9,10 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Ephesians 6:16,17 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

4) **The way to win the victory is to remember that Christ has already won the war and, by the gospel, empowers believers to win their daily battles.**

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Romans 14:7,8 For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

D3 D, IV. Good works are done by the Christian willingly according to God's rule laid down in the revealed will of God (the third use of the law).

D3 D, IV, 1. A Christian is willing to do good works.

a) **This willingness flows from the gospel.**

1) **It springs from gratitude, faith, and love.**

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy (διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρῶν τοῦ θεοῦ), to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Psalms 110:3 Your troops will be willing (נָצְיָו) on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn you will receive the dew of your youth.

Romans 13:8-10 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

2 Corinthians 8:3,4,12 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. ¹²For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Ephesians 5:1-4 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. ³But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

2) **This willingness is not a natural inclination.**

Matthew 5:43-48 You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." ⁴⁴But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

b) **This willingness has both focus and direction.**

1) **It seeks to obey God's command.**

1 Samuel 3:10 The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

Romans 6:22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

Romans 7:22 For in my inner being (τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον) I delight in God's law.

1 John 5:3 This is love for God to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.

2) **It seeks to follow Christ's example.**

Psalms 40:8 I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Hebrews 10:7 Then I said, "Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God."

Isaiah 50:5 The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back.

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

Luther: Each should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all; that is, that we may be truly Christians (*LW* 31, p 367f).

3) **It seeks to be faithful in carrying out our God-given vocation.**

Ephesians 5:22-6:9 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through word, the ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. ¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." ⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. ⁵ Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶ Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. ⁷ Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, ⁸ because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. ⁹ And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

1 Peter 2:13-17 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. ¹⁶ Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

Luke 3:8-14 "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ⁹ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰ "What should we do then?" the crowd asked. ¹¹ John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" ¹³ "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. ¹⁴ Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

D3 D, IV, 2. No one but God may prescribe good works.

a) **No human authority has the right to bind our conscience apart from the Word of God.**

Matthew 15:9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.

Matthew 23:8-10 But you are not to be called "Rabbi," for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹ And do not call anyone on earth "father," for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰ Nor are you to be called "teacher," for you have one Teacher, the Christ.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

Colossians 2:20-23 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

1 Samuel 15:22,23 But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king."

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

Acts 26:9 I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

b) **God prescribes good works for us in several ways.**

1) God does this by commanding love as the fulfillment of the law and by specifying what love is in his commandments.

Romans 13:8-10 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Matthew 22:35-40 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Galatians 5:13-15 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. ¹⁴ The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

2) God provides an opportunity for good works by giving each one a certain vocation in life.

1 Corinthians 7:20-24 Each one should remain in the situation (ἐν τῇ κλήσει) which he was in when God called him. ²¹ Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. ²² For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave. ²³ You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. ²⁴ Brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation (ἐν ᾧ ἐκλήθη) God called him to.

Ephesians 5:22,25 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

3) God prescribes good works by placing his representatives over us.

Ephesians 6:1,5,6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ⁵ Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶ Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.

Romans 13:1-5 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

c) Human nature is prone to despise the God-given works and to indulge in self-chosen ones.

Consider Roman monastic vows, Mormonism's avoidance of hot beverages, the Social Gospel, and countless other examples.

Matthew 15:7-9 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ⁸ “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹ They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”

Colossians 2:23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Augsburg Confession, XVI, p 50, 4-7 They also condemn those who place the perfection of the gospel not in the fear of God and in faith but in forsaking civil duties. The gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart, but it does not destroy the state or the family. ⁵ On the contrary, it especially requires their preservation as ordinance of God and the exercise of love in these ordinances. ⁶ Therefore Christians are necessarily bound to obey their magistrates and laws except when commanded to sin, ⁷ for then they ought to obey God rather than men.

Luther: We did not learn in the papacy what constitutes a good work. Before the gospel came, we were told that the works which we ourselves devised and chose were good works, such as making a pilgrimage to St. James or some other place, giving money to the monks in the cloisters for the reading of many masses, burning candles, fasting with but bread and water, praying a certain number of rosaries, etc. But now that the gospel is come, we preach thus: Good works are not those which we choose of ourselves, but those which God has commanded, those which our vocation calls for. A servant does good works when he fears God, believes in Christ, and obeys his master. First he is justified by faith in Christ, then he walks in faith, leads a godly life, is temperate and well-behaved, serves his neighbor, cleanses the stable, feeds the horses, etc. In performing such tasks he does better works than any Carthusian monk. For since he is baptized, believes in Christ, and in assured hope is waiting for eternal life, he goes on and obeys his master and knows that what he does in his calling pleases God. Therefore everything that he does in his occupation is a good and precious work. It does not look like a great fine work when he rides out on the field, drives to the mill, etc., but since he has God's command and directive for it, such works, mean as they seem, are nothing else than good works and a service rendered to the Lord. In like manner also a maidservant does good works when she performs her calling in faith, obeys her mistress, sweeps the house, washes and cooks in the kitchen, etc. Though there works are not as glamorous as the works of the Carthusian who hides behind a mask and has people gaping at him, still such works are much better and more precious before God than those of the Carthusian who wears a hair skirt, keeps his vigils, gets up at night and chants for five hours, eats no meat, etc. He does them without God's command and order; how, then, can they please God? Likewise when a burgher or a farmer helps his neighbor, warns him of the danger threatening his body, wife, child, servant, cattle, and goods, etc., such works do not make a great show, but they are nevertheless good and precious works. When the civil government punishes the wicked and protects the virtuous, and when citizens yield obedience to the government and do so from faith and the hope of eternal life, they are performing good works, though they do not shine and glitter in the sight of reason....If you ask reason, the works of a servant, a maid, a master, a mistress, a mayor, and a judge are common, lowly works compared with the Carthusian's keeping his vigil, fasting, praying, abstaining from meat; but if you ask God's Word, the works of all Carthusians and all monks, melted together in one mass, are not as good as the work of a single poor

servantmaid, who by baptism has been brought into the kingdom of God, believes in Christ, and in faith is looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the knowledge that everything we do in our Christian calling and station by faith is altogether a good and precious work; on which account we should be zealous unto good works....For example, I am a preacher, that is my office; if now I believe in Christ and look for the blessed hope and then go and tend to my preaching and perform my calling, even though men hold my office in low esteem, I would not trade my office for all the works that all the monks and nuns do in the cloister (St.L. IX, p 952 as cited in Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol III, p 40-41).

D3 D, IV, 3. There is a wide neutral zone of acts neither commanded nor forbidden by God (adiaphora).

a) **These are often divided into two classes.**

1) **moral: smoking, drinking, gambling, etc.**

2) **ceremonial: mode of baptism, liturgy, etc.**

b) **In matters of adiaphora, a Christian's attitude will be governed by three principles.**

1) **In his own conscience he must be absolutely free (i.e. able to use or refrain from using them, as the situation may demand).**

Romans 14:5,6,14,22,23 One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. ¹⁴ As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean. ²² So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. ²³ But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

Galatians 4:10,11 You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

1 Corinthians 6:12 "Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything.

2) **In his conduct he must show tender respect for the equal liberty of others and for the welfare of weak brothers.**

Romans 14:3,4,10,15,19,20,21 The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹⁵ If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died. ¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. ²¹ It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.

1 Corinthians 10:27,28,32 If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. ²⁸ But if anyone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the man who told you and for conscience' sake— ³² Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God.

3) **When these liberties are attacked in principle, he must in word and deed defend them.**

Galatians 2:3-5; 5:1 Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. ⁴ This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵ We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Formula of Concord, TD, p 828, 1,2,6: There has also been a division among theologians of the Augsburg Confession concerning those ceremonies or church usages which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God but have been introduced into the church in the interest of good order and the general welfare.

THE CHIEF QUESTION AT ISSUE IN THIS CONTROVERSY

² The chief question has been, In times of persecution, when a confession is called for, and when the enemies of the gospel have not come to an agreement with us in doctrine, may we with an inviolate conscience yield to their pressure and demands, reintroduce some ceremonies that have fallen into disuse and that in themselves are indifferent things and are neither commanded nor forbidden by God, and thus come to an understanding with them in such ceremonies and indifferent things? One party said Yes to this, the other party said No.

⁶ We believe, teach, and confess that in time of persecution, when a clear-cut confession of faith is demanded of us, we dare not yield to the enemies in such indifferent things, as the apostle Paul writes, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1). "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?" (2 Cor. 6:14). "We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you" (Gal. 2:5). In such a case it is no longer a question of indifferent things, but a matter which has to do with the truth of the gospel, Christian liberty, and the sanctioning of public idolatry, as well as preventing offense to the weak in faith. In all these things we have no concessions to make, but we should witness an unequivocal confession and suffer in consequence what God sends us and what he lets the enemies inflict on us.

c) **An "offense" is that which causes another Christian to become weak or to fall from faith or hinders an unbeliever from coming to faith.**

Matthew 18:6,7 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. ⁷ Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!

Romans 14:13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

d) **In a looser sense “offense” is anything that causes division among brothers.**

1 Corinthians 9:22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

D3 D, IV, 4. No one but a Christian can do good works.

a) **An unbeliever may indeed perform works that externally appear identical to the works of a Christian.**

1) **Yet his motive will be only the inborn *opinio legis* (escape punishment, appease a conscience, merit a reward, etc.).**

2) **It will not be childlike gratitude.**

Hebrews 11:4,6 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Luther: A monkey can imitate the actions of people, but he is not a man on that account. But if he should become a man, this doubtless would not take place by virtue of these actions, by which he has imitated a man, but by some other power, namely, God's; but then having become a man, he would truly and rightly perform the actions of a man (*LW* 25, p 235).

b) **Apparent “good works” of the unbeliever may be categorized in the following ways.**

1) **When judged purely as a human activity, such works can be valued as civic righteousness.**

-a) **For the well being of society such civic righteousness is certainly preferable to open sin.**

-b) **Such works even bear the promise of temporal blessing.**

Matthew 6:5 And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Apology, IV, p 126, 22-24: We for our part maintain that God requires the righteousness of reason. Because of God's command, honorable works commanded in the Decalogue should be performed, according to Gal. 3:24, “The law is a custodian,” and 1 Tim. 1:9, “The law is laid down for the lawless.” For God wants this civil discipline to restrain the unspiritual, and to preserve it he has given laws, learning, teaching, governments, and penalties. ²³ To some extent, reason can produce this righteousness by its own strength, though it is often overwhelmed by its natural weakness and by the devil, who drives it to open crimes. ²⁴ We freely give this righteousness of reason its due credit; for our corrupt nature has no greater good than this, as Aristotle correctly says, “Neither the evening star nor the morning star is more beautiful than righteousness.” God even honors it with material rewards. Nevertheless, it ought not be praised at the expense of Christ.

2) **In God's view these works of civic righteousness are nothing but “glittering vices.”**

Matthew 5:46,47 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?

Luke 16:15 He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.”

Ephesians 2:1,12 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. ¹² Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

Ephesians 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Augustine: For though the soul may seem to rule the body admirably, and the reason the vices, if the soul and reason do not themselves obey God, as God has commanded them to serve Him, they have no proper authority over the body and the vices. For what kind of mistress of the body and the vices can that mind be which is ignorant of the true God, and which, instead of being subject to his authority, is prostituted to the corrupting influences of the most vicious demons? It is for this reason that the virtues which it seems to itself to possess, and by which it restrains the body and the vices that it may obtain and keep what it desires, are rather vices than virtues so long as there is no reference to God in the matter. For although some suppose that virtues which have a reference only to themselves, and are desired only on their own account, are yet true and genuine virtues, the fact is that even then they are inflated with pride, and are therefore to be reckoned vices rather than virtues (*City of God*, Book 19, Chapter 25).

D3 D, IV, 5. Faith, when viewed as a work demanded by the law, is ethically good. Yet such faith does not merit forgiveness.

a) **The law demands perfect trust in God.**

Exodus 20:3 You shall have no other gods before me.

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

b) **The gospel provides this faith demanded by the law. It does this by imputing Christ's faith, his perfect trust in God, to me.**

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

Philippians 3:9 I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

- c) **Through the faith that the gospel awakens in my heart, Christ's faith is credited to me as though I had rendered it. In this my God-given faith functions merely as a receiving hand (*organon leptikon*).**
Ephesians 2:8,9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God –⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.
- d) **At the same time my God-given faith, worked by the gospel, is new spiritual life, and as such it is the beginning of the fulfillment of God's law on my part. Yet since my faith ever remains imperfect here on earth, it is like every phase of my sanctification. It remains an imperfect fulfillment of the law on my part.**
- e) **Faith does not justify insofar as it is a partial restoration of God's image in us. Faith justifies since it is the God-given hand with which we embrace Christ's righteousness, imputed to us, including also his perfect trust in God as our substitute.**

D3 D, V. The process of sanctification is never completed in this life.

D3 D, V, 1. While conversion is a momentary act, and justification is not ours by degrees or stages, yet sanctification is a gradual process.

- a) **Since a Christian's person is acceptable to God in Christ, therefore the believer's works are acceptable in Christ as well.**

Hebrews 13:16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

Psalms 147:11 The LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

Psalms 149:4 For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation.

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

Colossians 1:3,4 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints.

1 Thessalonians 1:3,4 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, (This is true in spite of 4:4-6 Each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God: ⁶ and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you.)

2 Thessalonians 1:3,4 We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing. ⁴ Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. (This is true in spite of 3:11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies.)

Apology, III, p 168, 45,46: Again, what need is there of a long discussion? If we were to think that, after we have come to the gospel and are born again, we were to merit by our works that God be gracious to us, not by faith, conscience would never find rest, but would be driven to despair. For the law unceasingly accuses us, since we never can satisfy the law. All Scripture, all the Church cries out that the law cannot be satisfied. Therefore this inchoate fulfillment of the law does not please on its own account, but on account of faith in Christ. Otherwise the law always accuses us.

Apology, III, p 202, 172: When in this manner the heart is cheered and quickened by faith, it receives the Holy Spirit, who renews us, so that we are able to observe the law; so that we are able to love God and the Word of God, and to be submissive to God in afflictions; so that we are able to be chaste, to love our neighbor, etc. Even though these works are as yet far distant from the perfection of the law, yet they please on account of faith, by which we are accounted righteous, because we believe that for Christ's sake we have a reconciled God.

Apology, III, p 206, 187: Rom. 4:3,5: Faith is credited as righteousness. Although on account of certain captious persons we must say technically: Faith is truly righteousness, because it is obedience to the gospel. For it is evident that obedience to the command of a superior is truly a species of distributive justice. And this obedience to the gospel is reckoned for righteousness, so that, only on account of this, because by this we apprehend Christ as Propitiator, good works, or obedience to the law, are pleasing. For we do not satisfy the law, but for Christ's sake this is forgiven us, as Paul says, Rom. 8:1, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."

Formula of Concord, TD, IV, p 940, 8: Neither is there a controversy among us as to how and why the good works of believers are pleasing and acceptable to God, even though they are still impure and imperfect in this flesh of ours. We agree that this is so for the sake of the Lord Christ through faith, because the person is acceptable to God. For works which belong to the maintenance of outward discipline and which unbelievers and the unconverted are also able and require to perform, are indeed praiseworthy in the sight of the world, and even God will reward them with temporal blessings in this world, but since they do not flow from true faith, they are sinful (that is, spattered with sins in the sight of God), and God regards them as sin and as impure because of our corrupted nature and because the person is not reconciled with God. A bad tree cannot bear good fruit, and "Whatsoever does not proceed from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). The person must first be pleasing to God — and that alone for Christ's sake — before that person's works are pleasing.

- b) **A Christian's works are never perfect.**
 - 1) **They are deficient in quality.**

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags, we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

-a) Our works often reveal a lack of understanding.

Romans 14:1,20,23 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. ²³ But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

Colossians 2:16-23 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. ¹⁹ He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. ²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

-b) Our works often reveal a lack of zeal.

Romans 7:22,23 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Romans 12:11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

2) Our works are deficient also in quantity.

-a) Our whole life is to be spent in the service of our Savior.

Matthew 5:48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

-b) However, the following exhortations demonstrate that this devotion is not always present among believers.

1 Corinthians 16:1,2 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. ² On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

2 Corinthians 8:7 But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

2 Corinthians 9:8,11 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ¹¹ You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Ephesians 5:16 Make the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Colossians 4:5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

1 Timothy 6:18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

Titus 2:14 Jesus Christ gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Titus 3:8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

Luther: A Christian is righteous and a sinner at the same time (*simul justus et peccator*) (LW 26, p 232). A righteous man sins in all his good works (LW 32, p 83). Our condition in the kingdom of Christ is half sin and half holiness. What there is in us that belongs to faith and to Christ is completely pure and perfect, since it is not our own but Christ's, who is ours through faith and who lives and works in us. But what is still our own is completely sinful. Yet under Christ and in him it is concealed and blotted out through the forgiveness of sins (LW 21, p 205).

- c) **Though perfection is not attainable, we must not use this as an excuse for carelessness or despair.**
Philippians 3:12-14 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Colossians 1:10,11 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience.

1 Thessalonians 4:1,10 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. ¹⁰ And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.

Romans 7:24,25 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Luther: It is impossible to keep the devil from shooting evil thoughts and lusts into your heart. But see to it that you do not let such arrows stick there and take root, but tear them out and throw them away. Do what one of the ancient fathers counseled long ago: "I cannot," he said, "keep a bird from flying over my head. But I can certainly keep it from nesting in my hair or from biting my nose off" (*LW* 21, p 88).

Luther: (In a letter written to Melancthon on August 1, 1521.) If you are a preacher of grace, then preach a true and not a fictitious grace, if grace is true, you must bear a true and not a fictitious sin. God does not save people who are only fictitious sinners. Be a sinner and sin boldly, but believe and rejoice in Christ even more boldly, for he is victorious over sin, death, and the world (*LW* 48, p 281-282).

D3 D, V, 2. Perfectionism is taught by Roman Catholics. It is also taught by Methodists and other Holiness bodies.

a) Here are some illustrations of Rome's teaching.

Council of Trent, Session VI, chapter 11: It follows that it is certain that those who say that a righteous man sins at least venially in every good work are opposed to the doctrine of the orthodox religion.

Canon 18: If anyone says that it is impossible even for the man who has been justified and placed under grace to keep the commandments of God, let him be damned.

Canon 25: If anyone says that in any good work the righteous man sins at least venially, let him be damned.

Bellarmino: Secondly Catholics confess that the good works of the righteous are naturally and absolutely just and even in their own way perfect, although not with that perfection that they cannot increase and that some evil works are not at times mingled with the good works (*Loci*, Chap. X, p 533).

Consider also their teaching about works of supererogation (*opera supererogationis*) and evangelical counsels (*consilia evangelica*).

b) Here are some examples of the perfectionism of Methodism and other Holiness bodies.

Wesley: I believe a person filled with love of God is still liable to involuntary transgressions. Such transgressions you may call sins if you please; I do not (*A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, p 24 online edition; see Pieper, III, 32).

J. A. Wood: In the grace of justification sins, as acts of transgression, are *pardoned*. In the grace of entire sanctification, sin, as a malady, is *removed*, so that the heart is pure. In the nature of the case, the eradication of sin in principle from the human heart completes the Christian character. When guilt is forgiven in justification, and all pollution is removed in entire sanctification, so that grace possesses the heart and nothing contrary to grace, then the moral condition is reached to which the Scriptures give the name of perfection, or entire sanctification (*Perfect Love*, p 34).

Grider: Baptism with the Holy Spirit...occasions, or effects, entire sanctification....Another component of entire sanctification is perfection, but only in a certain sense. We are not perfect in our judgment or in ethical conduct. We are perfect in the sense that a metal is perfect when extraneous substances are separated from it so that the metal is all of one kind. When the carnal nature is cleansed away, we are perfect in the sense of having a pure human nature – a human nature no longer infected by carnality. Christians are urged in Scripture to go on to perfection (He 6:1) and to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is (Mt 5:48) (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 388,389). Wesley was correct in teaching that entire sanctification is received by faith and not by works. Even as we are justified by faith alone, we are sanctified wholly by faith alone. Luther had taught that we are justified by faith alone; but he also had taught that we are sanctified gradually by pious disciplines. This caused Wesley to say that hardly anyone had taught better than Luther on justification or more poorly than Luther on sanctification (395). The faith that procures entire sanctification is not instantaneous. It is true that many believers hear Holiness preaching, go forward to receive the second blessing, yield themselves to God, and by faith enter into entire sanctification—no trauma, no delay. Others, however, pray but do not enter into the experience of entire sanctification. Sometimes they seek without fulfillment. They may be hindered by limited or incorrect understanding or incomplete consecration. They should not be urged to profess the experience, but to continue to seek until God effects it (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 407).

c) They attempt to supply scriptural proof for this teaching.

1) They misapply certain statements.

-a) At times they point to statements such as this by John, "No one who is born of God will continue to sin."

1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. (Consider 1 John 1:10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.)

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

- b) **There are better ways to understand John's words.**
 - 1) **John is speaking about the Christian according to the new self.**
 - 2) **John is using a durative present.**

Note also the Pres. Inf., and the stress on the Christian's own activity (ποιεῖ).

2) **They also use other expressions in attempts to prove such perfectionism.**

- a) **"As many as be perfect." (KJV) ("Ὅσοι οὖν τέλειοι)**

Philippians 3:15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

- b) **Paul's own words in the context show that his meaning is anything but perfectionism.**

Philippians 3:9,12-14 I consider them rubbish that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ¹² Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Augsburg Confession, XXVII, p 82, 49: Besides, the commands of God and true and proper service of God are obscured when people are told that monks alone are in a state of perfection. For this is Christian perfection: that we fear God honestly with our whole hearts, and yet have sincere confidence, faith, and trust that for Christ's sake we have a gracious, merciful God; that we may and should ask and pray God for those things of which we have need, and confidently expect help from him in every affliction connected with our particular calling and station in life; and that meanwhile we do good works for others and diligently attend to our calling.

d) **Those who claim to be perfect are deceiving themselves.**

1 John 1:8,10 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

Proverbs 20:9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?

Job 14:4 Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one!

Ecclesiastes 7:20 There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags, we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Apology, III, p 166, 40: But although from those things which have been said above it is evident that justification signifies not the beginning of the renewal, but the reconciliation by which also we afterwards are accepted, nevertheless it can now be seen much more clearly that the inchoate fulfilling of the law does not justify, because it is accepted only on account of faith. Trusting in our own fulfillment of the law is sheer idolatry and blaspheming Christ, and in the end it collapses and causes our consciences to despair. Therefore, this foundation shall stand forever, namely, that for Christ's sake we are accepted with God, and justified by faith, not on account of our love and works.... Scripture indicates this often enough as in Ps. 143:2: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in your sight shall no man living be justified." Here he clearly shows that all the saints, all the pious children of God, who have the Holy Spirit, if God would not by grace forgive them their sin, still have remnants of sin in the flesh. For when David in another place, Ps. 7:8, says: "Judge me O Lord, according to my righteousness," he refers to his cause, and not to his righteousness, and asks God to protect his cause and word, for he says: Judge, O Lord, my cause. Again, in Ps. 130: 3 he clearly states that no person, not even the greatest saints, can bear God's judgment, if He were to observe our iniquity, as he says: "If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?" And thus says Job 9:28: "I was afraid of all my works" (Engl. vers., sorrows). Likewise 9:30: "Even if I wash myself with soap and my hands with washing soda, you would plunge me into a slime pit." And Prov. 20:9: "Who can say, I have made my heart clean?" And 1 John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." And in the Lord's Prayer the saints ask for the forgiveness of sins. Therefore even the saints have guilt and sins.

Apology, VI, p 294, 45: For of the law our adversaries speak thus: "God, condescending to our weakness, has given to man a measure of those things to which of necessity he is bound; and this is the observance of precepts, so that from what is left, *i.e.*, from works of supererogation, he can render satisfaction with reference to offenses that have been committed." Here men imagine that they can observe the law of God in such a manner as to be able to do even more than the law exacts. But Scripture everywhere exclaims that we are far distant from the perfection which the law requires. Yet these men imagine that the law of God has been comprised in outward and civil righteousness; they do not see that it requires true love to God "with the whole heart," etc., and condemns the entire concupiscence in the nature. Therefore no one does as much as the law requires. Hence their imagination that we can do more is ridiculous. For although we can perform outward works not commanded by God's law, which Paul calls beggarly ordinances, yet the confidence that satisfaction is rendered God's law is vain and wicked.

Formula of Concord, Ep., VI, p 804, 4: For although they are indeed reborn and have been renewed in the spirit of their mind, such regeneration and renewal is incomplete in this world. In fact, it has only begun, and in the spirit of their mind the believers are in a constant war against their flesh (that is, their corrupt nature and kind), which clings to them until death. On account of this Old Adam, who inheres in people's intellect, will, and all their powers, it is necessary for the law of God constantly to light their way lest in their merely human devotion they undertake self-decreed and self-chosen acts of serving God. This is further necessary lest the Old Adam go his own self-willed way. He must be coerced against his own will not only by the admonitions and threats of the law, but also by its punishments and plagues, to follow the Spirit and surrender himself a captive. 1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 6:12; Gal. 6:14; Ps. 119:1; Heb. 13:21.

Formula of Concord, TD, II, p 906, 68: But since in this life we have received only the first fruits of the Spirit, and regeneration is not as yet perfect but has only been begun in us, the conflict and warfare of the flesh against the Spirit continues also in the elect and truly reborn. Again, there is not only a great difference between Christians, one being weak and the other strong in the Spirit, but even the individual Christian in his own life discovers that at one moment he is joyful in the Spirit and at another moment fearful and terrified, at one time ardent in love, strong in faith and in hope, and at another time cold and weak.

Formula of Concord, TD, VI, p 964, 7: But in this life Christians are not renewed perfectly and completely. For although their sins are covered up through the perfect obedience of Christ, so that they are not reckoned to believers for damnation, and although the Holy Spirit has begun the mortification of the Old Adam and their renewal in the spirit of their minds, nevertheless the Old Adam still clings to their nature and to all its internal and external powers.

D3 D, VI. Sanctification is a necessary characteristic of Christian life.

D3 D, VI, 1. First of all consider the value of good works.

a) We can list several ways their great worth is evident.

1) They correspond to the will of God.

Ph. Friedlieb (1655): The essence of good works absolutely considered is total conformity with the law of God. When we hold that faith is the essence of good works, this is what we want to say, that Christ the Mediator apprehended by true faith makes both a man and his works acceptable to God (*Medulla*, p 729).

Quenstedt: The essence of good works is either absolute or relative. Their essence or absolutely essential characteristic consists in ἐννομία, or their agreement and conformity with the law of God, just as the essential characteristic of the opposite of good works, namely sin, consists in ἀνομία, or lack of conformity with the law...But the essence of good works relative to what pleases God is justifying faith (*TDP*, Part IV, chap. IX, sect. I, thesis VII, p 307).

2) They are performed with strength and ability which God gives.

Quenstedt: They are called good not absolutely, but in their own way, not because of the intrinsic worthiness of the person who does them but because of the perfection of the infinite merit of Christ which perfectly covers all the imperfections of our works. Note: The works of the regenerate are not perfectly good when they are viewed in themselves, but they are defiled and spoiled by the pollution of sin, but in Christ they are perfectly good (*TDP*, Part IV, chap. IX, sect I, thesis III, p 306).

3) They serve the glory of God.

Matthew 5:16 let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

4) They provide external evidence of justification.

1 Thessalonians 1:3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

5) They serve Christ by serving our neighbor.

Matthew 25:40 The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

b) God promises to reward good works.

1) Scripture states this truth in many places.

Matthew 10:41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

1 Corinthians 3:8,14 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.

1 Corinthians 9:17 If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

2 John 8 Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully.

Revelation 11:18 The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.

2) This reward is not for this life only but also for the life to come.

Matthew 19:29 Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

Mark 10:30 No one will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.

1 Timothy 4:8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 14:14 You will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.

Revelation 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Revelation 22:12 Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

3) **This is a reward by grace.**

Matthew 20:8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first." Compare verse 15 Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?

c) **A Christian will rejoice in the promised reward.**

1) **While these rewards are never the believer's motivation for living his faith, yet he will draw encouragement from God's superabundant grace.**

Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:16,17 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2) **Never will the Christian demand them as rewards of merit.**

-a) **That would be against the nature of faith.**

-b) **A Christian realizes the imperfection of his works.**

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

1 Peter 2:5 You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

-c) **Whatever is commendable in them is due to the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.**

Philippians 2:13 For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Matthew 25:37-39 Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?" ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

D3 D, VI, 2. Good works are necessary.

a) **This necessity does not conflict with willingness.**

1) **It is not a necessity of coercion.**

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Romans 7:6 But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

2) **It is a necessity of natural consequence.**

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

1 Peter 2:9-12 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

1 John 3:14,23 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

b) **They are not necessary for salvation. Such was the false claim of George Major. (See the historical introduction in the Triglotta p 112-114)**

1) **Salvation is a matter of grace and faith alone.**

Romans 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Colossians 1:22,23 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

1 Peter 1:5,9 Through faith you are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁹ You are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Council of Trent, Session VI, Canon 32: If anyone says that the good works of a justified man are gifts of God to such an extent that they are not also good merits of the justified person himself or that the justified person himself by the good works which are done . . . by him does not truly merit increase of grace, everlasting life with all that belongs to it, (provided only that he dies in the state of grace), and even an increase in glory, let him be damned.

- 2) **Good works do not preserve faith, although bad works may destroy it.**
 Romans 6:1,2 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?
 1 Corinthians 5:6 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?
 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.
 Galatians 5:7,17 You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? ¹⁷ For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.
 1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.
- 3) **Good works are not harmful to faith, as Amsdorf claimed, but confidence in them destroys faith.**
 Formula of Concord, Ep., IV, p 798,800, 8-10, 17,18: We believe, teach, and confess further that all men, but especially those who are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit, are obligated to do good works. ⁹ In this sense the words "necessary," "ought," and "must" are correctly and in a Christian way applied to the regenerated and are in no way contrary to the pattern of sound words and terminology. ¹⁰ However, when applied to the regenerated the words "necessity" and "necessary" are to be understood as involving not coercion but the due obedience which genuine believers, in so far as they are reborn, render not by coercion or compulsion of the law but from a spontaneous spirit because they are "no longer under the law but under grace." ¹⁷ We also reject and condemn as offensive and as subversive of Christian discipline that bald statement that good works are detrimental to salvation. ¹⁸ Especially in these last times, it is just as necessary to exhort people to Christian discipline and good works, and to remind them how necessary it is that they exercise themselves in good works as an evidence of their faith and their gratitude toward God, as it is to warn against mingling good works in the article of justification. Such an Epicurean dream concerning faith can damn people as much as a papistic and Pharisaic confidence in one's own works and merit.

D3 D, VII. The new life impels a Christian to pray, and in turn, his new life is strengthened as a result of prayer.

D3 D, VII, 1.

Only a Christian prays in a way acceptable to God.

a) **Prayer is a sign of Christian faith.**

1) **Scripture refers to prayer as a regular part of the Christian's life.**

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray continually.

Luther: Where there is a Christian, there is the Holy Spirit, who is always engaged in prayer. For though the Christian does not continually move his lips to utter words, nevertheless the heart is beating and pulsating, like the arteries and the heart in the body, unceasingly sighing, "O dear Father." So then, you cannot find a Christian who is not always praying, as little as a living person without a pulse, which never rests, but beats continually, though the person may be sleeping or is occupied otherwise, so that he is not aware of its beating (*LW* 24, p 89).

2) **Christians have the boldness of faith to approach God.**

Romans 8:14-17 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

John 16:26,27 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

3) **Christians enjoy access to God through faith in his grace.**

Daniel 9:18 Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy.

John 14:13,14 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

John 16:23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

1 John 5:14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

4) **Christians are moved by the Holy Spirit to pray.**

Romans 8:14-17 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Galatians 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

b) Unbelievers cannot pray in a way acceptable to God.

1) They may externally pray as fervently and devoutly as Christians.

Matthew 6:5 And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector."

1 Kings 18:26-28 So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "O Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. 27 At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." 28 So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.

2) Yet their prayers are sinful and are not pleasing to God.

Psalms 109:6,7 Appoint an evil man to oppose him; let an accuser stand at his right hand. 7 When he is tried, let him be found guilty, and may his prayers condemn him.

Matthew 6:7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Ephesians 2:1,2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

D3 D, VII, 2.

Regarding the form of our prayers Scripture teaches us the following.

a) Christians may express their prayers in various ways.

1) They may offer prayers consciously or subconsciously (during work, sleep, etc.).

Romans 8:26,27 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Isaiah 65:24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray continually.

Luther: A Christian prays even when, as often happens while fulfilling his earthly calling, he is not conscious of praying, yes, even when by reason of great sorrow and grief he imagines that he cannot pray (St. Louis ed., XI, 922).

2) They may offer their prayers audibly or in thought.

Psalms 27:8 My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek.

Psalms 19:14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Acts 7:59,60 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

3) They may offer their prayers according to some prescribed formula or *ex corde*.

Matthew 6:9 This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

Luke 11:1,2 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." 2 He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.'"

4) They may offer their prayers individually or together with their fellow Christians.

Psalms 4:1 Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.

Psalms 5:1-2 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. 2 Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.

Matthew 6:6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 18:19,20 Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 4:24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them."

b) Christians may pray at any time or place.

1) They may pray at set times, or on special occasions.

Daniel 6:10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Psalms 119:164 Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws.

Acts 3:1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.

2) **They may pray in special places or anywhere.**

Jonah 2:1 From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.

Matthew 21:13 “It is written,” he said to them, “My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it a ‘den of robbers.’”

John 4:20-24 “Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” 21 Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

1 Timothy 2:8 I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

3) **Christians can pray with a variety of postures and dress suited to the occasion.**

Luke 18:13 But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

John 17:1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.”

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

Ephesians 3:14 For this reason I kneel before the Father.

1 Timothy 2:8 I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

1 Corinthians 11:4,5,13 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. 5 And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as though her head were shaved. 13 Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?

D3 D, VII, 3.

Scripture teaches about the content of prayer.

a) **Prayers may to include praise and thanksgiving.**

Psalms 26:6,7 I go about your altar, O Lord, 7 proclaiming aloud your praise and telling of all your wonderful deeds.

Psalms 30:4 Sing to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name.

Psalms 35:18 I will give you thanks in the great assembly; among throngs of people I will praise you.

Psalms 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

Psalms 103:1 Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Psalms 105:1 Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done.

Psalms 106:1 Praise the LORD. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Psalms 118:28,29 You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God, and I will exalt you. 29 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Romans 14:6 He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

Ephesians 5:20 Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:12 Give thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

b) **Prayers may to include petitions.**

1) **We may pray about anything.**

Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

1 John 5:15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

2) **We may to pray for everyone, including our enemies.**

1 Timothy 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.

Jeremiah 29:7 Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

Matthew 5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Ephesians 6:18,19 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.

1 Timothy 2:1-3 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior.

3) We are not to pray for the souls of the dead.

Note: Nowhere does Scripture command or encourage us to pray for the dead, nor does it provide positive examples of people doing so. Such prayers would be contrary to the will of God who indicates that once people die, they are either saved or lost.

Hebrews 9:27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.

Pomazansky: The departed need only one kind of help from their brethren: prayer and petition for the remission of their sins (ODT, p 311).

Council of Trent: XXV, Concerning Purgatory: Let the bishops, however, see to it that the suffrages of the believers [the things done by believers in behalf of the dead], namely, mass sacrifices, prayers, alms and other works of piety which are customarily done by believers for other believers who have died, are done with piety and devotion according to the institutions of the church.

Bellarmino: Prayer helps the souls of the dead in two ways, in one way, as a certain wearisome work of penance, and in this way it could be classified as a work of satisfaction; in the second way it helps when it is a supplication (a prayer for help), which is a characteristic of prayer as such (Concerning Purgatory, II, XVI, I, p 374).

2 Maccabees 12:39-45 On the follow day, since the task had now become urgent, Judas and his men went to gather up the bodies of the slain and bury them with their kinsmen in their ancestral tombs. 40 But under the tunic of each of the dead they found amulets sacred to the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbids the Jews to wear. So it was clear to all that this was why these men had been slain. 41 They all therefore praised the ways of the Lord, the just judge who brings to light the things that are hidden. 42 Turning to supplication, they prayed that the sinful deed might be fully blotted out. The noble Judas warned the soldiers to keep themselves free from sin, for they had seen with their own eyes what had happened because of the sin of those who had fallen. 43 He then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he has the resurrection of the dead in view; 44 for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. 45 But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. NAB

The Lutheran Church condemns this practice.

Quenstedt: With the Apology of the Augsburg Confession we do not prohibit votive prayers for the dead, prayers of praise, gratitude and thanksgiving. But prayers for the dead which are meritorious, which serve as penitential satisfactions, and prayers of supplication through which and on account of which God should remit in the next life the punishments that remain after guilt has been forgiven, we totally disapprove of and reject (TDP, De Extremo Judicio, VII, p 377).

Apology, XXIV, p 416, 94,96: Our opponents quote the Fathers on offerings for the dead. We know that the ancients spoke of prayer for the dead. We do not forbid this, but rather we reject the transfer of the Lord's Supper to the dead ex opere operato. The ancients do not support the opponents' idea of the transfer ex opere operato. Even though they have support at most from Gregory and the more recent theologians, we set them against the clearest and surest passages of Scripture. There is also great variety among the Fathers. 96 Our opponents also misapply against us the condemnation of Aerius, who they say was condemned because he denied that in the Mass there was an offering for the living and the dead. They often use this dodge. They cite ancient heresies and by falsely comparing them with our position they try to crush us. Epiphanius testifies that Aerius believed that prayers for the dead were useless. This he rejects. We do not support Aerius either. But we are at suit with you for wickedly defending a heresy that clearly conflicts with the prophets, apostles, and holy Fathers, namely, that the Mass justifies ex opere operato and that it merits the forgiveness of guilt and punishment even for the wicked to whom it is applied, if they make no objection. We reject these wicked errors which rob Christ's suffering of its glory and utterly destroy the doctrine of righteousness by faith.

D3 D, VII, 4. All prayers must be addressed to the Triune God.

a) Prayers may be addressed to God.

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, " Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Deuteronomy 6:13 Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.

b) Prayers may be addressed to God the Father.

John 17:1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

" Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

c) Prayers may be addressed to God the Son

Acts 7:59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

d) The human nature of Christ is not excluded, since it is inseparably united with his divine nature.

Philippians 2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 5:23 All may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

Hebrews 1:6 And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

Revelation 5:11-14 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Note: We do not adore the flesh of Christ in the Corpus Christi, yet the Reformed rejection of the Corpus Christi is based on a false Christology.

Beza: To say that the flesh of Christ is to be adored is a crime of horrendous idolatry (Apology to Selnecker, III; Quenstedt, TDP, III, p 200).

Lambertus Danaeus (d. 1596): Cursed (says the prophet speaking in the stead of God himself) is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm (Jr 17:5). However, the flesh of Christ is true flesh and the man Christ is a true man. However, he who with religious worship adores or prays to any man has trust in the man whom he adores and to whom prays in that way. Therefore he who directs his adoration and prayers to the very flesh of Christ is cursed out of the mouth of God himself (Examination of the book of Chemnitz on The Two Natures of Christ, p 417).

Quenstedt: The human nature of Christ in the personal union, or as it exists in the person of the Son of God, is with one and the same adoration to be worshipped and adored together with the divine nature of the Logos (TDP, qu. XV, p 199)

e) **Prayers may be addressed to God the Holy Spirit.**

D3 D, VII, 5. Prayers must not be directed to anyone or anything other than the Triune God.

a) **Prayers must not be directed to saints.**

Isaiah 63:16 But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

1 Timothy 2:5,6 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Council of Trent, XXV, p 227, Concerning Invocation: The holy synod commands all bishops diligently to instruct the believers especially concerning the intercession of and prayers to the saints, the honoring of relics, and the legitimate use of images, according to the usage of the catholic and apostolic church, teaching them that the saints who are ruling together with Christ offer their prayers to God in behalf of men and that it is good and useful to pray to them in supplication and to flee for refuge to their prayers, their support and their help in obtaining benefits from God through his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Savior.

b) **Prayers must not be directed to images or icons.**

Note: This does not exclude the use of art in worship.

Exodus 20:4,5 You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

Deuteronomy 5:8,9 You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 9 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

Deuteronomy 7:25 The images of their gods you are to burn in the fire. Do not covet the silver and gold on them, and do not take it for yourselves, or you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the LORD your God.

1 John 5:21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

2 Kings 18:4 He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.)

Isaiah 44:9ff All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless. Those who would speak up for them are blind; they are ignorant, to their own shame.

Isaiah 46:5ff To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?

Council of Trent, XXV, p 228, Concerning Invocation: Furthermore, images of Christ, of the virgin mother of God, and of other saints should be kept and retained especially in the church buildings and due honor and veneration should be offered to them.

Timothy Ware: Orthodox churches are full of icons—on the screen, on the walls, in special shrines, or on a kind of desk where they can be venerated by the faithful. When Orthodox people enter a church, their first action will be to buy a candle, go up to an icon, cross themselves, kiss the icon, and light the candle in front of it (The Orthodox Church, p 271).

c) **Prayers must not be directed to angels.**

Revelation 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Revelation 22:8,9 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. 9 But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

Carlos Santana: It's a real joy to be in your presence right now and we'd like to let you know that Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel are present. We suggest that you invite them into your life and you, too, will witness some incredible changes (Angeltimes, 6, 51).

d) Note the specious distinction Roman Catholics make between veneration and worship.

Greek / Latin terms:

Doulia – directed to saints

Hyperdoulia – to Mary and human nature of Christ

Latria – to God

Latin / Spanish terms:

Venerar – saints

Adorar - God

Hoenecke: To be sure, the Council of Trent says that this worship should not happen "not as through it were believed that any divinity or power resided in them," or because one should place trust in them, but they are to be involved "because the honor which is shown them is bestowed on the prototypes they represent, so that through the images which we kiss, and because which we uncover our heads and bow down, we may adore Christ, and venerate the saints" (ELD, III, p 412, 413).

Augsburg Confession, XXI, p 56, 1,2: It is also taught among us that saints should be kept in remembrance so that our faith may be strengthened when we see what grace they received and how they were sustained by faith. Moreover, their good works are to be an example for us, each of us in his own calling....

2 However, it cannot be proved from the Scriptures that we are to invoke saints or seek help from them. "For there is one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5), who is the only savior, the only highpriest, advocate, and intercessor before God (Rom. 8:34). He alone has promised to hear our prayers.

Apology, XXI, p 342, 1-7: [The Roman Catholics] absolutely condemn Article XXI because we do not require the invocation of the saints. Nowhere else do they expend so much sophistry, but all they manage to prove is that the saints should be honored and that the living saints should pray for others. They present this as though on this account the invocation of the departed saints were also necessary. 2Cyprian asked Cornelius, while he was still alive, to pray for his brothers after his departure. They cite this example to prove the invocation of the dead. They also refer to Jerome's controversy with Vigilantius and say, "On this field of battle Jerome conquered Vigilantius eleven hundred years ago." So our opponents state a triumph as though the war were already over. These asses do not see that in the controversy between Jerome and Vigilantius there is not a syllable about invoking, but only about honoring, the saints. 3 Nor do the rest of the ancient Fathers before Gregory mention invocation. The theory of invocation, together with the theories our opponents now hold about the application of merits, surely has no support among the ancient Fathers. 4 Our Confession approves giving honor to the saints. This honor is threefold. The first is thanksgiving: we should thank God for showing examples of his mercy, revealing his will to save men, and giving teachers and other gifts to the church. Since these are his greatest gifts, we should extol them very highly; we should also praise the saints themselves for using these gifts, just as Christ praises faithful businessmen (Matt. 25:21, 23). 5 The second honor is the strengthening of our faith: when we see Peter forgiven after his denial, we are encouraged to believe that grace does indeed abound more than sin (Rom. 5:20). 6 The third honor is the imitation, first of their faith and then of their other virtues, which each should imitate in accordance with his calling. 7 Our opponents do not require these real honors; they only argue about invocation, which, even if it were not dangerous, is certainly unnecessary.

D3 D, VII, 6.

We may ask fellow Christians to pray with us and for us.

Matthew 18:19 Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

Romans 15:30 I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

Ephesians 6:19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.

Colossians 4:3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.

2 Thessalonians 3:1 Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.

a) Public prayer is an act of confession and an expression of fellowship, but not a means of grace (See the section on the means of grace, p 50).

1) Therefore we should not join in prayer with people who are not one in faith with us (prayer fellowship).

Matthew 7:15 Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

Matthew 10:32,33 Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their

God, and they will be my people.” 17 “ Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” 18 “ I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

1 Thessalonians 5:22 Avoid every kind of evil.

Titus 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

Romans 16:17-20 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. 18 For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. 19 Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Hoenecke: This unionistic mind-set, in which people want to unite even with giving up the truth, spreads like gangrene in our days, also in the Lutheran church of our land. ... The only thing agreeing with the Word of God is totally to abstain from all prayer fellowship and worship fellowship with heretics.

...The presupposition of all union is that the truth of Scripture, particularly insofar as it condemns all error, even the least error, and warns against it as poison for the soul, was not seriously asserted (ELD, III, p 415, 416).

2) **Our confession must be kept clear when attending worship services of the heterodox.**

Note: The term “ heterodox” refers to those churches and people who do not hold to an orthodox or correct view of biblical doctrine. A heterodox church is one that adheres to false teaching.

1 Timothy 1:3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer

2 Kings 5:18 But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this.

Quenstedt: An orthodox man should either abstain entirely from the sacred rites of unbelievers or heretics (especially the papists) or, if he at one time or another wishes to be or is required by official duties to attend, let him be careful not to give the appearance of secretly agreeing with them ... but rather let him in some way, either by words or by signs, make clear his disagreement (TDP, p 383).

Pope Hadrian VI (d. 1523): Believers are permitted to pray with unbelievers in their temples, to hide their beliefs and to pretend by signs and words to hold a foreign religion (De Extreme Judicio, p 122).

D3 D, VII, 7.

God accomplishes great things as he answers the prayers of his people.

a) **God takes into account our prayers as he governs and preserves the world.**

1) **Scripture exemplifies this truth.**

Isaiah 38:1-6 In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, “ This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover.” 2 Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, 3“ Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly. 4 Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: 5 “ Go and tell Hezekiah, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. 6 And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city.

Quenstedt: The prayer of a believer is a key of heaven. The prayer rises to God and the mercy of God comes down, says Augustine (Serm 220, de tempore). It is a second Jacob's ladder and a kind of royal portal which gives entrance to the heart of God. Prayer is a refuge for the one who prays, a sacrifice [offered] to God, a scourging of the devil, yes, the strongest defense against the devil, a fountain and source (root) of all good things. Let us, who are unarmed, fight with no other arms than prayer; he who makes prayer his defense, with prayer will win the victory (TDP, IV, XI, I, p 351).

2) **God listens to the prayers of his children.**

Matthew 7:7-11 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. 9 Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

James 1:6,7 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord.

James 4:3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

b) **God answers our prayers for stronger faith and help in godly living.**

1) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

Psalm 50:15,23 Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me. 23 He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God.

Colossians 1:9-11 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. 10 And we pray this in

order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

2) **Such prayers will be combined with a faithful use of the means of grace.**

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Isaiah 1:13-17 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies. 14 Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. 15 When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; 16 wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, 17 learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.

Isaiah 29:13 The Lord says: “ These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.”

Isaiah 58:2,3 For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. 3 “ Why have we fasted,” they say, “ and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?” Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

Amos 5:21-23 I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. 22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. 23 Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps.

D3 D, VIII.

The cross which God lays on Christians serves the purpose of advancing their sanctification.

D3 D, VIII, 1.

Cross is a term used for the Christian’s present state of humiliation.

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: “ If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily (καθ’ ἑμῆραν) and follow me.”

1 Peter 4:12-16 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

Hoenecke: As those justified before God, we believers have no sin and we ought not have to carry suffering for the sake of the Word or otherwise, for it no longer belongs to us; but we are in the state of humiliation and thus have all kinds of suffering. But therefore all suffering is to be called a cross, when it does not belong to us by law, but is imposed on us by paternal grace, so that we may conform to our Lord (ELD, III, p 404).

a) **Since Christians have been justified, they are free from guilt and should not bear any suffering as a punishment for sin.**

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

John 3:17,18 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

b) **Yet like their Lord, Christians must suffer for a time while they are waiting for their final redemption.**

Matthew 10:25,38 It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household! 38 and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “ If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

Philippians 2:5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Colossians 1:24 Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.

Luke 21:28: When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

c) **The cross is not limited to persecution for the faith but includes all the suffering a Christian endures in this life.**

Some passages specifically mention the cross:

Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “ If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

Some refer to suffering because we share a message that is foolishness to human wisdom:

Matthew 11:25,26 At that time Jesus said, " I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

1 Corinthians 2:1,2 When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

2 Corinthians 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Jesus' message will always bring outward division:

Matthew 10:34 Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Luke 12:51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.

Personal animosity is aimed at us because we belong to Christ:

Matthew 5:11 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Luke 6:22 Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; 5 in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; 6 in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; 7 in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; 8 through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; 9 known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; 10 sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

1 Peter 4:14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

Division occurs even within the closest human relationships:

Matthew 10:35-37 For I have come to turn " a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— 36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household." 37 Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Luke 12:52,53 From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.

Luke 14:26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.

We learn to let go of or to hold lightly this life's possessions:

Matthew 19:21,22 Jesus answered, " If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

Troubles of various kinds meet us on the path to heaven:

Acts 14:22 They returned, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. " We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Romans 8:17,18 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. 18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

We daily crucify our old self:

Romans 6:6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

Galatians 5:24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.
Colossians 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Daily hating all that our old self produces:

Romans 7:14,15,24 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Hoenecke: By cross is to be understood the suffering and sorrow of Christians (ELD, III, p 403).

Quenstedt: I say, all the afflictions of the pious come with the name "cross", for by them we become like the crucified Christ, and Christ with his cross has sanctified and hallowed all our sufferings, that they might be beneficial to us (TDP, IV, X, I, p 348).

Jesper Brochmand (d. 1652): The disasters and afflictions to which a man is subject in this life are described with different words by the Spirit of God, and these are very significant. It is called the cross with reference to the cross of Christ. For just as Christ had to suffer and die and in this way enter into his glory (Lk 24:26), so also it is fitting that all those who want to be followers of Christ should take up their cross and through various afflictions enter the kingdom of God (Systema, II, XLI, I, I, p 4075).

d) The sorrows of the wicked would not be classified as a cross.

Psalm 16:4 The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips.

Psalm 32:10 Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

Psalm 34:21 Evil will slay the wicked; the foes of the righteous will be condemned.

Exodus 7:1-11:10 – The plagues sent on Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

D3 D, VIII, 2. It is God who lays the cross on the Christian.

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

1) God may impose the cross directly.

1 Chronicles 21:8-14 Then David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing." 9 The LORD said to Gad, David's seer, 10 "Go and tell David, 'This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.'" 11 So Gad went to David and said to him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Take your choice: 12 three years of famine, three months of being swept away before your enemies, with their swords overtaking you, or three days of the sword of the LORD—days of plague in the land, with the angel of the LORD ravaging every part of Israel.' Now then, decide how I should answer the one who sent me." 13 David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men." 14 So the LORD sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

Hebrews 12:6 The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.

2) God may impose the cross through the devil or the unbelieving world.

Job 1:12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job 2:6 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

Luke 22:31 Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.

2 Corinthians 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

b) God reserves the right to impose the cross, either directly or indirectly.

1) No Christian should impose the cross on his fellow Christian.

Galatians 6:2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:26,29 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. 29 Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?

2) A Christian should not impose the cross on himself.

1 Peter 3:17 It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

3) A Christian may pray to God for deliverance from the cross.

2 Corinthians 12:8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

Psalm 50:15 Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.

4) Yet the Christian will remember that ultimately the cross is for his good.

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, " My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

D3 D, VIII, 3. The cross is never a punishment for sin.

Note: In Lutheran dogmatics we make a distinction between punishment and chastisement. God punishes unbelievers but chastises believers.

a) Since Christians are forgiven, their sufferings are " without cause."

Psalms 109:3 With words of hatred they surround me; they attack me without cause.

Psalms 119:78 May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause.

Psalms 119:86 All your commands are trustworthy; help me, for men persecute me without cause.

Job 2:3 Then the LORD said to Satan, " Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason."

John 9:2,3 His disciples asked him, " Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 " Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, " but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." Heerbrand: In a general way indeed every affliction is a penalty (poena) for sin. But properly the ungodly are punished (puniuntur) by God either that they may repent when they are admonished by the punishments (poenis) or, if they will not be converted, that they might perish. But for pious believers in Christ the guilt and the eternal punishment (culpa et poena) are simultaneously forgiven for the sake of the suffering and merit of Christ.... And if in the case of the pious God often responds to (visitet) specific sins with specific penalties (poenis), yet this must not be understood to be true in every case. Therefore afflictions and disasters are rightly called the cross and not the punishments (poenae) of the pious, because they no longer have the nature of punishments, namely, something that makes them feel God's wrath (Compendium, Concerning the Cross, p 443). Q831.

Calov: The essence of the cross is not punitive but fatherly affliction or suffering and, with the testing that is joined to it, a confirmation of the Father's love. After the remission of guilt there is no liability to temporal punishment to be suffered by believers. Therefore that doctrine full of [reasons for] doubt, yes, even despair, falls, [namely] that believers are still bound to endure punishment, and that therefore the affliction that comes to them in this world (hic) comes from God as an angry judge but not as a kind Father; but the apostle teaches differently (He 12:5f), as does also St. James [1:12], and besides one older than they, the model of true patience, Job (5:17) yes, Christ Himself (Ac 3:19), where we must distinguish between τιμωρίαν, punishment, and δοκιμασίαν, testing, and chastisement inflicted as a test (Ja 1:12,13; Mt 6:13). The former is sent on account of sin, but the latter only for the testing of faith (1 Pe 1:6,7; Ps 66:10) (Systema, p 704).

b) The cross is evidence of God's fatherly love and discipline.

1) Scripture teaches this truth.

Hebrews 12:6-8 The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son. 7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.

2 Corinthians 1:5 For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

2) Christians should expect to endure the cross.

1 Peter 4:12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

3) This is true even when the cross is the consequence of a weakness or sin of the Christian.

2 Samuel 12:14 But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.

c) It is important to remember that God does not punish Christians for their sins, either in this life or the next.

1) God withholds the blessing of the cross from unbelievers.

Psalms 73:3-12 For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. 5 They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills. 6 Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. 7 From their callous hearts comes iniquity; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits. 8 They scoff, and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. 9 Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. 10 Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. 11 They say, " How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?" 12 This is what the wicked are like—always carefree, they increase in wealth.

2) Since the purpose for the cross may be hidden to the Christian, he may not comprehend the grace, love, and justice of God.

Job 30:21 You turn on me ruthlessly; with the might of your hand you attack me.

Psalms 13:1,2 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Psalms 73:13-17 Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence. 14 All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning. 15 If I had said, " I will speak thus," I would have betrayed your children. 16 When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me 17 till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.

Lamentations 5:20 Why do you always forget us? Why do you forsake us so long?

3) Weak Christians, who don't understand that God imposes the cross in love, can fall from faith as a result of the cross.

Luke 8:13 Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.

2 Peter 3:17,18 Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

D3 D, VIII, 4. A proper understanding of the cross can help a Christian grow in his life of sanctification as he ponders on the grace and love of God.

a) Scripture explains the spiritual blessings of the cross.

Acts 14:21-22 They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

1 Peter 4:1,2 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. 2 As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

2 Corinthians 12:7,8,9 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

2 Corinthians 4:11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

Isaiah 26:16 LORD, they came to you in their distress; when you disciplined them, they could barely whisper a prayer.

1 Peter 1:6,7 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

b) God shows his power and glory as he strengthens us through the cross.

John 9:1-3 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

c) Therefore the Christian can rejoice in his cross.

Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 6:23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.

Acts 5:41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.

Acts 16:25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

Romans 5:3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance.

James 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds.

1 Peter 4:13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

D3 D, IX. An important factor in shaping a Christian's life is the constant expectation of the Lord's return in glory.

D3 D, IX, 1. Christians are strangers in this world.

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

1) They are not of this world.

John 17:11,14,16,18 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

Hebrews 13:14 For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

2) Christians will long for the next world.

-a) Christians may long for the end of their earthly life.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, 3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 We live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Philippians 1:21-23 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

-b) Christians may long for Christ's second coming.

1 Corinthians 1:7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Titus 2:13 We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

b) Because Christians can be distracted by the matters of this life, Scripture reminds them to long for their heavenly home.

1) By nature human beings cling to this earthly life.

Genesis 3:22 And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

Job 2:4 “Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life.”

2) A long life is a blessing of God, yet such a blessing is nothing in comparison to the eternal blessings of heaven.

Ephesians 6:2-3 “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— 3 “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

1 Corinthians 15:54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

1 Thessalonians 4:17,18 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage each other with these words.

D3 D, IX, 2. The expectation of the Lord's coming is a powerful factor in shaping a Christian's life.

Matthew 24:14,42 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. 42 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Compare Acts 1:11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Matthew 25:13 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

Romans 8:18,23 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

1 Corinthians 7:31 Those who use the things of the world [should live], as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

Philippians 4:5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Titus 2:12-14 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and

Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
Revelation 3:11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

D3 E. Preservation

D3 E, I. God preserves the Christian in faith.

D3 E, I, 1. This preservation is necessary for a Christian to enjoy the blessings of heaven.

a) **A Christian can fall from the faith.**

1) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

Matthew 13:20-22 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. ²² The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

Luke 8:13,14 Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.

Compare *The Living Bible*: The stony ground represents those who enjoy listening to sermons, but somehow the message never really gets through to them and doesn't take root and grow. They know the message is true, and sort of believe for awhile; but when the hot winds of persecution blow, they lose interest.

Note also the comments of William Hendriksen (a Calvinist) regarding this verse: These are the emotional people. They are impulsive. After the sermon they rush toward the preacher to tell him how his message gripped them. How does one know whether marked emotional behavior is the evidence of genuine faith? The answer is, "It is, if it can endure testing." The people described in Luke 8:13 cannot. In the time of trial they fall away. Of course, such people never really belonged to Christ's flock. 1 John 2:19 describes their situation exactly, "They left us, but they never really belonged to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have stayed with us" (*Commentary on St. Luke*, p 427, 428, emphasis his).

John 6:66,67 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ⁶⁷ "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.

2) **Scripture provides examples of believers who temporarily fell from the faith.**

2 Samuel 11:27 After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.

Psalms 32:3-5 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD" — and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Matthew 26:33-35 Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." ³⁴ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." ³⁵ But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

3) **Scripture provides examples of believers who permanently fell from the faith.**

1 Samuel 13:1-23 – The example of Saul

1 Samuel 15:35 Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the LORD was grieved that he had made Saul king over Israel.

1 Samuel 16:1 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

Acts 1:16-19 Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus— ¹⁷ he was one of our number and shared in this ministry. ¹⁸ (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. ¹⁹ Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

Hebrews 6:4-6 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

2 Timothy 1:15 You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

2 Timothy 2:17 Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus.

2 Timothy 4:10 Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.

b) **There are many things that can cause a Christian to fall from faith.**

1) **There are external causes.**

-a) **Scripture mentions some external causes.**

Matthew 10:21,22 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²² All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Matthew 13:21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

Matthew 13:22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

2 Timothy 4:10 Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.

Matthew 24:11 Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.

Matthew 24:12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.

2 Timothy 2:16,17 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. ¹⁷ Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus.

-b) These external causes appeal to our sinful nature.

Galatians 5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

Romans 7:20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

2) There are inner causes that can weaken the Christian.

-a) The sinful nature may lead a Christian to be complacent in the faith.

Matthew 24:42 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

Mark 13:37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: "Watch!"

1 Thessalonians 5:6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Revelation 3:3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

Revelation 16:15 Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.

James 4:2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight.

-b) The sinful nature may lead the Christian to be unfaithful in his prayer life.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body (σάρξ) is weak.

Romans 15:30 I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.

Ephesians 6:18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Colossians 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

James 4:2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

-c) The sinful nature may lead the Christian to be apathetic or hostile toward God's Word.

Matthew 11:16-19 To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷ "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn." ¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon." ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and 'sinners.'" But wisdom is proved right by her actions.

Mark 3:5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

Acts 28:27 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

Amos 8:11,12 "The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine through the land—not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD. ¹² Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it."

-d) The sinful nature may lead the Christian to a false sense of security.

1 Corinthians 4:8 Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings—and

that without us! How I wish that you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you!

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

Romans 11:20 But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

Matthew 26:33-35 Peter replied, “ Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” ³⁴ “ I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “ this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

³⁵ But Peter declared, “ Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

c) God encourages Christians to endure.

Matthew 10:22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Matthew 24:13 He who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Romans 11:20 But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

1 Corinthians 10:12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

D3 E, I, 2. Preservation is not something Christians achieve through their own efforts, but a blessing that the Holy Spirit provides.

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

1) God promises to preserve Christians in the faith.

John 10:28-30 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:13 It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

1 Thessalonians 5:23,24 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

1 Peter 1:5 Through faith [you are] are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

2) God preserves us in the faith through the means of grace.

-a) Scripture teaches this truth.

1 Timothy 4:16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

-b) We can see this in the example of the apostles.

1 Peter 5:12 With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

2 Peter 3:1,2 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ² I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

2 John 12 I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

-c) The Holy Spirit enables us to remember and understand the truth of God's Word.

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

-d) God preserves us in the faith, which he works and strengthens in us through the Word.

1 Peter 1:5 Through faith [you] are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Romans 10:8,14,17 But what does it say? “ The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Luke 16:31 He said to him, “ If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

b) God protects us against our own sinful nature.

1) Our own sinful nature is our worst enemy.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Galatians 5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

Romans 7:21-23 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law;²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

2) **God is able to protect us from this enemy—the sinful nature.**

1 John 3:20 For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

Psalms 51:10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Psalms 119:36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.

3) **The faithful God controls all temptations.**

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Compare James 1:14 Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

c) **There are two main errors to avoid in the doctrine of preservation.**

1) **Calvinists deny that a Christian can fall from faith.**

Note: The "P" in the Calvinist TULIP (perseverance) teaches a "once saved, always saved" theology.

Westminster Confession XVII, I: All those whom God has accepted in his beloved Son, called efficaciously, and sanctified by his Spirit cannot either finally or completely fall from that state of grace, but they will surely remain in it to the very end and be eternally saved.

Reymond: Not to affirm the eternal security of the truly saved, and actually to teach, as do Arminians, that those whom the Father elected, called, and justified, and to whom he also freely gives, along with the gifts of his Son, all things necessary to their salvation, to teach that those for whom the Son paid the penalty of sin by breathing that those whom the Holy Spirit has regenerated and sealed unto the day of redemption can still finally lose their salvation and never be glorified because of some action on their part is truly an ill-advised counsel of despair (*A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p 794).

Grudem: The perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again (*Systematic Theology*, p 788).

Erickson: Believers are capable of repudiating their faith, but will freely choose not to (*Christian Theology*, p 1005).

R. C. Sproul: Reformed theology teaches the doctrine of perseverance of the saints. This doctrine is sometimes called "eternal security." In essence the doctrine teaches that if you have saving faith you will never lose it, and if you lose it, you never had it (*Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, p 197).

Smalcald Articles, Part III, III, p 490, 42-44: On the other hand, if certain sectarians would arise, some of whom are perhaps already extant, and in the time of the insurrection of the peasants came to my own view, holding that all those who had once received the Spirit or the forgiveness of sins, or had become believers, even though they should afterwards sin, would still remain in the faith, and such sin would not harm them, and hence crying thus: "Do whatever you please; if you believe, it all amounts to nothing; faith blots out all sins," etc.—they say, besides, that if any one sins after he has received faith and the Spirit, he never truly had the Spirit and faith: I have had before me seen and heard many such insane men, and I fear that in some such a devil is still remaining, hiding and dwelling.⁴³ It is, accordingly, necessary to know and to teach that when holy men, still having and feeling original sin, also daily repenting of and striving with it, happen to fall into manifest sins, as David into adultery, murder, and blasphemy, that then faith and the Holy Spirit has departed from them. For the Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so as to be accomplished, but represses and restrains it so that it must not do what it wishes. But if it does what it wishes, the Holy Spirit and faith are certainly not present. For St. John says, 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, ... and he cannot sin." And yet it is also the truth when the same St. John says, 1:8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

Augsburg Confession XII, p 48, 7: Rejected here are those who teach that persons who have once become godly cannot fall again.

2) **Synergists deny *sola gratia* and ascribe perseverance in part to man's own activity.**

Daniel Clendenin: Fastings, vigils, prayer, alms, and other good works which are done in the name of Christ are means which help us reach that goal which always remains the same: the reception of the Holy Spirit and the making him our own, that is, theosis (*Eastern Orthodox Theology*, p 190).

Daniel Clendenin: The issue here is not one of virtue but of cooperation. Inasmuch as there is concurrence by our free will, divine grace is able to increase within us (*Eastern Orthodox Theology*, p 191).

J. Rodman Williams: It is particularly significant to note the need for confirming, or making firm one's "call and election." This clearly implies that calling and election (the background of calling) do not guarantee continuance; rather, this only occurs through our making this firm and hereby having an abundant entrance into God's eternal kingdom (*Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, II, p 125).

D3 E, II. A Christian may confidently trust in God to preserve him, because God has from eternity elected him to salvation.

D3 E, II, 1. Scripture proclaims election to comfort and strengthen our faith.

a) **Scripture sometimes refers to believers as the elect.**

Note: Scripture does not speak of the non-elect. To speak in such terms often leads to a double predestination.

Matthew 24:22,24,31 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the *elect* those days will be shortened. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the *elect*—if that were possible. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his *elect* from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Luke 18:7 And will not God bring about justice for his *chosen ones*, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's *chosen people*, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the *elect*, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Titus 1:1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's *elect* and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness. . .

1 Peter 1:1,2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's *elect*, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, ² who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a *chosen people*, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

b) **God gave us the doctrine of election for our comfort and encouragement in the faith.**

1) **The gospel nourishes our faith.**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

2) **Since the doctrine of election is gospel, it also encourages us in our faith.**

Romans 8:18,26,28-30 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-15 They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. ¹³ But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

Ephesians 1:3-6 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms (τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις) with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. ¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.

2 Peter 1:10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.

c) **The doctrine of election underscores the truth of *sola gratia*.**

1) **This was true of the election of Israel as God's covenant nation.**

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. ⁷ The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 9:4-6 After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The LORD has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out before you. ⁵ It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ⁶ Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people.

2) **It is true of our election.**

2 Timothy 1:9 [God] has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

Ephesians 1:5,6 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Romans 11:5,6 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

1 Corinthians 1:27,28 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are.

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

d) **The doctrine of election is given for our comfort not our speculation.**

Example: Why some and not others?

Luke 13:23-25 Someone asked him, “ Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?” He said to them, ²⁴ “ Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. ²⁵ Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’ “ But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.’”

1) **This applies to every gospel statement.**

1 Thessalonians 5:1 Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you.

2 Thessalonians 2:1ff Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers....

Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Compare v 42 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

2) **In the case of election, speculation will lead either to Calvinism (election and reprobation) or synergism (*intuitu fidei*).**

-a) **In response to the question, “ Why some and not others?” Calvinism answers with God’s sovereignty.**

Westminster Confession of Faith, III/i,iii: God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass...and by the decree of God, for the manifestation of his own glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

Berkhof : Predestination includes two parts, namely, election and reprobation, the predetermination of both the good and the wicked to their final end, and to certain proximate ends which are instrumental in the realization of their final destiny (*Systematic Theology*, p 113).

Grudem: When we understand election as God’s sovereign choice of some persons to be saved, then there is necessarily another aspect of that choice, namely, God’s sovereign decision to pass over others and not to save them. This decision of God in eternity past is called reprobation. Reprobation is the sovereign decision of God before creation to pass over some persons, in sorrow deciding not to save them, and to punish them for their sins, and thereby to manifest his justice (*Systematic Theology*, p 684, 685).

-b) **In response to the question, “ Why some and not others? Synergism answers with God’s foreknowledge of man’s faith.**

H. Orton Wiley: The church is both predestinated and elected, the former referring to the plan of redemption as manifested in the universal call; the latter to the elect or chosen ones who have closed in with the offers of mercy. The elect are chosen, not by absolute decree, but by acceptance of the conditions of the call (*Christian Theology*, p 337, 338).

J. Kenneth Grider: Conditional predestination is the view of Arminius. God does predestinate each individual to an eternal destiny, but it is based on his foreknowledge of their free response to, or rejection of, the gospel (*A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, p 248).

Russian Orthodoxy: The Orthodox Church also recognizes predestination, but does not consider it unconditional, that is, independent of men’s free will and based on a groundless decision of the divine will. According to Orthodox teaching, God, as omniscient, knows, foresees the moral state of men and, on the basis of this foresight, preordains, predetermines for them a certain fate (*The Teaching on Predestination*, <http://www.stjohndc.org/homilies/9710a.htm>).

D3 E, II, 2. By election we mean that God determined in eternity to do what he then carried out in time, that is, bringing believers to faith and keeping them in the faith.

a) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

1) **Our personal salvation dates back to eternity.**

2 Timothy 1:9,10 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, ¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

Ephesians 1:4 He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

2) **The objects of God's election are people who in time will be brought to faith.**

-a) **God's providence extends over all people.**

Job 14:5 Man's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.

Matthew 5:45 He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

-b) **God's election extends only over his children.**

Matthew 22:14 For many are invited, but few are chosen.

Mark 13:20,22,27 If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them. ²² For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible. ²⁷ And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Compare Matthew 24:24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.)

Luke 18:7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

Romans 8:33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

Ephesians 1:4 He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

Formula of Concord: XI, Ep., p 830, 1-5: 1. To start with, the distinction between the foreknowledge and the eternal election of God is to be diligently noted. 2. God's foreknowledge in nothing else than that God knows all things before they happen, as it is written, "There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:28). 3. This foreknowledge extends alike over good people and evil people. But it is not a cause of evil or of sin which compels anyone to do something wrong; the original source of this is the devil and man's wicked and perverse will. Neither is it the cause of man's perdition; for this man himself is responsible. God's foreknowledge merely controls the evil and imposes a limit on its duration, so that in spite of its intrinsic wickedness it must minister to the salvation of his elect. 4. Predestination or the eternal election of God, however, is concerned only with the pious children of God in whom he is well pleased. It is a cause of their salvation, for he alone brings it about and ordains everything that belongs to it. Our salvation is so firmly established upon it that the "gates of Hades cannot prevail against" it (John 10:28; Matt. 16:18).

-c) **Election does not refer simply to the choice of the means by which God calls people to faith.**

-1) **The doctrine of election pertains to persons not means.**

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

-2) **The choosing of the means of grace is not "election."**

-3) **God does call the elect to faith through the means of grace.**

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

b) **God's motive for choosing us is his pure grace.**

1) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

2 Timothy 1:9 [God] has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

Ephesians 1:5,6 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

2) **The προγινώσκειν is not merely an intellectual foreknowledge, but an emotional recognition.**

-a) **This is true concerning election.**

Romans 8:14-17,28-29 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

1 Peter 1:1,2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, ² who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1 Peter 1:20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

-b) Foreknowledge denotes intellectual knowledge.

Acts 26:5 They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee.

2 Peter 3:17 Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.

-c) Foreknowledge also stresses emotional recognition.

Psalms 1:6 For the LORD *watches over* the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Amos 3:2 You only have I *chosen* of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.

Matthew 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, "I never *knew* you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Romans 11:2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel:

Galatians 4:8,9 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.⁹ But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Formula of Concord, TD, Article VII, p 1069, 23: In this his eternal counsel, purpose, and ordinance God has not only prepared salvation in general, but he has also graciously considered and elected to salvation each and every individual among the elect who are to be saved through Christ, and also ordained that in the manner just recounted he wills by his grace, gifts, and effective working to bring them to salvation and to help, further, strengthen, and preserve them to this end.

3) God's election rests on the redemptive work of Christ.

Ephesians 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Romans 8:31-34 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

4) The decree of election includes the means of grace.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

1 Peter 1:2 [You] have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

c) Election pertains to all phases of sanctification.

1) Scripture teaches this truth.

Romans 8:28-30 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

2 Timothy 1:9 [God] has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

1 Peter 1:1,2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, ² who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

2) Those whom God elects, he also brings to faith which is a fruit of election.

Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

Formula of Concord XI, 8, 23: God's eternal election, however, not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but by God's gracious will and pleasure in Christ Jesus it is also a cause which creates, effects, helps, and furthers our salvation and whatever pertains to it. Our salvation is based on it in such a way that "the gates of Hades" are not able to do anything against it (Matt. 16:18), as it is written, "No one shall snatch my sheep out of my hand" (John 10:28), and again, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). ²³ In this his eternal counsel, purpose, and ordinance God has not only prepared salvation in general, but he has also graciously considered and elected to salvation each and every individual among the elect who are to be saved through Christ, and also ordained that in the manner just recounted he wills by his grace, gifts, and effective working to bring them to salvation and to help, further, strengthen, and preserve them to this end.

3) It is contrary to Scripture to base election on foreseen faith or to restrict election to final glorification.

Hollaz: Predestination is God's eternal decision to confer eternal salvation on each and every man of whom God foresaw that he would believe in Christ to the end (*Examen*, p 604). Caution!

Walther: [The controversy] consists simply in the following twofold question: first, whether God from eternity, before the foundations of the world were laid, out of pure mercy and only for the sake of the most holy merit of Christ, elected and ordained the chosen children of God to salvation and whatever pertains to it...or second, whether in his election God took into consideration anything good in man, namely the foreseen conduct of man, the foreseen non-resistance, and the foreseen persevering faith, and thus elected certain persons to salvation...The first of these questions we affirm, while our opponents deny it, but the second question we deny, while our opponents affirm it (*The Controversy Concerning Predestination*, p 5).

Brief Statement, Paragraph 36: Nor does Holy Scripture know of an election 'by foreseen faith,' 'in view of faith,' as though the faith of the elect were to be placed before their election; but according to Scripture the faith which the elect have in time belongs to the spiritual blessings with which God has endowed them by His eternal election.

D3 E, II, 3. The doctrine of election serves to reassure us and preserve us in our faith to the end.

a) This is how Scripture uses this doctrine in Romans 8.

Romans 8:28-39 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. ³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

b) Election reminds us that God is in control of our salvation.

1) We did not come to faith by chance.

Ephesians 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

2) Our election was a part of God's saving plan in eternity.

Romans 11:28,29 As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, ²⁹ for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Psalms 33:11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

3) God always accomplishes his plans.

Matthew 24:22,24 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible.

John 10:28,29 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

Romans 8:28,30 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Romans 11:2-6 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: ³ “Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me”? ⁴ And what was God's answer to him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” ⁵ So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

c) While this doctrine gives genuine gospel comfort, it should not be used to give a false security.

Luke 12:32 Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; ³⁰ those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; ³¹ those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

2 Peter 1:10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.

Compare Philippians 2:12,13 ¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

D3 E, II, 4. There is no predestination to damnation as a corollary to the election of grace unto salvation.

a) This is the Calvinistic error (the “U” in the Calvinistic TULIP).

Augustine: All (1 Ti 2:4) stands for “many,” whom he wants to come to grace. The words are: he wants all people to be saved, as if all are to be understood as predestined, since every kind of people is included (those predestined come from all kinds of people) (*De corrept. et grat.*, 44).

Calvin: God's eternal decree by which He decided in Himself what He wanted to happen to each and every man we call predestination. Eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others.—I confess that it is indeed an awesome decree (*decretum horribile*)(*Institutes*, III, XXIII, VI, p 151).

Westminster Confession, III, 3: God in order to manifest His glory by His decree predestined some men and angels to eternal life, others, however, He foreordained to eternal death ... 7.) The rest of the human race, according to the counsel of His unsearchable will (by which He at will extends or withholds His mercy), God was pleased to pass over to the praise of His supreme power over His creatures. He (was pleased to) appoint them to shame and wrath for their sins to the praise of His glorious righteousness.

Grudem: When we understand election of God's sovereign choice of some persons to be saved, then there is necessarily another aspect of that choice, namely, God's sovereign choice to pass over others and not save them. This decision of God in eternity past is called reprobation. Reprobation is the sovereign decision of God before creation to pass over some persons, in sorrow deciding not to save them, and to punish them for their sins, and thereby manifest his justice (*Systematic Theology*, p 684, 685).

R. C. Sproul: The only way to avoid the doctrine of double predestination is to either affirm that God predestinates everybody to election or that he predestinates no one to either election or reprobation. Since the Bible clearly teaches predestination to election and denies universal salvation, we must conclude that predestination is double. It includes both election and reprobation. Double predestination is unavoidable if we take Scripture seriously (*Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, p 165).

b) Unbelievers—not God or his decree—are responsible for the fact that they will be eternally lost.

Acts 13:46-48 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For this is what the Lord has commanded us: “I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.” ⁴⁸ When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

c) Predestination to damnation may be a logical conclusion, but it is not a scriptural teaching.

1) God may harden unbelievers who continually reject him and his Word (obduracy). But this is not to be confused with predestination to damnation.

2 Peter 2:7,8 And if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men ⁸ (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)

Isaiah 6:9 He said, “Go and tell this people: “‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’”

Matthew 13:10-15 The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” ¹¹ He replied, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’”

2) The statement that some are “fit for destruction” (Ro 9:22) does not mean that some are “predestined for destruction.”

Romans 9:22 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction (κατηρισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν)?

-a) Note the meaning of the term “fit” (ripe).

Luke 6:40 A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is *fully* (κατηρισμένος) will be like his teacher.

1 Corinthians 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be *perfectly united* (κατηρισμέν) in mind and thought.

2 Timothy 3:17 so that the man of God may be *thoroughly equipped* (ἐξηρισμένος) for every good work.

-b) God's attitude toward those “fit for destruction” shows wonderful forbearance.

Romans 9:22-24 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared (κατηρισμένα) for destruction? ²³ What if he did this to make the riches of his

glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance (προητοίμασεν) for glory—²⁴ even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

3) The scriptural statement that “ God has mercy on whom he will, and hardens whom he will” is directed not against universal grace, but against self-righteousness.

Note the antecedent and consequent will of God. See middler dogmatics notes p 157-158.

Romans 9:8,15-18,30-33 In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring. . . .¹⁵ For he says to Moses, “ I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: “ I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.”¹⁸ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. . . .³⁰ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith;³¹ but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it.³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “ stumbling stone.”³³ As it is written: “ See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble (λίθον προκόμματος) and a rock that makes them fall (πέτρην σκανδάλου), and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

Romans 10:3 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

d) Like other doctrines of Scripture, election is a teaching of Scripture we will not fully understand in this life.

1) Scripture reminds us of this truth.

Romans 11:33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!³⁴ “ Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?”³⁵ “ Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?”³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Formula of Concord, TD, XI, p 1078, 52: But a distinction must be observed with special care between that which is expressly revealed concerning it in God’s Word, and what is not revealed. For, in addition to what has been revealed in Christ concerning this, of which we have here spoken, God has still kept secret and concealed much concerning this mystery, and reserved it for his wisdom and knowledge alone, which we should not investigate, nor should we indulge our thoughts in this matter, nor draw conclusions, nor inquire curiously, but should adhere entirely to the revealed Word of God. This admonition is most urgently needed.

2) The desire to harmonize this doctrine does not justify the question: “ Why some and not others?”

-a) **By asking it as one question it presupposes a uniform cause for both.**

-b) **The question must be divided into two and biblical answer given to each.**

D3 F. Mystic Union

D3 F, I. The Triune God makes his home in the heart of the believer.

D3 F, I, 1. The mystic union is more than the essential and operative presence of God in all people (omnipresence).

a) God is present everywhere and sustains all people.

Acts 17:28 For in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, “ We are his offspring.”

b) God lives in the hearts of believers in a special way.

1) Scripture explains the nature of this mystic union.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?

John 14:23 Jesus replied, “ If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home (μονήν) with him.”

John 14:2 In my Father’s house are many rooms (μοναί); if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

John 17:20-23 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are:²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Quenstedt: The mystic union does not consist in a mere harmony and agreement of feelings, . . . but in a true, real, proper and most intimate union. This mystic union does not consist only in the gracious working of the Holy Spirit in believers. Nor does this union consist in a (μετουσία) or a transubstantiation or conversion of our substance into the substance of God and Christ or vice versa. Nor does it consist in συνουσία or a consubstantiation, so that out of two united essences one essence is made (TDP, sect. II, p 623).

Luther: The true Spirit therefore lives in believers not by means of his gifts, but by what he is (i.e. he dwells personally in us) (Erlanger Auslegung des 51 Psalms, p 109).

Quenstedt: It does not follow that wherever God is already present according to his substance, there he cannot according to his substance come closer in another way. Only this follows that God cannot come closer in that way in which he is already there. That, however the divine essence, insofar as it is an essence, can allow for such a way of coming closer without danger of giving up its boundlessness that unique way in which it is present in Christ

demonstrates. There the divine nature is united with the finite human nature in such a way that in this particular way he is not, nor does he want to be, anywhere else. This presence is certainly not defined as a new way of working in us, but as the intimate indwelling of a spaceless substance in another substance bound by space and time. Granted that this presence is uniquely unique, nevertheless it can not be denied, that from the personal union we can draw the conclusion that such a drawing near is not absolutely in conflict with the divine essence (*TDP*, I, 3, p 629).

2) **The mystic union should not be equated with other unions.**

- a) **It should not be compared to the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ.**
- b) **It should not be compared to the sacramental union of the elements in Eucharist.**
- c) **It should not be compared to pantheism or Eastern Orthodox mysticism.**

Luther: Dionysius with his mystic theology and others who followed him have given opportunities for speculations about [God's] bare majesty. They wrote many things about "spiritual marriage," in which they portrayed God as the bridegroom, the soul as the bride. And so they taught that men can, without means, come into contact with and deal with the unsearchable and eternal majesty of God in this mortal life and in this corrupt nature and flesh. And certainly this doctrine of theirs has been accepted as high and divine. I myself once dabbled in it with great damage to myself. I exhort you to detest as a pestilential thing this mystic theology of Dionysius and other similar books containing such nonsense. I am afraid that together with him fanatics of the future, who will again bring such monstrosities into the church, will also through this obscure the sound doctrine and destroy it completely (In Loescher, *Timotheus Verinus*, Part 3, p 31).

D3 F, I, 2. The Holy Spirit forms the mystic union through the means of grace.

a) **Scripture teaches this truth.**

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
Compare verse 23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

Ephesians 3:16,17 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

b) **The Holy Spirit forms the mystic union at conversion.**

Quenstedt: The moment when this union begins is completely identical with the moment of regeneration, justification, and renewal. For these deeds all occur together in an instant. In the Notes he adds the necessary comment: According to our way of thinking regeneration and justification are [logically though not chronologically] prior to the mystic union (*TDP*, sect. 1, thes. XVI, p 621).

Note: The mystic union is the result of justification and not the cause of it.

D3 F, II. God uses the mystic union to encourage the believer.

D3 F, II, 1. God uses the mystic union to comfort the believer.

Psalms 46:5 God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

Matthew 10:19,20 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say,²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Romans 8:9-11,16,26,35 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

John 6:54-56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.⁵⁵ For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.

John 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

Calov: The purpose is that he might fill us with the fullness of grace and preserve us until we come to the fullness of glory. On this he comments in the Notes: For here, in the kingdom of grace, we receive blessings of every kind, yes, we are even made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pe 1:4). All these things we will receive in fuller measure when we obtain the end of our faith (1 Pe 1:9). And we will be like God (1 Jn 3:2) who will be all in all for us (1 Cor 15:28). Therefore he fills us with his grace, that we might above all be more and more strengthened in faith and sealed with the Holy Spirit for the glory of the heavenly inheritance (2 Cor 1:22; 1 Pe 1:3-4), that our joy may be full (1 Jn 1:4) (*Systema*, cap. VIII, thes. V, p 505).

Balthazar Mentzer (d. 1627): What then? I cannot express it, but I firmly believe that this indwelling of Christ in us by which we are made one body with him is such a real bond and union and connection that nothing in this life can exist or be imagined which is sweeter, more pleasant, more filled with comfort than this (*Brevis consideratio*, cap. 2, qu. 2).

D3 F, II, 2. God uses the mystic union to give the believer the strength to do good works.

John 15:4,5 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

1 Corinthians 6:15-17 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2 Peter 1:4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

D3 F, II, 3. God uses the mystic union to warn the believer not to sin.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

D3 F, II, 4. God uses the mystic union to stress the close relationship that exists between the believer and his God.

John 15:4,5 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Matthew 25:40 The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Acts 9:4,5 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

1 Corinthians 3:17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.

D3 F, III. The mystic union is the result not the cause of justification. We are justified by Christ outside of us, not by Christ living in us.

Luther: [A Christian] is righteous and holy by an alien or foreign holiness—I call it this for sake of instruction—that is, he is righteous by the mercy and grace of God. This mercy and grace is not something human; it is not some disposition or quality of the heart. It is a divine blessing given us through the true knowledge of the gospel, when we know and believe that our sin has been forgiven through the grace and merit of Christ.... Is not this righteousness an alien righteousness? It consists completely in the indulgence of another and is a pure gift of God who shows mercy and favor for Christ's sake.... Therefore a Christian is not essentially righteous; he is not righteous according to quality or substance (*Exposition of Ps 51:2* (1532) WA 40 II, 352f.).

Formula of Concord, III, TD, p 932, 54: We must also explain correctly the discussion concerning the indwelling of God's essential righteousness in us. On the one hand, it is true indeed that God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is the eternal and essential righteousness, dwells by faith in the elect who have been justified through Christ and reconciled with God, since all Christians are temples of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who impels them to do rightly. But, on the other hand, this indwelling of God is not the righteousness of faith of which St. Paul speaks and which he calls the righteousness of God, on account of which we are declared just before God. This indwelling follows the preceding righteousness of faith, which is precisely the forgiveness of sins and the gracious acceptance of poor sinners on account of the obedience and merit of Christ alone.

Formula of Concord, Ep., p 794, 16, 18: We reject: 4. That faith does not look alone to Christ's obedience, but also to his divine nature in so far as it dwells and works within us, and that by such indwelling our sins are covered up. 6. That not God himself but only divine gifts dwell in believers.

On the contrary view of Osiander see the Introduction to the Triglotta, p 153-157.

Osiander: Whoever hears, retains, and believes the Word, receives God himself, for God is the Word. If, therefore, the Word of God, Christ our Lord, dwells in us by faith and we are one with Him, we may say with Paul: 'I live, though not I, but Christ lives in me,' and then we are justified by faith (*A Good Instruction*).

Osiander: The one and only righteousness availing before God is God Himself. But Christ is the Word which we apprehend by faith, and thus Christ in us, God himself, is our righteousness which avails before God....The gospel has two parts; the first, that Christ has satisfied the justice of God; the other, that he has cleansed us from sin and justifies us by dwelling in us (*Action of the Honorable Wise Council in Nürnberg with Their Preachers*).

Council of Trent, Session VI, Chapter VII: The single essential cause [of justification] is the righteousness of God, not that by which he is himself righteous, but that by which he makes us righteous, or that by which we, being endowed by him, are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed to be, but are truly called and are righteous, receiving the righteousness in us, everyone his own, according to the measure which the Holy Spirit imparts to each one as he wills and according to each one's disposition and cooperation. Canon XI: If anyone says that a man is justified either solely by the crediting of Christ's righteousness or solely by the forgiveness of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and charity which is poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and stays with them, or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the favor of God, let him be damned (anathema).

D4. The Church

D4, I. Scripture states that Christians form a body.

D4, I, 1. They are united by their faith in Christ which is worked in them through the means of grace.

a) The means of grace convert each person individually.

Luke 3:7-14 John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “ You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ⁹ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ “ What should we do then?” the crowd asked. ¹¹ John answered, “ The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.” ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized. “ Teacher,” they asked, “ what should we do?” ¹³ “ Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them. ¹⁴ Then some soldiers asked him, “ And what should we do?” He replied, “ Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

Acts 2:47 And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Note: There never is a mass conversion, though many conversions may take place simultaneously as the following passages illustrate.

Jonah 3:5 The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

b) The means of grace join believers into a communion of believers.

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

1 Corinthians 11:26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:20-22 When you come together, it is not the Lord’s Supper you eat, ²¹ for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. ²² Don’t you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!

D4, I, 2. Scripture calls the body of believers the church.

a) Etymologically ἐκκλησία, from ἐκ-καλεῖν, means to “ call out.” In secular usage it refers to a meeting of citizens called together by a herald.

Acts 19:32,39,41 The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. ³⁹ If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. ⁴¹ After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

1 Corinthians 11:18 In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it.

1 Corinthians 14:19 But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.

b) This term is sometimes applied to the assembly of Israel.

1) The Septuagint gives us some examples of this.

Psalm 22:22 I will declare your name to my brothers; in the *congregation* I will praise you.

2) The New Testament gives us some examples of this.

Acts 7:38 He was in the *assembly* in the desert, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living words to pass on to us.

Hebrews 2:12 He says, “ I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the *congregation* I will sing your praises.”

3) In Jewish usage it was gradually replaced by the term συναγωγή as a name for the congregation.

Acts 13:43 When the *congregation* was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

Matthew 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their *synagogues*, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Etc.

c) The term ἐκκλησία was retained by the Christian church both for the church as a whole and also for local churches.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Matthew 18:17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:

1 Thessalonians 1:1 To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

D4, I, 3. Scripture uses the following figurative names for the church.

- **Body of Christ**

Ephesians 1:22,23 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 2:16 And in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

Ephesians 4:12,16 [Pastors and teachers] prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

Colossians 1:18,24 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ²⁴ Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.

Colossians 2:19 He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Romans 12:4,5 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

1 Corinthians 12:12,13,27 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Apology, VII, p 226, 5,6,12: Namely, where God's Word is pure, and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the same, there certainly is the church, and there are Christians. And this church alone is called the body of Christ, which Christ renews. Christ is its Head and sanctifies and governs by his Spirit, as Paul testifies, Eph. 1:22 sq., when he says: And gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, ⁶ the fulness of him that fills all in all. Wherefore, those in whom Christ does not act through his Spirit are not the members of Christ. This, too, the adversaries acknowledge, namely, that the wicked are dead members

of the church. Therefore we wonder why they have found fault with our description our conclusion concerning the church. ¹²Although, therefore, hypocrites and wicked men are members of this true church according to outward rites, yet when the church is defined, it is necessary to define that which is the living body of Christ, and which is in name and in fact the church which is called the body of Christ, and has fellowship not alone in outward signs, but has gifts in the heart, namely, the Holy Spirit and faith.

- **God's Household**

1 Timothy 3:15 If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ), which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

- **Spiritual House**

1 Peter 2:5 You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house (οἶκος πνευματικὸς) to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- **Sanctuary - House**

Ezekiel 9:6 Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary (יְהוָה בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ). So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple (הַבַּיִת).

- **God's Field – God's Building**

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field (θεοῦ γεώργιον), God's building (θεοῦ οἰκοδομή).

- **God's Temple**

1 Corinthians 3:16,17 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple (ναὸς θεοῦ) and that God's Spirit lives in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's Temple (τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ), God will destroy him; for God's temple (ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) is sacred, and you are that temple.

- **City of God**

Psalms 46:4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God (עִיר־אֱלֹהִים), the holy place where the Most High dwells.

- **City with foundations**

Hebrews 11:10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations (τὴν τοῦς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν), whose architect and builder is God.

- **Mount Zion**

Psalms 48:1,2 Great is the LORD, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain. ² It is beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth. Like the utmost heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the Great King.

- **Jerusalem that is above**

Galatians 4:26 But the Jerusalem that is above (ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ) is free, and she is our mother.

- **Sheep Pen - Flock**

John 10:16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen (τῆς ἀλλήστραυτης). I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock (μία ποιμνὴ) and one shepherd.

- **The Bride of Christ**

John 3:29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

Revelation 21:9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

2 Corinthians 11:2,3 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. ³ But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Psalms 45

- **Mother**

Galatians 4:26 But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.

Large Catechism, p 688, 42: For, in the first place, he has a peculiar congregation in the world, which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God, which he reveals and preaches, and through which he illumines and enkindles hearts, that they understand, accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it.

D4, I, 4. The term βασιλεία (kingdom of God, of Christ, of heaven) is also used to refer to God's church and its activity.

a) βασιλεία may refer to a realm or kingdom.

John 18:36 Jesus said, " My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

Matthew 4:8 The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

Luke 11:18 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub.

b) Usually βασιλεία refers to a reign or activity (kingship).

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Large Catechism, p 710, 51,53: But what is the kingdom of God? Answer: Nothing else than what we learned in the Creed, that God sent his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the power of the devil, and to bring us to himself, and to govern us as a King of righteousness, life, and salvation against sin, death, and an evil conscience, for which end he has also bestowed his Holy Spirit, who is to bring these things home to us by his holy Word, and to illumine and strengthen us in the faith by His power. . . .^{53]} For *the coming of God's Kingdom to us* occurs in two ways; first, here in time through the Word and faith; and secondly, in eternity forever through revelation. Now we pray for both these things, that it may come to those who are not yet in it, and, by daily increase, to us who have received the same, and hereafter in eternal life.

c) βασιλεία is described as a place one may enter.

Matthew 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3 And he said: " I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 19:23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, " I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Luke 13:28,29 There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹ People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.

Luke 14:15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, " Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

John 3:5 Jesus answered, " I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

Acts 14:22 We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.

2 Timothy 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

d) βασιλεία is described as a possession one may have.

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, " Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Mark 10:14,15 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, " Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

1 Corinthians 6:9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders

- e) **In the history of the church as well as in the Lutheran confessions, the term “ kingdom” is often used as a synonym for the church.**

Apology, VII, VIII, p 230, 16: Therefore, only those are the people, according to the gospel, who receive this promise of the Spirit. Besides, the church is the kingdom of Christ, distinguished from the kingdom of the devil. . . . Therefore, the church, which is truly the kingdom of Christ, is properly the congregation of saints. For the wicked are ruled by the devil, and are captives of the devil; they are not ruled by the Spirit of Christ.

D4, I, 5. The church has definite boundaries.

- a) **It consists of all true believers.**

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “ The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “ Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”

John 10:14-16,27-29 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.

- b) **Yet this does not mean that the boundaries of the church can be clearly seen.**

Luke 17:20,21 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “ The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, ²¹ nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”

- 1) **Only God knows with certainty the members of the church.**

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “ The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “ Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”

- 2) **Its presence is recognized by the marks of the church, that is, the means of grace.**

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

D4, II. The church is the “ communion of saints.”

D4, II, 1. Jesus twice used the term church to denote the communion or fellowship of saints.

- a) **The first time he refers to the church as a whole: Mt 16:15–20.**

Matthew 16:15-20 “ But what about you?” he asked. “ Who do you say I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “ You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ Jesus replied, “ Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

Note: The “ rock” (πέτρα) in this section is not Peter (πέτρος) but the confession that Peter has made, that Jesus is “ the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

- b) **The second time he speaks of the functioning of the church on a local level: Matthew 18:15-20.**

Matthew 18:15-20 “ If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ “ I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ “ Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

Compare John 20:22,23 And with that he breathed on them and said, “ Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Note: In this section Jesus is pointing out that in their love for souls, the members of the communion of saints (church) will go to all possible means to win back a straying brother.

D4, II, 2. As the term ἐκκλησία indicates, the church is an assembly.

a) It is an assembly of people who share a common faith.

Ephesians 4:3-6 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1) All members acknowledge that they are sinful and cannot save themselves but that they are saved through the redemptive work of Christ.

Romans 3:23,24 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

2) In every case this faith is produced by the means of grace.

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

3) All Christians have a common interest in the Lord's work.

Acts 2:42-47 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

b) Our confessions testify to these truths about the church.

Augsburg Confession, VII, p 46, 1 : Also they teach that one holy church is to continue forever. The church is the congregation of saints, in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered.

Augsburg Confession VIII, p 46, 1: Although the church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless, since in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful (Latin: *licet*, allowed, valid; German: *gleichwohl kräftig*, still effective) to use sacraments administered by evil men, according to the saying of Christ: "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat."

Apology, VII, VIII, p 228, 8, 28: The wicked indeed are not a holy church. And that which follows, namely, *the communion of saints*, seems to be added in order to explain what the church signifies, namely, the congregation of saints, who have with each other the fellowship of the same gospel or doctrine and of the same Holy Spirit, who renews, sanctifies, and governs their hearts. ^{28j} Wherefore we hold, according to the Scriptures, that the church, properly so called, is the congregation of saints, who truly believe the gospel of Christ, and have the Holy Spirit. And yet we confess that in this life many hypocrites and wicked men, mingled with these, have the fellowship of outward signs, who are members of the church according to this fellowship of outward signs, and accordingly bear offices in the church [preach, administer the Sacraments, and bear the title and name of Christians]. Neither does the fact that the sacraments are administered by the unworthy detract from their efficacy, because, on account of the call of the church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10:16: He that hears you hears me [Thus even Judas was sent to preach.] When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ. Those words of Christ teach us not to be offended by the unworthiness of the ministers.

Large Catechism, 688, 47: The Creed denominates the holy Christian church, *communio sanctorum*, a communion of saints; for both expressions, taken together, are identical.

D4, II, 3. A person becomes a member of this church through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

a) Saving faith is more than a mere knowledge about the history of Jesus Christ. The church is not a historical society.

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

b) Saving faith is more than acknowledging that Christ is a wise teacher and a positive example for a moral life. The church is not a self-help organization for moral improvement.

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

John 3:2 He came to Jesus at night and said, " Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Colossians 2:20,21 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ “ Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!” [?]

- c) **Saving faith is more than expecting temporal blessings from Jesus. The church is not a mutual insurance company. Example: theology of glory.**

John 6:15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

- d) **Saving faith is a trust in the atoning work of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins and eternal life.**

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

D4, II, 4. Only those who have this faith are members of the church, the communion of saints.

Acts 16:31 They replied, “ Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Galatians 3:26-29 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

- a) **The comforting names given to the church apply to Christians.**

1 Timothy 3:15 If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.

Galatians 3:26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

- b) **These comforting names do not apply to unbelievers who because of their lack of faith in Christ are excluded from membership in Christ’s church.**

Note: Pluralism, inclusivism, and universalism would include unbelievers in God’s “ church.”

- c) **Membership in a visible church or organization does not make one a member in the communion of saints.**

- 1) **A person may be a prominent member of the organization and yet not a member of the church.**

Matthew 7:21-23 Not everyone who says to me, “ Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, “ Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?” ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, “ I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!”

Matthew 25:1-12 At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish and five were wise. ³ The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. ⁴ The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. ⁵ The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. ⁶ At midnight the cry rang out: “ Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!” ⁷ Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ The foolish ones said to the wise, “ Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.” ⁹ “ No,” they replied, “ there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.” ¹⁰ But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. ¹¹ Later the others also came. “ Sir! Sir!” they said. “ Open the door for us!” But he replied, “ I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.”

- 2) **A person may be excluded from a visible church or organization, and yet be in good standing in the church.**

John 9:34 To this they replied, “ You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out.

John 16:2,3 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. ³ They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

3) Membership in the church does not presuppose a perfect knowledge or understanding.

-a) The understanding of even the more mature members will remain imperfect.

1 Corinthians 13:9-12 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹² Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

-b) Because of a weakness of faith, the understanding of some members may even be contain ignorance, doubt, and confusion about some teachings of Scripture.

Acts 1:6 So when they met together, they asked him, " Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Romans 14:1-3 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. ² One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him.

1 Corinthians 8:7 But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled.

Hebrews 5:11,12 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

-c) When one holds to an error against conscience and against clear testimony, this destroys faith and such a person forfeits membership in the church.

Titus 3:10,11 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. ¹¹ You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Galatians 1:8,9 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

-d) A Christian will never attain perfection (entire sanctification) in this life.

Psalms 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

-e) Yet a Christian still strive to grow in his Christian faith as well as his understanding of God's Word, recognizing that a lack of sanctification can destroy faith.

Romans 3:8 Why not say—as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—" Let us do evil that good may result" ? Their condemnation is deserved.

Romans 6:1,2 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

D4, II, 5. These truths are denied by Roman Catholic theology which teaches that the one true church is a visible body under a visible head.

Vatican I, Session IV, Ch. 3: We teach that the Roman Church has obtained preeminence above all others so that, when the unity with the Roman pope both in fellowship and in the profession of the same faith is preserved, the church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme shepherd.

Bellarmino: The church is a gathering of people which is just as visible and tangible as the assembly of the people of Rome, or the Kingdom of France, or the Republic of Venice. However, all the rest are included even if they are reprobate, criminals, and ungodly (*Disputations*, Vol. 11, Book 11, Concerning the Church Militant, Chapter ii, 5,6, p 64).

Quenstedt: To the extent that anyone belongs to the outward congregation of some particular church, to that extent he also confesses the public confessions of that church and is joined with the rest; but to the extent that he belongs

to the universal (invisible) church, to that extent he is through spiritual bonds, namely, faith and love, in fellowship both with the head, which is Christ, and with the rest of the pious. If there is no fellowship except between those associates who can recognize one another by external and visible signs, then all fellowship between Christ and the universal church and its members will be denied, since Christ is not seen with physical eyes in this life (*TDP*, Part IV, ch, XV, II, II, p 496).

Vatican II: Christ, the one Mediator, established and ceaselessly sustains here on earth His holy church, the community of faith, hope, and charity, as a visible structure.... But the society furnished with hierarchical agencies and the Mystical Body of Christ are not to be considered as two realities.... Rather, they form one interlocked reality which is comprised of a divine and human element (*Doc.*, p 22).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 816: The sole Church of Christ is that which our Savior, after his resurrection, entrusted to Peter's pastoral care, commissioning him and the other apostle to extend and rule it. . . . This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 838: The Church knows that she is joined in many ways to the baptized who are honored by the name of Christian, but do not profess the Catholic faith in its entirety or have not preserved unity or communion under the successor of Peter. Those who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church.

D4, III. The presence of the church becomes evident by the confession of its members.

D4, III, 1. The church is invisible.

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

1) We believe in the church because of Christ's promise.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

2) Christ, the head of the church, is invisible to us now.

Acts 1:9,11 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

3) Faith, which makes someone a member of the church, is invisible, since it is an attitude of the heart.

Romans 2:29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

Romans 10:9,10 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

4) God alone, who reads the heart, knows the members of his church.

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

Matthew 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Matthew 25:12 But he replied, "I tell you the truth, I don't know you."

5) Some people, including some Christians, may be deceived about the presence of the church.

Luke 17:20,21 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, ²¹ nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

1 Kings 19:14,18 Elijah replied, “ I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”

¹⁸ “ Yet I [Lord] reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him.”

b) Even though we cannot see the church we can see evidence of its presence.

1) Jesus speaks of the church as a discernible body, which may admonish sinners and administer the keys, and to which people may appeal.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Matthew 18:17-20 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ “ I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

2) In his letters, Paul addresses groups of people as churches.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours.

2 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia.

Galatians 1:2 To the churches in Galatia.

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

Romans 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

Colossians 1:2 To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

3) At times the growth of the church is registered in numbers.

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 4:4 But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

4) We can note two things in these examples.

-a) All of these passages speak of groups of believers as churches. Though not the church universal, they are evidence of its existence.

-b) These bodies were discernible as churches to human beings.

D4, III, 2. The church becomes discernible by its use of the means of grace, the marks of the church (*notae ecclesiae*).

a) By his very nature, every believer confesses Christ as Savior.

1) Scripture teaches this truth.

Matthew 12:34 For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

Acts 4:20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

Romans 10:9,10 That if you confess with your mouth, “ Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Luther: On account of its confession the congregation of the church is visible (Weimar, 39/2, p 161).

2) Scripture also provides exceptions to this rule.

John 19:38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate’s permission, he came and took the body away.

b) The church is created and maintained through the means of grace.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

John 8:31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples."

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

2 Corinthians 4:5,6 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Isaiah 55:10,11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Apology, Article VII, p 226, 5: The Christian church consists not alone in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists especially in inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart, as of the Holy Spirit, of faith, of the fear and love of God; which fellowship nevertheless has outward marks so that it can be recognized, namely, the pure doctrine of the gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the gospel of Christ. Namely, where God's Word is pure, and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the same, there certainly is the church, and there are Christians.

c) Whoever adheres to the means of grace must be considered a member of the church.

1) According to the dictates of Christian love we must accept every confession as sincere (though some may not be).

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

1 Timothy 6:5 [There will be] constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

2) A person may be induced to "confess" by causes other than faith.

Psalms 7:9 O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure.

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

3) Exposing such hypocrisy is not our responsibility but that of God.

Cf. Ananias and Sapphira

Matthew 18:17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

1 Corinthians 5:13 God will judge those outside. Expel the wicked man from among you.

4) Should the insincere confession of a hypocrite be revealed, that person ceases to be a hypocrite and must be put out of the fellowship of confessors as a public unbeliever.

Philippians 1:6,7 [I am] confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me.

D4, III, 3. Note the following terms that are used by Lutheran dogmaticians.

a) **Recognizing that Scripture uses the term “church” in various ways, they make the following distinctions.**

- 1) **They speak about the church in a strict sense, that is, the assembly of the saints (*ecclesia stricte dicta—congregatio sanctorum*).**
- 2) **They speak about the church in a loose sense, that is, the visible assembly of the called (*ecclesia late dicta—coetus visibilis vocatorum*).**

Apology, VII, VIII, p 234, 28: Wherefore we hold, according to the Scriptures, that the church, properly so called, is the congregation of saints, who truly believe the gospel of Christ, and have the Holy Spirit. And yet we confess that in this life many hypocrites and wicked men, mingled with these, have the fellowship of outward signs, who are members of the church according to this fellowship of outward signs, and accordingly bear offices in the church. Neither does the fact that the sacraments are administered by the unworthy detract from their efficacy, because, on account of the call of the church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10:16: He that hears you hears me. [Thus even Judas was sent to preach.] When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ. Those words of Christ teach us not to be offended by the unworthiness of the ministers.

b) **These are not to be considered as two different churches but one church viewed from two perspectives.**

Hebrews 12:22-24 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Ephesians 1:22,23 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Quenstedt: We do not hold that there are two churches, one true, real, and internal, the other only nominal and external. But we say that one and the same church is looked at from two points of view, namely, from the inside and from the outside, or in view of the call and external fellowship, which consists in the profession of faith and the use of the sacraments, and in view of inward regeneration and internal (spiritual) fellowship, which consists of the bond of the Spirit. We concede that in the former way also hypocrites and unbelievers belong to the church, but in the latter way of looking at the matter (hendiadys) we hold that only those who truly believe and are sanctified belong to it (*Systema*, VI, p 488).

D4, III, 4. Roman Catholics claim that the one true church is united under the Roman pontiff.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 816: The sole Church of Christ is that which our Savior, after his Resurrection, entrusted to Peter’s pastoral care, commissioning him and the other apostles to extend and rule it. This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him.

D4, IV. Scripture teaches that there is one holy, Christian, and apostolic church.

D4, IV, 1. The church is one.

Galatians 3:10,28 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

a) **This unity is a matter of faith.**

Ephesians 4:3-6 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called—⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism;⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

b) **It is the means of grace that bring about this unity.**

Augsburg Confession, VII, p 47, 2-4: And to the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the gospel and³¹ the administration of the sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike.⁴¹ As Paul says: One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Eph. 4, 5. 6.

Apology, VII, p 236, 30, 31: The adversaries condemn also the part of the Seventh Article in which we said that “to the unity of the church it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrine of the gospel and the administration of the Sacraments; nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by men should be alike everywhere.” Here they distinguish between *universal* and *particular* rites, and approve our article if it be understood concerning particular rites; they do not receive it concerning universal rites. (That is a fine, clumsy distinction!)³¹ We do not sufficiently understand what the adversaries mean. We are speaking of true, *i.e.*, of spiritual unity we say that those are one harmonious church who believe in one

Christ; who have one gospel, one Spirit, one faith, the same Sacraments; and we are speaking, therefore, of spiritual unity, without which faith in the heart, or righteousness of heart before God, cannot exist.

Formula of Concord, Ep., X, p 830, 7: We believe, teach, and confess also that no church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other, if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine and all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy sacraments, according to the well-known saying: *Dissonantia ieiunii non dissolvit consonantiam fidei*, Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith.

D4, IV, 2. Scripture teaches that the church is holy.

a) The church is holy because it has forgiveness of sins through Christ.

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Philippians 3:9 And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

b) This holiness is not something that can be seen.

Smalcald Articles, XII, p 498, 1-3: We do not concede to them that they are the church, and in truth they are not the church; nor will we listen to those things which, under the name of church, they enjoin or forbid. ²¹ For, thank God, today a child seven years old knows what the church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd. For the children pray thus: I believe in one holy [catholic or] Christian church. ³¹ This holiness does not consist in albs, tonsures, long gowns, and other of their ceremonies devised by them beyond Holy Scripture, but in the Word of God and true faith.

D4, IV, 3. Scripture teaches that the church is universal (catholic).

John 10:16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

Acts 10:34,43 Then Peter began to speak: “ I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism.” ⁴³ “ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Romans 3:21-24 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:6-9,28,29 Consider Abraham: “ He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” ⁷ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ⁸ The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “ All nations will be blessed through you.” ⁹ So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Revelation 7:9 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

a) There are two stages in the development of the church.

1) We speak of the church militant.

Ephesians 6:10-17 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

1 Peter 5:8,9 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

1 John 5:4 For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Romans 7:14,15 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

Galatians 5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

2) We speak of the church triumphant.

Revelation 2:10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 4:4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

2 Timothy 4:7,8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

3) These are not two, but one universal church.

Hebrews 12:22,23 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.

Colossians 1:18-20 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

b) There is no salvation outside the church.

1) Scripture teaches this truth.

John 14:6: I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

2) Our confessions teach this truth.

Large Catechism, Third Article, p 692, 56, p 694, 66: But outside of this Christian church, where the gospel is not, there is no forgiveness, as also there can be no holiness. Therefore all who seek and wish to merit holiness, not through the gospel and forgiveness of sin, but by their works, have expelled and severed themselves from this church. ⁶⁶ These articles of the Creed, therefore, divide and separate us Christians from all other people upon earth. For all outside of Christianity, whether heathen, Turks, Jews, or false Christians and hypocrites, although they believe in, and worship, only one true God, yet know not what his mind towards them is, and cannot expect any love or blessing from him; therefore they abide in eternal wrath and damnation. For they have not the Lord Christ, and, besides, are not illumined and favored by any gifts of the Holy Spirit.

3) The Roman Catholic Church applies this statement to their visible church.

See *Unam sanctam*, 1302, Boniface VIII (see Smacald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 34).

Vatican II: The Church ... is necessary for salvation.... Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved. (*Doc.*, p 32f). Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or his Church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do his will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience (*Doc.*, p 35).

D4, IV, 4. Scripture teaches that the church is apostolic.

a) It is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Ephesians 2:20 Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

John 17:20 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

b) This does not mean that Scripture teaches an apostolic succession of a hierarchy in the church as some believe.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 869: The Church is apostolic. She is built on a lasting foundation: "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:14). She is upheld infallibly in the truth: Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops.

Timothy Ware: The Orthodox Church is a hierarchical Church. An essential element in its structure is the Apostolic Succession of the bishops (*The Orthodox Church*, p 248).

The Anglican/Episcopal Church also believes in Apostolic Succession.

Luther: We need pay no attention to the bogey man of these masqueraders when they distinguish between the power of the keys and the use of the keys, a distinction based on no Scripture but on their own recklessness alone. As usual they beg the question. For when it is incumbent on them to show that they have a power different from that given the whole church, they rush on as if this were already demonstrated, and then go on to this fictitious distinction that the power of the keys belongs to the church, their use, however, to the bishops. This is trifling, and the argument has nothing to support it. Christ gives both the power and the use of the keys to each Christian, when he says, "Let him be to you as a Gentile" (Matt. 18:17) (*LW* 40, p 26).

D4, V. To the church have been committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

D4, V, 1. Christ arranged the church as his body so that the members could support and encourage each other in the faith.

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

Ephesians 4:16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Colossians 2:19 He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

1 Peter 4:10,11 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Romans 12:4,5 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Large Catechism, 3rd Article, p 690, 51-53: But this is the meaning and substance of this addition: I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms. ^{52]} I am also a part and member of the same, a sharer and joint owner of all the goods it possesses, brought to it and incorporated into it by the Holy Spirit by having heard and continuing to hear the Word of God, which is the beginning of entering it. For formerly, before we had attained to this, we were altogether of the devil, knowing nothing of God and of Christ. ^{53]} Thus, until the last day, the Holy Spirit abides with the holy congregation or Christendom, by means of which he fetches us to Christ and which he employs to teach and preach to us the Word, whereby he works and promotes sanctification, causing it daily to grow and become strong in the faith and its fruits which he produces.

b) The members of the body of Christ support and encourage each other in the faith through the ministry of the keys.

1) The ministry of the keys is the authority to pronounce or withhold the forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 18:18 I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

John 20:23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

Smalcald Articles, VII, p 492, 1-3: The keys are an office and power given by Christ to the church for binding and loosing sin, not only the gross and well-known sins, but also the subtle, hidden, which are known only to God, as it is written in Ps. 19:13: Who can understand his errors? And in Rom. 7:25 St. Paul himself complains that with the flesh he serves the law of sin. ² For it is not in our power, but belongs to God alone, to judge which, how great, and how many the sins are, as it is written in Ps. 143: 2: Enter not into judgment with your servant; for in your sight shall no man living be justified. ³ And Paul says, 1 Cor. 4: 4: For I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, p 510, 24, p 522, 68: In addition to this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the church, as many most clear and firm arguments testify. For Christ, speaking concerning the keys adds, Matt. 18;19, "If two or three of you shall agree on earth, etc." Therefore he grants the keys principally and immediately to the church, just as also for this reason the church has principally the right of calling. For just as the promise of the gospel belongs certainly and immediately to the entire church, so the keys belong immediately to the entire church, because the keys are nothing else than the office whereby this promise is communicated to every one who desires it, just as it is actually manifest that the church has the power to ordain ministers of the church. And Christ speaks in these words: Whatever you shall bind, etc., and indicates to whom he has given the keys, namely, to the church: Where two or three are gathered together in my name. Likewise Christ gives supreme and final jurisdiction to the church, when he says: Tell it unto the church. Therefore it is necessary that in these passages Peter is the representative of the entire assembly of the apostles, and for this reason they do not accord to Peter any prerogative or superiority, or lordship which he had, or was to have had, in preference to the other apostles. ⁶⁸ Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the church, and not merely to certain persons, Matt. 18:20, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, etc."

2) The power of the keys is identical with the means of grace.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 11:24,25 And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Augsburg Confession, XXVIII, p 84, 5-9: But this is their opinion, that the power of the Keys, or the power of the bishops, according to the gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer sacraments. ⁶¹ For with this commandment Christ sends forth his apostles, John 20:21 sqq., As my Father has sent me, even so send I you. Receive the Holy Spirit. Whoever's sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins you retain, they are retained. ⁷¹ Mark 16: 15, Go preach the gospel to every creature. ⁸¹ This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments, according to their calling either to many or to individuals. For thereby are granted, not bodily, but eternal things, as eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, eternal life. ⁹¹ These things cannot come but by the ministry of the Word and the sacraments, as Paul says, Rom. 1:16: The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Apology, VI, p 306, 79: But the keys have not the power of binding and loosing except upon earth, according to Matt. 16:19: Whatsoever, you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Although, as we have said above, the keys have not the power to impose penalties, or to institute rites of worship, but only the command to remit sins to those who are converted, and to convict and excommunicate those who are unwilling to be converted. For just as to loose signifies to remit sins, so to bind signifies not to remit sins. For Christ speaks of a spiritual kingdom. And the command of God is that the ministers of the gospel should absolve those who are converted, according to 2 Cor. 10:8, The authority which the Lord hath given us for edification.

Smalcald Articles, IX, p 496: The greater excommunication, as the Pope calls it, we regard only as a civil penalty, and it does not concern us ministers of the church. But the lesser, that is, the true Christian excommunication, consists in this, that manifest and obstinate sinners are not admitted to the Sacrament and other communion of the church until they amend their lives and avoid sin. And ministers ought not to mingle secular punishments with this ecclesiastical punishment, or excommunication.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Jurisdiction of the Bishops, p 522, 67: For wherever the church is, there is the authority to administer the gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers. And this authority is a gift which in reality is given to the church, which no human power can wrest from the church, as Paul also testifies to the Ephesians when

he says, Eph 4:8, He ascended, he gave gifts to men. And he enumerates among the gifts specially belonging to the church pastors and teachers, and adds that such are given for the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Hence, wherever there is a true church, the right to elect and ordain ministers necessarily exists. Just as in a case of necessity even a layman absolves, and becomes the minister and pastor of another; as Augustine narrates the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catechumen, who after baptism then absolved the baptizer.

c) The church administers the means of grace with the attitude of Christ.

1) Christ is the head of the church.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

2) Christ's attitude is one of loving service.

Matthew 20:28 The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

3) The church imitates the attitude of Christ.

Philippians 2:5-8 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

d) God does not prescribe the methods we are to use in administering the means of grace.

1) The members of the church have the freedom of adult children.

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

Galatians 4:4-6 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "*Abba, Father.*"

2) Christ trusts us that we will make the most of every opportunity.

2 Corinthians 4:2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

3) When Christ committed the keys to the church, he did not give a rigid set of instructions about the manner of their use.

Matthew 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 18:18 I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

John 20:23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

Romans 13:8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.

4) He equipped the church with his Spirit and spiritual gifts.

John 20:22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Romans 12:4-8 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Ephesians 4:11-13 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

5) The early church applied the means in a variety of ways.

Matthew 18:15-17 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5,11-13 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife.² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this?³ Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present.⁴ When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present,⁵ hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord. . . .¹¹ But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?¹³ God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

Romans 14:1 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

Romans 15:1 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Acts 13:1-3 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Colossians 3:16,17 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Acts 15:6,22,30,31 The apostles and elders met to consider this question.²² Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers.³⁰ The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter.³¹ The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message.

Romans 16:17,18 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.¹⁸ For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.

6) Jesus emphasizes that the church will go to great lengths to win back a straying brother.

Matthew 18:15-17 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

1 Timothy 5:20 Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent—not to put it too severely. ⁶ The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him. ⁷ Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. ⁸ I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. ⁹ The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. ¹⁰ If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, ¹¹ in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

D4, V, 2. The church will respect but not subject itself to human authority as it administers the keys.

a) The church will recognize its unique role in this area.

1) The greatest power that God gave to his church is the authority to forgive sins.

Mark 2:5-8 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “ Son, your sins are forgiven.” ⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ “ Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ⁸ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “ Why are you thinking these things?

Luke 5:21 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, “ Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

2) In exercising this power the church should not be made subject to human authority.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

3) In exercising this power the church should not abuse its authority and tyrannize believers or unbelievers.

Romans 14:4,10 Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.

Matthew 20:25-28 Jesus called them together and said, “ You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Luke 22:24-30 Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵ Jesus said to them, “ The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸ You are those who have stood by me in my trials.

²⁹ And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰ so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

1 Peter 5:2,3 Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Jurisdiction of the Bishops, p 524, 74-76: It is certain that the common jurisdiction of excommunicating those guilty of manifest crimes belongs to all pastors. This they have tyrannically transferred to themselves alone, and have applied it to the acquisition of gain. For it is certain that the officials, as they are called employed a license not to be tolerated and either on account of avarice or because of other wanton desires tormented men and excommunicated them without any due process of law. But what tyranny is it for the officials in the states to have arbitrary power to condemn and excommunicate men without due process of law! ^{75]} And in what kind of affairs did they abuse this power? Indeed, not in punishing true offenses, but in regard to the violation of fasts or festivals, or like trifles! Only, they sometimes punished adulteries; and in this matter they often abused and defamed innocent and honorable men. Besides, since this is a most grievous offense, nobody certainly is to be condemned without due process of law. ^{76]} Since, therefore, bishops have tyrannically transferred this jurisdiction to themselves alone, and have basely abused it, there is no need, because of this jurisdiction, to obey bishops. But since there are just reasons why we do not obey, it is right also

to restore this jurisdiction to godly pastors to whom, by Christ's command, it belongs, and to see to it that it is legitimately exercised for the reformation of morals and the glory of God.

b) The roles of the church and state in administering discipline and punishment should not be confused.

Note: See middler notes p 292ff.

1) The role of the church is to win and nurture souls with the gospel.

-a) This does not mean that the church will not be concerned about the physical welfare of believers and unbelievers alike.

Acts 6:1-4 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

-b) The church will use the sword of the Spirit (law and gospel) as the tool for winning and nurturing souls.

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Ephesians 6:13-17 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

-c) The church should not expect civil government or use the tools of civil government to assist her in this task.

Matthew 26:52 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."

2 Corinthians 10:4-6 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ⁶ And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

2) The role of the state is to maintain peace and stability in society through the sword (civil law and punishments).

Romans 13:1-7 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. ⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

3) The church and its members must passively resist the state should the state order it to disobey God's Word.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God."

Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

c) Both the Roman Catholic view and the traditional Calvinist view err in this article.

1) The traditional Calvinist view holds that the kingdom of God should be realized on earth through the means of the state.

Judges 21:25 In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.

Calvin: This shows the foolishness of those who want kings to be concerned only with pronouncing judgment between men, while concern for God is neglected, as if God established magistrates in His name, who should decide earthly controversies but that he passed over something of far greater importance, namely, that he should be purely worshiped according to the prescriptions of his Law (*Institutes*, IV, 20, 9).

2) The Roman Catholic view holds that the church is the head of the state.

Catholic Encyclopedia: The State, then, exists to help man to temporal happiness the Church, to eternal. Of these two purposes the latter is more ultimate.... It is clear, therefore, that the purpose of the Church is higher in the order of Divine Providence and of righteous human endeavor than that of the State.... In all subject-matter not purely spiritual nor purely temporal, but at the same time both spiritual and temporal in character, both jurisdictions may enter, and so entering give occasion to collision, for which there must be a principle of solution. In case of direct contradiction, making it impossible for both jurisdictions to be exercised, the jurisdiction of the Church prevails, and that of the State is excluded.In analogous fashion every higher court is always judge of its own jurisdiction as against a lower ("State and Church," Online Edition).

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, p 512, 31,33-35: The second article is still clearer, that Christ gave to the apostles only spiritual power, *i.e.*, the command to teach the gospel to announce the forgiveness of sins, to administer the sacraments, to excommunicate the godless without bodily force by the Word, and that he did not give the power of the sword, or the right to establish, occupy or confer kingdoms of the world to set up or depose kings.^{33]} Therefore the Constitution of Boniface VIII and the chapter *Omnes*, Dist. 22 and similar opinions which contend that the Pope is by divine right the ruler of the kingdoms of the world, are utterly false and godless.^{34]} From this persuasion horrible darkness has been brought into the church, and after that also great commotions have arisen in Europe. For the ministry of the gospel was neglected, the knowledge of faith and the spiritual kingdom became extinct, Christian righteousness was supposed to be that external government which the Pope had established.^{35]} Next, the Popes began to seize upon kingdoms for themselves; they transferred kingdoms, they vexed with unjust excommunications and wars the kings of almost all nations in Europe, but especially the German emperors, sometimes for the purpose of occupying cities of Italy, at other times for the purpose of reducing to subjection the bishops of Germany, and wresting from the emperors the conferring of episcopates. Yes, in the *Clementines* it is even written: When the empire is vacant, the Pope is the legitimate successor.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, p 502, 2: Secondly, he adds also that by divine right he has both swords, *i.e.*, the authority also of bestowing kingdoms, that is, enthroning and deposing kings, regulating secular dominions etc.

D4, VI. Brought together by the Holy Spirit, Christians will gather together for mutual edification and to do the work of the church more efficiently.

D4, VI, 1. Scripture refers to local gatherings of Christians.

a) It calls them churches.

Acts 8:1 A great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem.

Acts 14:23,27 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.²⁷ On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Romans 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours.

1 Corinthians 11:16 If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.

1 Corinthians 14:23 So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.

1 Timothy 3:5 If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?

- b) **This name applies because they are gatherings of Christians “ in the name of Jesus.”**
- 1) **When Christian gather to apply the keys , the work of the church is being done.**
Matthew 18:20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.
 - 2) **Christians may gather for reasons other than carrying out the work of the church. (Example: St. John’s softball team. Does one need to be a member of the church to be a member of the team?)**
- c) **The purpose of these gatherings is to carry out the work of Christ's kingdom.**
- 1) **Gathered around Christ and his Word, the members will build each other up in the faith.**
1 Thessalonians 4:1 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

Ephesians 4:13-15 [We will be built up] until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Ephesians 4:16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Galatians 6:1,2 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Matthew 18:15 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.

Compare verse 17: If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

- 2) **The members will also seek to share the gospel with others in their local area and throughout the world.**

Matthew 10:32 Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

Acts 13:1-3 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “ Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

D4, VI, 2. A “congregation” is a church body consisting of two or more Christians. (In general “a congregation” refers to a formally organized group.)

- a) **The public use of the keys is to be carried out by the congregation as a whole and not by individual Christians acting on their own.**

Matthew 18:19,20 Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father’s wife. ² And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ³ Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, p 510, 24: In addition to this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the church, as many most clear and firm arguments testify. For Christ, speaking concerning the keys adds, Matt. 18:19, If two or three of you shall agree on earth, etc. Therefore he grants the keys principally and immediately to the church, just as also for this reason the church has principally the right of calling. For just as the promise of the gospel belongs certainly and immediately to the entire church, so the keys belong immediately to the entire church, because the keys are nothing else than the office whereby this promise is communicated to every one who desires it, just as it is actually manifest that the church has the power to ordain ministers of the church. And Christ speaks in these words: Whatsoever you shall bind, etc., and indicates to whom he has given the keys,

namely, to the church: Where two or three are gathered together in my name. Likewise Christ gives supreme and final jurisdiction to the church, when he says: Tell it unto the church. Therefore it is necessary that in these passages Peter is the representative of the entire assembly of the apostles, and for this reason they do not accord to Peter any prerogative or superiority, or lordship which he had, or was to have had, in preference to the other apostles.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops, p 522, 68: Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the church, and not merely to certain persons, Matt. 18:20: Where two or three are gathered together in My name, etc.

Tertullian: Are not we laymen also priests? ... The authority of the church has established the difference between clergy and people, and through the assembly of the clergy themselves the higher honor of the clergy was approved. Therefore where the ecclesiastical order, i.e. a clergyman, is not present you alone are sacrificer, i.e. one who celebrates the Lord's Supper, baptizer, and priest. But wherever there are three, even if they are laymen, there is the church (*De Exhortatione Castitatis*, 7; *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. IV, p.54).

b) The place where Christians gather is not important.

1) Scripture uses the word “ church” to refer to Christians who gathered in houses.

Romans 16:5 Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

1 Corinthians 16:19 The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.

Colossians 4:15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

Philemon 2 To Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home.

2) Scripture uses the word “ church” to refer to gatherings of Christians in a city.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours.

2 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia:

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Etc.

3) Scripture uses the word “ church” to refer to gatherings of Christians or groups of congregations in a province or area.

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.

Acts 16:1-2 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. ² The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him (ἐμαρτυρεῖτο).

2 Corinthians 8:1,19 And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ¹⁹ What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help.

Galatians 1:2,22 To the churches in Galatia: ²² I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

Titus 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

Acts 9:31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.
'Ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας εἶχεν εἰρήνην οἰκοδομουμένη καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπιληθύνετο.

2 Corinthians 9:2 For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.

1 Thessalonians 4:10 And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.

1 Corinthians 5:13 God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked man from among you.” Compare 2 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia; 2 Corinthians 2:5ff If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent—not to put it too severely. . . .

1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.

D4, VI, 3. The local congregation, smaller in extent, is more comprehensive in the scope of its work than a synod.

a) The local congregation is a gathering of Christians in a particular area.

- 1) Its purpose is to join in prayer, hearing of the Word, using the sacraments, educating of the children, spreading the gospel, and displaying Christian love.**
- 2) The local congregation must not be confused with the legal corporation. The congregation consists only of the believers. No specific form of organization is prescribed in Scripture.**

This We Believe: We reject any attempt to identify the holy Christian church with an outward organization. We reject any claim that the church must function in the world through specific organizational forms (VII, 11).

b) A synod is a voluntary association of congregations established to work together in certain aspects of the work of the church.

- 1) Such groups are churches, gatherings in the name of Jesus.**
- 2) A synod is a group of churches that share a common faith.**

Matthew 18:19,20 Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Baier: Although particular churches could be subdivided into simple churches which are not composed of other churches, and composite churches which are composed of other churches.—Churches which were under the care of individual bishops, but in the same province were under the care of one metropolitan (bishop), formed one provincial church (*Compendium*, III, XIII, 19, 19g).

Walther: First Sermon at the Opening of the Synod.

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love, be with you all. Amen.

Honorable brethren in the Lord, esteemed and loved by all!

The most important feature of a synodical fellowship is pure doctrine and understanding. A Synod, after all, is to be a part of God’s church on earth. For that reason also its distinguishing mark is this that in it “the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are administered in accord with the Gospel.” Also a Synod is to be built on nothing but the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone. Also a Synod is to be a flock of those holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd. Also a Synod has been given the assignment which the Savior, when He ascended to heaven, left behind for His church on earth, “Teach them to observe all things which I have commanded you.” Also its ultimate purpose is the salvation of sinners, which is achieved by nothing else than the pure Gospel. Also its very first prayer should be, not “Thy kingdom come”, but “Hallowed be Thy name!” Yes, what am I saying?—even if a Synod has the pure confessions of the orthodox church as its law, but does not have in practice the pure doctrine and its correct understanding, then it, too, will be one of those whitewashed sepulchers that look beautiful on the outside but inwardly are full of the bones of dead men and all uncleanness (*Brosamen*, p 391).

3) The scope of the synod’s work is not as comprehensive as that of the local congregation.

-a) No baptism; services and communion only for the time of delegates’ meetings; etc.

- b) Their purpose: training of the servants of the church (educational institutions); mission work (home, heathen;—publications); visitations; care for invalid servants of the Word; general charity work (home for aged).**

Acts 8:14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.

Acts 11:22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

- c) **Groups of congregations and groups of synods may form other types of voluntary associations to carry on certain aspects of the work of the church.**
d) **In purely local, internal, affairs of the congregation the synod can exercise no more than advisory authority.**
e) **Each of these groupings will not interfere with the work or rights of the others, but they will work together in a spirit of cooperation and according to the accepted agreements.**

- 1) **The exercise of the keys and church discipline is not limited to the local congregation.**

August Pieper: From the very composition of a synod it is evident that the synod is church in the same sense as each local congregation. Its members ... do not divest themselves of their Christianity, do not lay aside their faith, do not sever their connection with Christ, do not lose their sanctity. As members of the synod they remain exactly what they were as members of the local congregation: Christians, believers (In Jahn, *Our Great Heritage*, III, p 362).

August Pieper: Our confessions not only recognize the representation of the entire church by synods and call their decisions the decisions of the church (Smal. Art., p. 521, 56); but our church in Europe has always placed congregational discipline in the hands of representatives of the entire church, of consistories, of ministerial, and of synods. That could result in tyranny, and it did; but in principle it was not contrary to God's word, as long as it was done with the consent of the congregations and the discipline was administered in accordance with the word of God (*OGH*, III, p 376).

Contra Francis Pieper: On the other hand, the union of congregations into larger church bodies, such as conferences, synods, etc., has not been ordained by God. The command "Tell it unto the church," according to the context, pertains to the local church, or congregation, and it must be restricted to the local church. "Tell it unto the synod," etc., is a human device (*CD*, III, p 420).

- 2) **For example, in the case of a high school teacher who must be disciplined, the governing body of the school will deal with his call to teach, the synod will deal with his eligibility for a call, and his congregation will deal with his membership in the church.**

Note. There is no actual authority in the church except that of the Word. All other "authority" is simply a matter of brotherly love and agreement.

D4, VII. The church may delegate the execution of certain functions to individuals, committees, or associations (*ecclesia repraesentativa*).

D4, VII, 1. Scripture provides some examples.

Acts 6:3-6 "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." ⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Acts 15:2,27 This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ²⁷ Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing.

2 Corinthians 8:18,19 And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. ¹⁹ What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help.

D4, VII, 2. God has not established a divine hierarchy to rule the church.

Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, p 504, 7-8: In the first place, therefore, let us show from the holy gospel that the Roman bishop is not by divine right above, that it cannot arrogate to himself any supremacy whatever over other bishops and pastors. ⁸¹ Luke 22:25. Christ expressly prohibits lordship among the apostles, i.e., that no apostle should have any supremacy over the rest. For this was the very question, namely, that when Christ spoke of his passion, they were disputing who should be at the head, and as it were the vicar of the absent Christ.

There Christ reproves this error of the apostles and teaches that there shall not be lordship or superiority among them, but that the apostles should be sent forth as equals to the common ministry of the gospel.

Quenstedt: The assembly of the teachers is called a “representative church” (*TDP*, Part IV, chap. XV, p 483).

Quenstedt: This assembly of teachers and bishops is also called “a council” (*TDP*, Part. IV, chap. XV, p 483).

Quenstedt: Beside the president, competent evaluators and judges are not only bishops, but any believers well-trained in the Holy Scriptures, both lay and clergy, who are sent to the church by the churches (*TDP*, Part. IV, chap. XV, p 485).

D4, VII, 3. The church can delegate only those powers that it possesses.

- a) **The authority of the church is restricted to the administration of the keys.**
- b) **Churches may come to a mutual agreement as to the best methods of administering the keys in a particular situation.**

Galatians 2:9 James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews.

- c) **Out of Christian love, congregations in a synod will respect such agreements, unless and until they are change by mutual agreement.**

1 Corinthians 14:40 But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

1 Corinthians 16:14 Do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 10:32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God.

1 Corinthians 11:16 If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.

- d) **The authority of any representative is limited by his commission.**

D4, VII, 4. There are various organizations that may carry out the work of the church.

- a) **They may be found on a synodical level (e.g., conventions and conferences). These may consist of delegates from constituent congregations. Between sessions they in turn may be represented by their executive officers, various boards, and special committees.**
- b) **They may be found on a congregational level.**
 - 1) **A great deal of the ongoing work of a congregation is delegated to the church council, school board, church committees, or other organizations in the congregation.**
 - 2) **Business meetings are actually only representative.**
- c) **All meetings of the church (congregational and synodical) should be conducted in an orderly manner and in the spirit of love.**

1 Corinthians 14:40 But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

1 Corinthians 16:14 Do everything in love.

- 1) **Such rules of order should serve the body and be carefully observed and not be applied in a legalistic manner.**

- 2) **In some cases a vote may be taken.**

-a) **In doctrinal matters a vote can aim only at confessing a truth not establishing one.**

-b) **In external matters and adiaphora everybody must be willing to abide by the outcome.**

-1) **The minority must not reject the decision, but cheerfully cooperate with the majority.**

-2) **The majority must not ruthlessly override or ignore the wishes of the minority.**

D4, VIII. Church organizations may err in their confessions.

D4, VIII, 1. Christ's holy church will remain until the end.

- a) **The Lord promises this in his Word.**

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Matthew 24:24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible.

Luke 1:33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

1 Timothy 3:15 If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth (στυλος και εδραιωμα της αληθειας).

Apology, p 232, 20-22: We are speaking not of an imaginary church, which is to be found nowhere; but we say and know certainly that this church, wherein saints live, is and abides truly upon earth; namely, that some of God's children are here and there in all the world, in various kingdoms, islands, lands, and cities, from the rising of the sun to its setting, who have truly learned to know Christ and his gospel. And we add the marks: the pure doctrine of the gospel [the ministry or the gospel] and the sacraments. And this church is properly the pillar of the truth, 1 Tim. 3:15. For it retains the pure gospel, and, as Paul says, 1 Cor. 3:11, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." —the foundation, i.e., the true knowledge of Christ and faith. Although among these in the body which is built upon the true foundation, i.e., upon Christ and faith, there are also many weak persons, who build upon the foundation stubble that will perish, i.e., certain unprofitable opinions, which, nevertheless, because they do not overthrow the foundation, are both forgiven them ²¹] and also corrected. And the writings of the holy Fathers testify that sometimes even they built stubble upon the foundation, but that this did not overthrow their faith. . . . But just as the church has the promise that it will always have the Holy Spirit, so it has also the threatenings that there will be wicked teachers and wolves. But that is the church in the proper sense which has the Holy Spirit . Although wolves and wicked teachers become rampant in the church, yet they are not properly the kingdom of Christ. Just as Lyra also testifies, when he says: The church does not consist of men with respect to power, or ecclesiastical or secular dignity, because many princes and archbishops and others of lower rank have been found to have apostatized from the faith. Therefore, the church consists of those persons in whom there is a true knowledge and confession of faith and truth. What else have we said in our Confession than what Lyra here says in terms so clear that he could not have spoken more clearly?

b) The Roman Catholic Church claims supreme authority not only for their church organization, but also for its head the pope.

Vatican II, Cap VI: We teach and define that it is a divinely revealed doctrine that the Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, i.e. when he functions in his capacity as the shepherd and teacher of all Christians and by his supreme apostolic authority defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals which must be held by the universal church through the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter possesses that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wanted His Church to be endowed for the defining of the doctrine concerning faith and morals; and therefore definitions of this kind, made by the Roman pontiff are unchangeable in themselves and not by the agreement of the church.

D4, VIII, 2. Visible Christian church bodies may be divided into two classes.

a) These two classes are as follows:

- 1) Orthodox churches hold to the true and pure doctrine of God's Word and administer the sacraments according to their divine institution.**
- 2) Heterodox churches tolerate false doctrine or deviate from divine institution in the sacraments.**

b) This distinction is made on the basis of Scripture.

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

1 Timothy 1:3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Jeremiah 23:31 "Yes," declares the LORD, "I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, 'The LORD declares.'"

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

Titus 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

Matthew 7:15 Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, ² and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," ³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. ⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

- c) **The entire visible church may at times become a heterodox church in its public confession.**
Quenstedt: That all particular churches can err is proved from the prophecies, or predictions, concerning the great deception (Mt 24:24; I Tim 4:1; 2 Th 2:3) (*TDP*, part. IV, chap. II, p 499).

Gerhard: The apostle is manifestly speaking of some great and almost universal apostasy, for many limited ones had already occurred (quoted by Quenstedt, *TDP*, part. IV, chap. II, p 499).

D4, VIII, 3. Christians are also found in heterodox churches.

- a) **They are present because the gospel is found there, in spite of any false doctrines that are taught.**

Note: While false doctrine does lead away from Christ and works against the gospel, a church or person does not need to have a correct understanding of all the doctrines of Scripture for the gospel or saving faith to be present. If that was the case, no one could be certain of salvation. This does not mean we take false doctrine lightly but that we recognize it is the gospel that saves. When the gospel is proclaimed, God promises it will produce results.

Acts 16:31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

- b) **The efficacy of the gospel does not depend on the beliefs, skills, or motives of the preacher.**

Philippians 1:15-18 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶ The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. ¹⁸ But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

- 1) **There may occur a near total corruption of the public ministry.**

1 Kings 22:23 So now the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The LORD has decreed disaster for you.

Isaiah 56:10 Israel's watchmen are blind, they all lack knowledge; they are all mute dogs, they cannot bark; they lie around and dream, they love to sleep.

Mark 14:64 "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death.

- 2) **Yet even in such times the church will survive.**

1 Kings 19:10,14,18 He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." ¹⁴ He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." ¹⁸ "Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him."

John 12:42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue.

Romans 11:3,4 "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me" ? ⁴ And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

- 3) **When a group of people is gathered around the gospel, there will still be Christians present, even when plagued by false teachings.**

Galatians 1:2,6-9 To the churches in Galatia: . . . I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no

gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

4) The believers in erring bodies do not realize their error.

Note: To knowingly reject Scripture is inconsistent with faith.

D4, VIII, 4. Scripture encourages us to work together with those who share a common confession in the teachings of Scripture.

3 John 8 We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth.

Note the distinction of types of fellowship:

- *Christian fellowship* refers first of all to the spiritual fellowship we have with God through faith in Christ. It may also refer to the spiritual ties that we have with all believers as members of the invisible church.
- *Church fellowship* refers to all activities in which Christians join together as members of visible churches. It is every expression of faith in which Christians join together because they are united by their acceptance and confession of all the teachings of Scripture (Brug, *Working Together for the Truth*, p 19,20).

Ephesians 4:3-6 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:11-16 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

1 John 3:17-19 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. ¹⁹ This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence

3 John 4-8 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. ⁵ Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. ⁶ They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. ⁷ It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. ⁸ We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth.

a) Scripture presents the doctrine of church fellowship as a blessing for his people and his church, not as a burden to be endured.

Psalms 133:1-3 How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! ² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. ³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

b) When people or groups share a common confession in the teachings of Scripture, they share in joint activities.

1) They join together in hearing and studying God's Word and worshiping.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Colossians 3:15,16 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Hebrews 10:23-25 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

2) They join together in administering and partaking of the sacraments.

Luke 22:19-20 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, " This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, " This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

1 Corinthians 10:16,17 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Ephesians 4:3-6 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

3) They join together in prayer.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 4:23,24 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them.

4) They join together in mission work.

Acts 13:1-3 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

5) They join together in Christian education.

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

6) They join together in training workers for the church.

Ephesians 4:11-16 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Titus 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

7) They join together in supporting the work of the church and in caring for each other's needs.

Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4 And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ² Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

Philippians 4:15-18 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶ for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. ¹⁷ Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. ¹⁸ I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

c) Scripture forbids us to join together (practice church fellowship) with those who do not share a common confession with us in the teachings of Scripture.

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

Titus 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

2 John 10,11 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. ¹¹ Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

1) Such a refusal to practice church fellowship does not necessarily pass judgment on the faith or eternal fate of those who hold to a heterodox confession.

Note the distinction between how we deal with a persistent errorist (Romans 16:17) and an erring brother (Matthew 18:15-18).

2) Since we cannot judge the presence or absence of saving faith, the practice of church fellowship is determined on the basis of a individual's or church's confession of faith and practice.

1 Samuel 16:7 Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.

Matthew 12:34 Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

Matthew 7:16 By their fruit you will recognize them.

Romans 10:10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

3) God wants us to show patience in confronting a person or church body with doctrinal error before one ceases from practicing church fellowship with them. The distinction between a weak brother and a persistent errorist must be maintained.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Note: How long we continue to practice church fellowship with a church or individual that is erring, but struggling for the truth, is a matter of Christian wisdom and brotherly love.

d) Scripture teaches the "unit concept" of church fellowship.

1) All doctrines of Scripture are to be treated as a unit.

Note: It important to distinguish between doctrines of Scripture and adiaphora. The "unit concept" does not apply to agreeing on adiaphora.

Matthew 28:20 [Teach] them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Acts 20:27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.

Note that when the word "teaching" is used in the New Testament to refer to the doctrines of Scripture, it is used only in the singular to denote the teachings of Scripture as a unit:

Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message (κατὰ τὴν διδασχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου) as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

2 John 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching (ἐν τῇ διδασχῇ) of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching (διδασχῆς) to which you were entrusted.

1 Timothy 6:3,4 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions

Revelation 22:18,19 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words

away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Augsburg Confession: VII, p 46, 2-4: And to the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and ³ the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. ⁴ As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Eph. 4:5. 6.

Note how Scripture gives examples of particular doctrines that are divisive of fellowship.

1 Timothy 4:3 They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

2 Timothy 2:17,18 Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.

Revelation 2:14,15 Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

Revelation 2:20 Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.

Hoenecke: The only thing agreeing with the Word of God is totally to abstain from all prayer fellowship and worship fellowship with those of other beliefs. For first, we are to confess Christ, and this confession includes all that Scripture teaches about him, his person, his office, and his work; and second, we are to not be ashamed of him and his Word (Lk 9:26; Mk 8:38). Prayer and worship fellowship with the heterodox contradicts this duty. Further, we are to avoid every kind of evil (1 Th 5:22), thus also the evil that we regard fellowship between light and darkness, truth and lie, to be correct (against 2 Co 6:14). However, he who fosters worship fellowship with heretics at least gives the appearance of evil (*ELD*, III, p 415,416).

Grudem: Consistent with this New Testament emphasis on the unity of believers is the fact that the direct commands to *separate* from other people are always commands to separate *from unbelievers* (2 Cor. 6:14) (*ST*, p 877).

Michael L. Dusing: Because the Lord's Supper is a true fellowship of believers, most churches in the Pentecostal and Evangelical traditions practice open Communion. This means that all born-again believers, regardless of their less significant differences, are invited to join with the saints in fellowship with the Lord at his table (*Systematic Theology*, Stanley M. Horton, Editor, p 563)

Grudem: A need for separation may arise when the doctrinal position of a church deviates from biblical standards in a serious way. This deviation may be in official statements or in actual belief and practice, insofar as that can be determined. But when does doctrinal deviation become so serious that it requires withdrawing from a church or forming a separate church? As we noted above, there are no commands in the New Testament to separate from any true church, so long as it is still a part of the body of Christ. Paul's response even to people in erring churches (even in churches like the one at Corinth, which tolerated serious doctrinal and moral error, and for a time tolerated some who rejected Paul's apostolic ministry) is not to tell faithful Christians to separate from those churches, but to admonish the churches, work for their repentance, and pray for them. Of course there are commands to discipline those who cause trouble within the church, sometimes excluding them from church fellowship (1 Cor. 5:11-13; 2 Thess. 3:14,15, Titus 3:10.11), but there are no instructions to leave the church and cause divisions if this cannot be done immediately (Rev. 2:14-16; 20-25; cf. Luke 9:50; 11:23) (*ST*, p 880).

2) All expressions of church fellowship are to be treated as a unit.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

2 John 10-11 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. ¹¹ Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

Philippians 1:4,5 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

Compare Philippians 4:15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only.

Friedrich Balduin (d. 1627): We should not confirm errorists in their error, which we do if we take part in their service. For in this way we give them the hope that finally we will come to agreement with them also in the remaining points. They will look upon our participation in their services as a sign that we thereby confess that we have separated from them without cause, since we in action approve of their worship (*Tract on cases of conscience*, II, 6, 7).

Quenstedt: An orthodox man should either abstain entirely from the sacred rites of unbelievers and heretics (especially the papists) or if he at one time or another wishes to attend or is required by official duties to attend, let him be careful not to give the appearance of secretly agreeing with them...but rather let him in some way, either by words or signs, make clear his disagreement (*TDP*, Pt 4, Ch 11, Sec 2, Qu 8).

This We Believe: We believe that those whose confession of faith reveals that they are united in the doctrines of Scripture will express their fellowship in Christ as occasion permits (Ephesians 4:3). They may express their fellowship by joint worship, by joint proclamation of the gospel, by joining in Holy Communion, by joint prayer, and by joint church work. God directs believers not to practice religious fellowship with those whose confession and actions reveal that they teach, tolerate, support, or defend error (2 John 10,11). When error appears in the church, Christians will try to preserve their fellowship by patiently admonishing the offenders, in the hope that they will turn from their error (2 Timothy 2:25,26; Titus 3:10). But the Lord commands believers not to practice church fellowship with people who persist in teaching or adhering to beliefs that are false (Romans 16:17,18) (VII, 6).

3) Scripture does not teach “levels of church fellowship.”

Walther's Thesis XXI in *The Evangelical Lutheran Church* concludes: The Ev. Lutheran Church rejects all fraternal and churchly fellowship with those who reject its confessions in whole or in part.

The Brief Statement: We repudiate unionism, that is, church fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine (The Church, 28).

The LCMS constitution renounced “unionism and syncretism of every description such as ... participating in heterodox tract and missionary activities” (Article VI, 2).

Franz Pieper: It is important to point out again and again that in all Scripture there is not a single text permitting a teacher to deviate from the Word of God or granting a child of God license to fraternize with a teacher who deviates from the Word of God (*CD*, III, p 422).

LCMS CTCR (1981): Through the use of the word “fellowship” almost exclusively to refer to a formal altar and pulpit fellowship relationship established between two church bodies on the basis of agreement in the confession of the faith, some have been given the impression that no fellowship relationship other than the spiritual unity in the body of Christ can or should exist among members of Christian churches not in altar and pulpit fellowship. The fact that the LC-MS is closer doctrinally to a church body which at least formally accepts Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions than to those denominations which do not is often obscured by the “all or nothing” approach that frequently accompanies ecclesiastical declarations of altar and pulpit fellowship” (“The Nature and Implications of the Concept of Fellowship,” p 42).

LCMS, “The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship,” (1998): For some time after Christ's resurrection Christians continued to pray with the Jews in their synagogues and the temple (Acts 2:46, 3:1, 21:26ff.) even though their leaders did not believe that Jesus was the Christ and had been raised from the dead (Matt. 28:11-15, Acts 4:1ff.). However, Holy Communion was not celebrated in the temple but only in the homes of Christians that served as their churches (Acts 4:26). Unbelieving Jews were excluded from the Sacrament. ... Agreement in the apostles' doctrine was necessary for the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42). *Church fellowship is altar and pulpit fellowship in the New Testament.* [italics in original]

Commission on Theology and Church Relations – Lutheran Church Missouri Synod: The LCMS is prevented from practicing church fellowship with other church bodies whose confessions or other official positions seriously distort the Christian proclamation. They do not share with the Synod the same biblical understanding of the Gospel and thus we do not share a common confession with them. Therefore the LCMS and its congregations do not join with them in proclaiming the Gospel or in administering the Sacraments. Under these circumstances the LCMS properly declines to be in “altar and pulpit” fellowship with these churches ([The Lutheran Understanding of Church Fellowship: Report on Synodical Discussions](#), 2001, p 2,3)

4) Nor does Scripture allow the use of ambiguous language to gloss over differences.

5) Scripture tells us not to separate from fellowship without cause.

This Blessed Fellowship (WELS tract): If it is wrong to subtract from God's Word or to add to it, it is just as wrong to divide the church over questions which are not answered by God's Word as it is to divide the church by discarding teachings of Scripture. We cannot bind people to doctrinal opinions which cannot be demonstrated from Scripture.

Agreement in adiaphora (things which God has neither commanded nor forbidden) and ceremonies is not necessary for fellowship. In Romans 14 Paul says: " ¹Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. ³The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. ⁵One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. ¹³Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way. ¹⁹Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." On another occasion Paul said, " Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day" (Colossians 2:16).

Christians do not have to use the same liturgy or enjoy the same style of worship to be in fellowship with each other. Worship styles in third-world mission fields are often quite different than those in American or Scandinavian Lutheran congregation. Some Christians may baptize by immersion; some may baptize by pouring water on the baby. Christians are not required to have the same system of church government or all of the same forms of ministry. The WELS has a ministry of Christian elementary school teachers. Many other churches do not. Christians do not have to follow the same diet or wear the same styles in order to practice fellowship together. Some Christians may choose to abstain from alcoholic beverages; others may use them in moderation. Such differences of opinion and practice are not divisive of church fellowship unless one party insists that its way is the only right way (Galatians 5:1). There is room for much diversity of *custom* in the church, but nothing in the New Testament offers any basis for excluding any *doctrine* from the unity needed for fellowship.

Our Lutheran Confessions state this principle in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession which says, " To the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike."

Complete agreement in doctrinal terminology is not necessary for church fellowship. We should not battle about mere words (2 Timothy 2:14-26). In 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul warns against a false teacher called " the man of sin" or " the man of lawlessness." In the fourth chapter of his first epistle John calls this same false teacher " the Antichrist." Even though they used different names for this false teacher, Paul and John agreed on the doctrine concerning his coming. It, therefore, would not be right to deny fellowship to someone who had the same teaching which we have, but who used different words to express it. It is, however, desirable to agree on common terminology within a church body to avoid confusing people.

Difference of words does not necessarily mean difference of doctrine, but we also need to be alert for the opposite danger. Use of the same words may be intended to hide differences of doctrine. False teachers often try to disguise their false teaching by twisting the meaning of the words which the orthodox church uses to express its teaching. For example, when false teachers call the Bible " infallible," they mean that it never fails to accomplish God's purpose even though it contains many errors. Such a use of " infallible" is intended to fool orthodox Christians, who use the same word, " infallible," to assert that the Bible is entirely without error. Such deception may mislead faithful Christians into thinking that the false teachers are proclaimers of the truth, who deserve their help and support. For this reason, the church has sometimes found it necessary to insist on specific, unambiguous terminology to " smoke out" false teachers. The need for such clear terminology is one reason that the church has composed creeds and confessions. The false teachers' refusal to accept these creeds exposed their deception and warned people to avoid them.

It is wrong, however, to divide the church on the basis of personal preference for a particular leader (1 Cor 1:11-13, 3:21-23) or to refuse fellowship to anyone on the basis of race, sex, or economic status (Galatians 3:28, James 2:1-5).

Although agreement in adiaphora, ceremonies, and wording is not necessary for fellowship, complete agreement in doctrine is necessary. The New Testament admonitions to doctrinal unity and its warnings against false doctrine are all-inclusive, general statements, which in no way imply that there are some scriptural doctrines which can safely be omitted or that there are some false teachings which can safely be tolerated: " Teach them to obey *everything* which I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20).

e) God permits errors in the visible church for various reasons.

1) It may be as a judgment for ingratitude and indifference.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

Romans 1:28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

2) It may be as a test for his children.

Deuteronomy 13:3 You must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Deuteronomy 8:2 Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.

Matthew 24:23-26 At that time if anyone says to you, "Look, here is the Christ!" or, "There he is!" do not believe it. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. ²⁵ See, I have told you ahead of time. ²⁶ So if anyone tells you, "There he is, out in the desert," do not go out; or, "Here he is, in the inner rooms," do not believe it.

1 Corinthians 11:19 No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval.

D4, VIII, 5. The evangelical practice of the biblical church fellowship principles is an expression of love.

1 Timothy 1: 3-5 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer ⁴ nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work—which is by faith. ⁵ The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Luther: Hence this passage must also be considered carefully in opposition to the argument by which they accuse us of offending against love and thus doing great harm to the churches. We are surely prepared to observe peace and love with all men, provided they leave the doctrine of the faith perfect and sound for us. If we cannot obtain this, it is useless for them to demand love from us. A curse on the love that is observed at the expense of the doctrine of the faith to which everything must yield—love, an apostle, an angel from heaven, etc! (*LW* 27, p 37).

a) Love for God's Word.

2 Corinthians 13:8: For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

Psalms 119:136 Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed.

b) Love for the errorist.

2 Timothy 2:24-25 The Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

c) Love for his victims and for the weak.

Ephesians 4:11-15 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Jude 22,23 Be merciful to *those who doubt*; ²³ snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. And on some have compassion, *making a distinction*; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. (NKJV)

1 Timothy 4:1-6 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ² Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. ⁴ For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. ⁶ If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.

WELS Theses on Fellowship, B,4: Weakness of faith is in itself not a reason for terminating church fellowship, but rather an inducement for practicing it vigorously to help one another overcome our individual weaknesses. In precept and example Scripture abounds with exhortations to pay our full debt of love toward the weak.

D5. The Ministerial Office

D5, I. Christ instituted one office in his church, the ministry of the gospel.

D5, I, 1. Christ assigned one task to his church: the office of preaching of the gospel.

a) The one task given to the church is preaching the word and administering the sacraments.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 26:26-28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Acts 1:8 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

1 Peter 2:9 You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

b) This work is called an office or a ministry, that is, a service or an administration.

Note: In biblical usage, the word "ministry" is a synonym of "service." Like "service," the word "ministry" can refer to a wide variety of functions and offices, both secular and spiritual. The NIV makes it difficult to recognize this wide range of usage of *διακονία*, the main Greek word for "ministry," because of the variety of translations the NIV uses for this word and for other words based on the same Greek stem. The following arrangement of passages illustrates the various meanings of the biblical terms "ministry" and "minister."

Examples of "ministry" in secular matters or physical things:

John 2:5 His mother said to the *servants*, "Do whatever he tells you."

Luke 17:8 Would he not rather say, "Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and *wait on me* while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink?"

Mark 1:31 The fever left her and she began to *wait on* them. Also Luke 4:39

Luke 10:40 But Martha was distracted by all *the preparations* that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me *to do the work* by myself?"

Acts 6:2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the [ministry of] the word of God in order to *wait on tables*."

Luke 8:3 These women were helping to *support them* out of their own means.

Romans 13:4 For [the ruler] is God's *servant* to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's *servant*, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Examples of the ministry of Christians in general:

1 Peter 4:10-11 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to *serve others, faithfully administering* (διακονούντες ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι) God's grace in its various forms. If anyone *serves*, he should do it with the strength God provides.

1 Corinthians 12:5 There are different kinds of *service*, but the same Lord.

Ephesians 4:12 [Pastors and teachers] prepare God's people for works of *service*, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

Examples of ministry or service with the Word:

Ministry of the Word in the abstract—the means of grace and the responsibility to use them:

2 Corinthians 3:7,8,9 Now if *the ministry that brought death*, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸will not *the ministry of the Spirit* be even more glorious? ⁹If *the ministry that condemns men* is glorious, how much more glorious is *the ministry that brings righteousness*!

2 Corinthians 5:18,19 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the *ministry of reconciliation*: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Ministry of the Word in the concrete—service by public ministers of the Word, who hold a specific office:

Acts 6:4 [We] will give our attention to prayer and *the ministry of the word*.

Acts 1:17,25 [Judas] was one of our number and shared in this *ministry*. ²⁵ ... this apostolic *ministry*, which Judas left to go where he belongs.

Romans 11:13 Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my *ministry*.

Acts 20:24 I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the *task* the Lord Jesus has given me—the *task* of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

1 Timothy 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his *service*.

Acts 21:19 Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his *ministry*.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your *ministry*.

Ephesians 3:7 I became a *servant* of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

1 Corinthians 3:5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only *servants* (διάκονοι) through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

2 Corinthians 3:6 He has made us competent as *ministers* (διακόνους) of a new covenant.

2 Corinthians 6:4 Rather, as *servants* of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses.

1 Timothy 4:6 If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good *minister* of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and *deacons* (διακόνους).

Augsburg Confession V speaks of the ministry of the Word in the abstract, the means of grace.

Augsburg Confession, V, 1,2 That we may obtain this faith, *the Ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted*. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, who works faith; where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel.

Ut hanc fidem consequamur, *institutum est ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta*.

Solchen Glauben zu erlangen, hat Gott *das Predigtamt eingesetzt, Evangelium und Sakramente gegeben*.

Apology XXIV, p 404, 59-60: Because the priesthood of the New Testament is the ministry of the Spirit or an office (*Amt*) through which the Spirit works, as Paul teaches (2 Cor 3:6), it accordingly has but the one sacrifice of Christ, which is satisfactory and applied for the sins of others.... The ministry of the Spirit is that through which the Holy Spirit is efficacious in hearts.

Formula of Concord, T.D. XII, 30 II: the ministry of the Church, the Word preached and heard...

U. V. Koren (d. 1910): There is no reference in this article to the work of the public ministry, by which the office of the word is to be performed in the congregation by certain persons who have been called to it. That is discussed later in the 14th Article. Here the reference is to the essence, power, and effectual working of the means of grace (*Faith of Our Fathers*, p 118).

Francis Pieper (d. 1931): Our article tells how a person comes to faith. It is through the *Predigtamt*, which means, through the Means of Grace established by God, the Gospel and the sacraments (*Das Grundbekenntniss der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, p 17).

Adolf Hoenecke (d. 1908): We can speak of the ministry of the Word, *Predigtamt* (preaching office), abstractly, understanding the expression to refer to the means of grace. Scripture itself does that, for example, in 2 Corinthians 3:4-8, where the apostle Paul designates the law as the ministry of the letter and the gospel as the ministry of the Spirit. Article V of the Augsburg Confession also speaks of the ministry of the Word in this abstract sense (ELD, IV, p 187).

C. F. W. Walther (d. 1887): The Apology does not have Grabau's understanding according to which the office of the ministry (*Predigtamt*) is always equivalent to the office of pastor (*Pfarramt*). ...No, when our old teachers ascribe such great things to the office of the ministry, they thereby mean nothing else than the service of the Word in whatever way (Weise) it may come to us ("The True Visible Church," in *Essays for the Church*, I, p 102).

c) This office has been given to the church, that is, to every individual Christian as such; not in theory only, but to be put into practice.

1) Christ gave the keys to the church.

Matthew 18:17-20 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

1 Peter 2:5,9 You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Luther: Since the church owes its birth to the Word, is nourished and strengthened by it, it is obvious that it cannot be without the Word. If it is without the Word, it ceases to be a church. A Christian, thus, is born to the ministry of the Word in baptism (*zu dem Amt des Worts geboren ist* ("Concerning the Ministry," *LW* 40, p 37; *SL* X, 1592-1593).

Luther: We maintain firmly that there is no other Word of God than that alone which all Christians are told to proclaim; that there is no other Baptism than that which all Christians may administer; that there is no other observance of the Lord's Supper than that which belongs to every Christian and was instituted by Christ to be kept; also that there is no other kind of sin than that which every Christian may bind or loose, etc.... These are, however, always the priestly and the royal offices ("To The People At Prague," *SL* X, p 1589f.).

Luther: Even though not everybody has the public office and calling, every Christian has the right and the duty to teach, instruct, admonish, comfort, and rebuke his neighbor with the Word of God at every opportunity and whenever it is necessary. For example, father and mother should do this for their children and household; a brother, neighbor, citizen, or peasant for the other. Certainly one Christian may instruct and admonish another ignorant or weak Christian concerning the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. And he who receives such instruction is also under obligation to accept it as God's Word and publicly to confess it (*LW* 13, p 333).

Luther: The preaching office is no more than a public service which happens to be conferred on someone by the entire congregation, all the members of which are priests (*LW* 13, p 332).

Walther: Through holy baptism every Christian has been consecrated, ordained and installed into the ministry (*geweiht, ordinirt, eingestetzt in das Amt*). ...What good is it my friends if we highly extol the spiritual priesthood as a great privilege, but do not fulfill the obligations. What good is it to be called spiritual priests if when we come together we do not exercise the office, but rather abandon it? What good is the name without the deed? (Sermon: "Bringing Souls to Christ," 1842; English in *Missio Apostolica* 6, 1998, p 10, 15).

This We Believe VII 7. We believe that every Christian is a priest before God (1 Peter 2:9). All believers have direct and equal access to the throne of grace through Christ, the mediator (Ephesians 2:17,18). God has given the means of grace to all believers. All Christians are to declare the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9). In this sense all Christians are ministers, or servants, of the gospel. God wants all Christians to share the message of salvation with other people (Matthew 28:19,20; 10:32).

2) When Christ committed the keys to the church, he gave no detailed instructions about the manner of their use.

John Schaller: From all of this it should be clear to us that God certainly has given no definite commands about the time, person and form of preaching as far as the vast majority of situations that call for gospel preaching are concerned. It is his concern that the gospel sound forth loudly in the world for the salvation of sinners. For this reason he provides his Christians, all of whom have been called and equipped to preach, with all kinds of opportunities to fulfill the commission of their Lord,

giving one this kind of opportunity and another a different kind. And so the preaching activity of Christians each time assumes a form that corresponds to the circumstances. ... Nevertheless, Scripture does indeed speak of special forms of the evangelical preaching ministry, both in the time before Christ's birth as well as after (WLQ, 1981, p 41).

See the section on the Church, V, page 532 ff.

D5, I, 2. From the beginning of the church there were men specially appointed to discharge the duties of this one ministry publicly, as the representatives of the church (ministry *in concreto*).

a) This public ministry is of divine origin. It is a divine institution.

1) All Christians are equal before God, knowing neither superiors nor subordinates. The spirit of brotherhood must not be violated.

Matthew 23:8-11 But you are not to be called "Rabbi," for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹ And do not call anyone on earth "father," for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰ Nor are you to be called "teacher," for you have one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant.

Luke 22:24-26 Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵ Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves."

1 Peter 5:2,3 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

2) God is a God of order. We are to conduct our affairs in an orderly way.

1 Corinthians 14:33,40 For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. ⁴⁰ But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

Colossians 2:5 For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

3) Christians are not all equally qualified to perform publicly the functions of the ministry.

-a) God gives to the church people qualified for the various forms of the work required.

Romans 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

1 Timothy 3:2-7 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Titus 1:5-9 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. ⁶ An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of

being wild and disobedient. ⁷ Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁸ Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

-b) These gifts should be gratefully received and developed.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2, ⁷ So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful: ⁷For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

1 Corinthians 12:31 But eagerly desire the greater gifts.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

-c) These gifts should be used by the church for spiritual edification.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Ephesians 4:8-16 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." ⁹ (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Johann Bengel (d. 1752) comments on the significance of the word ἀγαλλιαθῆμαι ("enjoy") in John 5:35, "John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to *enjoy* his light": John was to be *used*, not *enjoyed*. The Jews confused the means with the end. Those who seek merely the fruit of internal or external feelings in the Word and the servants of God, and not Christ himself, make a very serious mistake (*Gnomon*, I, p 597).

4) Public ministers are appointed by God.

-a) God establishes the ministry.

Jeremiah 3:15 Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 Corinthians 12:28 In the church God has appointed (ἔθετο) first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Ephesians 4:11 It was he who gave (ἔδωκεν) some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

1 Corinthians 9:14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded (διέταξεν) that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

Quenstedt: God is the author of the New Testament ministry:

- I. by promising teachers to the church (Jr 3:15; 23:4; Jl 2:23);
- II. by giving what he promised (1 Cor 12:28; 2 Cor 5:18);
- III. by preserving the ministry to the end of the world (Eph 4:11);
- IV. by functioning in the office of teaching himself (He 1:1);

V. by equipping the teachers of the church with the necessary gifts (2 Cor 3:5) (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XII, sect. I, thesis III, note, p 394).

-b) It is an error to trace the origin of the public ministry to mere expediency.

Johann Hoefling's *Grundsätze* (1852), contains much valuable material, but also the following error: As far as the ordaining of presbyters which was carried out or initiated by the apostles is concerned, it was nothing more than the fulfillment of a natural need for a leader, which becomes an imperative necessity not only for every fellowship but also for every kind of association (p 220 ff) (See the summary, Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, III, p 445-449.)

Francis Pieper: One is inclined to judge Hoefling less severely because his opponents (Muenchmeyer, Loehe, Kliefoth, etc.) taught a strongly Romanizing doctrine of the ministry, namely, that the office of the public ministry is not conferred by the call of the congregation as the original possessor of all spiritual power, but is a divine institution in the sense that it was transmitted immediately from the Apostles to their pupils, considered as a separate "ministerial order" or caste, and that this order perpetuates itself by means of the ordination. Some also spoke as if the means of grace exerted their full power and efficacy only when they were administered by men of this "order." Against this caricature of the public ministry Hoefling correctly argues that it makes the officiant a "means of grace" alongside Word and Sacrament: "The believers might see themselves with their spiritual needs referred not so much to Word and Sacrament as rather to the organ (the minister) divinely privileged to administer and distribute them. The full efficacy of the means of grace appears dependent on an external legal institution; the Holy Ghost now operates not so much in and through the means of grace as rather through the nomistic organs of their administration."...In short, Hoefling did not succeed in keeping his balance in opposing a coarse Romanizing error. Thoroughly to refute the immediate divine establishment of the public ministry as Loehe and others taught it, he thought it necessary to deny that the mediate establishment of this office through the congregation is God's ordinance or has divine command (*Christian Dogmatics*, III, p 447-448).

August Pieper: It does not follow from the spiritual priesthood of all believers that all Christians are *eo ipso* preachers for the congregation. That which all have in common, no one may take to himself ahead of the others. "No one should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments without an orderly call." Through the call to the office of preaching in the congregation the public administration of the priestly powers which are common to all are handed over to one or more individuals by a specific group of Christians. In this way the office of congregational preaching or the pastoral office comes into being. This is not to be regarded as a human, political arrangement, but as a divine ordinance. The pastoral office is mentioned in the Scriptures themselves along with the apostolate and office of evangelist as instituted (*eingerrichtete*) species of the general office of preaching won and commanded by Christ. To this arrangement (*Aufrichtung*) the Christian church of all time is ordinarily bound. Whoever despises this despises Christ (*WLQ*, 1912, p 34).

Carl Lawrenz: In contrast to Hoefling we hold on the basis of Scripture, that it is not the church but our divine Lord himself, who before the New Testament church was ever called into existence, took note of its future need, prophesying in advance that he would take care of it through the gift of the public ministry, that he has set forth the qualifications for this public ministry for us in his New Testament word and continues to give to his church men with all the needed talents required to carry out all the tasks of the public ministry (*WLQ*, 1982, p 132).

Note: Walther was also accused of being a Hoeflingite by Romanizing Lutherans. *Lehre. und Wehre*, 1858, p. 354.

This We Believe, VII 8: We believe that God has also established the public ministry of the Word (Ephesians 4:11), and it is the will of God that the church, in accordance with good order (1 Corinthians 14:40), call qualified individuals into this public ministry (1 Timothy 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 9:14). Such individuals minister publicly, that is, not because as individuals they possess the universal priesthood but because they are asked to do this in the name of fellow Christians (Romans 10:15). These individuals are the called servants of Christ and ministers of the gospel. They are not to be lords over God's church (1 Peter 5:3). We believe that when the church calls individuals into this public ministry, the Lord himself is acting through the church (Acts 20:28).

-c) That the public ministry is a special, God-ordained way of exercising the New Testament ministry of the Word is evident from the following points:

-1) Scripture speaks of the need for a call.

Romans 10:15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

-2) The qualifications for the ministry are established in Scripture.

1 Timothy 3:1-12 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. ⁸ Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. ¹¹ In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. ¹² A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

-3) Called ministers are special gifts of God to his church.

Ephesians 4:11-13 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

-4) Those serving in the ministry are appointed by God.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

-5) The ministry is designated by various special names.

For example, the office of a "bishop" or overseer in 1 Timothy 3:1: Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.

-6) The ministry is a means of livelihood for full-time servants of the Word.

1 Corinthians 9:7-14 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? ⁸ Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? ⁹ For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? ¹⁰ Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. ¹¹ If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? ¹² If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. ¹³ Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? ¹⁴ In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

Luke 10:7 Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

Galatians 6:6 Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.

b) There is, however, no direct word of institution for any particular form of the ministry.

1) Some claim Titus 1:5 is a specific institution of the parish pastorate.

Titus 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

2) A closer inspection will show that no divine institution of a specific form is spoken of.

-a) No command of the Lord is referred to, but a personal arrangement between Paul and his associate.

-1) Sometimes Luther is quoted to the contrary.

LW 36, 155: Whoever believes that here in Paul the Spirit of Christ is speaking and commanding will be sure to recognize this as a divine institution and ordinance, that in each city there should be several bishops, or at least one.

-2) But note Luther's point.

LW 36, 152: For this reason we are firmly convinced on the basis of the Holy Scriptures that there is not more than one office of preaching God's Word, and that this office is common to all Christians.... Since the Scriptures know of no other office of the Word of God.

LW 36, 156: The Holy Spirit appointed several bishops in one city, but each of you is over several cities, and a single pope wants to be bishop over all the cities of the world.

LW 29, p 16,17: First he gives Titus the general commission to appoint elders. Then he prescribes what kind of men they ought to be....Therefore it should be noted that it was Paul's ordinance that he should select "elders" [in the plural] in each city, and they are called bishops and elders. Therefore at the time of the apostles every city had numerous bishops. Then Christianity was in outstanding condition. This meaning of the word "bishop" disappeared, and it was subjected to very long and very distorted abuse. Now it is called the human ordinance by which a man is in charge of five cities. Every city ought to have many bishops, that is, inspectors or visitors. Such an inspector should be the parish clergyman along with the chaplain, so that they may share the duties and see how people live and what is taught. ...In every town, that is, many in each town.

-b) The words "what was left unfinished" (λείποντα) are alleged to imply the necessity of a specific form of ministry.

-1) This veiled reference is too general to draw from it a specific institution.

-2) It is sufficiently motivated in the context.

Titus 1:10ff For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group.

-c) If this was a word of institution of a specific form as the only divinely established form, then a sort of super-congregational form of church government was also instituted, and certain congregational boundaries were prescribed.

c) The public ministry and the common priesthood of all Christians are two species of the one genus, the ministry of the Word, since the same gospel is entrusted to both.

1) The public ministry is a special God-ordained way of practicing this one ministry of the gospel in the name of a group of Christians.

Luther: This is the way to distinguish between the office of preaching or the ministry and the general priesthood of all baptized Christians. The preaching office is no more than a public service which happens to be conferred on someone by the entire congregation, all the members of which are priests (LW 13, p 332).

2) When anyone does not have a call to this ministry, he is a member of the Christian laity.

Augsburg Confession, XIV: Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the church or administer the Sacraments unless he is regularly called.

D5, I, 3. The public ministry of the gospel may take on various forms, as circumstances demand.

a) Various functions and offices are mentioned in Scripture.

1) There are lists of duties and offices.

1 Timothy 4:13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.

Romans 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Ephesians 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

2) There are examples of duties and offices.

Shepherding and feeding

John 21:15-17 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord,

you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”¹⁷ The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 Peter 5:2 Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve.

Teaching and equipping

1 Timothy 3:2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.

1 Timothy 4:11 Command and teach these things.

1 Timothy 6:2 Those who have believing masters are not to show less respect for them because they are brothers. Instead, they are to serve them even better, because those who benefit from their service are believers, and dear to them. These are the things you are to teach and urge on them.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men (ἀνθρώποις) who will also be qualified to teach others.

Watching, oversight

Acts 20:28,31 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.³¹ So be on your guard!

Ruling

1 Timothy 3:5 If anyone does not know how to manage (προστῆναι) his own family, how can he take care of (ἐπιμελήσεται) God’s church?

1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who direct (προεστῶτες) the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

1 Peter 5:3 ...not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Rebuking

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

Titus 1:9-11 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.¹⁰ For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group.¹¹ They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for the sake of dishonest gain.

Titus 2:15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

3) However, it is not the function of the ministry in any form to decree articles of faith or to make church laws that go beyond or contrary to the Word, which is the sole source of doctrine.

Matthew 23:8 But you are not to be called “Rabbi,” for you have only one Master and you are all brothers.

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

1 Peter 5:3 ...not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Acts 15:19-21,28,29 It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.²⁰ Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted

by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath. ²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹ You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

Compare Galatians 2:4,5 This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵ We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

Apology XXVIII, p 446, 15-17 Although in the Confession we also have added how far it is lawful for them to frame traditions, namely, not as necessary services, but so that there may be order in the church, for the sake of tranquillity. And these traditions ought not to cast snares upon consciences, as though to enjoin necessary services; as Paul teaches when he says, Gal. 5: 1, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." ¹⁶¹ The use of such ordinances ought therefore to be left free, provided that offenses be avoided, and that they be not judged to be necessary services; just as the apostles themselves ordained for the sake of good discipline very many things which have been changed with time. Neither did they hand them down in such a way that it would not be permitted to change them. For they did not dissent from their own writings, in which they greatly labor lest the church be burdened with the opinion that human rites are necessary services. ¹⁷¹ This is the simple mode of interpreting traditions, namely, that we understand them not as necessary services, and nevertheless, for the sake of avoiding offenses, we should observe them in the proper place.

b) In spite of the great diversity in the external form and in the titles of the ministry, the ministry is essentially one, since there is only one gospel.

1 Corinthians 3:5-8 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor.

1 Corinthians 4:1, 6 So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ⁶ Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, "Do not go beyond what is written." Then you will not take pride in one man over against another.

1 Peter 5:1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed:

c) Also today the public ministry may take different forms.

1) The most comprehensive is the pastorate.

This We Believe, VII 9: We believe that the church's mission is to serve people with the Word and sacraments. This service is usually done in local congregations. We look upon the pastoral office as the most comprehensive form of the public ministry of the Word. Pastors are trained and called to provide such comprehensive spiritual oversight for the gathering and nurturing of souls in congregations (1 Peter 5:2).

2) We also may have, for example, head pastors, associate pastors, assistant pastors, staff ministers, school teachers, deacons, circuit pastors, missionaries, professors, and synodical executive officers.

This We Believe, VII 8b: We believe that the church has the freedom to establish various forms within the one ministry of the Word, such as pastors, Christian teachers, and staff ministers. Through its call, the church in Christian liberty designates the place and scope of service.

3) It is instructive, illustrating the flexibility of forms of the ministry, to compare the present pastorate with the forms of the office as developed in Corinth and other New Testament congregations.

1 Corinthians 12:1-14 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. ...⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. ¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Romans 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Ephesians 4:11 It was [Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants (δοῦλοι) of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons.

1 Timothy 3:1,8 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ⁸ Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.

1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

Luther, comparing preaching arrangements at Corinth with those he practiced in Wittenberg: But I would not be in favor of restoring this custom [1 Cor 14:29] and doing away with the pulpit. ... For St. Paul is not so rigidly concerned about the one method, but he is concerned about order and decent procedure, and gives this method as an example. We had better keep our custom in preaching since it more than the other will keep order among our stupid folk. In the days of the Apostle the custom of prophets sitting alongside each other was possible. For it was a habit of long standing and practiced daily among a well-disciplined people who had inherited it from Moses through the Levitical priesthood. It would hardly do to restore the practice among such uncouth, undisciplined, shameless people as ours (LW 40, p 392f)

Walther, "Address at the Installation of Two Academy Professors":

Theme: What should comfort us when men who have prepared themselves for the office of saving souls, yes, who have already carried on that office with blessing, take over the teaching office at our educational institution at the call of the church? In answer, we should be comforted by this: 1.) that also their office is the office of our God; 2.) that also their concern is the concern of our Lord. "God has really ordained only one office, namely, the office which in his name gathers, builds, governs, cares for, and preserves his church on earth" (*Brosamen*, p 346ff).

Chemnitz discusses various forms of the public ministry and then says: 1) that there is no command in the Word of God, which or how many such ranks or orders there should be; 2) that there were not at the time of the apostles in all churches and at all times the same and the same number of ranks or orders, as can be clearly ascertained from the epistles of Paul, written to various churches; 3) that there was not, at the time of the apostles, such a division of these ranks, but repeatedly one and the same person held and performed all the duties which belong to the ministry, as is clear from the apostolic history. Therefore such orders were free at the time of the apostles and were observed for the sake of good order, decorum, and edification, except that at that time certain special gifts, such as tongues, prophecies, apostolate, and miracles, were bestowed on certain persons by God.... This example of the apostles the primitive church imitated for the same reason and in similar liberty. For the grades of the duties of the ministry were distributed, not however in identically the same way as in the church at Corinth or in that at Ephesus, but according to the circumstances obtaining in each church. From this one can gather what freedom there was in the distribution of the ranks (*Examination*, Part II, p 685, Kramer translation).

Carl Lawrenz (d. 1989): In his "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," for example, Luther says: "All who are engaged in the clerical office (*Pfarramt*) or ministry of the word are in a holy, proper, good and God-pleasing order and estate." That the public ministry was a very wide and comprehensive concept for Luther, covering every form and phase of the ministry of the word can be exemplified from a quotation from his "Sermon on Keeping Children in School." There Luther says: "The estate I am thinking of is rather one which has the office of preaching and the service of the word and sacrament and which imparts the Spirit and salvation, blessings that cannot be attained by any amount of pomp and pageantry. It includes the work of pastors (*Pfarramt*), teachers, preachers, lectors, priests (whom men call chaplains), sacristans, schoolmasters, and whatever other work belongs to these offices and persons." It is significant that Walther offers also this quotation as he supplies support from Luther's writings for Thesis I. Here Luther uses *Pfarramt* as a species of the genus public ministry. This gives us reason to conclude that Walther was not unaware of Luther's understanding of the wide scope of the public ministry nor in disagreement with it (WLQ, 1982, p 126-127).

d) **From the fact that the functions of all public ministers are not the same it does not follow that there is a divinely established difference of rank.**

1) **The idea of divinely established hierarchy in the church is foreign to Scripture.**

Matthew 18:1-4 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"² He called a little child and had him stand among them.³ And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."⁴ Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Mark 9:33-35 They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?"³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Mark 10:42-45 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Parallel Luke 22:24-26.

Quenstedt: In our churches we retain ranking (*ordinem*) among the ministers, so that some are bishops, some presbyters, some deacons, because also in the apostolic and early church there were distinct ranks (orders) of ministers, and indeed they were divinely instituted (*divinitus constituti*)(1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11). Meanwhile we say that the same power of the ministry, consisting of the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, and the power of jurisdiction, consisting in the use of the keys, belongs to all ministers of the church (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XII, sect. I, thesis XIV, note, VI, p 396).

2) **The area of responsibility that a minister has is spelled out in the call.**

Acts 13:2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Acts 22:21 Then the Lord said to me, "Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles."

Galatians 2:7-8 On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews.⁸ For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles.

3) **The Roman Catholic demands acceptance of three ranks: bishops, priests, and deacons.**

Council of Trent, Sess. XXIII, Can. 6: If anyone says that in the Catholic church there is not a hierarchy instituted by divine ordination, which consists of bishops, presbyters, and ministers, let him be damned.

Can. 7: If anyone says that the bishops are not superior to presbyters or that they do not have the authority to confirm and ordain, or that the authority which they have belongs both to them and to the presbyters, or that ordination conferred by them without the call and consent of the people or secular authorities is not valid or that those who are not rightly ordained nor sent by canonical and ecclesiastical authority, but who come from elsewhere, are legitimate ministers of the Word and the sacraments, let him be damned.

Dominus Jesus (2000): Section 17. Therefore, there exists a single Church of Christ, which subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him. ...On the other hand, the ecclesial communities which have not preserved the valid Episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic mystery, are not Churches in the proper sense.

Francis A. Sullivan, S.J.: Most Christian scholars from both sides of this divide agree that the threefold structure of ministry, with one bishop among a number of presbyters and deacons in each church, does not appear in the New Testament.... Hardly anyone doubts that the church of Rome was led by a group of presbyters for at least a part of the second century (*From Apostles to Bishops*, p 217). No doubt proving that bishops were the successors of the apostles by divine institution would be easier if the New Testament clearly stated that before they died the apostles had appointed a single bishop to lead each of the churches they founded (p. 223).

e) **Note that the order of headship established by God at creation prevents women from functioning publicly in the church in any way which would violate this principle of headship. Women do possess the priesthood of all believers and can and should exercise this priesthood privately and may serve publicly in the church in any way that does not violate this principle.**

1 Corinthians 11:3-16 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.⁴ Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered

dishonors his head.⁵ And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as though her head were shaved.⁶ If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head.⁷ A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.⁸ For man did not come from woman, but woman from man;⁹ neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.¹⁰ For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.¹¹ In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.¹² For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.¹³ Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?¹⁴ Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him,¹⁵ but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering.¹⁶ If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.

1 Timothy 2:11-15 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.¹² do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man (διδάσκειν δὲ γυναῖκι οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἄνδρός); she must be silent.¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve.¹⁴ And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.¹⁵ But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

1 Corinthians 14:33-37 For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints,³⁴ women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says.³⁵ If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.³⁶ Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached?³⁷ If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command.

Augsburg Confession, XXVIII, 54-56, p 91: So Paul ordains, 1 Cor. 11:5, that women should cover their heads in the congregation, 1 Cor. 14:30, that interpreters be heard in order in the church, etc.⁵⁵ It is proper that the churches should keep such ordinances for the sake of love and tranquillity, so far that one do not offend another, that all things be done in the churches in order, and without confusion, 1 Cor. 14:4; comp. Phil. 2:14;⁵⁶ but so that consciences be not burdened to think that they are necessary to salvation, or to judge that they sin when they break them without offense to others; as no one will say that a woman sins who goes out in public with her head uncovered provided only that no offense be given.

Luther: Paul forbids women to preach in the congregation where men are present who are skilled in speaking.... Paul did not forbid this out of his own devices, but appealed to the law, which says women are to be subject.... Therefore order, discipline, and respect demand that women keep silent when men speak; but if no man were to preach, then it would be necessary for the women to preach (*LW*, 36, p 151f).
Luther: The second function, to baptize, they themselves [the Roman Catholics] have by usage allowed in cases of necessity even to ordinary women, so that it is hardly regarded any more as a sacramental function. Whether they wish or not we deduce from their own logic that all Christians, and they alone, even women, are priests, without tonsure and episcopal "character." For in baptizing we proffer the life-giving Word of God, which renews souls and redeems from death and sins. To baptize is incomparably greater than to consecrate bread and wine, for it is the greatest office in the church—the proclamation of the Word of God. So when women baptize, they exercise the function of priesthood legitimately, and do it not as a private act, but as a part of the public ministry of the church which belongs only to the priesthood (*LW* 40, p 23).

Walther: Women as well as men, young as well as old—all Christians are spiritual priests and teachers of the word (Sermon: "Bringing Souls to Christ," 1842; English in *Missio Apostolica* 6, 1998, p 13).

This We Believe VII 10: We believe that women may participate in offices and activities of the public ministry except where that work involves authority over men (1 Timothy 2:11, 12). This means that women may not serve as pastors nor participate in assemblies of the church in ways that exercise authority over men (1 Corinthians 11:3; 14:33-35).

LCMS: The Synod affirms that women on the basis of the clear teaching of Scripture may not serve in the office of pastor nor exercise any of its distinctive functions, and that women may serve in humanly established offices in the church as long as the functions of these offices do not make them eligible to carry out "official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office (Resolution 3-08A, 2004 Convention).

Ted Peters (ELCA): Given all I have said about eschatology and the open future, it is logical for me to stress that—regarding ordination of women as well as of gay and lesbian persons—there is room to be creative and to make changes even where traditions have long been ensconced (*God and the World's Future*, p 316).

D5, I, 4. The purpose of the public ministry is to build up the church.

a) It is the edification of the church by serving with the means of grace and by equipping others to serve.

1 Corinthians 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Ephesians 4:11-14 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

¹¹Καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, ¹²πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ

b) Therefore, ministers, recognizing their great responsibility, should discharge the duties of their office to the best of their ability.

Romans 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

1 Timothy 4:12-16 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

1 Timothy 5:21 I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

1 Peter 5:2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve.

1 Thessalonians 2:8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

c) Similarly, congregations should be diligent that the training of future ministers is as thorough as possible.

1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men (πιστοῖς ἀνθρώποις) who will also be qualified to teach others.

D5, II. No one may assume the functions of the public ministry except through a legitimate call.

D5, II, 1. A call is necessary.

a) The necessity is expressed as an axiom: *nisi rite vocatus*.

Romans 10:15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Hebrews 5:4-6 No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." ⁶ And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Jeremiah 23:21 I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied.

Augsburg Confession, XIV Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called.

August Pieper: The Lord has purchased the office of the Word, the New Testament preaching office, through his blood and expressly commanded it for his congregation. Along with the gospel he has entrusted his believers with the office of the keys, which is to be used by them. They should practice it in the whole world. The public preaching office is both inwardly and outwardly God's command

and order for the Christian church. But it does not follow from the spiritual priesthood of all believers that all Christians are *eo ipso* preachers for the congregation. That which all have in common, no one may take to himself ahead of the others. "No one should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments without an orderly call" (*WLQ*, 1912, p 33).

b) The need for a call is clear from the fact that all Christians are brothers. The minister represents all who have called him in the public discharge of certain duties which were originally given to all.

1) Individuals may represent the church on a special occasion.

Acts 15:2,25,27 This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ²⁵ So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— ²⁷ Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing.

2 Corinthians 8:18,19 And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. ¹⁹ What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help.

2) They may represent them in preaching the Word to others.

-a) It is the nature of every Christian to share the Word with others.

Acts 4:20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

Acts 8:1, 4 On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. ⁴Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

Acts 11:19-21 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. ²⁰ Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 4:13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak.

-b) But individuals may also be appointed to represent certain churches.

Acts 8:14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.

Acts 11:22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

Acts 13:1-3 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Acts 14:26,27 From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. ²⁷ On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

3) Called ministers have a special relationship with those who have called them.

-a) Bonds of love unite all Christians in congregations.

Colossians 3: 12-14 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

-b) The most intimate relation exists between pastor and flock.

1 Thessalonians 2:6-8, 11, 12 As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, ⁷ but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. ⁸ We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

-c) It would be contrary to love to usurp the ministry to oneself without the consent (call) of the congregation.

- d) **On the other hand, this relationship, once established, may not ruthlessly be severed. Just causes for dismissing a called worker are false doctrine, neglect of duty, inability to perform the duties of the office, and moral disqualification.**

Chemnitz: Moreover, just as there is a lawful method for calling someone into the ministry of the church, so also there is a lawful method for removing someone or for transferring him from one church to another. ...In our churches many also do not understand this matter correctly. For just as, when one hires a servant, he has the power to dismiss him when he wishes, so some think that they have authority also to dismiss a preacher, though they have no just cause. ...Just as the one God properly claims for himself the right to call even when the call takes place mediately, so also is it properly of God to remove a person from the ministry. Therefore, as long as God endures in the ministry his minister who teaches correctly and lives blamelessly, the church does not have authority to remove someone else's servant. But when he no longer edifies the church by doctrine or life, but destroys it, then God himself removes him. ...And then also the church not only can but also should remove such a one from the ministry (*Loci*, Pt III, Ch IV, Sect I, Vol. II, Preus translation, p 703).

D5, II, 2. Some men were called by God directly (*vocatio immediata*).

a) **Scripture gives examples of such calls.**

1) **Prophets and apostles were called by God.**

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Jeremiah 1:4-10 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." ⁶ "Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." ⁷ But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. ⁸ Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. ⁹ Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. ¹⁰ See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."

Exodus 3:10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.

Matthew 10:1 He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.

Matthew 4:21-22 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Matthew 9:9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

Acts 22:21 Then the Lord said to me, "Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles."

2) **Paul was very emphatic in pointing to his direct call when his apostolic authority was questioned.**

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.

2 Corinthians 12:12 The things that mark an apostle—signs, wonders and miracles—were done among you with great perseverance.

3) **Often those who received a direct call could substantiate their claim by signs and miracles.**

Exodus 4:1-9 Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you?'" ² Then the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied. ³ The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. ⁴ Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. ⁵ "This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you." ⁶ Then the LORD said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, like snow. ⁷ "Now put it back into your cloak," he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh. ⁸ Then the LORD said, "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second." ⁹

But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.”

Deuteronomy 18:21,22 You may say to yourselves, “How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?”²² If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder,² and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, “Let us follow other gods” (gods you have not known) “and let us worship them,”³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.⁴ It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him.⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

Acts 14:3 So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

2 Corinthians 12:12 The things that mark an apostle—signs, wonders and miracles—were done among you with great perseverance.

4) The direct call did not confer generically different functions on the apostles. All pastors have the same means of grace and treat each other as brothers.

-a) Note, for example, the brotherly relationship between Paul and Timothy and others.

2 Timothy 1:6,11,14 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.¹¹ And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.¹⁴ Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

Colossians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother...

1 Thessalonians 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God’s fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith.

1 Peter 5:1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed.

-b) The apostles, however, possessed the special gift of inspiration and extra-congregational authority in the church.

1 Corinthians 2:13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

2 Peter 1:19-21 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation.²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

John Brug: The apostles are distinguished from all other ministers of the gospel by being given the special title of Apostle by Jesus, by having a unique role as a foundation of the church, by being assigned a special role as leaders of Israel, and by being specially designated witnesses of Jesus’ resurrection. They are distinguished from subsequent ministers of the gospel by a direct call from Christ, by the special gifts of healing and power over demons, and by the gift of inspiration. These gifts were, however, shared with contemporaries of the apostles, who were in direct contact with Christ or the apostles. With the possible exception of Ananias, only the apostles were able to give these gifts to others. The apostles had a special calling as world missionaries. We have a detailed account of how that calling was fulfilled for only one apostle, Paul. We do not know if the other apostles were missionaries-at-large or whether they had territorial assignments from Christ, from the church, or by mutual agreement (W/LQ Summer 1995, p 176).

D5, II, 3. Ministers of the gospel today are called by Christ through the church (*vocatio mediata*).

a) Scripture speaks of mediate calls.

1) Paul, recognizing a call “by men,” appointed ministers and instructed his disciples to do the same.

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed (χειροτονήσαντες) elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Titus 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint (καταστήσης) elders in every town, as I directed you.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when (μετά) the body of elders laid their hands on you.

2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through (διά) the laying on of my hands.

2) The right of congregations to appoint ministers is implied in their possession of the keys.

Matthew 18:18 I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

1 Corinthians 3:21 So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours.

Ephesians 4:8,11 This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.”¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

Smalcald Articles, Tractate, 67-69, p 522: For wherever the church is, there is the authority to administer the gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers. And this authority is a gift which in reality is given to the church, which no human power can wrest from the church, as Paul also testifies to the Ephesians when he says, Eph 4:8, He ascended, He gave gifts to men. And he enumerates among the gifts specially belonging to the church pastors and teachers, and adds that such are given for the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Hence, wherever there is a true church, the right to elect and ordain ministers necessarily exists. Just as in a case of necessity even a layman absolves and becomes the minister and pastor of another; as Augustine narrates the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catechumen, who after baptism then absolved the baptizer.^{68]} Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the church, and not merely to certain persons, Matt. 18:20, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, etc.”^{69]} Lastly, the statement of Peter also confirms this, 1 Pet. 2:9, You are a royal priesthood. These words pertain to the true church, which certainly has the right to elect and ordain ministers since it alone has the priesthood.

Smalcald Articles, Tractate, 72, p 524: From all these things it is clear that the church retains the right to elect and ordain ministers. And the wickedness and tyranny of bishops afford cause for schism and discord, therefore, if the bishops either are heretics or will not ordain suitable persons, the churches are in duty bound before God, according to divine law, to ordain for themselves pastors and ministers. Even though this be now called an irregularity or schism, it should be known that the godless doctrine and tyranny of the bishops is chargeable with it, because Paul (Gal. 1:7f), enjoins that bishops who teach and defend a godless doctrine and godless services should be regarded as accursed.

3) Ministers so appointed have been appointed by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

4) Exercising the functions which were originally entrusted to the whole church, ministers are the servants of God and of the congregation.

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

1 Corinthians 4:1,6 So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God.⁶ Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not take pride in one man over against another.

1 Corinthians 3:5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

Colossians 1:25 I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness.

2 Corinthians 1:24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.

2 Corinthians 2:10 If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake,

1 Peter 5:3 ...not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

b) No mode of election and calling is prescribed in Scripture.

1) Scripture mentions mediate calls.

-a) Two “elections” are described.

Acts 6:1-6 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” ⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Acts 1:15-26 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) ¹⁶ and said, “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus— ¹⁷ he was one of our number and shared in this ministry.” ¹⁸ (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. ¹⁹ Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ²⁰ “For,” said Peter, “it is written in the book of Psalms, “‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’ and, “‘May another take his place of leadership.’ ²¹ Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.” ²³ So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” ²⁶ Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias (ἔδωκαν κλήρους αὐτοῖς καὶ ἔπεσεν ὁ κλήρος ἐπὶ Μαθθίαν); so he was added to the eleven apostles. [There is some question if the reference is to casting lots or voting, WLQ, Summer 98, p 212-214.]

-b) Others are merely noted in passing.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed (χειροτονήσαντες) elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

Titus 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint (καταστήσης) elders in every town, as I directed you.

2) Sometimes it may be expedient for the church to delegate the actual calling to a committee or board, for example in the calling of professors and mission workers and the assigning of seminary graduates.

3) It would be disorderly and inconsiderate if a congregation while calling did not avail itself of the advice of experienced pastors, for example, the district officials, as is the agreement in our synod.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

Titus 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

Smalcald Articles Tractate, 13,14, p 506: Again the Council of Nicea determined that bishops should be elected by their own churches, in the presence of some neighboring bishop or of several.

^{14]} The same was observed for a long time, not only in the East, but also in the West and in the Latin churches, as Cyprian and Augustine testify.

D5, II, 4. In opposition to the scriptural doctrine of the call we find two extremes.

a) Roman Catholics assert the authority of bishops to assign pastors without the consent of the congregation.

Council of Trent, Sess. XXIII, Can. 7: If anyone says that the bishops are not superior to presbyters or that they do not have the authority to confirm and ordain, or that the authority which they have belongs both to them and to the presbyters, or that ordination conferred by them without the call and consent of the people or secular authorities is not valid or that those who are not rightly ordained nor sent by canonical and ecclesiastical authority, but who come from elsewhere, are legitimate ministers of the Word and the sacraments, let him be damned. Cp. 4: Moreover, the most holy Synod teaches that in the ordination of bishops, priests and other clergy neither the consent, call, or authority of the people or of any secular authority or magistrate is required in such a way that ordination without these would be invalid.

b) Enthusiasts deny the necessity of the call.

Racovian Catechism: Do not those who teach in the church and who watch over the upholding and preserving of order need to be sent in some special way? By no means, for they now bring no new or previously unheard doctrine. But what do you say about these apostolic words, "How shall they preach except they be sent" (Ro 10:15)? Since the preaching of present-day teachers is not of the same kind as that of apostolic times, as we taught a little earlier, a sending of the same kind is by no means necessary for this present-day preaching (505, 506).

c) The Confessions reject both extremes.

Apology XII, p 254, 10-13 Nor do we have another priesthood like the Levitical, ¹¹as the Epistle to the Hebrews sufficiently teaches. But if ordination be understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises, Rom. 1:16, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes." Likewise, Is. 55:11, "So shall My Word be that goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please." ¹²If ordination be understood in this way, neither will we refuse to call the imposition of hands a sacrament. For the church has the command to appoint ministers, which should be most pleasing to us, because we know that God approves this ministry and is present in the ministry ¹³And it is of advantage, so far as can be done, to adorn the ministry of the Word with every kind of praise against fanatical men, who dream that the Holy Spirit is given not through the Word, but because of certain preparations of their own, if they sit unoccupied and silent in obscure places, waiting for illumination, as the Enthusiasts formerly taught, and the Anabaptists now teach.

D5, II, 5. Ordination is not necessary for conferring the office, which is conferred by the call.

a) "Ordination" (that is, laying on of hands) is frequently referred to in Scripture. Note: This laying on of hands is not limited to pastors. See WLQ, Fall 1995, p 267-269.

Acts 6:6 They presented these men [the deacons] to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Acts 13:3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.
Compare Acts 14:26 From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed.

1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when (μετα) the body of elders laid their hands on you.

² Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through (δια) the laying on of my hands.

b) Ordination or installation is a public declaration and testimonial that the called person possesses the required qualifications and the call was properly executed. It is a liturgical form for recognizing fitness for office and the legitimacy of the call and for invoking God's blessing on the minister.

Smalcald Articles, Tractate, 70, p 524: And this also a most common custom of the church testifies. For formerly the people elected pastors and bishops. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands, and ordination was nothing else than such a ratification.

Chemnitz: Therefore, although ordination does not make the call, yet, if someone has been legitimately called, then that ceremony is a declaration and public confirmation that the call which preceded it is legitimate (*Locí*, Pt III, Ch IV, Sect I, p 137; Preus translation, II, p 705).

c) It is an confusing to ordain a person who has not been called (*ordinatio absoluta*).

Chemnitz: But what we have said above about the apostolic calling, that it should stretch into the whole world, we cannot say also now about those who are called mediately. For teachers, pastors, bishops, and presbyters are called to certain churches and do not have authority to teach everywhere or in all churches. Thus in Acts 14:23 elders are ordained for individual churches, and in Titus 1:5 Titus is left in Crete to establish churches in every city. And thus God, through a special call, ordinarily shows where he wants

someone's labor to be used. Therefore by virtue of this call they do not have authority to teach in other churches to which they do not have a special call. Hence in the Council of Chalcedon, in Canon 6, and in Gratian, Canon 16 [C/C, p. 256, dist. 70], it states that absolutely no one should be ordained except to a specific and particular church (*Loci*, Pt III, Ch IV, Sect I, Vol. II, Preus translation, p 703).

H. Orton Wiley: The Scriptures clearly teach that the early church ordained elders or presbyters, by a formal setting apart to the office and work of the ministry. While it may be true that no particular form is prescribed, it seems evident from numerous references that the elders were set apart by the imposition of hands. Furthermore, it is evident from the Scriptures that the power of ordination rested in the eldership itself; and that all candidates were to be adjudged as worthy or unworthy of the office only by those who had been themselves ordained. Ordination, therefore, is to be regarded as in some sense, a divinely authorized and prescribed form of investiture or inauguration to a particular order. But ordination does not make the elder an officer in a particular church. This can be done only as he is elected by the church, and freely accepts this election. Thus, the eldership is an order of the ministry, from which only pastors can be elected, but until so elected they are not pastors of particular churches. ... We may safely maintain, therefore, that there is one order in the ministry, but many and various offices (*Christian Theology*, p 135f)

d) Roman Catholics falsely claim that ordination is a sacrament conferring an indelible character. The Orthodox view is similar.

Council of Trent, Sess. XXIII, Can. 3: If anyone says that order ("holy orders") or holy ordination is not truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by the Lord Christ, or that it is a certain human invention thought up by men unskilled in ecclesiastical affairs, or that it is only a ceremony by which ministers of the Word and the sacraments are chosen, let him be damned.

Council of Trent Sess. XXIII, ch. 4: Since in the sacrament of ordination ... a recognized official rank (*character*) is impressed which cannot be erased or taken away, the holy Synod rightly condemns the opinion of those who assert that those who were once correctly ordained can again become laymen if they no longer carry out the ministry of the Word of God. *Can. 4*: If anyone says that through holy ordination the Holy Spirit is not given ... or that through it a recognized official rank (*character*) is not impressed, or that he who was once a priest can again become a layman, let him be damned.

Pomazansky (Orthodox): Thus the Church hierarchy is composed of the three degrees. None of the three stages can be seized solely by one's personal desire; they are given by the Church, and the appointment to them is performed by the blessing of God through the ordination of a bishop (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 251).

Apology XIII, p 310, 11-12 But if ordination be understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises....¹² If ordination be understood in this way, neither will we refuse to call the imposition of hands a sacrament. For the church has the command to appoint ministers, which should be most pleasing to us, because we know that God approves this ministry, and is present in the ministry.

Chemnitz: This reminder must, however, be added, that the rite of ordination must be distinguished from the ceremony of baptism and the Lord's Supper, for ordination is not a sacrament in the same way as Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The difference is plain. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are means or instruments through which God applies and seals the promise of reconciliation or forgiveness.... There is therefore a difference between the promises which are added to ordination and those which are added to baptism and the Lord's Supper. Besides, there is also a difference in the ceremony or external rite. For in baptism and the Lord's Supper the Son of God himself prescribed and commanded a certain external element, a certain ceremony or rite. In ordination, however, such as we now understand it, Christ himself applied an external sign just once, when on the day of his resurrection he breathed on his disciples (John 20:22). He did not, however, add a command that the church should imitate that rite of breathing upon the ministers at their ordination. Now the ministry of the Word and the sacraments has divine promises, and the prayer at ordination rests on these, but these promises are not to be tied to the rite of the imposition of hands, about which there is neither a command of Christ nor such a promise as there is about baptism and the Lord's Supper. This reminder must be added, because the papalists contend that ordination is truly and properly a sacrament of the New Testament, just as are baptism and the Lord's Supper (*Examination*, II, Ninth Topic, Section III, Kramer translation p 694-695).

e) Some Lutherans have a Romanizing view of ordination.

Grabau and the Buffalo Synod: Ordination is a part of the divine ordinance by which a person is legitimately taken into the ministry ("3rd Synodical Report, p 7).

David Scaer (LCMS): I personally find it very difficult to designate as a human rite or adiaphoron any ceremony in which God is the Giver and the Holy Spirit is the recipient [sic], which can only be administered under certain stringent conditions, which carries with it a threat, which makes the acting participant in the rite responsible for the activities of the recipient of the rite, and which gives the recipient a gift which remains (*Ordination: Divine Rite or Human Ordinance*, p 12).

Office of the Church: An Orientation by the theological commission of SELK (1995): [Christ] himself calls into this office even today through his church by the rite of ordination (p 20). He irreversibly takes the office-holder with his whole life for this charge (p 20). In ordination, the ordinand receives the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands to equip him for ministry. This petitioned gift is effectively given, not simply prayed for (p 23).

Adolf Hoenecke: Many Lutherans walk in the footsteps of the papacy when they take away from the church the right to call and have the preacher become a preacher through ordination as a sacrament, not through the call. That is what they do when...to a greater or lesser degree, they ascribe to ordination decisive importance and efficacy, so only through ordination does anyone become a pastor. Their reason is that the office actually rest with the incumbents of the office, and thus they are the ones who confer it on the called person. In this connection several go so far as to attribute to ordination sacramental value and the effect of impressing on the recipient a permanent mark (*ELD*, IV, p 204).

D6. The Antichrist

D6, I. Holy Scripture prophesies the coming of antichrists and one great Antichrist.

D6, I, 1. Adversaries of Christ will arise.

a) All people are either friends or opponents of Christ.

Matthew 12:30 He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.
Parallel Luke 11: 23

b) Included among the enemies of Christ are some people who are externally members of the church.

1) Heretics and schismatics, who divide the church.

Titus 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

Matthew 7:15 Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

1 Timothy 1:3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

2) Unionists and syncretists, who mix false doctrine with the truth.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." ¹⁷ "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

Jude 4, 12-13 For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. ¹² These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. ¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

Exodus 23:32,33 Do not make a covenant with them or with their gods. ³³ Do not let them live in your land, or they will cause you to sin against me, because the worship of their gods will certainly be a snare to you.

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

3) Pseudo-Christ, who claim to be Christ.

Matthew 24:5,24 For many will come in my name, claiming, "I am the Christ" and will deceive many. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. Parallel Mark 13:22.

Luke 21:8 He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them."

4) Antichrists, who usurp Christ's place.

1 John 2:18,22 Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ²² Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3 But every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

2 John 7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

c) **They oppose Christ while pretending to preach his name.**

1) **Christ's instructions are to hold to the truth.**

Matthew 28:20 [Teach] them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

John 8:31,32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

2) **Their methods spread falsehood.**

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

D6, I, 2. One of these enemies is called the Antichrist *par excellence*.

a) **He is clearly distinguished from ordinary antichrists.**

1 John 2:18 Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist (ἀντίχριστος, no article, capitalization added) is coming (ἔρχεται), even now many antichrists have come (γεγόνασιν). This is how we know it is the last hour.

Hollaz: The name "antichrist" is used 1) in a general way for any heretics who disseminate doctrines that are false and opposed to the doctrine of Christ and stubbornly fight for these.... These are commonly called "little antichrists" and 2) in a special way and κατ' ἐξοχήν for that outstanding adversary of Christ ... whom for the sake of differentiation we call "the great Antichrist" (*Exam.* Pt III, Sect. II, Cap.X, p 1270).

Note: The decision to favor John's name "Antichrist" rather than Paul's name "Man of Sin" was made by the early church fathers.

b) **The Antichrist is presented under various names.**

1) **He is called the Man of Sin or Lawlessness.**

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, ² not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness [variant: sin] is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵ Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? ⁶ And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷ For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

2) **More figuratively, he is described as the Little Horn, the King of the North, the Beast, and the Great Prostitute.**

Daniel 7, selected verses: ⁷ After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully. ¹¹ Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. ¹² (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.) ¹⁶ I approached one of those standing there and asked him the true meaning of all this. So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ "The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth." ¹⁹ Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws—the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. ²⁰ I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the

other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully. ²¹ As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. ²³ He gave me this explanation: “The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. ²⁵ He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. ²⁶ But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.”

Daniel 11, selected verses: ¹¹ Then the king of the South will march out in a rage and fight against the king of the North, who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated. ¹³ For the king of the North will muster another army, larger than the first; and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped. ¹⁵ Then the king of the North will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a fortified city. The forces of the South will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand. ...³⁶The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. ³⁷ He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. ³⁸ Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. ³⁹ He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. ⁴⁰ At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. ⁴¹ He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. ⁴² He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. ⁴³ He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission. ⁴⁴ But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵ He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

Revelation 13:11-18: Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. ¹² He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³ And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. ¹⁴ Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹⁵ He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. ¹⁶ He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, ¹⁷ so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. ¹⁸ This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man’s number. His number is 666.

Revelation 17:1-18: One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters. ² With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.” ³ Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. ⁵ This title was written on her forehead: Mystery Babylon The Great The Mother Of Prostitutes And Of The Abominations Of The Earth. ⁶ I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished. ⁷ Then the angel said to me: “Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns. ⁸ The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come. ⁹ “This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. ¹⁰ They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while. ¹¹ The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and

is going to his destruction. ¹² “The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. ¹³ They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.” ¹⁵ Then the angel said to me, “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. ¹⁶ The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God’s words are fulfilled. ¹⁸ The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”

D6, II. The Pope in Rome is the prophesied Antichrist.

D6, II, 1. He shows the characteristics by which Antichrist is to be known.

a) He is a “man of sin.”

1) Paul calls the Antichrist: “man of sin/man of lawlessness,” “son of perdition.”

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας, ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀμαρτίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας

2) His sin is not ordinary sin.

-a) It is a “falling away,” rebellion (ἀποστασία) against the revealed truth. He is against Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

-b) It is a usurpation of divine authority. He takes Christ’s place.

Note: The Greek preposition ἄντι not only means “against” but also “instead of,” so that “Antichrist” denotes both an enemy of Christ and a “substitute Christ.”

-1) The Antichrist opposes Christ in both church and state.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God (ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεόν) or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

-2) His main sphere of operation, however, is the church.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple (εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ), proclaiming himself to be God.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?

2 Corinthians 6:16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

-c) His is a rebellion in which he acts like God.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God (ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶν θεός).

Compare Ezekiel 28:2 Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘In the pride of your heart you say, “I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas.” But you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god.’”

Smalcald Articles, Tractate, 40: Moreover, it is manifest, in the first place, that the Pope rules in the Church, and by the pretext of ecclesiastical authority and of the ministry has established for himself this kingdom. For he assigns as a pretext these words: “I will give to you the keys.” Secondly, the doctrine of the Pope conflicts in many ways with the gospel, and thirdly the Pope assumes to himself divine authority in a threefold manner. First, because he takes to himself the right to change the doctrine of Christ and services instituted by God, and wants his own doctrine and his own services to be observed as divine; secondly, because he takes to himself the power not only of binding and loosing in this life, but also the jurisdiction over souls after this life; thirdly, because the Pope does not want to be judged by the church or by any one, and puts his own authority ahead of the decision of councils and the entire church. But to be unwilling to be judged by the church or by any one is to make oneself God.

b) These passages paint a portrait of the pope.

1) He is a man of sin.

-a) The secret of his power is the sin-troubled conscience.

-b) **Instead of relieving consciences, he fastens burdens on them by his false doctrines of justification, repentance, purgatory, etc.**

-c) **He increases sin by burdening consciences with his ordinances and prohibitions.**

1 Timothy 4:1-3 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ² Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

-d) **He is thus the archtypical representative of the sin-principle in humanity—negatively as unbelief, positively as *opinio legis*.**

2) **The pope's sin is apostasy.**

-a) **He curses justification by grace alone by faith alone, the central doctrine of the gospel.**

Council of Trent. Sess. VI, Can. 11: If anyone says that men are justified either alone by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, or alone by the remission of sins, to the exclusion of that grace and love, which is infused into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and inheres in them, or that the grace by which we are justified is only the favor of God, let him be damned.

-b) **The pope claims to be Christ's vicar (substitute) on earth.**

-1) **Christ emphatically taught the brotherhood of all Christians.**

Matthew 23:8-12 But you are not to be called "Rabbi," for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹ And do not call anyone on earth "father," for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰ Nor are you to be called "teacher," for you have one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Mark 9:33-35 They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. ³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Mark 10:42-45 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Parallel Luke 22:24-26

-2) **The pope contends that he is supreme and infallible.**

Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Cp. 1: [He is] himself the vicar of God on earth.

Tridentine Profession of Faith (1564): I acknowledge the Holy and Apostolic Roman Church as the mother and teacher of all churches, and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman pope as the successor of blessed Peter, prince of apostles, and the vicar of (substitute for) Jesus Christ.

Vatican I, Decree on Primacy (1870): And so, if any one says that the Roman pontiff has only the office of inspection or direction, but not the full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church, not only in matters that pertain to faith and morals, but also in matters that pertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the whole world, or if anyone says that he has only a more important part and not the complete fullness of this supreme power; or if anyone says that this power is not ordinary and immediate either over each and every Church or over each and every one of the pastors and the faithful: let him be anathema.

Vatican II: All this teaching about the institution, the perpetuity, the force and reason for the sacred primacy of the Roman pontiff and of his infallible teaching authority, this sacred Synod again proposes to be firmly believed by all the faithful. (*Documents*, p 38).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Par. 882: The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter's successor, is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful. "For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.

Par. 883: The college or body of bishops has no authority unless united with the Roman Pontiff, Peter's successor, as its head. As such, this college has supreme and full authority

over the universal Church; but this power cannot be exercised without the agreement of the Roman Pontiff.

-c) The pope claims infallibility in decreeing articles of faith and rules of conduct as a divine prerogative.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Par. 891: The Roman Pontiff, head of the college of bishops, enjoys this infallibility in virtue of his office, when, as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful who confirms his brethren in the faith, he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals.... The infallibility promised to the Church is also present in the body of bishops when, together with Peter's successor, they exercise the supreme Magisterium, above all in an Ecumenical Council. When the Church through its supreme Magisterium proposes a doctrine for belief as being divinely revealed, and as the teaching of Christ, the definitions must be adhered to with the obedience of faith. This infallibility extends as far as the deposit of divine Revelation itself. Par. 892: Divine assistance is also given to the successors of the apostles, teaching in communion with the successor of Peter, and, in a particular way, to the bishop of Rome, pastor of the whole Church, when, without arriving at an infallible definition and without pronouncing in a "definitive manner," they propose in the exercise of the ordinary Magisterium a teaching that leads to better understanding of Revelation in matters of faith and morals. To this ordinary teaching the faithful are to adhere to it with religious assent which, though distinct from the assent of faith, is nonetheless an extension of it.

Note: The Orthodox Church makes the same claims of hierarchical supremacy and infallibility for its bishops and patriarchs, who are antichrists.

Timothy Ware (Kallistos): Unlike Protestantism, Orthodoxy insists upon the hierarchical structure of the Church, upon the Apostolic Succession, the episcopate, and the priesthood; it asks the saints for their prayers and intercedes for the departed. Thus far Rome and Orthodoxy agree—but where Rome thinks in terms of the supremacy and the universal jurisdiction of the Pope, Orthodoxy thinks in terms of the five Patriarchs and of the Ecumenical council; where Rome stresses papal infallibility, Orthodox stress the infallibility of the Church as a whole (*The Orthodox Church*, p 239).

The Orthodox Church is a hierarchical Church. An essential element in its structure is the Apostolic Succession of bishops. "The dignity of the bishop is so necessary in the Church," wrote Dositheus, "that without him neither the Church nor the name Christian could exist or be spoken of at all. . . . He is a living image of God on earth. . . and a fountain of all the sacraments of the catholic church, through which we obtain salvation." "If any are not with the bishop," said Cyprian, "they are not in the Church." At his election and consecration an Orthodox bishop is endowed with the threefold power of (1) ruling, (2) teaching, and (3) celebrating the sacraments (*The Orthodox Church*, p 248-249).

-d) The pope demands submission to himself under penalty of eternal damnation. He claims that the Catholic Church is the only church in which one can be saved.

Boniface VIII (*Unam Sanctam*, 1302): We are compelled with a firm faith to believe [in] the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church itself and to hold that . . . outside of it there is no salvation or remission of sins.... Furthermore we declare, say, define and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human being should be subject to the Roman pope.

Dominus Jesus (2000): Section 17. Therefore, there exists a single Church of Christ, which subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him. The Churches which, while not existing in perfect communion with the Catholic Church, remain united to her by means of the closest bonds, that is, by apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist, are true particular Churches. Therefore, the Church of Christ is present and operative also in these Churches, even though they lack full communion with the Catholic Church, since they do not accept the Catholic doctrine of the Primacy, which, according to the will of God, the Bishop of Rome objectively has and exercises over the entire Church. On the other hand, the ecclesial communities which have not preserved the valid Episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic mystery, are not Churches in the proper sense; however, those who are baptized in these communities are, by Baptism, incorporated in Christ and thus are in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the Church.

D6, II, 2. The history of the papacy corresponds to the outline given by Paul regarding the Antichrist.

a) Paul mentions various stages.

1) They are:

- a) Secret beginnings in Paul's own day.**
- b) Emerging to an open display of power.**
- c) Serious setback.**
- d) Destruction at the Lord's coming.**

2 Thessalonians 2: 7,8 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

- 2) **Compare the development of the papacy:**
 - a) **Gradual acceptance and operativeness of hierarchical and popish ideas without a dominant pope.**
 - b) **Emerging from the shadow of the Roman Emperor and successful struggle against the Holy Roman Emperor for supremacy.**
 - c) **Set back by secession of East and by Luther's Reformation.**
 - d) **Survival after the Reformation.**
- b) **Paul mentions lies as the Antichrist's chief source of strength.**
 - 1) **The Antichrist's coming is:**
 - a) **In accordance with the working of Satan.**
 - b) **Achieved through counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders.**
 - c) **And through deceit of unrighteousness.**

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.
 - 2) **The history of the papacy is one of lies.**
 - a) **He tells not only comparatively small lies: historical falsifications, forgeries, pseudo-documents, such as the Donation of Constantine, an 8th century forgery, in which Constantine allegedly transfers ecclesiastical and temporal power to the pope..**

The Donation of Constantine: ... We ordain and decree that he shall have the supremacy as well over the four chief seats Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Jerusalem, as also over all the churches of God in the whole world....In imitation of our own power, in order that for that cause the supreme pontificate may not deteriorate, but may rather be adorned with power and glory even more than is the dignity of an earthly rule, behold we are giving over to the oft-mentioned most blessed pontiff, our father Sylvester the universal pope, both our palace, as has been said, and also the city of Rome and all the provinces, districts and cities of Italy or of the western regions, and we are relinquishing them by our inviolable gift to the power and sway of himself or to the pontiffs his successors do decree, by this our godlike charter and imperial constitution, that it shall be so arranged; and do concede that these possessions shall lawfully remain with the holy Roman church.
 - b) **But especially the satanic lie that a sinner is saved by his own efforts.**

D6, II, 3. Many in the church recognized the Pope as the fulfiller of the prophecies of the Antichrist even before the Reformation.

Arnulf of Rheims, Bishop of Orleans (991 A.D.), Gallican Synod, protested against papal corruption and said: "What would you say of such a one, when you behold him sitting upon the throne glittering in purple and gold? Must he not be the 'Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God'?" (Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. IV, pp 290–291).

Philip Schaff: As for the papacy, no one has used more stinging words against individual popes as well as against the papacy as an institution than did Wyclif (1324–1384). In the treatises of his last years and in his sermons, the pope is stigmatized as anti-Christ. His very last work, on which he was engaged when death overtook him, bore the title, "Anti-christ, meaning the pope." He went so far as to call him the head-vicar of the fiend. He saw in the papacy the revelation of the man of sin. The office is wholly poisonous—*totum papale officium venenosum*. (*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. VI, p 332).

Dante (ca. 1321): Of such as you was the Evangelist's vision
when he saw her who sits on many waters
locked with the kings of the earth in fornication....
Gold and silver are the gods you adore!
In what are you different from the idolator,
save that he worships one, you a score.
Ah Constantine, what evil mark the hour—
not of your conversions, but of the fee
the first rich Father took from you in dower (*Inferno*, XIX, 100-111).

D6, II, 4. Many object to the identification of the pope as the Antichrist.

Objection a) Since he is called a king, the Antichrist must be a political oppressor like Nero, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, or an end-time figure, because rebellion is spoken of.

Response: Paul speaks of an apostasy and of spiritual tyranny.

Response: The Pope has been a political oppressor and persecutor and is still a head of state.

2 Thessalonians 2:4, 9-12 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

Objection b) The Antichrist must be an individual because Paul speaks of him in the singular, as a man of lawlessness.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

Response: Paul speaks of secret beginnings in his own day, and yet places the destruction at the end of the world. This cannot refer just to the lifetime of one person.

Response: Paul speaks also of the power which checks the rise of the Antichrist as a person of his day (ὁ κατέχων = the Roman emperor or perhaps the Christians by the Word), yet Paul also speaks of this person as an institution (τὸ κατέχον = what is holding him back, the empire or the church).

2 Thessalonians 2:6-8 And now you know *what is holding him back*, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷ For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but *the one who now holds it back* will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. For the secret power of lawlessness is *already at work*; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy *by the splendor of his coming*.

Response: These considerations show that the names are to be understood as collective nouns denoting an institution led by an individual. We may say the Antichrist is the pope or the papacy.

Daniel 7:17 The four great beasts are four kingdoms [Aramaic="kings"] that will rise from the earth.

Objection c) The pope cannot be the Antichrist because there is not a complete "falling away." The Roman Catholic Church adheres to many fundamental articles, for example the Trinity, the person and natures of Christ.

Response: This agrees with the statement of Paul that the Antichrist "sits in the temple of God."

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Response: When justification by grace is rejected, such articles as those mentioned cannot save a sinner.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Objection d) The papacy cannot be the "man of sin" because some popes were pious men.

Response: Pharisaism, externally righteous, was the most bitter opponent of Jesus.

Response: Paul calls special attention to the deceptiveness of Antichrist.

2 Thessalonians 2:9,10 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵ It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

Response: Many popes were openly wicked men.

Objection e) At least, this must not be preached as an article of faith. It is at most an open question or “historical judgment.”

Iowa Synod, Madison Declaration, 3: In regard to the Antichrist all true Lutherans should agree with the judgment expressed in the Confessions of our Church that the character of the papacy is antichristian. But we cannot declare the statement: “The Pope is the Antichrist” to be a doctrine of faith and cannot make it a condition of church fellowship to find the final and complete fulfillment of the prophecy, 2 Thess. 2, in the Pope (*Quellen und Dokumente*, p 332).

Charles Arand, LCMS: We must be cautious about making an absolute once-and-for-all times, never to be altered verdict. The identification of the papacy as the Antichrist in the confessions takes place in an apocalyptic climate in which the Reformers also considered other candidates for the title of the Antichrist, the most prominent of which was the Turks (*Concordia Journal*, Oct. 2003, p 402).

-First reason: Because the name Pope is not mentioned.

Response: Note the nature of prophecies. The Messiah is not named as Jesus of Nazareth in the Old Testament, but we can recognize that Jesus fits the marks.

Acts 18:28 For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

-Second reason. When did this become an article of faith? Paul himself places the identification of Antichrist in the future.

Response: When did it/does it become an article of faith that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ?

Matthew 11:2-4 When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” ⁴ Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.”

D6, II, 5. Confessional Lutherans therefore hold, before God and the church, that the pope is the very Antichrist.

a) Roman Catholics naturally deny the antichristian character of the Roman pontificate.

Bellarmino: With very great lack of shame the heretics declare the Roman pope to be the Antichrist (*Disputations*, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. I, 5, p. 392).

1) Some Catholics hold the preterist view also held by liberals: Nero or some other figure in “John’s” day was the Antichrist (Luis de Alcazar of Spain, d. 1613)

2) Some hold the futurist view held by millennialists: the Antichrist is an individual who will appear shortly before the return of Christ is the Antichrist (Francisco Ribera of Spain, d. 1591).

b) Lutheran statements identify the pope as the Antichrist.

Apology XV (VIII), p 318, 18: And what need is there of words on a subject so manifest? If the adversaries defend these human services as meriting justification, grace, and the remission of sins, they simply establish the kingdom of Antichrist. For the kingdom of Antichrist is a new service of God, devised by human authority rejecting Christ, just as the kingdom of Mohammed has services and works through which it wishes to be justified before God; nor does it hold that men are gratuitously justified before God by faith, for Christ’s sake. Thus the Papacy also will be a part of the kingdom of Antichrist if it thus defends human services as justifying.

Smalcald Articles, II, IV, p 474, 10-14 This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained nor commanded by God. ¹¹ This is, properly speaking to exalt himself above all that is called God as Paul says, 2 Thess. 2:4, Even the Turks or the Tartars, great enemies of Christians as they are, do not do this, but they allow whoever wishes to believe in Christ, and take bodily tribute and obedience from Christians. ¹² The Pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that to be saved a person must obey him. This we are unwilling to do, even though on this account we must die in God’s name. ¹³ This all proceeds from the fact that the Pope has wished to be called the supreme head of the Christian church by divine right. Accordingly he had to make himself equal and superior to Christ, and had to cause himself to be proclaimed the head and then the lord of the church, and finally of the whole world, and simply God on earth, until he has dared to issue commands even to the angels in heaven. ¹⁴ And when we distinguish the Pope’s teaching from, or measure and hold it against, Holy Scripture, it appears plainly that the Pope’s teaching, where it is best, has been taken from the imperial and heathen law and treats of political matters and decisions or rights, as the Decretals show; furthermore, it teaches of ceremonies concerning churches, garments, food, persons and similar puerile, theatrical, and comical things without measure, but in all these things nothing at all of Christ, faith, and the commandments of God. Lastly, it is nothing else than the devil himself, because above and against God he urges and disseminates his papal falsehoods concerning masses, purgatory, the monastic life, one’s own works and fictitious divine worship, upon each of which the Papacy is altogether founded and

is standing, and condemns, murders and tortures all Christians who do not exalt and honor these abominations of the Pope above all things. Therefore, just as little as we can worship the devil himself as Lord and God, we can endure his apostle, the Pope, or Antichrist, in his rule as head or lord. For to lie and to kill, and to destroy body and soul eternally, that is wherein his papal government really consists, as I have very clearly shown in many books.

Smalcald Articles, Tractate, p 514, 39-41 Now, it is manifest that the Roman pontiffs, with their adherents, defend and practice godless doctrines and godless services. And the marks all the vices of Antichrist plainly agree with the kingdom of the Pope and his adherents. For Paul, in describing Antichrist to the Thessalonians, calls him in 2 Thess. 2:3, an adversary of Christ, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he as God sits in the temple of God. He speaks therefore of one ruling in the church, not of heathen kings, and he calls this one the adversary of Christ, because he will devise doctrine conflicting with the Gospel, and will assume to himself divine authority. ^{40]} Moreover, it is manifest, in the first place, that the Pope rules in the church, and by the pretext of ecclesiastical authority and of the ministry has established for himself this kingdom. For he assigns as a pretext these words: I will give to you the keys. Secondly, the doctrine of the Pope conflicts in many ways with the Gospel, and thirdly, the Pope assumes to himself divine authority in a threefold manner. First, because he takes to himself the right to change the doctrine of Christ and services instituted by God, and wants his own doctrine and his own services to be observed as divine; secondly, because he takes to himself the power not only of binding and loosing in this life, but also the jurisdiction over souls after this life; thirdly, because the Pope does not want to be judged by the church or by any one, and puts his own authority ahead of the decision of Councils and the entire church. But to be unwilling to be judged by the church or by any one is to make oneself God. Lastly, these errors so horrible, and this impiety, he defends with the greatest cruelty, and puts to death those dissenting. ^{41]} This being the case, all Christians ought to beware of becoming partakers of the godless doctrine, blasphemies, and unjust cruelty of the Pope. On this account they ought to desert and execrate the Pope with his adherents as the kingdom of Antichrist; just as Christ has commanded, Matt. 7:15, Beware of false prophets. And Paul commands that godless teachers should be avoided and execrated as cursed, Gal. 1:8; Titus 3:10. And he says, 2 Cor. 6:14: Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what communion has light with darkness?

Quenstedt: These characteristics of the Antichrist must not here be considered separately and point by point but jointly and together, and when they are considered in this way they correspond exactly with the Roman pope. From this follows the conclusion: Therefore the Roman pope is that great Antichrist predicted by the Holy Spirit (*Systema*, Pt IV, chap. XIV, sect. I, thesis VIII, p 526).

“Statement on the Antichrist” adopted by representatives of the four synods of the Synodical Conference and by the Wisconsin Synod, 1959:

IV. Therefore on the basis of a renewed study of the pertinent Scriptures we reaffirm the statement of the Lutheran Confessions, that “the Pope is the very Antichrist” especially since he anathematizes the doctrine of the justification by faith alone and sets himself up as the infallible head of the church. We thereby affirm that we identify this “Antichrist” with the Papacy as it is known to us today, which shall, as 2 Thessalonians 2:8 states, continue to the end of time, whatever form or guise it may take. This neither means nor implies a blanket condemnation of all members of the Roman Catholic church, for despite all the errors taught in that church the Word of God is still heard there, and that Word is an effectual Word. ...

We reject the idea that the fulfillment of this prophecy is to be sought in the workings of any merely secular political power (2 Th 2:4; cf. *Treatise on the Power and the Primacy of the Pope* 39).

We reject the idea that the teaching that the Papacy is the Antichrist rests on a merely human interpretation of history or is an open question. We hold rather that this teaching rests on the revelation of God in Scripture which finds its fulfillment in history. The Holy Spirit reveals this fulfillment to the eyes of faith (cf. *The Abiding Word*, Vol. 2, p. 764). Since Scripture teaches that the Antichrist would be revealed and gives the marks by which the Antichrist is to be recognized (2 Th 2:6,8), and since this prophecy has been clearly fulfilled in the history and development of the Roman Papacy, it is Scripture which reveals that the Papacy is the Antichrist (*Doctrinal Statements*, p 22).

c) Lutherans were not alone in this confession.

Westminster Confession, XXV vi (1646): There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the pope in Rome be in any sense the head thereof, but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition.

Hodge: The common opinion, however, among Protestants is that the prophecies concerning Antichrist have special reference to the papacy (*Systematic Theology*, p 813)

D6, III. The proper way of opposing the Antichrist is proclaiming the gospel.

D6, III, 1. A Christian cannot be indifferent about the Antichrist.

a) The danger posed by the Antichrist demands our attention.

- 1) Although not Satan himself or an incarnation of him, the Antichrist is an agent of Satan.**
- 2) He is doing many counterfeit miracles.**

3) His doctrine is highly deceptive.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

b) A Christian's faith impels him to act.

1) He gratefully acknowledges God's grace in his own election.

2 Thessalonians 2:13,14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2) He recognizes in the Antichrist a judgment of God for indifference.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

3) This impels him to work out his own salvation with "fear and trembling."

2 Thessalonians 2:15-17 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. ¹⁶ May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

1 John 2:24,28 See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁸ And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

2 Peter 1:10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall,

c) The doctrine about the Antichrist is not a matter of concern only for advanced Christians. Paul taught the Thessalonians about him when they were new to the faith.

1) Knowledge of the truth that the pope in Rome is the Antichrist is not essential to salvation.

-a) The Antichrist has his throne in the very temple of God, that is, in the hearts and consciences of Christians.

-b) Hence some Christians remain Christians although they submit to the yoke of the Antichrist.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

2) Yet the absolute antagonism of the antichristian principles to Christian faith can be felt even by a beginner in the faith.

2 Thessalonians 2:5 Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?

Francis Pieper: Does the doctrine that the Pope is the Antichrist belong to the "fundamental articles" of the Christian faith? It certainly does not, for a person is a Christian solely through his knowledge of Christ and not his knowledge of the Antichrist. Before and after the unveiling of the Antichrist there have been many sincere Christians who have not recognized the Pope as the Antichrist. But every teacher in the Christian Church who is familiar with the historical phenomenon called the Papacy and still does not recognize in this Papacy the Antichrist prophesied in 2 Thessalonians 2 is weak in Christian theology (*Christian Dogmatics*, III, p 469).

D6, III, 2. The only effective weapon against the Antichrist (the pope) is the gospel.

a) The Antichrist (the pope) is a political and a spiritual oppressor.

1) He is a political oppressor.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Revelation 17 selected verses: ²With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries." ⁶I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. ¹¹The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction. ¹⁵Then the angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. ¹⁶The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until

God's words are fulfilled. ¹⁸ The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth."

Gregory VII (1073–1085) *Dictatus*: ¹²That he has the right to depose emperors. ²⁷. That he can release citizens from obedience to wicked [rulers].

2) However, the pope's stronghold is the Christian heart.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

3) Therefore, in order to defeat him decisively we must dislodge him from the hearts. Political victory may spell actual defeat by drawing the attention away from the main issue and leading to carnal security—or to the opposite, despair.

b) There is but one instrument to liberate the heart.

1) This is the truth of the gospel.

John 8:31,32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

2) This must be constantly applied to our own hearts.

2 Thessalonians 2:5,6,16,17 Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? ⁶ And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ¹⁶ May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

1 John 2:24-28 See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is what he promised us—even eternal life. ²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him. ²⁸ And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

3) The gospel must be used in the spirit of prayer.

2 Thessalonians 2:13,16,17 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁶ May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

4) The gospel must be witnessed to the world for salvation and also for freedom from the Antichrist.

2 Thessalonians 2:5 Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?

2 Thessalonians 3:1,2 Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. ² And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.

Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

E. ESCHATOLOGY / General Remarks

Our salvation will not be fully experienced in this life, but its consummation is reserved for a future life. When we describe the blessings we receive through Christ, there is a tension between “the already” and “the not yet.” We can say that we receive “salvation” at Calvary, in our baptism, at our death, and on the last day.

Liberal eschatology is realized in the past or present either through inner existential meaning or through outward liberation of society.

Dispensational eschatology takes place entirely in a future age.

Biblical eschatology involves both the “already” and the “not yet” of our salvation.

E, 1. The life to come will be radically different from our present life.

a) In this present life our joy is not complete.

1) We indeed have perfect justification, adoption, and so on.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:1,2 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Ephesians 2:6 God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

2) Other phases of the *ordo salutis*, however, are far from perfect.

-a) Our sanctification is incomplete.

Romans 7:18,19 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.

Galatians 5:17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

Philippians 3:12-14 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

-b) Our joy is exposed to attack, and it is mingled with fear.

John 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Acts 14:22. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; ⁵ in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; ⁶ in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; ⁷ in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸ through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; ⁹ known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

b) The conditions and manner of the life to come will be very different.

1) We are at present not equipped to share the future life.

1 Corinthians 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

1 Corinthians 15:50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

2 Corinthians 12:4 [He] was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.

2) We will be changed.

Luke 20:34-36 Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, ³⁶ and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.”

1 Corinthians 15:42-44,50 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁵⁰ I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

E, 2. We are taught to hope for complete salvation in the life to come.

a) Building this hope is the chief purpose of the doctrine of eschatology.

1) Our curiosity would like a full description of the future life.

-a) But we lack the experience needed to understand fully the last things.

2 Corinthians 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known.

-b) Hence we must exercise great moderation in our statements about eschatology.

Acts 1:7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority."

Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

2 Corinthians 12:4 He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.

2) Nevertheless, we need this hope to face death.

-a) Death is not the end of our existence.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

1 Corinthians 15:32 If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

-b) There is a future life with full salvation.

Matthew 24:13 He who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Luke 21:28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

2 Timothy 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

b) This hope strengthens us in our Christian life.

1) It strengthens us in earnest endeavors in sanctification.

Matthew 24:42 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

Parallel Matthew 25:13

Luke 21:34-36 Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.

2 Peter 3:11-12 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

2) It strengthens us in patience and endurance.

Luke 21:19 By standing firm you will gain life.

Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

3) It strengthens us in comfort.

1 Thessalonians 4:13,18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Matthew 24:22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

4) It strengthens us in greater zeal in mission work.

Acts 1:7,8,11 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Matthew 24:14,45-51 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. ⁴⁵ Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, "My master is staying away a long time," ⁴⁹ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. ⁵⁰ The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. ⁵¹ He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

E1. Death

E1, I. Temporal death is the separation of the soul from the body.

E1, I, 1. The word “death” occurs in Scripture in various meanings.

a) It is used figuratively in connection with spiritual life and death.

1) It may refer to the spiritual life of Christians: dead to sin, that is separated from sin.

Romans 6:2,11 We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Romans 7:1-4 Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? ² For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³

So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man. ⁴ So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.

Galatians 2:19 For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God.

Colossians 2:20 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules.

Galatians 6:14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

2) It may refer to the spiritual condition of unbelievers: dead in sin, separated from God’s grace.

Genesis 2:17 You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.

Ephesians 2:5 [God] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ.

1 Timothy 5:6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

3) It may refer to the condition of those in hell: the second death, eternal death, eternal separation from God’s grace.

Revelation 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Revelation 20:14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

b) It may refer to bodily death.

1) “Death” is used literally: of physical death, the separation of body and soul.

Genesis 5:5,8,11 Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died. ⁸Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died. ¹¹ Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died. Etc.

2) It is used metonymically, for the condition of death or as a personification.

Hosea 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?

1 Corinthians 15:54,55 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

Revelation 20:13,14 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

Romans 5:12,14 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

E1, I, 2. Other terms (euphemisms, circumlocutions, and metaphors) are used for physical death.

a) Being gathered to one’s people or gathered to one’s fathers.

Genesis 25:8,17 Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people. ¹⁷ Altogether, Ishmael lived a hundred and thirty-seven years. He breathed his last and died, and he was gathered to his people.

Genesis 15:15 You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a good old age.

Genesis 49:33 When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

b) Going the way of all the earth.

1 Kings 2:2 "I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, show yourself a man."
Joshua 23:14 Now I am about to go the way of all the earth.

c) The end.

Matthew 10:22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.
Parallel Matthew 24:13

Hebrews 11:22 By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.

d) Departing.

Luke 2:29 Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.

Philippians 1:23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart (ἀναλῦσαι) and be with Christ, which is better by far.

2 Timothy 4:6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure (ἀναλύσεως).

2 Peter 1:13-15 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, ¹⁴ because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ¹⁵ And I will make every effort to see that after my departure (ἔξοδον) you will always be able to remember these things.

2 Corinthians 5:4,8 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

e) Going to the eternal home.

Ecclesiastes 12:5 When men are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets; when the almond tree blossoms and the grasshopper drags himself along and desire no longer is stirred, then man goes to his eternal home and mourners go about the streets.

f) Sleep (of the body not the soul).

1) "Sleep" or "rest" refers to death in general, especially of believers.

כִּנְיָ (LXX, κοιμάμαι):

Deuteronomy 31:16 And the LORD said to Moses: "You are going to rest with your fathers."

2 Samuel 7:12 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom.

1 Kings 2:10 Then David rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. 1 Kings 11:43 Then [Solomon] rested with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king. Also 1 Kings 14:20,31, 1 Kings 15:8,24

יָשָׁן (LXX, ὑπνῶω):

Job 3:13 For now I would be lying down in peace; I would be asleep and at rest.

Psalms 13:4(3) Look on me and answer, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death.

Jeremiah 51:39,57 "But while they are aroused, I will set out a feast for them and make them drunk, so that they shout with laughter— then sleep forever and not awake," declares the LORD. ⁵⁷ "I will make her officials and wise men drunk, her governors, officers and warriors as well; they will sleep forever and not awake," declares the King, whose name is the LORD Almighty.

2) "Sleep" may also refer to the death of the wicked.

1 Kings 16:6,28 Baasha rested with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah. And Elah his son succeeded him as king. ²⁸ Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. And Ahab his son succeeded him as king. 1 Kings 22:40 Ahab rested with his fathers. And Ahaziah his son succeeded him as king.

2 Kings 21:18 Manasseh rested [slept] with his fathers and was buried in his palace garden, the garden of Uzza. 2 Chronicles 33:12-20 v12-18 describe Manasseh's repentance. ¹⁹ His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty, as well as all his sins and unfaithfulness, and the sites where he built high places and set up Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself—all are written in the records of the seers. ²⁰ Manasseh rested with his fathers and was buried in his palace. And Amon his son succeeded him as king.

3) The point of comparison is the awakening in the resurrection.

Mark 5:39 He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." Parallel Luke 8:52,53

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep (יָשָׁן) in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

1 Thessalonians 4:13,14 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

E1, I, 3. Death is the tearing apart of the human being, the separation of body and soul.

Note that the NIV is not consistent in its renderings of the various words for soul or spirit, which can sometimes also mean "life" or "breath." In the original, all of the following passages

refer to the departure or loss of “soul” or “spirit.” Review the study of these words at pages 362-369 of the middler dogmatics notes.

a) **At death the soul/spirit leaves the body.**

Ecclesiastes 12:7 The dust returns to the ground it came from, and *the spirit returns* to God who gave it.
Genesis 35:18 As she *breathed her last*—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. But his father named him Benjamin.

Matthew 27:50 When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he *gave up his spirit*.

Luke 12:20 But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your *life will be demanded* from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?”

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and *gave up his spirit*.

Acts 5:5,10 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and *died*. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. ¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and *died*. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

Psalms 31:5 Into your hands I *commit my spirit*; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth.

Luke 23:46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I *commit my spirit*.” When he had said this, he *breathed his last*.

Acts 7:59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, *receive my spirit*.”

1 Kings 17:21 Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried to the LORD, “O LORD my God, let this boy’s *life* return to him!”

Luke 8:55 *Her spirit returned*, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat.

Quenstedt: “Death,” understood literally, means the separation of the soul from the body and the loss of animate life. To it all, both good and bad, are ordinarily subject. And this is what it means here (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XVI, sect. I, thesis VI, p 535).

b) **Death is not annihilation.**

1) **The body disintegrates, but it is not lost.**

Genesis 3:19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.

Isaiah 26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice.

Job 19:26 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God.

2) **The soul will continue to exist. In this sense, it is “immortal.”**

-a) **Scripture clearly states this continued existence.**

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. ⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ We live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Luke 23:43 Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Philippians 1:23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

-b) **Among those who deny this truth are Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, liberal Lutherans, and some Evangelicals.**

Jehovah’s Witnesses: The dead are shown to be “conscious of nothing at all,” and the death state is one of complete inactivity (Ec. 9:5,10, Ps 146:4)... In both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures death is likened to a sleep, a fitting comparison not only because of the unconscious condition of the dead but also because of the hope of awakening through the resurrection (*Insight on the Scriptures*, I, 1988, p 597). When a person is dead, he is completely out of existence. He is not conscious of anything (*You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, 1982, p 88).

Seventh Day Adventists: Death is not complete annihilation; it is only a state of temporary unconsciousness while the person awaits the resurrection. The Bible repeatedly calls this intermediate state a sleep (*Seventh Day Adventists Believe*, p 352).

Samuele Bacchiocchi (Adventist): Human beings do not possess a mortal body and an immortal soul; they have a wholistic mortal body and soul which can become immortal.

Immortality or eternal life is God’s gift to those who accept His provision of salvation. Those who

reject God's plan for their salvation ultimately will experience eternal destruction, not eternal torment in an ever-burning hellfire (*Immortality or Resurrection?* p 24).

Gilbert Thiele (LCMS): We think it is consequently fair to say, to put it very bluntly, that when a man dies he is dead. The Bible when examined in its length and breadth knows of no disembodied condition in which a man lives, temporarily and certainly not permanently; it knows of neither a temporary or permanent human immortality as such ("Easter Hope," *The Seminarian*, March 1958, p 18).

Hans Schwartz (ELCA): In recent years, especially under the impact of renewed listening to the biblical documents, the idea of an immortal soul has become increasingly suspect. A human being is again seen as a unity. Karl Barth perhaps over-stated the case when he claimed that the notion of immortality is a typical thought engendered by fear. Karl Rahner put the issue more correctly when he states that there is no rectilinear continuation of our empirical reality beyond death. In this regard death puts an end to the whole man (Braaten and Jensen, *Christian Dogmatics*, II, p 566).

Ted Peters (ELCA): The Bible clearly states that we humans are mortal. We really do die and cease to exist. We will not be saved by a heroic souleectomy, that is, by extracting an immaterial soul from our material body. Sin is a cancer that eats away at the totality of human existence leaving no organ, whether physical or spiritual, uninfected. The resulting death means true extinction (*God—The World's Future*, p 323).

-c) The state of the soul between death and resurrection will be discussed in IV, p 638.

See "The Old Testament Concept of the Soul," *WLQ*, 1964, pp 33ff.

E1, II. The cause of death is sin.

E1, II, 1. The cause of death is not the composite nature of man, that is, death is not "natural," as evolutionary theory and Pelagian theology claim. This would deny the punitive character of death and violate the vicariousness of Christ's death.

Augustine: [The Pelagians] say that Adam himself would have experienced physical death even if he had not sinned. He was not mortal because of guilt but as a condition of nature (*Lib. de haereses, ad Quodvultd.*, 88).

Hans Schwartz: First, we must recognize that death is a basic order of God's creation. ... Only God is immortal and everyone else must die (1 Tim. 6:16). Even Christ became a life-giving being only through death and resurrection. Death and finitude indicate the basic difference between the Creator and the created. Thus is it difficult to think that biological death is a result of sin and the fall (Braaten and Jensen, *CD II*, p 562).

Ted Peters: It is out of love, then, that God separates Adam and Eve from the tree of life. Death is a gift of divine grace because it marks the point at which the consequences for sin come to an end. There is no suffering in the grave. Death is the door that God slams shut on evil and suffering within creation (*God—The World's Future*, p 322).

E1, II, 2. Various effective causes of death are mentioned.

a) Personal causes of death are:

1) The devil.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

2) God.

-a) By his decree.

Psalms 90:3,5,7,8 You turn men back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, O sons of men."⁵ You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning—⁷ We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. ⁸ You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.

-b) By setting a general limit on the length of human life.

Psalms 90:10 The length of our days is seventy years— or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

-c) By conditioning length of life on our conduct.

Deuteronomy 5:16 Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Parallel Exodus 20:12

Deuteronomy 4:40 Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the LORD your God gives you for all time.

Proverbs 3:1,2 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, ² for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

Isaiah 57:1,2 The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. ² Those who walk uprightly enter into peace

Leviticus 26:25 And I will bring the sword upon you to avenge the breaking of the covenant. When you withdraw into your cities, I will send a plague among you, and you will be given into enemy hands.

Psalms 55:23 But you, O God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of corruption; bloodthirsty and deceitful men will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you.

b) Physical (direct) causes of death are:

1) Internal (old age, disease)—Natural death, “wearing out”.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

2) External (accident, murder)—Violent death.

E1, II, 3. In every case sin is the underlying cause of death.

a) This is true of death in general.

Genesis 2:17 You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.

Genesis 3:3,17-19 God did say, “You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.” ¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

Numbers 16:29,30 If these men die a natural death (כָּמֹת כְּלִי-אֶדָמָה) and experience only what usually happens to men, then the LORD has not sent me. ³⁰ But if the LORD brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have treated the LORD with contempt.

Numbers 27:3 Our father died in the desert. He was not among Korah’s followers, who banded together against the LORD, but he died for his own sin and left no sons.

Psalms 90:7-9 We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. ⁸ You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. ⁹ All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan.

John 8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

b) This is true also of the vicarious death of Christ.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. Compare 2 Corinthians 5:14 For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

c) Sin is the cause of the fear and anger that death brings with it.

1 Corinthians 15:56: The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

Shakespeare/ Hamlet: To be, or not to be: that is the question:

Whether 'tis nobler in mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To Sleep? Perchance to dream! aye there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause....
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.

Dylan Thomas (d. 1953): Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

d) When the guilt of sin is removed, death is deprived of its terrors.

John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Luke 2:29 Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.

Philippians 1:21,23 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57: "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Apology, Art. VI, p 298, 56 Death itself serves this purpose, namely, to abolish this flesh of sin, that we may rise absolutely new. Neither is there now in the death of the believer, since by faith he has overcome the terrors of death, that sting and sense of wrath of which Paul speaks 1 Cor. 15:56, "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law." This strength of sin, this sense of wrath, is truly a punishment as long as it is present. Without this sense of wrath death is not properly a punishment.

Jesus Christ, my sure defense and my Savior, now is living.

Knowing this my confidence rests upon the hope he's giving,

Though the night of death be fraught still with many an anxious thought (CW 167).

E1, III. Death ends the time of grace for every person.

E1, III, 1. For the deceased the next event of importance after death is the resurrection to judgment.

Hebrews 9:27-28 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

E1, III, 2. This life is the only time for preparation.

Hebrews 3:13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

a) For the believer this time of preparation is not to be followed by another period of preparation, but by a period of fulfillment.

Luke 23:43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Philippians 1:21,23 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

Revelation 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

b) For unbelievers death is followed by final damnation.

Luke 16:22-26 The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire." ²⁵ But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us."

E1, III, 3. Objections to the finality of judgment at death are raised particularly on the basis of two passages.

a) The first is 1 Peter 3:19: "[Christ] went and preached to the spirits in prison."

1) Argument: Christ preached to the spirits in prison.

2) Response: But what was the subject of his proclamation?

-a) κηρύσσειν may refer to any sort of proclamation, not necessarily to a preaching of the gospel unto salvation.

Romans 2:21 You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal?

Galatians 5:11 Brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished.

Acts 15:21 For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

-b) According to the context, Christ's descent was a triumphal procession. He proclaimed his victory. He did not offer a second chance to believe the gospel.

1 Peter 3:18-19 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison.

Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

- b) **The second alleged support for this objection to the finality of hell is found in 1 Peter 4:6.**
- 1) **Argument:** “The gospel was preached even to those who are [now] dead” [The NIV adds the word “now” to the text—this is a correct understanding, but this word is not in the text].
 - 2) **Response:** No time is specified, yet the preaching evidently preceded their death.

E1, IV. Few details are revealed about the state of departed souls between the moment of death and final judgment. We know, however, that believers are at peace with Christ in heaven. Unbelievers suffer in hell.

E1, IV, 1. Death affects the whole person.

- a) **By creation the soul was designed to function in union with the body.**

Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

- b) **Persons are said to die.**

Genesis 2:17 But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.

Genesis 5:5,8,11, etc. Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died. ⁸Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died. ¹¹ Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

E1, IV, 2. Death is treated as a terrible reality, which even Christians may dread.

2 Samuel 22:5,6 The waves of death swirled about me; the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me. ⁶ The cords of the grave coiled around me; the snares of death confronted me.

Psalms 55:4 My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death assail me.

Matthew 26:38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

Acts 2:24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

2 Corinthians 5:2,4 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, ⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

E1, IV, 3. Dead persons are said to sleep.

Job 3:11,13 Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb? ¹³ For now I would be lying down in peace; I would be asleep and at rest.

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

1 Thessalonians 4:13,15 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁵ According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

Psalms 13:3 Look on me and answer, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death.

E1, IV, 4. Yet many passages seem to refer to awareness during a “time between” death and resurrection.

Luke 20:37,38 But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord “the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” ³⁸ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.

Revelation 6:9-10 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. ¹⁰ They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”

Revelation 20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Luke 16:22-31 selected verses: The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.... ²⁷ He answered, “Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.” ²⁹ Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.” ³⁰ “No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.” ³¹ “He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

Isaiah 24:21-22; In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days.

1 Peter 3:19 He went and preached to the spirits in prison.

2 Peter 2:9 If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

Pieper: These texts surely make it evident that the departed souls of the believers are in a state of blessed enjoyment of God, even though we know nothing further as to the manner of their blessed communion with God. Deductions from the nature of the soul, e. g., that it cannot be inactive, are uncertain and therefore not to be urged in theology. A soul sleep which excludes a blessed enjoyment of God [psychopannychism] must be definitely rejected on the basis of Phil. 1:23 and Luke 23:43. A sleep of the soul which includes enjoyment of God (says Luther) cannot be called a false doctrine (CD III, p 512).

E1, IV, 5. For practical purposes, since no change of spiritual condition is possible after death, the end of our earthly life bring us to the day of judgment.

a) Scripture speaks of an immediacy of judgment as well as of an immediate enjoyment of glory or an immediate suffering of damnation.

1 Corinthians 1:8 He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Hebrews 9:27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...

Luke 23:43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Philippians 1:23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.

Revelation 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Luke 16:22-24 "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."

Acts 1:25 ...this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.

b) The attention of Christians, therefore, is constantly directed to the coming of the Lord.

1) Their hopes will then be fulfilled.

1 Corinthians 1:7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

Philippians 3:20,21 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Colossians 3:2-4 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Titus 2:13 We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

2) Final judgment of the unbelievers will take place on that day.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

c) The dead are not conscious of specific events taking place on earth, nor do they return to earth as ghosts.

Isaiah 63:16 But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

Revelation 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Note some possible exceptions.

1 Samuel 28:11-20 Then the woman asked, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" "Bring up Samuel," he said.
12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!" 13 The king said to her, "Don't be afraid. What do you see?" The woman said, "I see a spirit coming up out of the ground." 14 "What does he look like?" he asked. "An old man wearing a robe is coming up," she said. Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. 15 Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" "I am in great distress," Saul said. "The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has turned away from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do." 16 Samuel said, "Why do you consult me, now that the LORD has turned away from you and become your enemy? 17 The LORD has done what he predicted through me. The LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors—to David. 18 Because you did not obey the LORD or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the LORD has done this to you today. 19 The LORD will hand over both Israel and you to the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also hand over the army of Israel to the Philistines." 20 Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of Samuel's words. His strength was gone, for he had eaten nothing all that day and night.
Matthew 17:3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

E1, V. As biblical terms for the state of death we find the following.

E1, V, 1. In the Old Testament:

a) מוֹת = death.

Psalms 89:49(48) What man can live and not see death, or save himself from the power of the grave?
Psalms 116:3 The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow.
Psalms 18:5(4),6(5) The cords of death entangled me; the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me. The cords of the grave coiled around me; the snares of death confronted me.

b) לִיָּאֲוִי = the state of death, the grave.

Genesis 37:35 All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. "No," he said, "in mourning will I go down to the *grave* to my son."
Genesis 42:38 But Jacob said, "My son will not go down there with you; his brother is dead and he is the only one left. If harm comes to him on the journey you are taking, you will bring my gray head down to the *grave* in sorrow." Parallel Genesis 44:29,31
Job 17:13 If the only home I hope for is *the grave*, if I spread out my bed in darkness.

Concerning לִיָּאֲוִי with a connotation of punishment, see further discussion of the term in the section on hell, page 699.

Deuteronomy 32:22 For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the *realm of death* below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains.
Psalms 9:17 The wicked return to the grave, all the nations that forget God.
Psalms 31:17 Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I have cried out to you; but let the wicked be put to shame and lie silent in the grave.
Psalms 49:14,15 Like sheep they are destined for the grave, and death will feed on them. The upright will rule over them in the morning; their forms will decay in the grave, far from their princely mansions. 15 But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself.
Psalms 55:15,16 Let death take my enemies by surprise; let them go down alive to the grave, for evil finds lodging among them. 16 But I call to God, and the LORD saves me.
Psalms 63:8,9 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. 9 They who seek my life will be destroyed; they will go down to the depths of the earth.

c) בּוֹר = the pit=the grave.

Psalms 30:4 (3) O LORD, you brought me up from the grave; you spared me from going down into the pit.
Psalms 88:5 (4), 7 (6) I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like a man without strength. You have put me in the lowest pit, in the darkest depths.
Psalms 28:1 To you I call, O LORD my Rock; do not turn a deaf ear to me. For if you remain silent, I will be like those who have gone down to the pit.
Psalms 143:7 Answer me quickly, O LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me or I will be like those who go down to the pit.

d) Other terms.

Psalms 88:11(10),12(11) Is your love declared in the grave, your faithfulness in Destruction? 12 Are your wonders known in the place of darkness, or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?
Psalms 16:10 You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

E1, V, 2. In the New Testament: θάνατος and ἄδης.

a) Note especially ἄδης as a translation of לִיָּאֲוִי.

Acts 2:27,31 You will not abandon me to the *grave*, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. Cites Ps 16:10

1 Corinthians 15:55 “Where, O death (θάνατος), is your victory? Where, O death (θάνατος; Variant ἄδης), is your sting?” Cites Hosea 13:14 Where, O death (Τῆν), are your plagues? Where, O grave (λίχψ), is your destruction?

b) Hades is used in various ways, like λίχψ in the Old Testament.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of *Hades* will not overcome it.

Luke 16:23 In *hell*, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

Revelation 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and *Hades*.

Revelation 6:8 I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and *Hades* was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

Revelation 20:13,14 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and *Hades* gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴ Then death and *Hades* were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

Matthew 11:23 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the *depths*. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. Parallel Luke 10:15

E1, VI. The Roman Catholic Church (and to a lesser degree, the Orthodox Church) teaches an elaborate system of permanent and intermediate states besides heaven and hell.

E1, VI, 1. Purgatory

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1031: The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire:

Gregory the Great (594): As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come (Mt 12:31). From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come (*Dialogia*, IV.xli.3).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Par. 1032: This teaching is also based on the practice of prayer for the dead, already mentioned in Sacred Scripture: “Therefore [Judas Maccabeus] made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin.” From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God. The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead:

John Chrysostom: Let us help and commemorate them. If Job’s sons were purified by their father’s sacrifice, why would we doubt that our offerings for the dead bring them some consolation? Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them (*Homilia in 1 Corinthos*, xli, 5).

Timothy Ware: Orthodox are convinced that Christians here on earth have a duty to pray for the departed, and they are confident that the dead are helped by such prayers. But precisely in what way do our prayers help the dead? What exactly is the condition of souls in the period between death and the resurrection of the Body on the Last Day? Here Orthodox teaching is not entirely clear, and has varied somewhat at different times. In the seventeenth century a number of Orthodox writers—most notably Peter of Moghila and Dositheus in his *Confession*—upheld the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory or something very close to it. ... Today most if not all Orthodox theologians reject the idea of Purgatory, at least in this form. The majority would be inclined to say that the faithful departed do not suffer at all. Another school holds that perhaps they suffer, but, if so, their suffering is of a purificatory but not an expiatory character; for when a person dies in the grace of God, then God forgives him all his sins and demands no more expiatory penalties: Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, is our *only* atonement and satisfaction. Yet a third groups would prefer to leave the whole matter entirely open (*The Orthodox Church*, p 254-255).

a) The origins of purgatorial teaching lie in the heathen philosophers and poets (Plato, Virgil). This influence came into the church through the speculations of such church fathers as Origen.

Chemnitz: Eusebius, *De praeparatione evangelica*, Bk. 1, last chapter, transcribes a lengthy discussion of Plato from the book *De Anima*, where, after having described the rivers of the underworld on the basis of the traditions of the poets, he finally says: “Those who, on account of the magnitude of their sins, such as temple robberies, unlawful killing, and similar things, appear to be incurable, these are cast into Tartarus, whence they can never escape. But those who are judged to have indeed perpetrated great sins yet to be capable of being cured or healed, if for instance they committed a murder in a fit of anger, or perpetrated some violent act against their parents, but spent the remainder of their life in penitence, these, according to the measure of their transgression, are cast into various rivers of fire to burn. Finally, after a year and more,

they approach the Acherusian lake; there they shout to those whom they have injured and beg as suppliants to be permitted to go out and be received. If they manage to persuade their adversaries of this, they come out and cease to suffer punishment. If not, they are cast about in these rivers of fire until they obtain this from those whom they injured (*Examination*, III, p 231).

Virgil: Therefore they are engaged in punishments
And pay the penalties of old wrongs:
Some are spread out, unfed, suspended to the winds.
For others, the crime that stains them is washed out
Under an immense raging flood or burnt out by fire;
We each suffer what we have deserved.
From there we are sent to Elysium,
And a few of us possess the happy fields
Until the long day, when the circle of time has elapsed,
Has banished the hardened transgression
And left the ethereal soul pure, a fire of pure gold (*Aeneid*, 6).

Origen: If, after the foundation has been laid, you build on it not only gold but also wood and stubble, what is it you want done to you when the soul shall be separated from the body? Do you want to enter the holy place with your wood and stubble so that you may pollute the kingdom of God? Or do you want to dwell outside on account of your stubble, and receive no reward for your gold? But this also is not fair. What follows, therefore, except that first fire is applied to you on account of the wood, which consumes the stubble? (*Homily 12 on Jeremiah*)

Origen: Whoever spurns the purifications of God's Word reserves himself for sad and penal purifications, that the fire of gehenna may amid torments purge him whom neither the apostolic doctrine nor the preaching of the Gospel has cleansed. But how long this cleansing, which is applied through the punishment of fire, is to endure and how many ages of torment it may require of sinners only he can know to whom the Father has given all judgment, who so loves his creature that he humbled himself for it (Phil. 2:8). But understandings of this kind, like the mystery of God, must be passed over in silence and not proclaimed everywhere (*Homily on Romans 11*).

b) As alleged proof for purgatory Catholics offer the following support.

1) From the Old Testament: a reference to sacrifices for the dead.

2 Macc. 12:42-45. [They] betook themselves unto prayer, and besought him that the sin committed might wholly be put out of remembrance. Besides, that noble Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes the things that came to pass for the sins of those that were slain. ⁴³ And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering, doing therein very well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection: ⁴⁴ For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. ⁴⁵ And also in that he perceived that there was great favor laid up for those that died godly, it was an holy and good thought. Whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin.

Response: This is apocryphal.

2) Alleged proof from the New Testament:

-a) A reference to purging fire.

1 Corinthians 3:12 –15 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

Response: Not souls, but works, pass through fire.

-b) Alleged references to payment after death.

Matthew 12:32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Matthew 5:26 I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

2 Timothy 1:18 May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day!

Response: None of these speaks of forgiveness granted after death.

c) Note the close relation between the idea of purgatory and the doctrine of justification by works and repentance.

Catherine of Genoa (1490): The basis of all the pains of purgatory is sin whether original or actual. ... Because the souls in purgatory are without guilt of sin, there is no obstacle between them and God except their pain which holds them back. ... For this reason a fierce fire comes into being which is like that of hell except for the guilt... As for guilt, these souls are just as they were when they were originally created by God... Only the corrosion of sin is left, and they are cleansed from this by pain in the fire (*Treatise on Purgatory*, iii, v).

Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article II, p 464, 11,12 In addition to all this, this dragon's tail (I mean the Mass) has begotten a numerous vermin-brood of manifold idolatries. ^{12]} First, purgatory. Here they carried their trade into purgatory by masses for souls, and vigils, and weekly, monthly, and yearly celebrations of obsequies, and finally by the Common Week and All Souls Day, by soul-baths so that the Mass is used

almost alone for the dead, although Christ has instituted the Sacrament alone for the living. Therefore purgatory, and every solemnity, rite, and commerce connected with it, is to be regarded as nothing but a specter of the devil. For it conflicts with the chief article which teaches that only Christ, and not the works of men, are to help set free souls. Not to mention the fact that nothing has been divinely commanded or enjoined upon us concerning the dead. Therefore all this may be safely omitted, even if it were not error and idolatry.

Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article III, p 484, 21 As to satisfaction, this is by far the most perplexing part of all. For no man could know how much to render for a single sin, not to say how much for all. Here they have resorted to the device of imposing a small satisfaction, which could indeed be rendered, as five Paternosters, a day's fast, etc.; for the rest that was lacking of the repentance they were directed to purgatory.

E1, VI, 2. Limbo: limbus patrum and limbus infantium or puerorum

Catholic Encyclopedia: "Limbo" (Late Lat. *limbus*) a word of Teutonic derivation, meaning literally "hem" or "border," as of a garment, or anything joined on (cf. Italian *lembo* or English *limb*). In theological usage the name is applied to a) the temporary place or state of the souls of the just who, although purified from sin, were excluded from the beatific vision until Christ's triumphant ascension into Heaven (the "*limbus patrum*"); or b) to the permanent place or state of those unbaptized children and others who, dying without grievous personal sin, are excluded from the beatific vision on account of original sin alone (the "*limbus infantium*" or "*puerorum*"). ...The question therefore arises as to what, in the absence of a clear positive revelation on the subject, we ought in conformity with Catholic principles to believe regarding the eternal lot of such persons [unbaptized babies]. Now it may confidently be said that, as the result of centuries of speculation on the subject, we ought to believe that these souls enjoy and will eternally enjoy a state of perfect natural happiness; and this is what Catholics usually mean when they speak of the *limbus infantium*, the "children's limbo" (Online Edition, 1999).

Chemnitz: The theologians of Ingolstadt distinguish hell, purgatory, the circle of infants who are not baptized, and the limbo of the fathers in this way, that the fire of hell which rages in the center of the earth torments the damned; flowing out from there upward it cleanses the faithful of the second circle; afterward perhaps, in the third circle, the smoke from it attacks the children; finally, in the fourth circle, the limbo of the fathers is heated and lighted by its heat and light as in steam baths (*Examination*, III, p 229).

E1, VII. Mormons also have four compartments for eternity:

1) Hell for the Sons of Perdition (Satan, his angels, and a small portion of humans); 2) the Celestial Kingdom for the Church of the Firstborn who will procreate on the new earth (the best Mormons); 3) The Terrestrial Kingdom in another world for weak Mormons and others who tried to do right [no procreation here], 4) the Telestial Kingdom on another world for the bad who are not bad enough for hell (Hoekema, *Four Cults*, p 71-74).

E2. The End of the World

E2.1. The end of the world will be marked by a visible return of Christ in glory.

E2.1.1. Christ will return in visible form.

a) Scripture declares the certainty of Christ's return.

2 Peter 3:3,4,10 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴ They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

Mark 13:37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: "Watch!"

b) The basic outline of events is provided by Jesus' Olivet Discourse.

Matthew 24:1-35 Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. ² "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." ³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Signs of the End

⁴ Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of birth pains. ⁹ "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. ¹⁰ At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, ¹¹ and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, ¹³ but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Destruction of Jerusalem

¹⁵ "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand— ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. ¹⁸ Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. ¹⁹ How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! ²⁰ Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. ²² If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. ²³ At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. ²⁵ See, I have told you ahead of time.

Christ's Appearance

²⁶ "So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. ²⁷ For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸ Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. ²⁹ "Immediately after the distress of those days "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken." ³⁰ "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. ³² "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Parallels in Luke 21 and Mark 13

c) Scripture describes the manner of Christ's return.

1) It will be visible.

Acts 1:9,11 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Matthew 24:27,30 For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁰ At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

Luke 17:24 For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.

2) Christ will be accompanied by the holy angels.

-a) They will be with him.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Mark 8:38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.

-b) They will serve as his ministers.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Matthew 24:31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Matthew 13:41,42,49,50 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴⁹ This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

d) The purpose of Christ's return is stated.

Luke 21:28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

Hebrews 9:26-28 Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

1 Peter 4:5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Matthew 25:31-32, 46 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ⁴⁶ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

2 Timothy 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge.

E2, I, 2. Christ's return will bring about the end of the present world.

a) This world will come to an end.

Matthew 13:39-43 The enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰ As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Matthew 25:31, 46 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ⁴⁶ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

1 Corinthians 15:23,24 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

b) The time of the end is fixed but not yet revealed.

1) The exact time is not revealed.

Matthew 24:36-44 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be

broken into. ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Mark 13:32 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Matthew 24:44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

1 Thessalonians 5:2,3 For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Jehovah's Witnesses: The "battle of the great day of God Almighty"

(Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced (*Studies in Scripture*, 1906 edition, p 101).

Jehovah's Witnesses: We may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old...to the condition of human perfection (*Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, 1920, p 89-90).

Jehovah's Witnesses: According to this trustworthy Bible chronology six thousand years from man's creation will end in 1975, and the seventh period of a thousand years of human history will begin in the fall of 1975 (*Life Everlasting—In the Freedom of the Sons of God*, 1966, p 29).

2) Disastrous conditions, foreboding the collapse of the world, are signs pointing to Christ's return. They occur throughout the New Testament era during the regular course of daily life until the appearance of the final signs in the heavens.

-a) Signs in society:

Luke 17:26-30 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. ³⁰ It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Matthew 24:10,12 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, ¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.

Luke 21:9,10 "When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away." ¹⁰ Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

2 Timothy 3:1-7 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. ⁶ They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, ⁷ always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.

-b) Signs in nature:

Matthew 24:7,29 There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ²⁹ Immediately after the distress of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

Luke 21:25,26 There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. Compare Genesis 8:22 As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

-c) Signs in the church:

Matthew 24:9 Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

Luke 18:8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?

Matthew 24:11,24 Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

Acts 20:30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.

2 Thessalonians 2:11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.

2 Timothy 4:3,4 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what

their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

2 Thessalonians 2:2-12 [Do not] become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ... ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ² Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.

Compare Romans 5:20 The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more.

3) All predicted signs have appeared and are occurring in the world.

-a) The destruction of Jerusalem with its attending horrors was a prelude to the world catastrophe.

Matthew 24:1-3 Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. ² "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." ³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Luke 21:20,21,24 "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. ²⁴ They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

George Stoeckhardt (d. 1913): The destruction of Jerusalem appears, on the one hand, as a sign of Judgment Day, on the other hand, as the beginning of the final judgment (*Bibl. Geschich. d. N. T.*, p 256).

-b) The gospel has penetrated to all nations.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Colossians 1:23 If you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

-c) Paul speaks of Christ's return as possible in his lifetime.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

1 Corinthians 1:7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

Titus 2:13 We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

c) This should teach us to live in constant readiness.

Matthew 24:42-51 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

⁴⁵ Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, "My master is staying away a long time," ⁴⁹ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. ⁵⁰ The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. ⁵¹ He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:13 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

Mark 13:33,35,37 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁵ “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁷ “What I say to you, I say to everyone: “Watch!”

Luke 21:36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.

Acts 1:6-11 So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

2 Peter 3:11-12 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

E2, I, 3. There will be but one visible return of Christ to end the New Testament era and inaugurate a new heavens and a new earth.

a) This is implied in all passages speaking of his return.

1) His return is predicted for the end of this present age.

Matthew 24:3, 29,30: As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” ²⁹ “Immediately after the distress of those days ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ ³⁰ At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.”

2) One passage enumerates the advents of Christ.

Hebrews 9:28 Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

b) Millennialism (chiliasm) in its various forms inserts an intervening age between the New Testament era and eternity.

1) Pre-millennialism believes Christ will return and a resurrection will take place before (pre-) the millennium.

-a) Historic or covenant premillennialism does not make a sharp distinction between the church and Israel. Most adherents of this view place the rapture of believers after the tribulation (post-trib). Many of the early church fathers held a version of this view (Papias, Irenaeus, Tertullian; today Millard Erickson, George Ladd).

Tertullian (207): We also hold that a kingdom has been promised to us on earth, but before heaven, but in another state than this, as being after the resurrection. This will last for a thousand years, in a city of God’s own making.... For it is indeed right and worthy of God that his servants should also rejoice in the same place where they suffered for his names. This is the purpose of that kingdom, which will last a thousand years, during which the saints will rise sooner or later, according to their merit. When the resurrection of the saints is completed, the destruction of the world and the conflagration of judgment will be effected. We shall be changed in a moment to the angelic substance...and we shall be transferred to the heavenly kingdom (*Against Marcion*, III, xxiv.3-6).

-b) Dispensational premillennialism applies the fulfillment of prophecy only to Israel, not to the church. Usually this view places the rapture of believers before the tribulation (pre-trib). This theory rose in the 19th century and became the popular form of millennialism among 20th century Fundamentalists and many Evangelicals (John Darby, Edward Irving, Moody Bible Institute, the Scofield Reference Bible, John Walvoord, Dallas Theological Seminary, Hal Lindsey). This form of millennialism is the focus of the following discussion.

Clarence Larkin: When we take the Old Testament promises and apply them to the Church we rob the Jew of that which is exclusively his (*The Greatest Book on Dispensational Truth in the World*, p 19).

2) Post-millennialism believes that the millennium is a golden age for the church at the end of this present age. Christ returns after (post-) the millennium. This view was popular in the late 19th century and is being revived in theonomy, reconstructionism, and dominion theology (Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge; Gary North, David Chilton). Liberal post-millennialism puts more emphasis on changing society than on personal conversion and is thus akin to the Social Gospel.

Lorraine Boettner: We have defined post-millennialism as the view of the last things which holds that the Kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of individuals, that the world eventually is to be Christianized, and that the return of Christ is to occur at the end of a long period of peace and righteousness commonly called the "Millennium" (*The Millennium*, p 14).

David Chilton: The Christian goal for the world is the universal development of Christian theocratic republics, in which every area of life is redeemed and placed under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the rule of God's law (*Paradise Restored: An Eschatology of Dominion*, p 226).

David Chilton: Our goal is world dominion under Christ's Lordship, a "world takeover" if you will; but our strategy begins with reformation, reconstruction of the church. From that will flow social and political reconstruction, indeed a flowering of Christian civilization (*Ibid.*, p 214).

3) A-millennialism literally means "no millennium." The 1000 years of Revelation refers to the New Testament era. There will be only one return of Christ. This is the scriptural view (Augustine, Luther).

Augsburg Confession, Article XVII, p 50: Of Christ's Return to Judgment.

Also they teach that at the Consummation of the World Christ will appear for judgment, and will raise up all the dead; he will give to the godly and elect eternal life and everlasting joys, but ungodly men and the devils he will condemn to be tormented without end.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who think that there will be an end to the punishments of condemned men and devils.

They condemn also others who are now spreading certain Jewish opinions, that before the resurrection of the dead the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being everywhere suppressed.

4) Millennialists consider Revelation 20 to be their stronghold, but it actually describes three events of the New Testament era.

-a) The binding of Satan.

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

This "binding" is defined as Satan's not being able to deceive the nations anymore. This binding occurred as a result of Christ's first coming.

Luke 10:17-18 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." ¹⁸ He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

John 12:31 Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

Revelation 12:10-11 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

-b) The first resurrection.

Revelation 20:4-6 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

This resurrection is described as the rule of souls at the throne of God. This rule begins at conversion and continues for the believer even after the death of the body.

-1) These martyrs have suffered for Christ.

Romans 8:36 As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

2 Corinthians 6:9 ...dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed

2 Corinthians 4:10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

-2) These saints live and reign with Christ.

John 5:24-29 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵ I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. ²⁶For as the Father has life in himself, so he has

granted the Son to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. Ephesians 2:4-6 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

John 11:25-26 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

-c) The loosing of Satan.

Revelation 20:7-12 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. ⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

This is the “short season” which is followed by Christ’s return and judgment.

Matthew 24:29-30 Immediately after the distress of those days “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.” ³⁰ At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

Luke 18:8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?

5) Millennialism, which finds no basis in Revelation 20, results from a distorted interpretation of Old Testament prophecy.

Clarence Larkin: The whole teaching of the Old Testament as to the Coming of the Messiah is Pre-millennial. The only use the Premillennialites have for the Thousand Year passage in Rev. 20:1-7 is to fix the length of that “Age of Righteousness and Peace” (*The Greatest Book on Dispensational Truth in the World*, p 4).

-a) Millennialists expect Jerusalem to be the seat of Christ’s earthly kingdom.

-1) They claim this passage supports this.

Isaiah 2:2,3 In the last days the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. ³ Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

-2) Response: this is the new Jerusalem, the church on earth and in heaven.

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,

-b) Millennialists expect a political restoration of the nation of Israel in the Promised Land, which is theirs forever.

-1) They claim the following passages support this.

Amos 9:11-15 “In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be, ¹² so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name,” declares the LORD, who will do these things. ¹³ “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills. ¹⁴ I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵ I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God.

Joel 3:18 In that day the mountains will drip new wine, and the hills will flow with milk; all the ravines of Judah will run with water. A fountain will flow out of the LORD’s house and will water the valley of acacias.

Jeremiah 31:35-36, 40 This is what the LORD says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the LORD Almighty is his name: “Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,” declares the LORD, “will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me.... ⁴⁰ The whole valley where dead bodies and ashes are thrown, and all the terraces

out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far as the corner of the Horse Gate, will be holy to the LORD. The city will never again be uprooted or demolished.”

-2) Response: Israel is built up when Gentiles are brought in through the gospel.

Acts 15:13-18 When they finished, James spoke up: “Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: ¹⁶ ‘After this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, ¹⁷ that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord who does these things’ ¹⁸ that have been known for ages.”

-3) Response: the possession of the land was conditioned on faith and obedience.

Jeremiah 17:4 Through your own fault you will lose the inheritance I gave you. I will enslave you to your enemies in a land you do not know, for you have kindled my anger, and it will burn forever.

-4) See also the following points about the real Israel and the new Jerusalem.

-c) Millennialists expect a widespread conversion of the Jews.

-1) They claim this passage supports this.

Romans 11:25-26 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so (οὐτως) all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.”

Note: A *manner* of restoration is referred to (“so,” “in this way”), not a *time* (“then”). All of this Israel which Paul is describing is converted.

-2) Response: The Israel of prophecy is the Israel of faith, not the Israel of the flesh.

a) Not all Jews are part of the Israel of promise.

Romans 9:6-8 It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. ⁷ Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” ⁸ In other words, it is not the natural children who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring.

Romans 2:28,29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man’s praise is not from men, but from God.

John 8:31-47 Jesus said: “I know you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. ³⁸ I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you do what you have heard from your father.” ³⁹ “Abraham is our father,” they answered. “If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do the things Abraham did. ⁴⁰ As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the things your own father does.” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire.”

Romans 11:7 What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 For you, brothers, became imitators of God’s churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men ¹⁶ in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

b) All believers in Christ are part of the Israel of promise.

Romans 4:11-13 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. ¹² And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. ¹³ It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.

Galatians 6:16 Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God.
Philippians 3:3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh.

Galatians 3:7, 26-29 Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ²⁶ You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Ephesians 2:11-20 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)— ¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. ¹⁵ His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

-d) Millennialists expect universal peace on earth.

-1) They claim these passages support this.

Isaiah 2:4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

Isaiah 11:6-9 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Zechariah 9:10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

-2) Response: This is the peace of the gospel.

Luke 12:51-53 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. ⁵² From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. ⁵³ They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law. Parallel Matthew 10:34

Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Ephesians 6:15 ...with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 9:2-6 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. ³ You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. ⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. ⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 11:1-9 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. ² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD— ³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. ⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They

will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Note the way in which prophetic language combines temporal and eternal images.

Temporal blessings and judgments are sometimes described with terms appropriate to the last things. The new heavens and the new earth are described in terms taken from earthly life.

-e) Millennialists expect Christian knowledge to fill the world.

-1) Passages allegedly supporting this.

Isaiah 11:9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Joel 2:28 And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

Seventh Day Adventists teach unrestricted knowledge of God in the millennium: Through this tangle of conflicting millennial expectations William Miller and his associates cut a clean swath in the direction of a new and different concept. "No temporal millennium," they said. By that they meant that the millennial reign was not in "time," with death, decay, and sin still present, but was the first portion of the *eternal* state. They held that when Christ comes again the day of human probation is ended, that all the sinners are slain by the overpowering brightness of the second advent, and all the redeemed are resurrected and/or transformed for eternity. They taught that the earth is renewed by fire, and that on it begins the kingdom of eternity—which is merely punctuated at the end of a thousand years by the final disposal of "the rest of the dead." That is, the sinners will be resurrected and, led by the released Satan, will attempt to take the Holy City, which has become down out of heaven to the earth; and then comes the final judgment and the execution of the sentence on the wicked (*Seventh Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*, p 479).

-2) Response: This is fulfilled now through the gospel

Acts 2:16-18 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."

-f) The rapture expected by millennialists (whether of the pre-, mid-, or post-tribulation variety) is based on a mis-understanding of certain passages which clearly speak of the gathering of believers to meet Christ on the the last day. The believers will be separated from the unbelievers so that they can welcome Christ at his return for the final judgment. They will then be with him eternally.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Matthew 24:31, 37-41 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. ³⁷As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

Matthew 13:30,41,47-50 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴⁷"Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

6) Millennialism contradicts the following clear teachings of Scripture:

-a) Christ's kingdom is spiritual.

John 18:36,37 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Luke 17:20-21 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, ²¹ nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

-b) Scripture constantly speaks of but one general resurrection of the body.

John 5:28,29 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

John 6:40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

-c) The church on earth is a kingdom of the cross and must pass through great tribulation.

Acts 14:22 [They were] strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must (δεῖ) go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Revelation 3:10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from (σε τηρήω ἐκ) the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

John 17:15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from (τηρήσης αὐτοὺς ἐκ) the evil one.

-d) The time of grace is the whole New Testament era. There will be no other time of grace on earth.

Isaiah 59:20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD. See Romans 11:25-27.

Jeremiah 31:33,34 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." See Hebrews 10:16.

Mormons teach the millennium as a new time of grace: The Millennium is the period of time that represents the 1,000 years following the return of Christ, and is what Latter-day doctrine refers to as the final period before the last judgment. LDS doctrine teaches that the millennium is a time to catch up on any unfinished business from world history, such as teaching the gospel to those who never had a chance to hear it during mortality. During the final millennium, LDS doctrine teaches that Jesus will personally preside over his church here on earth. During this sort of transitional period, Jesus and those who followed him throughout the ages will be working to establish divine order throughout the world. This period of time is when the earth will be prepared for its eventual transition back into a glorified world (as it was when Adam and Eve walked with God in the Garden of Eden), prior to the end of the First Resurrection (Drew Williams, *Understanding Mormonism*, p 44).

-e) The only means of grace is the gospel. We are not to look for any other way of salvation in the millennial dispensation as some forms of millennialism do.

Clarence Larkin: The Scripture mentions seven great "Dispensational Tests" of man from his creation until the New Heaven and the New Earth appear. He was tested in "Innocence" in the Garden of Eden; under "Conscience" before the Flood; under "Human Government" at Babel; under the "Headship of the Family" under the Patriarchs; under "Law" before Christ; he is now being tested under "Grace;" he will have one more test before God gives him up as hopelessly, incurably, incorrigibly God-hating and disobedient, and that test will be final and deprive him of his last shadow of excuse. ... The principle under which God will deal with men in those days will not be Law, Grace, or Judgment, but Righteousness. ... As Satan will be bound at that time, the character of the Millennial Dispensation will be entirely different from all preceding Dispensations (*The Greatest Book on Dispensational Truth in the World*, p 41, 43).

-f) Christ is ruling now, contrary to millennial claims that his kingdom will come only in the future.

Matthew 28:18–20: Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Hebrews 2:8-9 In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Clarence Larkin: The Office Work of Christ is threefold, that of Prophet, Priest, and King. But He does not hold these offices conjointly but successively. His Prophetic work extended from Creation to His Ascension; His Priestly Work extends from His Ascension to the Rapture of the Church; His Kingly Work from His Revelation at the close of the Tribulation Period until He surrenders the Kingdom to the Father (*The Greatest Book on Dispensational Truth in the World*, p 47).

E2, II. In the resurrection at the end of the present world all dead bodies will be reunited with their souls and transformed and adapted to their future environment.

E2, II, 1. The Greek word ἀνάστασις (ἐγείρω, συνεγείρω) is used in various ways.

a) It is used figuratively.

1) Metaphorically, for regeneration (the first resurrection).

Ephesians 5:14 It is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Colossians 2:12 ...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

2) Metonymically (cause for effect): Christ himself.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."

b) It is used literally, referring to the bodily resurrection at the end of the world.

John 6:40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

1 Corinthians 15:12,13 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

E2, II, 2. Resurrection is an assured fact to faith.

a) Some may doubt but without reason.

1 Corinthians 15:12,32 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

Acts 17:18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Acts 17:32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject."

Acts 26:8 Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

Matthew 22:29 Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God."

b) Both the Old Testament and the New Testament teach the resurrection.

1) The New Testament teaches the resurrection.

-a) In many brief references:

Matthew 22:31-32 But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, ³² "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.

John 5:28,29 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

John 6:39,40 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Acts 4:2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

Acts 23:6 Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead."

Acts 24:15 I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

- b) **In an elaborate argument:**
1 Corinthians 15: 1-11; 12-34; 35-50; 51-58.
- 2) **The Old Testament teaches the resurrection.**
 - a) **Directly:**
Job 19:25-27 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.
²⁶ And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; ²⁷ I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!
Psalm 17:15 And I—in righteousness I will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness.
Isaiah 26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.
Daniel 12:2,13 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ¹³ As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.
Hosea 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?
 - b) **By implication:**
Genesis 17:7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.
Genesis 26:24 That night the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham.” Parallels Genesis 28:13 and Exodus 3:6
Compare Mark 12:26,27 Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!
Ezekiel 37:1-14, the vision of the dry bones, assumes a knowledge of the concept of the resurrection.
- 3) **This doctrine is central to the gospel message.**
1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.
1 Corinthians 15:19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.
2 Timothy 2:17,18 Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.
1 Timothy 1:19,20 Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. ²⁰ Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.
- c) **In the resurrection the whole person who lived before will be restored to life.**
 - 1) **Consider the following points concerning the resurrection.**
 - a) **The subjects of resurrection are “the dead.”**
John 5:21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.
John 11:23,24 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”
1 Corinthians 15:15,16 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either.
Hollaz: The resurrection of the dead essentially consists 1) in the restoration or repair of the same body which perished in death from its atoms and particles that have been scattered and dispersed here and there; 2) in the reunion of the same body with the soul (*Exam.* p 1245).
 - b) **Christ was the same person after his resurrection.**
John 20:16-18 Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!”
1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
 - c) **Note the analogy of sleep: the person who awakes is the one who fell asleep.**
Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

Psalm 17:15 And I—in righteousness I will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness.

2) **Scripture teaches the identity of the pre- and post-resurrection body.**

-a) **It will be the same in number and substance.**

Romans 8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 Corinthians 15:53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

Luke 24:39,40 “Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

Quenstedt: The *subjectum quod* of resurrection (the subject which rises) is the whole man previously dead and turned to ashes; the *subjectum quo* (the subject by which he rises) is the body, identical in number and substance with that body which we had in this present life (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XVII, sect. I, thesis x, note, p 582).

Symbolum Apostolicum: Credo in carnis resurrectionem.

Das Erste Bekenntnis: Ich glaube an Auferstehung des Fleisches.

Symbolum Nicaenum: Exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum.

Das Andere Bekenntnis: Ich warte auf die Auferstehung der Toten.

Ted Peters: When reciting the Nicene Creed we say that we believe in the “resurrection of the dead”...What does this mean? It does not mean resuscitation of a corpse in the sense that one recuperates from surgery and goes back to the daily routine of life. Nor is this referring to a soulehtomy. ...If resurrection is neither a resuscitation of a corpse nor a soulehtomy, could that which is resurrected look like a *ka* depicted on frescoes in Egyptian pyramids? Or might it resemble the occult understanding of the astral (star) body? ...If there is resuscitation, it is a new creation. Therefore, the resurrected body of the New Testament must be something different from the astral body as ordinarily understood (*God—The World’s Future*, p 324-325).

-b) **It will, however, be a “transformed” body.**

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies (μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως) so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 Corinthians 15:37,47-49,51 When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else.⁴⁷ The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.⁴⁸ As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed (ἀλλαγῶμεθα).

-c) **Such transformation is necessary before we can live in the changed environment of the new heavens and the new earth.**

1 Corinthians 15:50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

-d) **Our transformed bodies will possess: imperishability—glory—power—spirituality.**

1 Corinthians 15:42-46,53 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.⁴⁵ So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.⁴⁶ The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual.⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

42 οὕτως καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν. σπείρεται ἐν φθορᾷ, ἐγείρεται ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ· 43 σπείρεται ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ, ἐγείρεται ἐν δόξῃ· σπείρεται ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ, ἐγείρεται ἐν δυνάμει· 44 σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν.

Revelation 7:16 Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

2 Corinthians 5:4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

1 Corinthians 15:41,43 The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor. ⁴³it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

Hollaz: The bodies we carry around in this life differ from our resurrected bodies not so far as their substance is concerned but 1) in respect to duration: the former decay and perish, these endure forever immune to all decay; 2) in respect to their outward form: the former were deformed, pale, stinking corpses, these will be glorious, shining, and very beautiful; 3) in respect to vigor: the former are sown into the earth weak, without feeling or motion, the latter will be lively, strong, capable of exquisite feelings, free from every defect; 4) in the way in which they work and feel: the former generate children, are nourished, grow, move from place to place; they need drink, food, marriage; the latter will be completely devoted to spiritual activities, nor will they need nourishment nor conjugal society (*Examen*, p 1243):

-e) A corresponding change in the opposite direction will affect the unbelievers.

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

Isaiah 66:24 And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.

-f) Scripture is silent on the question of stature and sex of the raised bodies.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.

Luke 20:35-36 But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. Parallel Matthew 22:30

Augustine: All will rise as young people (Hoenecke IV, *ELD*, p 258).

Quenstedt: Together with Gerhard and Brochmann, we accept this opinion as the most probable one [that each one will rise in the form which he had at the time of death] (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XVIII, sect. II, qu IV, p 604).

d) The resurrection will be general. It will include all the dead.

1) This is expressly stated in various ways.

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

Revelation 20:12,13 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

John 5:28,29 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Acts 24:15 I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Axiom of the Dogmatists: The object or material of the resurrection [that which is raised] consists of all the dead, both believers and unbelievers.

2) Resurrection is the crowning act of Christ's work of salvation.

-a) Restoring life (like giving and preserving it) is a creative act of God.

2 Corinthians 1:9,10 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us.

Romans 4:17 God ... gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were (τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα). [Alternate rendering: calls things that are not so that they come into being.]

1 Corinthians 6:14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.

-b) In a special way, the work of resurrection is ascribed to Christ.

John 5:28 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice.

John 6:39,40,54 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."

Quenstedt: The principal efficient cause of resurrection is the Triune God alone, but in a very special way the divine-human Redeemer ...since he is in a very special way our Goel or our Redeemer (Jb 19:25f) and the Father has given him authority for this action of restoration to life as well as of judgment, because he is the Son of Man (Jn. 5:25,27) (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XVIII, sect. I, thesis VI, p 580).

-c) The resurrection will be the last act in Christ's work of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:20-26 Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

2 Timothy 1:10 But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

-d) It will be preliminary to judgment, the final segregation of the believers from the unbelievers.

John 5:28,29 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

1 Corinthians 15:23,24,28 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Friedrich Balduin (d. 1627): The ungodly will not be raised by the power of the resurrection of Christ but because of the unchangeable decree by which it is appointed unto men once to die but after this judgment (He 9:27) (*Commentarius*, p 510).

Konrad Dannhauer (d. 1666): Resurrection in the absolute sense, insofar as one ignores the difference between a resurrection to salvation and to damnation, is not a result of the merit of Christ, 1) because whatever is a result of the merits of Christ does not happen without the intervention of the merits of Christ; but the damned would rise even if the Son of God had never become incarnate; 2) because no fruit of the resurrection of Christ ever comes to a man unless he accepts it by faith (in the absence of the acceptance of faith). But those who are damned will rise even if they did not by faith make the resurrection of Christ their own. Yet the resurrection of Christ is the cause of resurrection to life even though in reality few obtain it (*Hodosophia*, p 745). [Note: "Resurrection" is ascribed to all, "life" only to believers. Unbelievers rise to eternal death, an existence in which they are eternally separated from God, the source of all life.]

E2, III. Immediately following the resurrection a general judgment of the world will be held.

E2, III, 1. The last day is a day of judgment.

a) Judgment is a fact.

Matthew 25:31-46 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" ⁴⁰ The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." ⁴¹ Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me." ⁴⁴ They also will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?" ⁴⁵ He will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me." ⁴⁶ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

Matthew 10:15 I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

Matthew 11:23,24 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. ²⁴ But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.

Revelation 20:12,13 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

b) The reality of judgment is used as a basis for exhortation.

Acts 17:30,31 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

2 Corinthians 5:9,10 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Revelation 3:11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

c) The reality of judgment is held out as a warning.

Matthew 12:36-37 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.

Mark 3:29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.

John 5:29 Those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

John 12:47,48 As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. ⁴⁸ There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

Romans 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

Hebrews 10:27 [What remains is] only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

James 5:9 Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

d) Natural reason opposes this truth.

Qoheleth: All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. Who knows if the spirit of man rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth? (Ec 3:20-21).

Aeschylus: When the dust drinks up a man's blood, once he has died, there is no resurrection (*Eumenides* 647).

Isaac Asimov: Although the time of death is approaching for me, I am not afraid of dying and going to Hell, or (what would be considerably worse) going to the popularized version of Heaven. I expect death to be nothingness and by removing from me all possible fears of death, I am thankful to atheism (*Science Fiction Magazine*, January 1992).

Blood, Sweat, and Tears: I'm not scared of dying and I don't really care. If it's peace you find in dying well then let the time be near... Now troubles they are many, they're as deep as a well. I can swear there ain't no heaven but I pray there ain't no hell. Yes I swear there ain't no heaven and I pray there ain't no hell. But I'll never know by living, only my dying will tell. Yes only my dying will tell (Song: "And when I die").

e) The time of judgment for all is the end of the world. This is one day called by various names, not the multiple judgments of millennialism.

1) The day of judgment

Matthew 10:15 I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

2 Peter 2:9 If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

2 Peter 3:7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

2) The day of the Lord—the last day—the great day

1 Corinthians 1:8 He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 5:5 Hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

John 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. (Compare 6:39,40 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.)

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

3) **“That day”**

Matthew 7:22 Many will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?”

Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

2 Timothy 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

2 Timothy 4:8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

2 Thessalonians 1:10 ...on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.

E2, III, 2. The judge will be Jesus Christ.

a) **Authority to judge has been given to him.**

1) **Judicial power is vested in God.**

Genesis 18:25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Psalms 9:7,8 The LORD reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment. ⁸ He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.

Romans 2:16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

2) **Jesus will be the judge by appointment of the Father.**

Acts 10:42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.

Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

Romans 2:16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

Matthew 25:31,32 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

2 Timothy 4:8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

2 Thessalonians 1:7,8 [He will] give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

3) **Jesus will be the judge because he is the Savior.**

John 5:27 And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

1 Corinthians 15:21-24 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

Isaiah 22:22 I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. See Revelation 3:7.

4) **There will be associate judges and witnesses.**

1 Corinthians 6:2,3 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!

Psalm 149:6-9 May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, ⁷ to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, ⁸ to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, ⁹ to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints.

Revelation 20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Parallel Luke 22:30 so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew 12:41,42 The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here. Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

Baier: But the saints will be witnesses who approve of the judgment of Christ (*Compendium*, pt I, ch X, para X, p 79).

Quenstedt: Therefore it should rather be said that on the last day in their own way the saints will judge the world and evil spirits 1) by sitting with Christ, the Judge, 2) by publicly approving the sentence of the Judge by their own judgment, 3) by testifying, insofar as they bring testimony concerning the kindness and generosity shown to them by the godly and other good works, and 4) by condemning the ungodly and the evil angels by the example of their constancy of faith (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XII, sect. I, thesis VII, note vii, p 608).

b) The standard according to which Jesus will judge the world is his gospel.

1) This is expressly stated.

John 3:17-19 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

John 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

2) This is clear also from the following considerations.

-a) Jesus sent his disciples to preach the gospel.

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

-b) The gospel is a proclamation of justification.

Romans 3:24,28 [All] are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁸ For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Galatians 2:16 Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

-c) This verdict of the gospel will stand on Judgment Day.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Romans 8:1,33,34 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Micah 7:19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Isaiah 38:17 Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back.

Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

Isaiah 44:22 I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.

3) Every person is judged by his or her response to the gospel.

John 3:18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Luke 21:28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

4) Warnings of judgment are addressed to Christians because of their sinful flesh.

Matthew 12:36,37 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

5) Unbelievers, who reject the gospel, place themselves under the judgment of the law.

-a) This fact is stated.

John 5:45 But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.

Romans 2:12 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

-b) Their damnation is a foregone conclusion because of their unbelief.

John 3:18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

-c) Note the double set of record books, which reflect the judgment according to the gospel and the law.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and *books* were opened. *Another book* was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

Daniel 7:10 A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and *the books* were opened.

Revelation 3:5 He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from *the book of life*, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.

Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in *the book of life* belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. Also Revelation 17:8

Revelation 21:27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in *the Lamb's book of life*.

Philippians 4:3 Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in *the book of life*.

Exodus 32:32,33 "But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of *the book you have written*." ³³ The LORD replied to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of *my book*."

Psalm 69:28 May they be blotted out of *the book of life* and not be listed with the righteous.

Daniel 12:1 At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in *the book*—will be delivered."

Malachi 3:16 Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. *A scroll of remembrance* was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name.

Luke 10:20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are *written in heaven*.

Hebrews 12:23 ...the church of the firstborn, whose names are *written in heaven*. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.

6) Our dogmaticians speak of the norm of judgment.

Gerhard: The godly will be judged by the gospel, specifically and properly so-called, the ungodly by the law illumined by the gospel (*Loci*, vol XIX, ch V, par LXX, 217).

Quenstedt: The norm of this judgment, in so far as men are to be judged, generally speaking, is the whole heavenly doctrine (Jn 12:48; Ro 2:16); but specifically speaking, so far as the godly are concerned the norm is the gospel understood in the strict sense as distinct from the law (Ga 3:9,12; Mt 25:34), but so far as the unbelievers are concerned the norm is the law (Ga 3:10; Ro 2:12; 1 Cor 6:9,10; Ga 5:19,20,21; the law, I say, but not the law as seen alone and by itself, but to the extent that it is illumined by the gospel (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XIX, sect. I, thesis X, p 611).

E2, III, 3. All people will have to appear in the final judgment.

a) All people, living and dead, will appear at the judgment.

Matthew 25:32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Romans 14:10,12 ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹² So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Acts 10:42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.

2 Timothy 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

1 Peter 4:5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

b) Also the fallen angels will be judged.

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.

E2, III, 4. The judgment will fully reveal God's righteousness and mercy.

a) God's ways are not fully understood on earth.

Ezekiel 18: 25-30 Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear, O house of Israel: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust? ²⁶ If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin, he will die for it; because of the sin he has committed he will die. ²⁷ But if a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life. ²⁸ Because he considers all the offenses he has committed and turns away from them, he will surely live; he will not die.

²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is not just." Are my ways unjust, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust? ³⁰ Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³¹ Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!

Romans 2:5,6 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done."

2 Thessalonians 1:5-8 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. ⁶ God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 73:16,17 When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me ¹⁷ till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.

Romans 11: 33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴ "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" ³⁵ "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

b) Believers will not be confronted with their sins, which have been removed by Christ.

Luke 21:28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

Isaiah 38:17 Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back.

Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

Isaiah 44:22 I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.

Micah 7:19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Matthew 25:34-36 Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

Hollaz: Question: Whether also the sins of believers will be examined and made public on the day of the Last Judgment?

Answer: It is not likely that individual sins of believers will on the last day be investigated and specially judged by Christ. Evidence for this answer:

- 1) From the divine promise. God has promised to blot out our sins as a cloud (Is 44:22), to cast them behind his back (Is 38:17), to sink them in the depths of the sea (Mi 7:19), that he will no longer remember them (Is 43:25). But what God does not want to remember, he will not publicize.
- 2) From the immutability of God. His will is unchangeable (Mal. 3:6). And so, since God in this life has forgiven sins to believers, it is unlikely that the same God will recall for rigid examination sins that have been forgiven.
- 3) From what the Judge has done in the past. Christ will come to judgment as our Redeemer (Lk 21:28). He who presented the church to himself as a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing (Eph 5:27), will not bring up the spots of his saints (*Examen*, pt III, sect II, ch X, qu 13, p 738).

Quenstedt: Question: Whether also the sins of the elect will be made manifest at the last judgment? The sins of the elect and godly will not be made manifest before the world of men in the last judgment in the same way as those of the ungodly and unbelievers.

Question: Whether the godly and believers will undergo judicial examination on the day of final judgment? The pious and believers will not undergo any divine judicial examination in their own consciences, but without examination, discussion, or debate they will pass over to eternal life. Therefore there will be no arguing of the case of those who come into the presence of the judge with certainty of their own salvation and blessedness, yes, they are already blest. The sins of those who do not come into judgment, but have eternal life, will not be published nor examined (Jn 5:24) (*TDP*, Pt IV, chap. XIX, sect. II, qu 6,7, p 629).

c) Christ will deliver the kingdom, fully restored, to the Father.

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

E2, III, 5. On Judgment Day the present universe will be destroyed and replaced by a new heaven and new earth.

a) The present world is under the curse of sin.

1) It was created for the benefit of man.

Genesis 1:26,28,29 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

Psalms 115:16 The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to man.

Isaiah 45:18 For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other."

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

2) Because of man's sin it is now cursed.

Genesis 3:17-19 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will

eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”
Romans 8:20,22 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

b) Hence the universe will disappear.

1) The world will be destroyed in a mighty catastrophe.

Psalm 102:25-27 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ²⁶ They will perish (יִדָּוֵא), but you remain; they will all wear out (יִלָּבֵן) like a garment. Like clothing you will change them (דִּפְּנֵי־לְבָבָהּ) and they will be discarded (יִפְּלֹגוּ!). ²⁷ But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Hebrews 1:10-12 He also says, “In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ¹¹They will perish (ἀπολοῦνται), but you remain; they will all wear out (παλαιωθήσονται) like a garment. ¹² You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed (ἀλλαγῆσονται). But you remain the same, and your years will never end.”

2 Peter 3:10-12 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar (οἱ οὐρανοὶ ροιζηδὸν παρελεύσονται); the elements will be destroyed by fire (στοιχεῖα δὲ καυσούμενα λυθήσεται), and the earth and everything in it will be *laid bare* (καὶ γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα εὐρεθήσεται). [Note also the many variants which seem to be attempts to remove the difficulty of εὐρεθήσεται including οὐχ εὐρεθήσεται and εὐρεθήσεται λυόμενα] ¹¹Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat (οὐρανοὶ πυρούμενοι λυθήσονται καὶ στοιχεῖα καυσούμενα τήκεται).

2) It does not seem that this will cause a material annihilation.

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away (παρελεύσεται), but my words will never pass away.
Matthew 5:18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear (παρέλθῃ), not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

1 John 2:17 The world and its desires pass away (ὁ κόσμος παράγεται), but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled (ἔφυγεν) from his presence, and there was no place for them (τόπος οὐχ εὐρέθη αὐτοῖς).

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away (ἀπῆλθαν), and there was no longer any sea.

Isaiah 34:4 All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved (יִקְרַב) and the sky rolled up (יִלָּגַן) like a scroll; all the starry host will fall (יִבוֹ) like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree.

Isaiah 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish (יִחַלְמוּ) like smoke, the earth will wear out (יִלָּבֵן) like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.

3) More likely a renovation will take place.

-a) Some expressions used imply a restoration or rebirth.

1 Corinthians 7:31 For this world in its present form is passing away (παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου).

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things (ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ), when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Romans 8:21 The creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth (συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει) right up to the present time.

Acts 3:21 He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything (ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων), as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

-b) The Lutheran dogmatists had different opinions about the meaning of these terms.

F. Pieper: Our old Lutheran theologians are not agreed on whether this passing away is to be defined more specifically as a total annihilation (*interitus mundi secundum substantiam*, κατ’ οὐσίαν) or only as a transformation or conversion (*interitus mundi secundum accidentia*, κατὰ ποιότητα). Luther, Brenz, Althammer, Ph. Nicolai, and others teach a transformation, principally on the basis of Rom. 8:21: “The creation itself also shall be freed from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Most of the earlier Lutheran theologians join Gerhard, Quenstedt, and Calov in assuming that the world will perish *quoad substantiam*. Gerhard (*Loci*, “*De consummatione seculi*,” § § 37–63) treats the subject extensively. He quotes the arguments pro and con and then gives his reasons why he regards a destruction according to the substance as corresponding more fully to the statements of Scripture. Nevertheless Gerhard says (*ibid.*, § 38): “We do not defend our opinion of the

destruction of the world according to its substance as an article of faith, but we assert that this opinion is more in conformity with the emphatic statements of Scripture concerning the end of the world. Hence we do not rashly accuse those of heresy who are of the opposite opinion and describe the destruction of the world as a transformation. Many therefore would rather reserve judgment in this question [ἐπέχειν] and leave this matter to future experience than take a definite stand now." All who assume a transformation of the creation must teach a change whereby the world in its entire present outward form really passes away on Judgment Day or comes to an end (τέλος). 1 Cor. 7:31: "The fashion (σχῆμα, form) of this world passes away." Luther: "In short, whatever belongs to the nature of these temporal goods, whatever constitutes this transitory life and activity, shall all cease" (St. L. VIII: 1222) (*CD*, III, p 542-543).

c) We expect a new heaven and a new earth.

2 Peter 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Isaiah 65:17 Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.

Isaiah 66:22 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure."

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

Siegbert Becker: Moreover, there are several passages in the Bible that seem to indicate that the fire of the last day will not annihilate but rather purify the earth and restore it to its original perfection. Perhaps the clearest of these passages is found in Romans, chapter eight, where the apostle Paul says that the created world will be set free from the bondage of corruption to participate in the glorious liberty of the children of God (Ro 8:21). Some orthodox Lutheran commentators have even concluded from this that there will be animals in heaven, but who can speak of such things with any kind of certainty? These words, however, may be very significant when we read of the passages that speak of a new heaven and a new earth. Peter, after telling his readers that this world will be burned up, speaks of such a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pe 3:13). Already the prophet Isaiah records the words of God in which He says, "The new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me" (Is 66:22). It should be pointed out that in all these passages the word heaven is used as it was used in the first chapter of Genesis. The new heaven is a new sky above this new earth. The most detailed description of this new heaven and new earth we find in the last two chapters of the Bible, where we have also a detailed description of the place where God's people will live through all eternity. John first tells us that he had a vision of a new heaven and a new earth.... What more can we say to add anything to that picture of endless bliss and glory? We can only join in the prayer of St. Bernard, "Jesus, in mercy bring us to that dear land of rest" (Essay "Heaven and Hell," 1978, *Our Great Heritage*, III, p 668-670).

E3. Eternity

E3, I. The wicked, persistently rejecting Christ, will suffer eternal damnation in hell.

E3, I, 1. Eternal damnation is a fact.

a) **Man's conscience testifies to this.**

Romans 2:15,16 They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. ¹⁶ This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

Knowledge of hell is preserved in human conscience, Tartarus, etc.

Virgil: And now wild shouts, and wailings dire,

And shrieking infants swell the dreadful choir.

Here sits in bloody robes the Fury fell,

By night and day to watch the gates of hell.

Here you begin terrific groans to hear,

And sounding lashes rise upon the ear.

On every side the damned their fetters grate,

And curse, 'mid clanking chains, their wretched fate (*Aeneid* 6).

b) **Scripture has many names for hell.**

1) **Sheol (occasionally)**

Proverbs 15:11 *Death and Destruction* lie open before the LORD—how much more the hearts of

men! שְׂאוֹל וְאַבְדֹן

Deuteronomy 32:22 For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the *realm of death* below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains.

כִּי־אֶשׁ קִדְחָהּ בְּאֶפְי וְתִיקַד עַד־שְׂאוֹל תַּחְתֶּיהָ

Psalms 139:7-8 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

2) **Gehenna was Jesus' main name for the place of the damned. Gehenna is literally "valley of Hinnom," the valley south of Jerusalem where human sacrifice was performed.**

Matthew 5:22,29,30 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, "Raca," is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, "You fool!" will be in danger of the *fire of hell*. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into *hell*. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into *hell*. ἔνοχος ἔσται εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in *hell*.

Matthew 23:15,33 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of *hell* as you are. ³³ You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell

James 3:6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by *hell*.

3) **Fire, eternal fire, unquenchable fire**

Matthew 25:41 Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the *eternal fire* prepared for the devil and his angels. εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον

Mark 9:43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where *the fire never goes out*. εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον

4) **Hades (Greek parallel of Sheol)**

Luke 16:23,28 In *hell*, where he was in *torment*, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁸ "For I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment." ἐν τῷ ᾄδῃ ἐν βασάνοις,

5) **The Abyss**

Luke 8:31 And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον

Romans 10:7 Who will descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον

6) **Tartarus** (The place of torment in the Greek version of the underworld, the lowest part of Hades. See [Hesiod, Theogony](#); [Homer, Odyssey](#), XI, 576 ff; [Virgil, Aeneid](#), VI, 539-627)

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but *sent them to hell*, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment. ταρταρώσας

7) **Darkness, outer darkness**

Matthew 22:13 Then the king told the attendants, "Tie him hand and foot, and throw him *outside, into the darkness*, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον

2 Peter 2:4, 17 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but *sent them to hell*, putting them into *gloomy dungeons* to be held for judgment (σειραῖς ζόφου—bonds of darkness; variant: σιροῖς ζόφου—pits of darkness) ¹⁷ *Blackest darkness* is reserved for them. ὀζόφος τοῦ σκότους.

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept *in darkness*, bound *with everlasting chains* for judgment on the great Day. ὑπὸ ζόφον δεσμοῖς αἰδίοις

8) Destruction, judgment

2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will be punished with *everlasting destruction* and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power οἵτινες δίκην τίσουσιν ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου

1 Thessalonians 5:3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Hebrews 10:27 [What remains is] only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Φοβερὰ δὲ τις ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως καὶ πυρὸς ζήλος

Hebrews 6:2 [We should go on to] instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and *eternal judgment*. Κρίματος αἰωνίου.

9) The Lake of Fire / The Second Death

Revelation 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death. ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ δευτέρου.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. Τῇ λίμνῃ τῇ καιομένῃ πυρὶ καὶ θείῳ, ὃ ἐστὶν ὁ θάνατος ὁ δεύτερος

c) The duration of eternal damnation is parallel to eternal salvation.

Matthew 25:46 Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

E3, I, 2.

Critics raise ethical objections to the doctrine of eternal damnation.

a) Objection: "Hell conflicts with God's infinite love."

William Crockett cites Celsus' words of God becoming a "cosmic cook" (*Four Views on Hell*, p 50).

Jehovah's Witnesses: The fiendish concepts associated with a hell of torments slander God and originate with the chief slanderer of God (the Devil) (*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, 1985, p 175).

Clark H. Pinnock (Evangelical): Let me say at the outset that I consider the concept of hell as endless torment in body and mind an outrageous doctrine, a theological and moral enormity, a bad doctrine of the tradition which needs to be changed. How can Christians possibly project a deity of such cruelty and vindictiveness whose ways include inflicting everlasting torture upon his creatures, however sinful they may have been? Surely a God who would do such a thing is more nearly like Satan than like God, at least by any ordinary moral standards, and by the gospel itself. ... Surely the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is no fiend; torturing people without end is not what our God does (*Criswell Theological Review*, Spring 1990, p 246-47, 253).

These passages answer the objection:

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 11:33,34 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"

1 Timothy 6:16 [God] who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

b) Objection: "It is unfair to give eternal punishment for temporal sin. Fairer punishments would be immediate annihilation (Jehovah's Witnesses), annihilation after failing the millennial test (Jehovah's Witnesses), restoration after suffering (rationalists), or annihilation after suffering (Seventh Day Adventists)."

Scripture answers the objection with these passages.

1) Sin deserves judgment.

Psalms 90:11 Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

1 John 3:8-10 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. ⁹ No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Gerhard: The degree of punishment and blame is not to be sought in how long it took to commit, but in the quality and shamefulfulness of the sin (*Locī*, Vol XX, ch VI, par LXV, 6, p 243).

Brochmand: Because the God who is infinitely good and eternal is offended by sin, therefore it follows that sin merits eternal punishment (*Systema*, Vol II, art XLVIII, ch II, qu III, p 7043).

2) Unbelief deserves damnation.

Hebrews 6:6 To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Hebrews 10:26-29 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

c) Objection: “Words like ‘destruction’ imply a cessation of suffering. Therefore, eternal punishment must refer to punishment that has an eternal result, annihilation.”

Response: the Bible speaks of conscious suffering of the damned.

Revelation 14:11 And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.”

E3, I, 3. Opponents of the teaching of eternal damnation include cults, liberals, and some Evangelicals.

An Evolutionary View of the Doctrine

Hans Schwartz: We also notice a growing understanding of the concept of “hell” (*Sheol*). In the earlier parts of the Old Testament, *Sheol* indiscriminately denotes the shadowy existence of all who died (cf. Ps. 89:48). But *Sheol* is also already interpreted as the dimension of alienation from God and the sphere of death. In postexilic times, perhaps through the influence of Parsiism, *Sheol* was a temporary dwelling place and was different for the righteous than for the godless. In the New Testament, *Gehenna* (hell) names the place where the “worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:48). While “hell” denotes an already present reality (Matt. 25:41), only after resurrection and judgment will hell be disclosed as the realm of eternal torment. ...In contrast to apocalyptic, the New Testament does not paint the torments of hell in drastic colors, unless in attempting to awaken the conscience of listeners (cf. Matt. 10:28). Like heaven, hell has its peculiarity not from a cosmological locality but from its relationship with God. Only in the world of fairy tales and fantasy is hell the domain of the devil. According to biblical witness even the anti-Godly powers are under God’s control (Braaten and Jenson, *CD* II, p 585-586).

Vague Hope: Qualified Universalism and Ecumenic Pluralism

Hans Schwartz: Without circumventing the salvific power of Christ, the church evidently affirmed the hope that those also could be saved who had not encountered Christ during their lifetime on earth. Yet it never dared to declare that therefore everyone will eventually be saved, nor did it define how someone could be saved through Christ’s descent. Our reflection today must show a similar restraint. While we fervently hope and pray that all humanity will be saved, we cannot take for granted that it will indeed be so or outline a way in which God will reach this goal. We know that the saved will be saved only for Christ’s sake (Braaten and Jenson, *CD* II, p 579).

Compare Ted Peters: What we need to affirm theologically, I believe, is ecumenic pluralism....The concept of a universal humanity must become an article of faith. (*God—The World’s Future*, p 352). In this position there is a shift away from a christocentric religion toward a theocentric model of a universe of faiths. Rather than advocate one or another existing religious perspective, this supraconfessional theology would see the existing world religions as different human responses to the one divine reality (p 357).

Restoration, the view that the damned will be released from their suffering and restored to happiness. Hell in effect is a form of purgatory.

Origen: The end of the world, then, and the final consummation, will take place when every one shall be subjected to punishment for his sins, a time which God alone knows, when He will bestow on each one what he deserves. We think, indeed, that the goodness of God, through his Christ, may recall all his creatures to one end, even his enemies being conquered and subdued. But those angels who have been removed from their primal state of blessedness have not been removed irrecoverably, but have been placed under the rule of those holy and blessed orders which we have described; and by availing themselves of the aid of these, and being remoulded by salutary principles and discipline, they may recover themselves and be restored to their condition of happiness (*De Principiis* 1; 6; 1,2).

Julius Wegscheider (d. 1849): We are of the opinion, first, that God will alleviate the very miserable condition of sinners who have been afflicted by punishments after death and have improved their souls. ... God will alleviate their condition to the same degree that they return to a better mind and strenuously continue their efforts to perfect their souls. Second, we are of the opinion that even if a wicked man is improved by the punishments of the future life and advances from them to a milder condition, nevertheless, he will never be free from the memory of the evil done in earthly life, nor will he be equal in blessedness to those who live honorably (*Institutiones*, sect. 200, p 639).

Annihilation, the view that after suffering for awhile, the damned will be put out of their misery. Conditionalism (or conditional immortality) is a form of annihilationism. In some forms of

conditionalism the souls of the damned do not suffer at all since they are never restored to life. In other forms, their suffering is temporary.

Seventh Day Adventists: The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever (*Seventh Day Adventists Believe*, p 362). So the Bible makes it very clear that the *punishment*, not the *punishing*, is everlasting—is the second death. From this punishment there is no resurrection; its effects are eternal (p 371).

Seventh Day Adventists: This annihilation Seventh Day Adventists call the second death; before the annihilation, however, there will be gradations of suffering, depending on the guilt of the person or demon involved. Since Satan is the most guilty of all God's creatures, he will suffer the longest and therefore will be the last to perish in the flames (*Questions on Doctrine*, p 498, in Hoekema, *Four Cults*, p 142).

Clark Pinnock: I was led to question the traditional belief in everlasting conscious torment because of moral revulsion and broader theological considerations, not first of all on scriptural grounds. It just does not make any sense to say that a God of love will torture people forever for sins done in the context of a finite life. . . . It's time for evangelicals to come out and say that the biblical and morally appropriate doctrine of hell is annihilation, not everlasting torment (*Theological Crossfire*, p. 226-227).

LeRoy Froom: Here is God's good news: Although man was not created unconditionally immortal, and is not today born immortal, yet he may become so—if he follows the provisions of God. According to the unfailing promise of the Almighty, he may acquire an immortality beyond the reach of death and time and destruction. That is the high privilege to be granted to the righteous—a favor conferred on the penitent believer. But it is *always conditional*. The righteous will live again, *forever*; but the impenitent will finally be destroyed—likewise *forever*. Life is thereby conditional. These are the final endings of the two ways of life and death (*The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers*, p 20,21).

Edward Fudge: What we have found, beyond any question, is that the Old and New Testaments alike, in a multiplicity of ways, terms, figures, pictures, expressions and examples, declare time and time again that the wicked finally pass away and be no more, that righteousness will then fill the universe, and that God will then forever be all in all. Not one time in all of Scripture does God say that any human being will be made immortal for the purpose of suffering conscious everlasting torment (*The Fire That Consumes*, p 434).

E3, I, 4. We must let our teaching be determined by Scripture not by reason or feeling.

August Pieper: The Christian gives his Yea and Amen to the unimaginable horrible torments of hell, because God has so ordered them and has himself revealed them, although human nature revolts against the thought of eternal torment (*Isaiah II*, p 706).

Francis Pieper: The objections [to eternal punishment] are understandable, for the thought of a never-ending agony for rational beings, fully realizing their distressing plight, is so appalling that it exceeds comprehension. . . . But all objections are based on the false principle that it is proper or reasonable to make our human sentiments and judgements the measure of God's essence and activity (*Christian Dogmatics*, III, p 545).

E3, I, 5. Damnation is a permanent separation from the enjoyment of God's grace.

a) Note the description of the judgment as separation.

Matthew 25:41 Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Matthew 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Matthew 8:12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.

b) Note some descriptions of damnation as death and destruction.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Matthew 7:13 Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

c) Damnation includes punishment of loss (*mala privativa, poena damni*).

Psalms 1:5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

Psalms 5:5 The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong.

Isaiah 48:22 "There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked."

Luke 13:28 There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out.

Hebrews 4:3 Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, "So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'"

Luke 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.

d) **Damnation includes suffering of pain (*mala positiva, poena sensus*).**

1) **The pain is real.**

2 Thessalonians 1:6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you.

Matthew 13:42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Luke 16:23,25,28 In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁵ But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony."

²⁸ "I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment."

Romans 2:9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Revelation 14:11 And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

2) **The pain is intense.**

Matthew 8:12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:50 Throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Revelation 6:16,17 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

Revelation 9:6 During those days men will seek death, but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.

3) **It is debated whether the unquenchable fire and the never-dying worm are to be understood literally or metaphorically.**

Isaiah 66:24 And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.

Matthew 3:12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Mark 9:43,44,46,48 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out, ⁴⁴ where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. ⁴⁶ where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. ⁴⁸ where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. Parallel Matthew 18:8,9

Matthew 25:41 Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Quenstedt: Opinions of the nature of the fire of hell:

1. The first opinion is that of those who hold that the fire of hell will be material, physical, elemental. So certain fathers, such as Tertullian, Augustine etc. held. The reasons for this opinion are the following:
 - 1) One should not depart from the literal sense.
 - 2) Flame, sulfur, smoke, wood are ascribed to the fire of hell; therefore it is physical fire.
 - 3) This fire burns human bodies; therefore also it will be physical.... These reasons do not yet prove fully that the fire of hell will be material or elemental. For
 - a) Holy Scripture clearly says that all the elements on that day of judgment will be burned up (2 Pe 3:10).
 - b) In Matthew 25:41 the fire of hell is called eternal. But a material fire and one properly called fire cannot be eternal.
 - c) The fire of hell also burns devils and souls; but a material fire cannot burn a spirit.
2. The second opinion is that that fire by which the machinery of heaven and earth is dissolved and destroyed will by God's decision involve the damned in their coarser part (i.e., their bodies) and this fire will be supernatural and will be the instrument of eternal torment. This is the opinion of Calixtus, Zanchius, Alstedt. Contra: From this opinion it follows that the fire of hell does not yet exist, and that the soul of the damned are not tormented by it.
3. The third opinion is that of those who think that Holy Scripture describes the state and condition of the damned as a fire, not because there is in hell a literal fire, but that it might signify the very bitter pains and griefs of the damned. This is the opinion of Ambrose, John of Damascus, Aegidius Hunnius, Balduin, Dannhauer. (The basis for this view is found in a comparison of Mt 25:41 and 46). These last words [in v.46] seem to indicate that by the hellish fire is meant the very severe punishment of hell.
4. Finally, there is the opinion of those who prefer to reserve judgment, rather than to assert anything for sure. Gerhard follows this opinion. He says, we do not doubt that by God's power it could happen that a physical fire torments devils and disembodied souls. But whether that fire will really be physical, material, and visible, or whether it will be non-physical, invisible, and immaterial we leave undecided, although we lean more toward the latter view (Gerhard is thus more inclined to think of it as an immaterial fire rather than the opposite) and we pray God earnestly that he will not make the answer clear to us by the knowledge that comes from experience (*TDP*, Pt I, chap. XIV, sect. II, qu IV, p 573).

4) There will be degrees of punishment.

Matthew 10:15 I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

Matthew 11:22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.

Luke 12:47,48 That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. ⁴⁸ But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Romans 2:11,12 For God does not show favoritism. ¹² All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.

E3, I, 6.

Damnation will be eternal.

a) Sin, as an attitude, is perpetuated in the damned.

1) They do not repent or confess their guilt.

Matthew 7:22,23 Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Matthew 25:44 They also will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?"

2) They will be in eternal bondage to sin.

Matthew 22:13 Then the king told the attendants, "Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Revelation 22:11 Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.

Francis Pieper: Can ceaseless sinning be predicated of the damned? Since the damned remain morally responsible being, subject to God's Law, and yet are wicked, there is unending sinning on their part. The claim that the punishments of hell are intended to be remedial or restorative (hypothetical damnation) is just as unscriptural as the claim that these punishments are a means of annihilation. But to the question whether God will suffer the damned continually to blaspheme Him by outward acts some of our old Lutheran theologians do not risk an affirmative answer (CD, p 546-547).

b) Eternal punishment is uninterrupted and without end.

1) There will be no intermission in the pain.

Luke 16:24,25 So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire." ²⁵ But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony."

Isaiah 34:10 It will not be quenched night and day; its smoke will rise forever. From generation to generation it will lie desolate; no one will ever pass through it again.

Revelation 14:11 And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever (εις αιωνας αιωνων). There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.

Revelation 19:3 And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever."

Revelation 20:10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

2) There will be no end or escape.

Isaiah 66:24 And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.

Mark 9:43,44 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out, ⁴⁴ where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

Luke 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.

Psalms 49:8 The ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough.

Matthew 18:8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.

Matthew 25:41 Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

Jude 6,7 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. ⁷

In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

Augsburg Confession, XVII, p 50, 3 But ungodly men and devils he will condemn to be tormented without end.

Apology, XVII, p 334, 66 We confess that at the consummation of the world Christ shall appear, and shall raise up all the dead, and shall give to the godly eternal life and, eternal joys, but shall condemn the ungodly to be punished with the devil without end.

c) **Critics raise these objections to the eternity of the torment.**

1) **Objection: “The biblical expressions for eternal may mean a long, yet limited period of time.”**

Exodus 12:14, 24 This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD—a lasting ordinance. ²⁴ Obey these instructions as a *lasting ordinance* (עֲוֹלָה עֲדָתְךָ לְדֹרֹתֶיךָ) for you and your descendants.

Exodus 21:6 Then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant *for life* (לְעֹלָם).

Response : When עֲוֹלָה means for a long, indefinite, but finite time, the context indicates this.

-a) **There are qualifying terms: for generations to come, life time.**

-b) **The parallel between eternal damnation and eternal life makes it clear that the meaning of the term in this case is “eternal.”**

Matthew 25:46 Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

-c) **The connotation “eternity” is made clear by heaping up the terms, for example, “to the ages of the ages.”**

2) **Objection: “Scripture teaches a restitution or restoration of the damned.”**

-a) **There will be a “visitation after many days.”**

Isaiah 24:21,22 In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be *punished after many days*, or NIV footnote: *released after many days*. וְיִמְרָב יָמִים וְיִפְקְדוּ

Response: Does “visitation” (יִפְקְדוּ) mean release or punishment? Note the parallelism of this passages to 2 Peter 2:4:

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.

After many days there is an intensification of punishment, not a release.

-b) **There will be a “regeneration” (παλιγγενεσία)**

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, at the *renewal of all things*, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Response: This is a plain reference to the new life for believers which follows Judgment Day.

-c) **There will be a “restoration” (ἀποκατάστασις).**

Acts 3:21 He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to *restore* everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Response: This too refers to salvation as promised by the prophets for God’s faithful people.

-d) **“All things will be placed under Jesus’ feet.”**

1 Corinthians 15:27,28 For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

Ephesians 1:10 [God’s purpose in Christ is] to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Philippians 2:9,10 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

Response: This includes subjection of enemies by force.

Psalms 2:9,12 You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.

¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

E3, I, 7. The cause of damnation is unbelief.

a) **The fault does not lie in God.**

1) **It is not a deficiency of divine grace.**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

2) **It is not a lack of efficacy of the means of grace.**

Luke 16:29,31 Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them." 31 He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

3) **It is not an absolute decree of damnation for some.**

1 Timothy 2:4 [God] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

b) **The fault lies entirely in sinful mankind.**

1) **Consider these general statements.**

Isaiah 3:9 The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves.

Jeremiah 2:19 "Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you. Consider then and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the LORD your God and have no awe of me," declares the Lord, the LORD Almighty.

Hosea 13:9 You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against me, against your helper.

Romans 1:20-21 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

2) **The unbeliever, rejecting Christ, remains in his sin.**

John 3:18,19,36 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

John 9:41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

3) **The unbeliever, therefore, is damned both on account of his sins and of his unbelief.**

Ephesians 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

John 8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.

Hebrews 10:26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left.

E3, I, 8. The place of damnation is hell.

a) **Hell is a "somewhere" (ποῦ *damnatorium*) not merely a state of mind.**

1) **Individuals are sent there.**

Luke 16:28 I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.

Acts 1:25 ...[Choose one] to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs

1 Peter 3:19 Through whom also [Christ] went and preached to the spirits in prison.

Gerhard: Some clearly deny the latter definition (namely that hell is a place), and they think that hell can be defined only as a feeling of divine wrath and eternal malediction, as well as horrors of conscience. But it does not seem that it can be denied that there is a certain ποῦ (somewhere), in which the damned suffer their punishments. The bodies of the damned reunited with their souls, and therefore the damned themselves, will be either everywhere, or nowhere, or in a certain ποῦ. The first cannot be said, because being present everywhere derives its origin either from infinity of essence or of person. Neither of these can be claimed here. Add the fact that the damned are said to be not in heaven but in hell in the future. Therefore they will not be everywhere.... The second likewise cannot be said because ... all finite beings must be somewhere.... Therefore only the third opinion is left, namely, that the damned will be in a certain ποῦ (*Locī*, Vol Xx, Ch III, par XXV, p 175-176).

Mary Baker Eddy: Christian Science has shown the hidden unpunished sin is this internal fire—even the fire of a guilty conscience. ...The advanced psychologist knows that this hell is mental, not material.

...Sin makes its own hell, and goodness its own heaven (Hoekema, *Four Cults*, p 219).

Hans Schwartz: Allusions in the New Testament, such as "outer darkness," "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 22:13, and "eternal fire" (Matt. 25:41) evoke hell in terms of pain, despair, and loneliness. They express the anguish of knowing what one has missed with no possibility of reaching it, and

witness to a state of extreme despair with no hope of recuperation. Such anguish and despair will not result from a local separation from God but must come from a dimensional separation from God and the faithful (Braaten and Jenson, *CD II*, p 586).

2) **Hell is distinguished from the realm of heaven.**

Matthew 8:11,12 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Revelation 22:14,15 Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Hollaz: It is certain that the hellish prison is in a real place distinct from the residence of the blessed. It is also likely that it is outside of this inhabited world. But where that place definitely is, is unknown to men who are pilgrims still on the way (*Examen.*, Pt III, sect I, ch XII, qu 29, p 984).

Johannes Fecht (d. 1716): Where hell is, whether inside or outside the earth cannot be taught with sufficient proof, even though the parasites of the Roman Church or rather court promise sure knowledge of this thing in vain (*De statu damnatorum*, p 329).

Quenstedt: But of what kind that πoū is, is not stated. Some locate it in the world, and indeed exactly in the center of the earth, as the Papists do. Others locate it outside the world which is also probable (*TDP*, Pt I, chap. XIV, sect. I, thesis XXXIV, p 564).

b) **Hell's location is not revealed.**

1) **It is customary to refer to heaven as above and to hell as below the earth.**

Philippians 2:10 At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

2) **This has been understood literally by some Roman Catholics.**

Bellarmino: The Latin name *infernus* [the Latin word for "hell" which means "a place below"] is not doubtful, for it is distinct from the name "grave" and since it means something below us. But below us is nothing but the center of the earth. The places of hell must necessarily be understood as deep subterranean locations (*Disputat.*, Vol I, Bk IV, Ch X, I, p 247).

3) **A subterranean location for hell does not necessarily follow, however, from references to going down to *sheol*.**

-a) **Korah and his followers went down to *sheol* when they were swallowed by the earth.**

Numbers 16:33 They went down alive into [*sheol*], with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community.

-1) **This passage describes the mode of their death (vs 30–32). The NIV renders: "went down into the grave."**

-2) **If hell is in the earth, is heaven then in the clouds?**

2 Kings 2:11 As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

-b) **The term *sheol/hades* is used as a parallel with death and decay.**

Psalms 16:10 You will not abandon me to [*sheol*] [NIV—the grave] nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

Acts 2:27,31 You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

In such passages *sheol* is not hell, but the condition of death.

4) **Remember Chrysostom's word:**

Let us not be concerned with, "Where is it?" but with, "How can we escape it?" (In Rom., hom. xxxi, n. 5, in P. G. LX, 674).

E3, I, 9.

The doctrine of damnation is revealed as a warning.

a) **It is loving to warn people so that they may escape the pain.**

Matthew 3:2, 12 Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.... ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Matthew 8:11,12 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 24: 42, 48-51 Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.... ⁴⁸ But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, "My master is staying away a long time," ⁴⁹ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. ⁵⁰ The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. ⁵¹ He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 26:24 The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.

Mark 9:43-48 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where “their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”

b) “Humane” theologians who fail to warn against hell are really lacking in mercy.

Ezekiel 33:6-8 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood. ⁷ Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. ⁸ When I say to the wicked, “O wicked man, you will surely die,” and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood.

E3, II. The believers will enjoy eternal happiness in the presence of God in heaven.

E3, II, 1. This eternal happiness has many names.

a) The most common words are “life” and “live” (αἰώνιος ζωῆ).

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to *everlasting life*, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

Matthew 7:14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to *life*, and only a few find it.

Matthew 18:8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter *life* maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.

Matthew 25:46 Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to *eternal life*.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have *eternal life*.

John 5:24,29 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has *eternal life* and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to *life*. ²⁹ Those who have done good will rise to *live*, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

John 6:27,40,54 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to *eternal life*, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval. ⁴⁰ For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have *eternal life*, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has *eternal life*, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 10:10 I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 17:3 Now this is *eternal life*: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto *life*.”

Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for *eternal life* believed.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is *eternal life* in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the *eternal life* to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Isaiah 26:19 But your dead will *live*; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them, “As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and *live*. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?”

Luke 10:28 “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will *live*.”

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will *live*, even though he dies.”

Romans 6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also *live* with him.

1 John 4:9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might *live* through him.

b) Scripture uses many other names for eternal life.

1) Heaven, the heavens οὐρανός οὐρανοί

Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in *heaven*, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Mark 10:21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in *heaven*. Then come, follow me.”

2 Corinthians 12:2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to *the third heaven*. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows.

2) Paradise (garden) παράδεισος

Luke 23:43 Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in *paradise*.”

2 Corinthians 12:4 [He] was caught up to *paradise*. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.

Revelation 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in *the paradise of God*.

- 3) **Dwellings, rooms**
 John 14:2 In my Father's house are many rooms (ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς μου μοναὶ πολλαὶ εἰσιν); if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.
 Luke 16:9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings (εἰς τὰς αἰώνιους σκηνάς).
- 4) **Country, city, homeland**
 Hebrews 11:16 Instead, they were longing for a better country (πατρίδα)—a heavenly one.
 Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.
 Hebrews 13:14 For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come (οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ὥδε μένουσαν πόλιν ἀλλὰ τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν).
 Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship (πολίτευμα) is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 5) **Granary, barn**
 Matthew 3:12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn (εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην) and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Parallel Luke 3:17
 Matthew 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.
- 6) **Abraham's side, Abraham's bosom**
 Luke 16:22 The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side (εἰς τὸν κόλπον Ἀβραάμ). The rich man also died and was buried.
- 7) **Kingdom ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν**
 Luke 12:32 Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the *kingdom*.
 Matthew 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the *kingdom of heaven*.
 Matthew 7:21 Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the *kingdom of heaven*, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
 Matthew 21:31 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the *kingdom of God* ahead of you."
 Matthew 25:34 Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the *kingdom* prepared for you since the creation of the world."
- 2 Timothy 2:12 If we endure, we will also *reign* with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us.
- 8) **Salvation σωτηρία**
 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be *saved* through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.
 Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be *saved*, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.
 1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive *salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ.
 2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the *salvation* that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.
 Hebrews 1:14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit *salvation*?
 Hebrews 9:28 Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring *salvation* to those who are waiting for him.
 1 Peter 1:9,10 You are receiving the goal of your faith, the *salvation* of your souls. ¹⁰ Concerning this *salvation*, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care.
- 9) **Inheritance κληρονομία**
 1 Peter 1:4 [You will be received] into an *inheritance* that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you.
 Acts 20:32 Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an *inheritance* among all those who are sanctified.
 Ephesians 5:5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any *inheritance* in the kingdom of Christ and of God.
 Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal *inheritance*—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.
 Matthew 25:34 Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your *inheritance*, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."
 1 Peter 3:9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may *inherit* a blessing.
 Revelation 21:7 He who overcomes will *inherit* all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.
 Romans 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are *heirs*—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

10) **Glory δόξα**

Romans 5:2 Through [Christ] we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the *glory* of God.

Romans 8:17,18 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his *glory*.¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the *glory* that will be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal *glory* that far outweighs them all.

Colossians 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of *glory*.

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal *glory*.

11) **Joy**

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy (χαρᾶ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῃ).

12) **Rest**

Hebrews 3:11 So I declared on oath in my anger, “They shall never enter my rest” (εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν μου).

Hebrews 4:1,9-11 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest (σαββατισμὸς) for the people of God;¹⁰ for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his.¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

13) **Wedding feast, feast**

Matthew 25:10 But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet (εἰς τοὺς γάμους). And the door was shut.

Revelation 19:9 Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” (εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ γάμου τοῦ ἀρνίου).

Matthew 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. (ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαάκ καὶ Ἰακώβ) Parallel Luke 13:29

Luke 22:30 ...so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

E3, II, 2. Eternal salvation consists in a perfect union with God and enjoyment of his presence.

a) **God will be all in all.**

1 Corinthians 15:28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

b) **We shall be with God.**

Revelation 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

c) **We shall see God (the beatific vision, *visio Dei*).**

Psalms 17:15 And I—in righteousness I will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

1 Corinthians 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

Hebrews 12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Revelation 22:1-5 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

1) **The “seeing” is predicated of the whole person. It is not limited to a *visio mentalis*.**

Job 19:26,27 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God;²⁷ I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

2) **This *visio* will not necessarily be effected only through the human nature of Christ.**

-a) **Though God is invisible to mortal eyes, pure spirits are said to see him.**

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

1 Timothy 6:16 [God] who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Matthew 18:10 See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

-b) Though Jesus certainly displayed the Godhead when he was on earth, after the final judgment he will not longer serve as a mediator between us and the Father in the same way as now.

Colossians 1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Matthew 17:2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Parallel Luke 9:29

John 14:8,9 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." ⁹ Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

1 Corinthians 15:24,28 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

-c) Perhaps we will see a theophany like the one at Sinai but more glorious.

Exodus 24: 9-11 Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up ¹⁰ and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself. ¹¹ But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.

Ezekiel 1:25-28 Then there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads as they stood with lowered wings. ²⁶ Above the expanse over their heads was what looked like a throne of sapphire, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man. ²⁷ I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. ²⁸ Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

Daniel 7:9-13 As I looked, "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. ¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. ...¹³ "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

Revelation 4 and 5 selected verses: ² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. ⁴ Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. ⁶ Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. ^{5:1} Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. ² And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴ I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne .

3) The *visio Dei* produces a double result.

-a) The vision produces perfect happiness.

1 Corinthians 13:9-12 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹² Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

John 16:22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

1 Peter 4:13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

1 John 1:3,4 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We write this to make our joy complete.

Jude 24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy...

Matthew 25:23 His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

Psalms 16:11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalms 126:5-6 Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. ⁶He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.

Psalms 73:25,26 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Gerhard: Because God is the highest good, therefore by the beatific vision of himself he communicates his good, his joy, his sweetness in the highest degree to the elect. He is the fountain of every good, and therefore of all bliss, because from the beatific vision of God all the good things that belong to the blessed saints in heaven rise and depend in a unique way (*Loci*, Vol XX, Ch V, Par LX, p 384).

-b) The vision produces glorification of God.

Revelation 7:9-14 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." ¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" ¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Revelation 11:16,17 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign."

Revelation 19:1-7 After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, ² for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants." ³ And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever." ⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!" ⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!" ⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. ⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

4) This will be a great advance over our present happiness.

2 Corinthians 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

Romans 7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

John 16:20 I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

5) We will enjoy the following blessings.

-a) Freedom from all evils and all the consequences of sin.

Luke 21:28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

Romans 8:21-23 The creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

1 Corinthians 15:25,26 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Isaiah 25:8 He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 49:10 They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat upon them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.
Revelation 7:16 Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.

2 Thessalonians 1:6,7 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

-b) Freedom from sinning.

Hebrews 12:23 You have come to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.

Contrast He 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

-c) Freedom from temptation, trials, persecution.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

1 Peter 4:12,13 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

John 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Revelation 12:7-11 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸ But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. ⁹ The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹ They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Revelation 20:10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Matthew 25:32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

Luke 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.

-d) Our dogmatians describe this freedom.

Gerhard: These blessings of eternal life can, however, be described in negative terms, both in general and specifically. In general (γενικῶς) we say that every evil that can be named or imagined will be absent from the blessed. Specifically (ειδικῶς), we say that the evils of guilt and punishment, the evils of sin and its penalty, the evils of body and soul, internal and external evils, temporal and eternal evils, will be absent from the blessed.... When the necessary consequence has been removed, also the cause has been removed (*Loc. i*, Vol XX, Ch V, Par LV, p 377).

-e) This joy will include many special blessings.

-1) There will be fellowship with saints and angels.

Matthew 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Luke 13:29 People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.

Hebrews 12:22,23 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.

1 Thessalonians 4:17,18 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Gerhard: The “thetical,” or positive blessings of eternal life can be classified as internal blessings, which the blessed feel in themselves, and as external ones, which they see in their partners in bliss, by the sight of which their internal blessings are increase (*Loci*, Vol XX, Ch V, Par LIX, p 382).

Gerhard: Just as Moses and Elijah spoke with Christ concerning his departure, that is, concerning the suffering and death of Christ, so in eternal life we will carry on those very pleasant conversations with one another concerning the mystery of redemption and salvation, which we cannot understand perfectly in this life (*Loci*, Vol XX, Ch V, Par XXII, 5, p 313).

Hoenecke’s comment: One could perhaps put a question mark behind this, namely, as far as the subject of the conversation is concerned. I can’t speak about salvation without speaking about sin. And if the discussion about sins is to be so true and lively that it actually contributes to the experience of the joy of salvation, it is, nevertheless, not conceivable without a certain sense of pain about the sins (of which one was guilty); and such a feeling would not be reconcilable with a condition of perfect bliss. One could well find a proof of Gerhard’s statement in Re 5:9ff; but compare 5:13; 1:5,6. That the fellowship of the saints in heaven with one another is very intimate is evident from the perfect love for one’s neighbor that exists in heaven (IV, p 331).

-2) All the saints will have complete joy and the same salvation, but the glory will be different.

a) Glory is distinguished from happiness.

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

b) There will be degrees of glory.

1) The degrees are gifts of grace, but they are related to one’s works and faithfulness.

Luke 16:9-12 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. ¹⁰ Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

1 Corinthians 4:1-7 So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God. ⁶ Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not take pride in one man over against another. ⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

2 Corinthians 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

Revelation 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”

2) The degrees may be positions of honor and responsibility.

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Matthew 20:21-23 “What is it you want?” he asked. She said, “Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom.” ²² “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said to them. “Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?” “We can,” they answered. ²³ Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not

for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.”

Matthew 25: 23,28,29 His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”²⁸ “Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.”²⁹ For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.”

Luke 19:17,19 “Well done, my good servant!” his master replied. “Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.”¹⁹ His master answered, “You take charge of five cities.”

3) Perhaps they involve a display of differing glory.

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

1 Corinthians 15:40-42 There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another.⁴¹ The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.⁴² So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable.

Gerhard: It is certain that the happiness and glory of all the blessed will be the same objectively [the object is after all God] and subjectively. ... It will be the same because it will continue and last forever, ... the same because it will be sure, ... the same because it will be full, ... the same because it will be free of all adversity, ... the same because there will be a living love and sharing between all. ... However, there can be some question about whether that difference which will exist between individuals in heaven must be held to consist only in accidental glory of soul and body or whether it also consists in essential glory, so that in some of the blessed there will be a greater light of glory, in others less, because one blessed person sees the divine essence more perfectly and clearly than another. Our theologians more correctly assert that the difference should be held to consist only in accidental rewards: There will be one and the same salvation for all the saints but a differing glory. This difference will not create any disturbance, because there will be no envy there. There will be no jealousy because of greater brightness when the unity of love rules in all (*Locī*, Vol XX, Ch V, Par CXX. 5, p 463).

E3, II, 3. The joys of heaven are everlasting and unbroken.

a) **There will be a new heaven and earth where there is no sin.**

Isaiah 65:17 Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.

Isaiah 66:22 “As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure.”

2 Peter 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

Psalm 37:9,11 For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.¹¹ But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace.

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

b) **The joys will be uninterrupted.**

John 16:22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

1 Peter 1:4 [You will be received] into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you.

Revelation 4:8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.”

c) **They will be endless.**

Matthew 25:46 Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

Luke 16:9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2 Corinthians 5:1 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.

Hebrews 5:9 He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Revelation 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.

d) The heavenly joys will not be disturbed by thoughts concerning the damned (Lk 16:25).

Hutter: But by no means will they be disturbed, for the will of the blessed will in all things agree with the will of God. Therefore carnal feelings of this kind, which in this life are a sign of our weakness, will completely come to an end in that other life, where all our love will reach out only to those whom God himself holds dear to himself and makes heirs of eternal life. But in the damned they will admire the supreme justice of God and rejoice in it forever (*Comp. Theo*, 318).

E3, II, 4. Only believers will receive everlasting life.

a) Consider these truths about the gift of salvation:

1) Eternal life is not given as a reward of merit.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

2) Christ won eternal life for us.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

1 Corinthians 15:21,22 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

3) Christ's work is appropriated through faith.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

b) Faith must be acquired in this life.

1) There will be no opportunity after death.

Hebrews 9:27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...

2) Hence the urgency of preaching the law and the gospel now.

Hebrews 3:13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

John 9:4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

Luke 24:47 Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

2 Timothy 4:1,2 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ² Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

Ezekiel 3:10,18 And he said to me, "Son of man, listen carefully and take to heart all the words I speak to you. ¹⁸ When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood."

Matthew 18:15-17 If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

3) Can any non-Christians enter heaven?

-a) The Roman Catholic Church, liberals, and even some Evangelicals say "Yes."

Karl Rahner (d. 1984): 2nd Thesis: Until the moment when the gospel really enters into the historical situation of an individual, a non-Christian religion (even outside the Mosaic religion) does not merely contain elements of a natural knowledge of God, elements, moreover, mixed up with human depravity which is the result of original sin and latter aberrations. It contains also supernatural elements arising out of the grace which is given to men as a gratuitous gift on account of Christ. For this reason a non-Christian religion can be recognized as a *lawful* religion (although only in different degrees) without thereby denying the error and the depravity contained in it....

3rd Thesis: If the second thesis is correct, then Christianity does not simply confront the member of an extra-Christian religion as a mere non-Christian but as someone who can and must already be regarded in this or that respect as an anonymous Christian (*Theological Investigations*, Vol V, from p 115-134).

Vatican II: Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or his Church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do his will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does divine Providence deny help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to his grace (*Documents*, p. 35).

Dominus Jesus (2000): Above all else, it must be firmly believed that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is the mediator and the way of salvation; he is present to us in his body which is the Church. He himself explicitly asserted the necessity of faith and baptism (cf. Mk 16:16; Jn 3:5), and thereby affirmed at the same time the necessity of the Church which men enter through baptism as through a door. This doctrine must not be set, against the universal salvific will of God (cf. Tim 2:4). It is necessary to keep these two truths together, namely, the real possibility of salvation in Christ for all mankind and the necessity of the Church for this salvation (Par. 20).

Clark Pinnock: According to the Bible, persons can relate to God in three ways and covenants: through the cosmic covenant established with Noah, through the old covenant made with Abraham, and through the new covenant ratified by Jesus. One may even speak of salvation in the broad sense in all three circumstances. That is, insofar as salvation connotes a relationship with God, there is salvation for people in all three of the covenants. Of course, there is a more complete saving knowledge of God in the new covenant than in the old, and more in the old than in the cosmic covenant, but a relationship with God is possible in the context of all three covenants. In all three, God justifies Jews and Gentiles on the ground of faith, the condition for salvation in all dispensations (Ro 3:30) (*A Wideness in God's Mercy*, p 105). The issue God cares about is the direction of the heart, not the content of theology (*WGM*, p 158). Uniqueness belongs first of all to the God of the Bible, and if it should be said that Jesus is unique, it will be only because of that special relationship to God he is thought to enjoy as God's Son. Uniqueness and finality belong to God. If they belong to Jesus, they belong to him only derivatively (*WGM*, p 53).

John Sanders: According to the inclusivist view, the Father reaches out to the unevangelized through both the Son and the Spirit via general revelation, conscience, and human culture. God does not leave himself without witness to any people. Salvation for the unevangelized is made possible only by the redemptive work of Jesus, but God applies that work even to those who are ignorant of the atonement. God does this if people respond in loving faith to the revelation they have (*What About Those Who Have Never Heard*, p 36).

Apology IV (II), p 126, 24 Now, although we cheerfully assign this righteousness of reason the praises that are due it (for this corrupt nature has no greater good, and Aristotle says aright: Neither the evening star nor the morning star is more beautiful than righteousness, and God also honors it with bodily rewards), yet it ought not to be praised with reproach to Christ.

-b) In the time before Christ, as today, the gospel was available. The nations threw it away and turned to their own ways.

Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Genesis 9:26,27 He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. ²⁷ May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave."

c) Thus the doctrine of eternal life is a great stimulant for our faith.

Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Romans 8:18,37 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

2 Timothy 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

Luke 10:16-20 He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me. ¹⁷ The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." ¹⁸ He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

***Perducat nos ad beatitudinem vitae aeternae
Christus Jesus, fidei et vitae ἀρχηγέτης,
in saecula benedictus. Amen.***

May Christ Jesus the author of faith and life,
blessed to the ages,
lead us to the bliss of life eternal.
Amen.