

## I. The Lord's righteousness is an integrating perspective on Reformed theology

In my *Foundations* book, I utilized a Westminster integrative method to link the doctrine of God's glory revealed in both blessed and cursed faces, *to, on, in* and *by* his elect (WCF 2:2) with eight omni-attributes that have derivative expressions in Christ's humanity and his elect.

In this book I will build on those same patterns to integrate Reformed theology using one omni-attribute, omni-holiness, or omni-righteousness. The model shifts to emphasize righteousness as the new integrating perspective. The omni-righteousness of the Lord is revealed to us, on us, in us and by us. I will add the three integrating patterns of Westminster Standards' moral law (I will call it *lex Christi*), specifically, a pattern of the *interdependence* of each commandment on the others, a pattern of *supra-morality* that encompasses all requirements of his righteous image in man, and a replicating pattern of *lex Christi* within the redemptive-historical *meta-narrative* and related topics of systematic and practical theology.

From this shift in perspective, the model helps explain other facets of the Westminster Standards and parallels the theological framework of the book of Romans. When Lord-King's blessed face shines on his elect, by the Spirit and the Word working saving faith uniting them to Christ, he reveals his kingdom dominion of omni-righteousness *to* them in the face of the perfect, derivative, *lex Christi* righteousness of Christ and his perfect propitiating sacrifice on the cross to satisfy the just death penalty due to their unrighteousness, *on* them, declaring their sins against *lex Christi* forgiven and his *lex Christi* righteousness credited to them, *in* them, writing the *lex Christi* so they love righteousness and hate all unrighteousness, and *by* them, as prophets proclaiming, priests reconciling and kings ruling by the *lex Christi* in their realms (heavenly & earthly) and places (assembly//creation//diaspora) through their various roles (disciple, student, parent, spouse, church member, deacon, elder, neighbor, employee, employer, citizen). The ten mandates of the *Foundations* book (assembly, commission, discipline//cultural, investment, frustration-mercy//ambassador, reformation, warfare, emigration) can be reorganized as applications of the three patterns of the *lex Christi's* interdependence, supra-morality, and its replication within the redemptive history meta-narrative and related topics of systematic and practical theology.

Since Christ and his apostles proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom<sup>1</sup> as the primary meta-narrative structure for their teaching, we can develop our *Reformed faith* under a variation of this theme. Since the words "kingdom" and "righteousness" or "righteous" are also linked in Scripture, I will augment the theme with the word "righteous".<sup>2</sup> We will link the additional categories of gospel, historical, systematic and practical theology under a new, synthesized title called the meta-narrative of the **righteous king's dominion** (RKD).<sup>3</sup> To develop the meta-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 10:7; Luke 8:1; 9:2, 60; Acts 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31; Heb. 12:28; Jas. 2:5; 2 Pet. 1:11; Rev. 1:9; 12:10

<sup>2</sup> Isa. 9:7; Matt. 5:20; 6:33; 13:43; Rom 14:17

<sup>3</sup> The Scriptures and confessions (WCF 8:1; HC 31-32) show the Christ is anointed to three offices of king, priest and prophet, but this RKD metanarrative selects the predominant office that runs throughout Scripture and expounded in the Gospels as the king ruling over his kingdom (Matt 21:5; 27:11, 29, 37, 42; John 1:49; 12:13-15; 18:33-39) and

narrative outline, we will consider connections between theological topics that use these or synonymous words. Since the *Reformed life* is defined in WCF 19:2 by the moral law as “a perfect rule of righteousness,” these topics are linked by searching for the related sets of words “righteous,” “righteousness,” “holy,” “holiness,” “godly,” “godliness,” and the meta-narrative words “gospel” and “kingdom” in the Westminster Standards and Scripture, with particular attention to Romans, which uses the word righteousness 32 times (exceeding all other NT books by 4x’s or more), only exceeded by OT books Isaiah (48x’s) and Psalms (58x’s).

## II. Westminster Standards’ Righteousness Integration Patterns

The longer I focus on the gift given to the church by the wise men who authored the Westminster Standards, looking at both their contents and their theological methods, while comparing what they wrote with Scripture, the more I see a unifying and integrated perspective on Scripture. I have observed how fragmented our seminary instruction and theological books (historical, systematic, practical) and have become, in part, because we have neglected the wisdom of our Westminster heritage! Even the current Reformed emphasis on being Christ-centered and Gospel-centered have not provided any widely endorsed template for organizing the sub-disciplines of the seminary curriculum. So many scholars have focused teaching and writing on the details of seminary sub-disciplines with much less time considering the importance of their studies for building up believers into the righteous likeness of Christ. From these sub-disciplines others have built mini-models out of fragments, while missing the larger integrating patterns that Westminster (and Romans) uses to link them all together and give them coherence.

Though the Ten Commandments are commonly referred to as the moral law, this phrase can be misunderstood to mean only the words of the Ten Commandments. We can describe the law in different ways in different time periods. God gave to Adam **Eden’s kingdom law** (without sin in the world, only the positive **duty** senses of the commands are revealed, with one prohibition not to eat from the tree, that, when transgressed, broke all Ten Commandments). In a later period we call it the **Mosaic law** (because sin has entered the world, the Ten Commandments emphasize mostly negative **prohibitions** of the commandments), functioning as an inter-generational school-master to prepare men to receive the work of Christ on their behalf, to realize the meaning of cross’s curse for unrighteousness and the resurrection as proof of Christ’s righteousness (Gal. 3:25; Phil. 3:9; Rom. 3:20-26; 4:24-25; 10:9-10). Faith that God raised Christ credits righteousness to us, and the Spirit is sent to write the law on our hearts (Rom. 8:3-4; Heb. 10:16). However, we do not need any required preparatory work of the law in repentance as somehow qualifying us to receive grace. Saving faith looks to Christ, who sends the Spirit to show us Christ and our helplessness without him. Our biblical counseling model could use several related NT phrases that seem to capture the essential meaning, “the law of *Christ*” (Gal 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21) and the synonymous phrase ‘the *royal* law that gives liberty’ or the ‘law of the

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related phrases used by Christ like the “gospel of the kingdom” and kingship parables (Matt. 18:23-35; 22:1-14; 25:31-46).

*kingdom'* (Jas. 1:25; **2:8-12**).<sup>4</sup> The *law of the kingdom* (Jas. 2:8) functions as an integrating perspective on all the RDK meta-narrative, or in other words, can help explain various parts of historical, systematic and practical theology. I will call this law, *lex Christi*, a derivative Latin phrase for the law of Christ.

How does Westminster use *lex Christi*? In three specific ways.

**An irreducibly complex morality model:** Westminster Larger Catechism 99 shows patterns of using each commandment as a way of interpreting other commandments. For example, the heart sin of coveting (10<sup>th</sup> commandment) is a root of many other sins. Those in authority (5<sup>th</sup> commandment) are to model, explain and use their authority to represent and apply the all the righteous commands. There are many inter-connections and parallels in meaning between the first four commands and the last six commands.

**A supra-morality model:** The Westminster Larger Catechism Q&A 99-150 interprets each command having *duties* and *sins* associated with the character of righteousness, similar to Ephesians 4:28 showing the sin of using your hands to steal, but the positive duty of using your hands to work so we have enough to share with those in need. Ephesians 4:20-6:9 tends to give the best development of duties and sins associated with various commandments. I call this Westminster's supra-morality model, meaning that all the duties and sins defined in Scripture can be arranged under various commandments.

**A meme that integrates the RDK metanarrative:** The Westminster Standards link the *lex Christi* with righteous church assembly, the righteous individual, the righteousness of God in whose image man is made, Christ as the propitiation for unrighteousness and accomplisher of righteousness, with the Spirit as the applier of that righteousness in justification, sanctification until final glorification when we see Christ in his righteousness and are transformed, body and soul to live in the home of righteousness, and the Last Judgment of the unrighteous.

I will explain more about these specific patterns below in sections IV and V.

### III. Reading the Proverbs Looking for *lex Christi*

What are the standards for being a good friend? What kinds of friends are dangerous? How does a mature Christian attract others to friendship and earn praise (Prov. 31)?

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<sup>4</sup> See Richard Bauckham, *James: The Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage*, (Routledge 1999), 142-147 for explanation of how James uses the term "royal" to mean "the law of the kingdom of God" (142) and "law" to mean "the law interpreted by Jesus in his preaching of the kingdom" (143) and "liberty" means heart deliverance out of sin's bondage (Jas. 1:14-15) into renewal by the implanted word of truth (Jas.1:18, 21) to love God and neighbor. James 2:1-5:12 offers an extended exegesis of Leviticus 19:12-18 (Lev. 19:12, 13, 15, 16, 17b, 18a cited or alluded to in Jas. 5:12; 5:4; 2:1 & 9; 4:11; 5:20; 5:9 respectively) including citing the command to love neighbor (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:40) (143). But James also shows that the teaching of Jesus is the authoritative interpretation of the law (cf. Jas. 4:11; 5:9; 5:12 with Matt. 7:1; 7:1-2; 5:33-37 respectively) (145).

- A. In the prologue to the book, Solomon through Proverbs tell us we can gain wisdom in righteous living, learning to reject youthful foolishness that comes from lack of moral discernment (Prov. 1:2-5; 7:7; 9:6). The commandments are presuppositions for the comparative analysis done in Proverbs. While most of the second table (4b-10) commandment connections are obvious, the first table of the law (1-4a) is more summarized in the command to fear the Lord and live under the blessed protection of all his commands. When the wise teacher appeals to the benefit of learning wisdom to be delivered from “the way of evil, men of perverted speech, who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil, men whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways . . . [and] the forbidden woman, . . . the adulteress” (Prov. 2:12-16), we can assume that all Ten Commandments are used to define the evil from which we must be delivered.
- B. The wise who know, trust and fear the omniscient Lord, humbly listen, who internalize and live by the Ten Commandments, fulfilling its duties and heeding its warnings against lawlessness, will be established by the Lord to dwell securely with authority to rule justly, enjoy the honor of a good name, have sufficient resources, bring honor to their superiors and joy to inferiors, cover others offenses, enjoy long life and peace with men and will be guarded from the ways of evil and the false allure of evil people who tempt to disobey.<sup>5</sup> Those who reject this wisdom will experience God’s scorn that gives men up to all manner of moral failure, disasters and chaos to themselves and all their relationships: unsatisfied cravings, poverty, strife, public disgrace by exposed evil, beatings with the rod, shame to superiors, ruin, bad reputation, disappointing those who rely on them, leading others to share sinful ways, worthless speech that harms, and premature death.<sup>6</sup>
- C. The structure of the book begins with a series of case studies in chapters 1-9 that are followed by repeated inter-related proverbs, teaching the wise how to respond to moral evil, how to avoid the ways of the naïve who only sees the immediate benefits of sin, the fool who insists on his own opinions and thinks he can avoid consequences, the mocker who delights in doing evil, the scoffer who hates wise correction, or more broadly, how to engage darkened worldviews.<sup>7</sup>
- D. The proverbs also teach those with authority how to persuasively represent this wisdom.<sup>8</sup> They should call the simple or naïve to hear and get wisdom.<sup>9</sup> They warn against rebuking the proud scoffer, the fool wise in his own eyes, because he will abuse and hate you<sup>10</sup> and cause more relational, life-threatening and economic destruction with his reckless speech.<sup>11</sup> Proverbs also points out vicarious benefits for the observant naïve as a reason to answer the foolish scoffer according to his folly, discipline him or dissociate

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<sup>5</sup> Prov. 2:1-3:26; 4:1-13, 18, 21-23, 25-27; 6:20-23; 8:1-36; 9:1-6, 9-11; 11:10, 16; 12:4; 13:13-16, 20-21; 15:3, 31-33; 16:3, 7, 9, 20, 23; 17:9; 19:23; 21:21; promise of 5<sup>th</sup> command to live long in the land; 7<sup>th</sup> command

<sup>6</sup> Prov. 1:20-33; 3:32; 6:16; 10:1-32; 11:1, 20; 12:22; 13:21; 14:1; 15:8, 10, 25-26; 16:5; 17:13, 15; 19:5; 20:10; 21:27; 24:9

<sup>7</sup> Prov. 9:4-18; 1:22-23; 21:4

<sup>8</sup> Prov. 9:9; 13:24; 16:23; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13; 26:3; 29:15, 17

<sup>9</sup> Prov. 1:4, 20-23; 8:5; 9:4-6; 14:15

<sup>10</sup> Prov. 1:22-32; 9:7-8; 13:1; 15:5; 21:24; 23:9; 26:12

<sup>11</sup> Prov. 10:8, 10, 14, 18; 12:15-16; 13:16; 14:16; 15:6, 27; 17:21; 18:2, 6-7; 19:1, 9; 20:3; 29:9, 11, 20

- from him.<sup>12</sup> In some cases where there is no clear moral directive to solve a quarrel, when all constituents believe that the decision is from the Lord, the use of lots is commended.<sup>13</sup>
- E. All of the cases are integrally related to a heart filled with foolish pride, sins of rash, harsh, angry, deceptive, manipulating, lying or false speech, rash vows, hypocritical worship or being persuaded by those who so speak, fomenting social chaos, which the Lord hates.<sup>14</sup>
  - F. The first case study teaches the wisdom-seeker how to respond to speech inviting partnership with covetous thieves and murderers in their plot to get rich quick: 'just say no!' because these men will be destroyed themselves.<sup>15</sup> This is followed by contrasting wicked plans with righteousness toward neighbors in following related proverbs that reinforce the theme.<sup>16</sup> We should promptly do good for those who deserve it (duties of equals, 5<sup>th</sup> command), rather than plot any evil or stir up trouble against others.<sup>17</sup> Proverbs teaches reserve and self-control with respect to neighborly relations, resisting the urge to take advantage of his hospitality.<sup>18</sup>
  - G. A second case study teaches the wisdom-seeker how to respond to the sexually immoral temptation (especially flattering, deceptive words) of the seductress: notice that this ruse is a mere appearance of pleasure, since she is a pit of destruction, so flee from her.<sup>19</sup>
  - H. A third case study teaches the wisdom-seeker about how to avoid financial ruin that comes from listening to the swindling speech of the stranger, guaranteeing his debt.<sup>20</sup> Many of the following proverbs show the importance of making financial transactions with known, trusted people, and using fair and just business and pricing practices.<sup>21</sup>
  - I. A fourth case study teaches the wisdom-seeker to reject all evil schemes and slothful diversions from diligent labor by taking note of the ruin that comes to the lazy. The wise learn from the internalized industriousness of ants, who, without need of external authority and control, also reflect the Creator's purposes.<sup>22</sup> This is followed by proverbs contrasting the consequences of laziness and diligence reinforcing the theme.<sup>23</sup>
  - J. In the capstone exemplary case study of the virtuous wife in Proverbs 31:10-31, Proverbs shows the way of wisdom is to fear the Lord, receive the life-enriching instruction of the moral law, and promote human flourishing in marriage, parenting and community. In contrast to each of the earlier warning case studies, the virtuous woman is self-disciplined, working diligently for her income and using her resources wisely to prosper her family and help the poor and needy. She is a faithful wife, exemplifying the all the

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<sup>12</sup> Prov. 19:25; 20:19; 21:11; 22:10; 26:5; 14:7

<sup>13</sup> Prov. 16:33; 18:18

<sup>14</sup> Summary in Prov. 6:16-19; 15:8-11, 26; pride in 8:13; 11:2; 16:18; 21:4, 24; 29:23; sins of speech in 6:12-15; 7:14; 10:31; 12:18-19, 22; 13:3; 14:5, 17, 29; 15:1-2, 4, 18; 17:4, 20; 18:20; 21:6, 23; 25:23; 26:28; 28:23; 29:22; 30:8, 33; sin of being persuaded by evildoers to take rash vows 20:25; sins of hoping in the plans of the wicked 24:20-22

<sup>15</sup> Prov. 1:10-19; 3:29-34; 4:14-17, 19; 12:6, 12; 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> commands

<sup>16</sup> Prov. 10:2

<sup>17</sup> Prov. 3:21-35; 6:12-18; 16:29-30

<sup>18</sup> Prov. 25:17

<sup>19</sup> Prov. 5:1-23; 6:24-35; 7:1-27; 23:27-28; 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> commands

<sup>20</sup> Prov. 6:1-5; 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> commands

<sup>21</sup> Prov. 11:1, 15; 17:18; 20:14, 16; 21:16; 22:26-27; 27:13

<sup>22</sup> Prov. 6:6-15; 12:11-12; 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> commands

<sup>23</sup> Prov. 10:3-5, 26; 12:11; 13:4, 11, 18, 25; 15:19; 16:26; 18:19; 19:15, 24; 20:4, 13; 21:25; 22:13; 24:30-34

beauty of one who loves wisdom in speech and behavior. She has authority to teach wisdom and kindness to her children and the community. She resists all the tempting allures offered by fools, scoffers or mockers and refuses to tempt others with her own feminine allures. She is established securely in the protection of the Lord and the community without fear of the future or hardship. She receives her due public honor for the peace she brings to all her relationships.

- K. Thus, we can deductively show that Solomon’s moral law wisdom engages the representative speech and immorality of darkened worldviews, showing that human flourishing begins with the First Commandment to fear and know the one true God and receive instruction in his law given by the representative wise community who have internalized the wisdom of Proverbs. We can integrate knowledge that submits to the *lex Christi*. The Lord’s wisdom teachers and their students reject integration of anti or a-moral-law worldviews, opinions, philosophies, principles and those persuasively promoting such views. Those who exemplify and have gifts to discerningly apply this wisdom in its new covenant Gospel context are qualified to counsel the simple. Biblical counselors who identify foolish scoffers or mockers through the counseling process will dissociate from them and teach wisdom to family members who frequently face their manipulation and abuse. Wherever the psychologies are using their influence to suppress human flourishing by ignoring or denying the moral law, such as medicalizing sin and calling it “disorder” or “disease” additionally used to reinforce passive sloth, the Lord-fearing community seeks to persuade the simple or naïve to receive and obey the teaching of biblical wisdom to find true human flourishing. Where the psychological establishment claims professional credibility for all its state certified therapists, the wisdom community will teach the simple not to trust any false-speaking swindlers claiming to provide amoral, therapeutic or prescription drug help for morally-embedded human problems. Where ever the psychologies are developed or adopted by scoffing fools and mockers, we recognize that engagement with their worldviews will bring scorn, insult and abuse upon us, and may mean that we engage with them so the simple can learn from it, or it may mean we dissociate from them. But our best form of engaging darkened worldviews of psychology is to show how the community of biblical wisdom provides the capstone case studies in human flourishing.

#### **IV. Romans Uses Righteousness as its Integrating Theme**

1. The Westminster Standards are quite similar to the model of Romans in using the theme of righteousness to integrate election, creation, fall, redemption and glorification as well as reprobation of the non-elect after the fall.
2. Romans presents a moral standard of righteousness that exposes the unregenerate unrighteousness of both Gentile and Jewish cultures, expressed on a continuum of doing and promoting moral wickedness, to moral-conscience-conformity to a few God-dissociated commandments that enables some social harmony, to outward morality-demanding hypocrisy (Rom. 1:17-2:28; 3:5; 9:31-10:3; 16:17-18). In all these cases, there is explicit disobedience to both tables of the moral law (Rom. 3:10-18) that every excuse may be silenced and the whole human world brought to account for their immoral chaos before the one true God (Rom. 3:19). The Gentiles deny the one true God by false

worship and the ensuing social chaos of man sinning against man, suppressing the condemnation of their own moral-law accusing consciences (Rom. 1:18-32; 2:14-16). The Jews blaspheme Sabbath worship by hypocritically taking the Lord's name in vain (Rom. 2:1-29). In cursed response to those he passes by and leaves in their sins, the Lord shows his righteous wrath, power and patience (Rom. 1:18, 24, 26, 28; 9:17-22).

3. In saving response to unrighteousness of the unregenerate elect (among whom Paul himself is counted Rom. 1:1, 5), the Lord through the Spirit applies Christ's perfect human righteousness through faith in his propitiation for and union in death to their sins, and in his credited, imparted, assembly-nourished and completed aspects of righteousness (Rom. 1:5, 12; 16:26; 3:21-26; 4:25; 5:9, 18-21; 6:1-11; 8:1-13, 23, 28-30; 9:30; 10:4, 9-10; 13:8-14; 15:8-14). This transformation into righteousness is the proof of the Lord's love and confirms the hope of glorious renewal of both the body and the world to come, enabling his elect to patiently endure and respond constructively to all types of suffering, whether from attacks from earthly or angelic enemies with darkened worldviews or the tragedies, deprivations, sicknesses or death in this world cursed with bondage to corruption (Rom. 8:17-39; 9:22-23; 12:17-21; 13:1-7; 16:16-20). The elect community demonstrates patience and acceptance in disputable views and practices that are not part of the required righteousness for the entire community (Rom. 14:1-15:7 in connection with contrasting emphasis on righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit in the whole book Rom. 14:17-18).
  
4. But like the capstone case-study of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 showing the attractive qualities of God-fearing wisdom, Romans' most significant exemplars of righteousness are the righteous saints within the righteousness-nourishing community. They will be lovers of God and men (Rom. 12:1-2, 9-10; 13:9-10; 2 Tim. 1:7). They will model social *constructivity* with an excellent work ethic, using gifts, skills and time to provide life support for their families, pay taxes to government and social *mercy* for the weak and poor (4<sup>b</sup> 24, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> commands; Rom. 6:19; 12:11, 13; 13:6-14). They will model social *harmony* with a proper honor and submission to various positions of authority, proper respect for equals, and proper use of authority to bless those they serve, and proper encouragement of the best character qualities in others (1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> commands; Rom. 12:3-8, 14-16; 13:1-7; Eph. 5:23-6:9). They will model social *integrity* in duties, promises, contracts and vows, and speak with integrity about those social relationships (7<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> commands; Rom. 12:9-12; 13:1-10). They will model social *enjoyment* by contentment with their own life situations (10<sup>th</sup> command; Rom. 13:9; 7:7-8; 1:29). The righteous individual participating in the community of the righteous will share the Spirit-confirmed, moral-law in-total, social *identity* affirmation of being "in Christ Jesus," "acceptable to God and approved by men" (Rom. 14:18; 8:1-16; 5:1-2; Acts 2:47; 5:13; 7:10). The Christian community living with righteous integrity will be the best apologetic witness to the surrounding communities living in darkened worldviews. The witness of peace-loving, moral-law righteousness will put enemies and false accusers to

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<sup>24</sup> 4<sup>b</sup> means the second part of the 4<sup>th</sup> command "six days you shall labor, and do all your work" (Exod. 20:9). 4<sup>a</sup> means the first part of the 4<sup>th</sup> command to "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exod. 20:8).

shame and overcome and convert some of them with good (Rom. 12:17-21; 1 Pet. 3:1-16; 1 Cor. 14:24-25).

## V. Westminster Standards' Righteousness Integrating Patterns

***Lex Christi (the law of Christ) is an integrating perspective on a Reformed theology:*** The moral law in-total can be integrated with various categories of historical, systematic and practical theology, what I call *the Righteous King's Dominion* (RKD) meta-narrative. Saving faith knows God through this story, and we understand ourselves in light of the kingdom of God narrative, from election to creation (who were we created to be?), fall (what did we lose? explains why life is difficult, why sin is so destructive and entangling), redemption (what is in process of restoration?) and consummation (what is our hope for eternity?). The Lord's promise to change his elect is joined with the command to yield ourselves and instruments or slaves of righteousness (Rom 6:13, 19; 8:1-4; Heb. 10:16). Discipleship and all practical theology start to make integrated sense.

### A. RKD Revealed: Doctrine of Scripture WCF 1:6, 1:10

***6. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life<sup>25</sup>, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.*** Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, **common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.**<sup>26</sup>

***10. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private***

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<sup>25</sup> In Scripture & the Westminster Standards, the Christian life is defined by moral law righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

<sup>26</sup> There can be no integration of any tradition of men that pertains to what to believe for salvation. How to live in a way that pleases God and serves the good of man must be in accord with the moral law. Christians are bound always and only to the general rules of the Word and the good and necessary consequences deduced from it. Thus, any integration of external knowledge related to worship and church government, when they discern things common to human actions and societies, should be *ordered* by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, and general rules of the Word, specifically, we could clarify, that these 'orderings' must be in accord with the moral law. Derived from this pattern of external knowledge integration, we could also insert that we may also integrate any extra-biblical knowledge that helps us apply the *lex Christi* (the law of Christ), whether from psychology, sociology or economics, knowledge that discerns patterns common to human actions and societies by the light of nature. Productive six-day labor includes using time wisely to study knowledge that is useful to human flourishing or limiting human chaos.

***spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest,*** can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.<sup>27</sup>

## **B. RKD Planned: The Triune Righteous Lord**

WCF 2:1. There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, **most holy** (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8), most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and **most righteous will**, (Eph. 1:11) for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him;<sup>w</sup> and withal **most just and terrible in his judgments** (Neh. 9:32-33); hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

**WCF 3:6-7 Election means Certain Justification (unrighteousness forgiven by Christ’s cross, credited with Christ righteousness) unto Righteous Transformation (Spirit changes into righteous image and keeps until Christ completes at his return)**

6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

7. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.

## **C. RKD Founded: Doctrine of Creation and Fall**

WCF 4:2 **“endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image,<sup>28</sup> having the law of God written in their hearts,** and power to fulfil it”

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<sup>27</sup> Proof text Matt. 22:29, 31 where Jesus critiques Sadducees faulty doctrine of the future, who deny the resurrection of the dead. Jesus says they are wrong because they do not know the Scriptures, or the power of God. WCF view of how God engages all worldviews is the Spirit speaking in the Scriptures.

<sup>28</sup> *The Lord-King* defines His righteous self-identity to Adam by the *righteous duties* of Adam as image; no other Self-introduction is given by the Lord. He is the righteous Lord-King in whose righteous image man was created to reflect. *Key verses: (Gen 1:28) ADAM WAS BLESSED AS REFLECTING-RIGHTEOUS KING TO . . .*

WORK/CULTIVATE & KEEP/GUARD (*for food*): “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to *work it and keep it,*” (Gen. 2:15) or to work/cultivate and guard/watch over. “And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. *You shall have them for food,*” (Gen. 1:29). *The Lord does these things* by planting a garden of trees pleasant to the sight and good for food

WCF 19:1 **GOD gave to Adam a law**, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him, and all his posterity, to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it. 2 **This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness**; and, as such, was delivered by God upon mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables; the first four commandments containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man.<sup>29</sup>

**1. Commandments given to Adam**

2. In *Principles of Conduct* by John Murray (Murray, 1957, pp. 14-19, 25-44, 90, 126) he clarifies WCF by showing that the Lord gave Adam (and Eve) **creation ordinances**, (*what I call the law of Christ*) in the Garden of Eden. Murray (1957, pp. 189-194, 201) highlights that Paul calls this the law of Christ (Gal 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21). To highlight its unique meaning in Pauline theology, this dissertation will use a Latin phrase *lex Christi* to describe this full biblical, theological, new covenant interpretation of the moral law.<sup>30</sup>
  - a. Sabbath and labor (**4<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 2:3; 1:26, 28 “So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. . . . Let them have dominion over the [creatures] . . . Subdue [the earth].”)

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in Eden and putting the man in it (Gen. 2:8-9)

BE FRUITFUL & MULTIPLY; SUBDUE & GOVERN: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and *subdue* it, and have *dominion* [rule/govern] over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Gen. 1:28). *The Lord does these things* by blessing the creatures to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:22) and by creating the sun & moon to “rule” day and night (Gen. 1:16-18).

BLESS & GIVE NAMES DEFINING IDENTITIES: Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the *man called* every living creature, that was its name. The *man gave names* to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; *she shall be called Woman*, because she was taken out of Man,” (Gen. 2:19-23). *The Lord does these things* by calling forth the creation, blessing and naming the things he created: “heaven” “earth” “seas” “man” ‘the first to the seventh day’ (Gen. 1:8, 10, 26).

LIMIT/PROHIBIT: Adam was commanded to limit/prohibit himself and Eve from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16). *The Lord does these things* by prohibiting Adam from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17).

These are stewardship actions that the righteous Lord-King does in his created world that Adam was to imitate, with parallels in the response to all the commandments, namely, *a kingly stewardship that cultivates and guards, subdues and governs, names creation according to its purposes* the relationships defined by each of the commandment duties.

<sup>29</sup> The Mosaic Ten Commandments merely *renew* and place the creation ordinances within the establishment of a redemptive kingdom (Exod. 19:4-6).

<sup>30</sup> The Latin Vulgate translates Galatians 6:2 “the law of Christ” as “*legem Christi*” but for purposes of memorability, I have chosen the more commonly understood word “*lex*” for the translation of “law” such as in Puritan Samuel Rutherford’s book *Lex Rex, The Law of the King*. We could also propose the phrase James uses, “the law of liberty” “*legem libertatis*” (Vulgate) and “the perfect law of liberty” “*lege perfecta libertatis*” (Vulgate), but for greater identification with the teaching of Christ, the law of Christ, *lex Christi* will better serve the representative purpose.

- b. procreation (**6<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 1:28 “be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth”)
  - c. marriage (**7<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 2:24 “a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh”),
3. We could expand on Murray, similar to the creation-commandments themes developed by Waltke and Yu’s *An Old Testament Theology* (2007, p. 206) and further clarify WCF 19:2, related to other implied commands and also note that the language describes Adam as representative king and ruler over the kingdom the Lord created.
- a. authority of the Lord-Creator to be loved above all else, to believe and obey his Word regarding all the commands, (**1<sup>st</sup> commandment**)
  - b. worshiped in his defined ways, to be thankful and bless the Lord for all his good gifts of the Garden, a wife (**2<sup>nd</sup> commandment**)
  - c. truthful witness of Adam and Eve to each other about the Lord’s creation commands; feared as just judge for any disobedience (**3<sup>rd</sup> commandment** in in Gen. 1:26, 28; 2:17 “Let them have dominion over the [creatures] . . . Subdue [the earth]. . . of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die”).
  - d. authority of Adam over Eve (**5<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 2:20 “a helper fit for him”)
  - e. stewardship of the Garden and the world (**8<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 1:26, 28; 2:15, 19 “Let them have dominion over the [creatures] . . . Subdue [the earth]. . . The Lord God . . . put him in the garden to work it and keep it. . . And he brought [the creatures] to the man to see what he would call them”)
  - f. truthful witness of Adam and Eve to each other about their identity as creatures made in God’s image, about Adam as head, Eve as helper in labor and obedience to the Lord; giving appropriate names to the creatures that Eve would learn and naming Eve, all signifying their identity, special characteristics and function (**9<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 1:27; 2:19 “ in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. . . And he brought [the creatures] to the man to see what he would call them . . . This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man”)<sup>31</sup>
  - g. contentment by not eating from the forbidden tree (**10<sup>th</sup> commandment** in Gen. 1:29; 2:9, 16-17; 3:6 “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. . . Out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is *pleasant to the sight and good for food*. . . You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. . . when the woman saw that the *tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one*

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<sup>31</sup> “In the Bible a name . . . reveals the very essence of a thing, or rather its essence as God’s gift. . . . To name a thing is to manifest the meaning and value God gave it, to know it as coming from God and to know its place and function within the cosmos created by God. To name a thing, in other words, is to bless God for it and in it.” (Ann Voskamp, *One Thousand Gifts*, 2010:53, citing Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* 1973:15)

*wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”)*

#### **D. Man’s Fall, Doctrine of Sin**

WCF 6:2 By this sin they fell from their **original righteousness**, and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

WCF 19:6 “the law is of great use to [true believers] for . . . discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts and lives, so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin”

#### **What about the tree of the knowledge of good (righteousness?) and evil**

**(unrighteousness)?** How does this represent the fullest test of righteousness, not simply an arbitrary test? Curiosity about unrighteousness leads to knowing unrighteousness leads to doing unrighteousness. “then the eyes of both were opened” 3:7 “like God knowing good and evil” 3:5 The one test is a test of obedience to the two great commands and all the details of all the moral law put in a culturally appropriate gardening/farming/agricultural context. Only one “you shall not” needed! Stay away from unrighteousness! The Mosaic law needed to clarify/state for the record, the “you shall not”

Mark Jones’ “Adam Broke All Ten Commandments” online article (2015) observes that ‘Adam broke all ten commandments in the Garden:’ he failed to love and trust God (1<sup>st</sup>), worship in the proper manner, listening to false religion (2<sup>nd</sup>), dishonored the word of warning against eating from the tree (3<sup>rd</sup>), failed to enter eternal Sabbath rest (4<sup>th</sup>), dishonored his Father (5<sup>th</sup>), brought death on himself and all mankind (6<sup>th</sup>), failed to protect his wife from temptation (7<sup>th</sup>), with Eve, stole from a forbidden tree (8<sup>th</sup>), believed false witness and didn’t resist it with the truth (9<sup>th</sup>), and due to discontentment, coveted the forbidden fruit (10<sup>th</sup>). In application, he notes that every sin usually breaks multiple commandments (Jas. 2:10), and second table sins (5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>) are usually connected to first table sins (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>).

#### **E. RKD Promised: Under the Law as a Shadow of Coming Realities WCF 7:5**

This covenant was differently administered in **the time of the law**, and in the time of the gospel: under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and **ordinances** delivered to the people of the Jews, all **foresignifying Christ to come**; which were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the old Testament.

#### **F. RKD Renewed: WCF 19:1-2 Ten Commandments Given to Adam, Renewed by Moses**

1. **God gave to Adam a law**, as a covenant of works, by which He bound him and all his posterity, to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience, promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

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

### **G. RKD Accomplished: Doctrine of Christ and Salvation**

WCF 3:6

. . . Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are **justified, adopted, sanctified**, and **kept** by His power, through faith, unto salvation. . . .

WCF 8:3-5

3. The Lord Jesus, in His human nature thus united to the divine, was **sanctified, and anointed with the Holy Spirit**, above measure, having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell; to the end that, being **holy, harmless, undefiled**, and full of grace and truth, He might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator and Surety. Which office He took not unto Himself, but was thereunto called by His Father, who put all power and judgment into His hand, and gave Him commandment to execute the same.

4. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake; which that He might discharge, He was **made under the law, and did perfectly fulfill it**; endured most grievous torments immediately in His soul, and most painful sufferings in His body; was crucified, and died, was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption. On the third day He arose from the dead, with the same body in which He suffered, with which also He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of His Father, making intercession, and shall return, to judge men and angels, at the end of the world.

5. The Lord Jesus, **by His perfect obedience, and sacrifice** of Himself, which He through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath **fully satisfied the justice of His Father**; and **purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven**, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him.

WCF 11:2 Faith, thus receiving and resting on **Christ and his righteousness**, is the alone instrument of justification; yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but **worketh by love** [*to God and man, both tables of the law*].

WCF 13:1 They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened, in all saving graces, **to the practice of true holiness** [*or righteousness*], without which no man shall see the Lord.

WCF 14:2 By this faith a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; **yielding obedience to the commands**, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are **accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone** [his cross propitiation for unrighteousness and resurrection for righteousness applied by the Spirit] **for justification, sanctification, and eternal life**, by virtue of the covenant of grace.

WCF 15:2 **Repentance unto life** is a hatred for and turning from moral law disobedience unto moral law obedience

2. By it, a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of **his sins, as contrary to the holy nature, and righteous law of God**; and upon the apprehension of His mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God, **purposing and endeavouring to walk with Him in all the ways of His commandments**.

WCF 16:2 These **good works, done in obedience to God's commandments**, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith; and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that, having their **fruit unto holiness**, they may have the end, eternal life.

WCF 17:2 This perseverance of the saints depends, not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the **efficacy of the merit** and intercession **of Jesus Christ**; the abiding of the Spirit and of the seed of God within them; and the nature of the covenant of grace: from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

WCF 18:3 This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure; that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in **love and thankfulness to God**, and in **strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience** [righteousness expressed by obedience to both tables of the law] (Rom. 14:17; Ps. 119:32), the proper fruits of this assurance: so far is it from inclining men to looseness.

WCF 19:6-7 uses the moral law as an integrating perspective on *soteriology* (doctrine of salvation) in all three quotes below: “as a rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly” additional integration to *Christology* (doctrine of Christ), “a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience” and integration to *Pneumatology* (doctrine of the Spirit) “the forementioned uses of the law . . . do sweetly comply with [the grace of the Gospel]; the Spirit of Christ subduing and

enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requires to be done.”

The WCF 19:5-7 and 20:4 are reprinted in full below.

**1. Of the Law of God WCF 19:5-7  
Moral Law as Glory Revealer, Standard for Human Comparison &  
Restoration: See Christ, Know Sin, Learn Duty**

**V. The moral law does forever bind all,**<sup>32</sup> as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof;<sup>33</sup> and that, not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it.<sup>34</sup> Neither does Christ, in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.<sup>35</sup>

VI. Although true believers be not under the law, as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified, or condemned;<sup>36</sup> yet is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as

- 1) a rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly;**<sup>37</sup>
- 2) discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts and lives;**<sup>38</sup> **so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin;**<sup>39</sup>
- 3) together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of His obedience.**<sup>40</sup>
- 4) It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin;**<sup>41</sup> and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve; and what afflictions, in this life, they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Here we should note that the Westminster Assembly holds all men accountable to the moral law, thus we can infer that they understand it as the supreme apologetic tool for engaging worldviews. The universal apologetic usefulness of the moral law to engage worldviews is further developed in WCF 19:6.1-2 below, informing all men, “true believers . . . as well as others,” of their duty to obey the will of God, their sins against God, and their need of Christ as Savior. The moral law is also a significant way that God, through his servant-ambassadors, engages the darkened worldviews of the Gentile nations, since it will be the standard by which he judges the nations (Rev. 21:8; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Pet. 4:3-5; Rom. 1:28-2:2; 1 Cor. 5:10-13; 6:9-10), but beginning at his own house (1 Pet. 4:15-17; Rom. 2:17-24; 9:31-10:3; 1 Cor. 10:6-10).

<sup>33</sup> Rom. 13:8-10; Eph. 6:2; 1 John 2:3-4, 7-8

<sup>34</sup> Jas. 2:10-11

<sup>35</sup> Matt. 5:17-19; Jas. 2:8; Rom. 3:31

<sup>36</sup> Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:16; 3:13; 4:4-5; Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1

<sup>37</sup> Rom. 7:12, 22, 25; Ps. 119:4-6; Gal. 5:14, 16, 18-23

<sup>38</sup> Rom. 7:7; 3:20

<sup>39</sup> Jas. 1:23-25; Rom. 7:9, 14, 24

<sup>40</sup> Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:24-25; 8:3-4

<sup>41</sup> Jas. 2:11; Ps. 119:101, 104, 128

<sup>42</sup> Ezra 9:13-14; Ps. 89:30-34

5) **The promises of it, in like manner, show them God's approbation of [the duties of] obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof:**<sup>43</sup> although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works.<sup>44</sup> So as, a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourages to the one and deters from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law: and not under grace.<sup>45</sup>

VII. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it;<sup>46</sup> **the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requires to be done.**<sup>47</sup>

#### H. RKD Applied: Apologetics, Evangelism & Missions

WCF 19:5 states that “the moral law does forever bind all [men]” indicating that it can be integrated with practical theology topics like apologetics, evangelism and missions, telling all men that God will hold them accountable to the moral law. WCF 24:1-6 explains the obligations of all men, both Christians and non-Christians, to obey the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment.

#### I. RKD Applied: Doctrine of the Church and Civil Government: WCF 20:4 Of Christian Liberty

And because the powers which God has ordained, and the liberty which Christ has purchased<sup>48</sup> are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another, they who, **upon pretense of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it**, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God.<sup>49</sup> And, for **their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature,**<sup>50</sup> **or to the known principles of Christianity (whether concerning faith, worship,**<sup>51</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Lev. 26; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 6:2-3; Ps. 37:11; Matt. 5:5; Ps. 19:11

<sup>44</sup> Gal. 2:16; Luke 17:10

<sup>45</sup> Rom. 6:12, 14; 1 Pet. 3:8-12; Ps. 34:12-16; Heb. 12:28-29

<sup>46</sup> Gal. 3:21

<sup>47</sup> Ezek. 36:27; Heb. 8:10; Jer. 31:33

<sup>48</sup> A liberty under the law of Christ as the best design for human flourishing 1 Cor. 9:21; Eph. 6:3; 1 Tim. 4:8 (Dixon, 2016, pp. 42-47)

<sup>49</sup> The lawful power of the church is to exercise church discipline on those who disobey the moral law and refuse to repent, including any who resist legitimate powers, which is a sin against the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment. The separation of church and state in some Western countries and some mental health contexts resist the ordinance of God in forbidding the lawful exercise of Christian counselors, therapists or psychiatrists giving unfettered biblical counsel in military, government-controlled secular institutions, hospitals and mental health clinics. Some places do permit chaplains to serve with a great deal of freedom.

<sup>50</sup> Likely, because of the law written on the human heart, this means socially common laws that affirm the second table of the law Romans 2:14-16 and later references to second table examples of adultery and stealing 2:21-22, with specific reference to 7<sup>th</sup> commandment such as homosexuality giving up “natural relations” Rom 1:26-27, also 6<sup>th</sup> commandment malice and murder, 9<sup>th</sup> commandment such as strife, deceit, gossip, slanderers, since Rom 1:32 is cited in #16 proof text, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> commandments such as covetousness, envy, evil, and 5<sup>th</sup> commandment such as insolent, haughty, boastful, disobedient to parents.

<sup>51</sup> First table of the law 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>a</sup> commandments

**or conversation<sup>52</sup>), or to the power of godliness;** or, such erroneous opinions or practices, as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ has established in the Church, **they may lawfully be called to account,<sup>53</sup> and proceeded against, by the censures of the Church** [and by the power of the civil magistrate].<sup>54</sup>

### **J. RKD Applied: Gospel of Kingdom Finalized, WCF 33:1-2**

1. God hath appointed a day, wherein He will **judge the world, in righteousness**, by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to **give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds**; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.
2. The end of God's appointing this day is for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; and of His justice, in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient. For **then shall the righteous go into everlasting life**, and receive that fullness of joy and refreshing, which shall come from the presence of the Lord: **but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ**, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

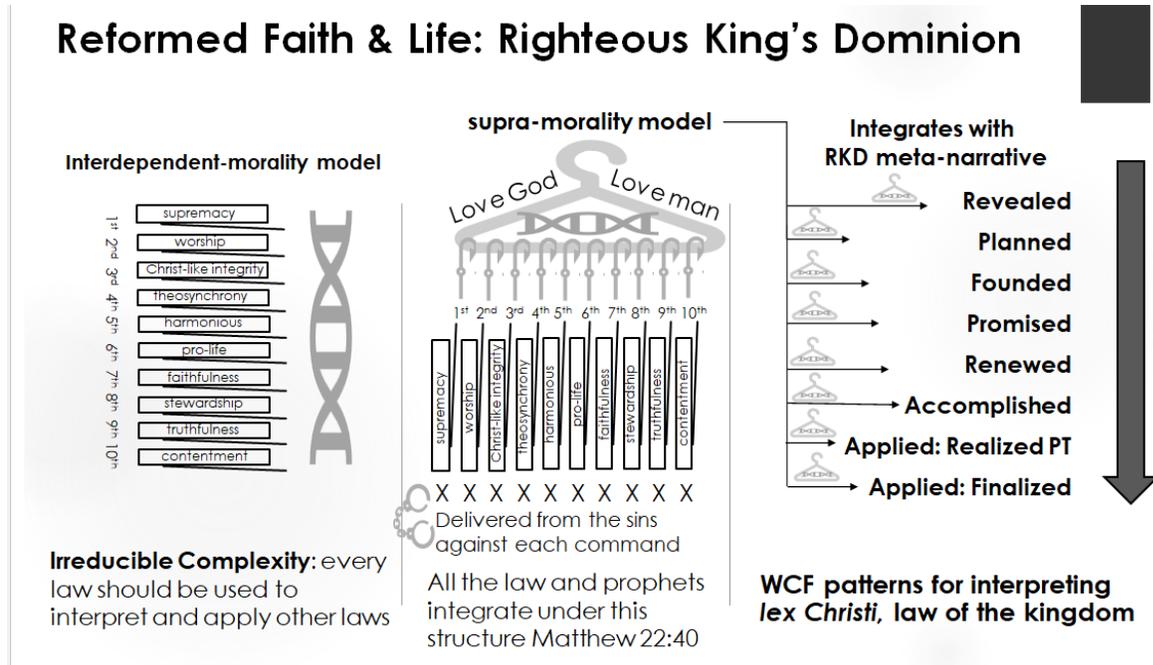
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<sup>52</sup> Second table of law 4b-10<sup>th</sup> commandments

<sup>53</sup> Rom. 1:32; 1 Cor. 5:1, 5, 11, 13; 2 John 1:10-11; 2 Thess. 3:14; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; 6:3-5; Tit. 1:10-11, 13; Matt 18:15-17; Rev. 2:2, 14-15; 3:9

<sup>54</sup> This phrase deleted from the American revision, but it might still be maintained if understood that, while not involving itself in internal church discipline, a righteous civil government and police force does protect the church from disruptive protesters, frivolous lawsuits, destruction of property and violence from her enemies. This meaning is part of the American revision of WCF 23: "Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and sacraments; or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; or, in the least, interfere in matters of faith. Yet, as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions, without violence or danger. And, as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exercise thereof, among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief. It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretense of religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever: and to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance." Deut. 13:6-11; Rom. 13:3-4; 2 John 1:10-11; Ezra 7:23, 25-28; Rev. 17:12, 16-17; Neh. 13:15, 17, 21-22, 25, 30; 2 Kings 23:5-6, 9, 20-21; 2 Chron. 34:33; 15:12-13, 16; Dan. 3:29; 1 Tim. 2:2; Isa. 49:23; Zech. 13:2-3.

## VI. Westminster's Structure for Reformed Faith & Life: The Righteous King's Dominion (RKD)



There are three hermeneutical categories that the Westminster Standards uses to interpret and explain the uses of the moral law.

- Interdependent morality model: The individual commandments can be used to interpret and apply other commandments.
- Supra-morality model: All biblically relevant teachings for new covenant believers about righteousness (duty) and unrighteousness (sin) can be integrated under various commandments.
- The Lex Christi (law of Christ) is an integrating perspective on a Reformed theology: The moral law in-total can be integrated with various categories of historical, systematic and practical theology, such as the Righteous King's Dominion (RKD) meta-narrative.

### A. Interdependent morality model: the Moral Law's Individual Commands Interpret the Other Commands

The irreducible complexity of these commands received together is a test for balanced maturity.

- Obedience to every law is required as a total system of righteousness. Breaking one law is breaking them all (Jas. 2:10).**
- The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment not to covet but to be content, reaches the understanding will and affections related to all the other commandments. Each commandment has a heart as well as behavioral requirement. Coveting, greed and love of worldly things is the root

of all evils and thus contentment and love for and trust in God is part of each commandment.

3. The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment applies to all the others, in that superiors, equals and inferiors each have influence on others to keep all the other commandments. It also relates to the individual's circumstances in life, in that some may be own property and have material possessions, some may not, but each has different obligations to the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> commandments.
4. One who claims to love God with all his heart, cannot be double-hearted, friends with the world (Jas. 1:8; 4:1-4).
5. One who holds the faith of the Lord Jesus cannot be partial to the rich (Jas. 2:1-9).
6. Faith in God (commands 1-4a) must be shown by good works to men (commands 4b-10) (Jas. 1:25; 2:8-14).
7. One who claims to love God cannot also hate his brother (1 John 4:20-21).
8. The love of money is the root of all evil, so coveting is the root of all material greed and idolatry (1 Tim 6:9-10; Eph 5:5; Col 3:5).
9. Discernment developed: Legalists and pharisees who boast in their doctrine but neglect loving those in need. Social Gospelites who care for the needy without love for God. Discern wrong judging: often due to coveting, or sinful envy, using faulty or incomplete information about the person or problem (or deliberate misinformation as in US media political warfare, the trial of Jesus) to attack, injure or hinder his/her flourishing, work or service, steal (against 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> commandments, provoking him/her to anger).

**B. Supra-morality model: the Moral Law as the Topical Outline for all Biblically defined Duty and Sin:** The Ten Righteous Prohibitions (mostly 8/10) against Sin (Ten Commandments)

First, the Westminster interpretation of the moral law defines all biblical righteousness and unrighteousness under the outline of the Ten Commandments. All biblically relevant teachings for new covenant believers about righteousness (duty) and unrighteousness (sin) can be integrated under various commandments. This is largely the task of WLC 99-150 with its catalog of terms and proof-texts from all over Scripture.

The commands to love God and neighbor are the ways to fulfill or carry into effect the moral law as a motive and active principle, not as a NT substitute for the Ten Commandments. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" means that the law is something other than these two commands. Love is not equal to the whole law, nor does this motive let us experiment and reason our way to what it means to love. Instead, the Lord revealed to Adam what that law was, that law that love was to fulfill, then restated those laws in the Ten Commandments given to Moses.

### **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

#### **Q. 45. Which is the first commandment?**

A. The first commandment is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* [119]

**Q. 46. What is required in the first commandment?**

A. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly.[\[120\]](#)

**Q. 47. What is forbidden in the first commandment?**

A. The first commandment forbids the denying,[\[121\]](#) or not worshiping and glorifying, the true God as God,[\[122\]](#) and our God;[\[123\]](#) and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone.[\[124\]](#)

**Q. 49. Which is the second commandment?**

A. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.[\[126\]](#)

**Q. 50. What is required in the second commandment?**

A. The second commandment requires the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his Word.[\[127\]](#)

**Q. 51. What is forbidden in the second commandment?**

A. The second commandment forbids the worshiping of God by images,[\[128\]](#) or any other way not appointed in his Word.[\[129\]](#)

**Q. 53. Which is the third commandment?**

A. The third commandment is, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*[\[133\]](#)

**Q. 54. What is required in the third commandment?**

A. The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles,[\[134\]](#) attributes, [\[135\]](#) ordinances, [\[136\]](#) Word, [\[137\]](#) and works.[\[138\]](#)

**Q. 55. What is forbidden in the third commandment?**

A. The third commandment forbids all profaning or abusing of anything whereby God maketh himself known.[\[139\]](#)

**Q. 57. Which is the fourth commandment?**

A. The fourth commandment is, *Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*[\[141\]](#)

**Q. 59. Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly sabbath?**

A. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly sabbath; [143] and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian sabbath. [144]

**Q. 60. How is the sabbath to be sanctified?**

A. The sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; [145] and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, [146] except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy. [147]

**Q. 61. What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?**

A. The fourth commandment forbids the omission, or careless performance, of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations. [148]

**Q. 63. Which is the fifth commandment?**

A. The fifth commandment is, *Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* [151]

**Q. 64. What is required in the fifth commandment?**

A. The fifth commandment requires the preserving the honor, and performing the duties, belonging to everyone in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals. [152]

*Inferiors to Superiors:* honor them from the heart, and with words and behaviors, praying for and giving thanks for them, imitating their virtues and graces, obeying their lawful counsels and commands, submitting to their corrections, allegiance to and defense of their persons and offices, bearing with their infirmities and covering them with love.

*Superiors to Inferiors:* love, pray for, bless, instruct, counsel, admonish, rewarding those who do well, discouraging and correcting those who do evil, providing for their souls and bodies, and being an example of integrity to preserve the honor due to your authority.

*Equals:* serve, give honor, praise and thanks to others above yourself

**Q. 65. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?**

A. The fifth commandment forbids the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honor and duty which belongeth to everyone in their several places and relations. [153]

Resist, oppose and remove all improper relations of superiors, inferiors and equals:

*Inferior to Superior:* envy and contempt of, cursing, mocking, rebellion against authorities

*Superior to Inferior*: neglect of duties to, self-seeking by them, unlawful commands, unable to perform, encouraging evil, discouraging good, excessive correction, carelessly exposing them to sin, temptation and danger, provoking them to anger, or giving a bad example.

*Equals*: neglect of duties, undervaluing, envying, grieving at advancement of others, putting yourself above others

**Q. 67. Which is the sixth commandment?**

A. The sixth commandment is, *Thou shalt not kill.*[\[155\]](#)

**Q. 68. What is required in the sixth commandment?**

A. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others.[\[156\]](#)

**Q. 69. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?**

A. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbor, unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.[\[157\]](#)

**Q. 70. Which is the seventh commandment?**

A. The seventh commandment is, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*[\[158\]](#)

**Q. 71. What is required in the seventh commandment?**

A. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior.[\[159\]](#)

**Q. 72. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?**

A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.[\[160\]](#)

**Q. 73. Which is the eighth commandment?**

A. The eighth commandment is, *Thou shalt not steal.*[\[161\]](#)

**Q. 74. What is required in the eighth commandment?**

A. The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.[\[162\]](#)

**Q. 75. What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?**

A. The eighth commandment forbids whatsoever doth, or may, unjustly hinder our own, or our neighbor's wealth or outward estate.[\[163\]](#)

**Q. 76. Which is the ninth commandment?**

A. The ninth commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*[\[164\]](#)

**Q. 77. What is required in the ninth commandment?**

A. The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor's good name,[\[165\]](#) especially in witness-bearing.[\[166\]](#)

**Q. 78. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?**

A. The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own, or our neighbor's, good name.[\[167\]](#)

**Q. 79. Which is the tenth commandment?**

A. The tenth commandment is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.*[\[168\]](#)

**Q. 80. What is required in the tenth commandment?**

A. The tenth commandment requires full contentment with our own condition,[\[169\]](#) with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbor, and all that is his.[\[170\]](#)

**Q. 81. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?**

A. The tenth commandment forbids all discontentment with our own estate,[\[171\]](#) envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor, and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.[\[172\]](#)

**Q. 82. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?**

A. No mere man, since the fall, is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.[\[173\]](#)

**Q. 83. Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?**

A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.[\[174\]](#)

**Q. 84. What does every sin deserve?**

A. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.[\[175\]](#)

**Q. 85. What does God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse, due to us for sin?**

A. To escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin, God requires of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life,[\[176\]](#) with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption.[\[177\]](#)

**Q. 86. What is faith in Jesus Christ?**

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace,[\[178\]](#) whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.[\[179\]](#)

**Q. 87. What is repentance unto life?**

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace,[\[180\]](#) whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,[\[181\]](#) doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God,[\[182\]](#) with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.[\[183\]](#)

**Q. 88. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?**

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.<sup>[184]</sup>

**C. Law of the Kingdom as an Integrating Perspective on the Righteous King’s Dominion Meta-narrative**

The meta-narrative of the **righteous king’s dominion** alone (RKD) for the elect, could be expounded using this outline.

1. **RKD Revealed:** SCRIPTURE: revealed to man in history by special revelation, his holy Word,<sup>55</sup> for training in righteousness,<sup>56</sup> and for interpreting general revelation, leading the saints to saving faith,
2. **RKD Planned:** KING & KINGDOM: all glory be given to the righteous Triune Lord revealed in his kingly dominion,<sup>57</sup> the Father who by grace alone decreed the fall while righteously choosing his elect in Christ in union with the Spirit for royal-law-righteousness and justly passing by the rest in their sins,<sup>58</sup>
3. **RKD Founded:** RIGHTEOUS KINGDOM FOUNDED-LAW OF CHRIST GIVEN-REBELLION BY UNRIGHTEOUSNESS: (original righteousness): creating man in his righteous-kingly-dominion image to rule over the earth,<sup>59</sup> writing the royal law of Christ on his heart to receive creation ordinances as perfect rule of righteousness,<sup>60</sup> (original sin): that he disobeyed and fell into bondage to sin, the Lord permitting the fall for the

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<sup>55</sup> WCF 16:1; Ps. 119:160

<sup>56</sup> 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 5:13

<sup>57</sup> WCF 2:1-2; 15:2; 1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 72:1-20; 145:11-13; Isa. 9:7; 32:1; Dan. 2:44; 4:1-3; 7:27; Matt. 4:23; 6:33; 9:35; 22:1-14; 24:14; Mark 16:15; Acts 20:25; Rom. 1:1, 9, 15-16; 2:16; 10:16; 11:28; 14:17; 15:16, 19-20; 16:25; 1 Cor. 15:1-8; Gal. 3:8; Rev. 14:6. In *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, Schreiner (2013) develops similar OT-NT biblical theology themes of the king uniting all kingdom citizens into his eternal kingdom. Job 36:3; 37:23; Ps. 7:17; 22:31; 31:1; 33:5; 35:24, 28; 37:6; 45:4, 7; 50:6; 65:5; 89:14; 98:2; 99:4; 103:6; 111:3; 112:9; 119:142; Isa. 5:16; Isa. 9:7; 11:5; 45:23-24; Jer. 9:24; 23:6; John 17:25; Rom. 1:17-18; 3:5, 21-22, 25-26; Lev. 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Pet. 1:1; Rev. 15:4. Righteousness is not a single attribute, but a meta-attribute describing all the Lord’s perfections, shared by each person of the Trinity, with synonyms of holiness, godliness and spiritual *Foundations: God’s Glory as an Integrating Perspective on Reformed Theology* (Yates, 2017, pp. 96-97), shown in justification as imputation of Christ’s righteousness—all that God requires of believers—because of all that Christ accomplished (Rom. 5:18-19; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18). The terms are interchangeable in describing the saints (Rev. 22:11b).

Heavenly glory is described as the hope of righteousness, a summary of the beauty and perfections of the new heavens and new earth, where righteousness dwells (Gal. 5:5; 2 Pet. 3:13). To the praise of his glory: Eph. 1:6, 12, 14.

<sup>58</sup> WCF 5:4, 6; Eph. 1:4; Rom. 9:11-23; Jas. 1:25; 2:8-12. “Royal law” in James 2:8 could be translated “kingdom law” again showing that the law is part the rule of Christ the king over his kingdom.

<sup>59</sup> Gen. 1:26; Acts 17:25-26; Eph. 4:24; WCF 4:2; 6:2

<sup>60</sup> WCF 4:2; 19:1-2; see *Principles of Conduct* (Murray, 1957, pp. 25-44) for clarifications on creation ordinances of procreation (6<sup>th</sup>) and marriage (7<sup>th</sup>), the Sabbath and labor (4<sup>th</sup>), and expanding on Murray and clarifying WCF 19:2, other implied commands, such as the authority of Adam over Eve (5<sup>th</sup>), stewardship of the Garden and the world (8<sup>th</sup>), truthful witness that reinforced the creation commands of God (9<sup>th</sup>) contentment by not eating from the forbidden tree (10<sup>th</sup>), and the authority of the Lord-Creator to be loved above all else (1<sup>st</sup>), worshiped in his defined ways (2<sup>nd</sup>) and feared as just judge for any disobedience (3<sup>rd</sup>). In the NT this is called the law of Christ (*lex Christi*) and the entire outline includes this idea when speaking of righteousness.

display of his righteousness and condemning sin due to lack of conformity to royal-law-righteousness,<sup>61</sup>

4. **RKD Promised:** SHADOWS OF KINGDOM GOSPEL: Gospel proclaimed,<sup>62</sup>
5. **RKD Renewed:** LAW OF CHRIST: refreshed the creation ordinances' perfect rule of righteousness in the royal law<sup>63</sup> and the evident historical inability of all men in Adam to perfect royal law righteousness,<sup>64</sup>
6. **RKD Accomplished:** GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM ACCOMPLISHED & APPLIED: fulfilled in Christ's Gospel ministry, who as King, establishes an eternal kingdom of righteousness by uniting his elect kingdom citizen-priests and ambassadors under his dominion by saving faith<sup>65</sup>
  - a. the Son, as second person of the Trinity, fully God with all the omni-attributes<sup>66</sup>
  - b. taking full humanity upon himself, as Christ, filled with the Spirit to fulfill royal-law-righteousness, the law of Christ,<sup>67</sup>
  - c. enduring the passion and crucifixion, suffering the wrath and curses of the law as King, for Gospel propitiation on behalf of the moral-law unrighteousness of the elect,<sup>68</sup>
  - d. raised and exalted to the Father's right hand for crediting royal-law righteousness in Gospel justification of the elect by faith,<sup>69</sup>
  - e. sending the Righteous Spirit, to convict the elect of unrighteousness unto repentance for forgiveness of sins<sup>70</sup> and to write royal-law righteousness on the sanctified hearts

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<sup>61</sup> WCF 5:4, 6; 6:1, 6; Isa. 46:12; 48:18; 58:2; 59:14; Rom. 3:5, 10; 9:31; 10:3, 5; Gal. 3:21; Jas. 1:20; 2:8; see online article "Adam Broke Ten Commandments in the Garden" (Jones, 2015) for a perceptive expansion of how Adam broke all Ten Commandments in eating the forbidden fruit.

<sup>62</sup> WCF 7:5-6; 8:6; Gen. 3:15; 12:3; 15:6; Rom. 4:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 13, 22; Gal. 3:6, 8, 21; Heb. 11:1-12:4; Jas. 2:23; Rev. 13:8

<sup>63</sup> WCF 6:6; 15:2; 19:2; Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:1-21; Rom. 7:12

<sup>64</sup> Rom. 9:31; 10:3; 2 Cor. 3:9; Gal. 2:21; Phil 3:9; Tit. 3:5

<sup>65</sup> WCF 8:5, 8; 25:2; Exod. 19:6; 2 Sam. 7:12-13, 16; Ps. 45:6; Isa. 9:7; Jer. 33:15; Dan. 2:44; Luke 1:33; Rom. 1:17; 10:4; 14:17; 2 Cor. 3:9; 5:20; 9:9; Phil. 1:11; 3:20-21; Col. 1:13; Heb. 1:8; Rev. 1:4-8

<sup>66</sup> WCF 8:2; John 1:1; 4:10; 8:24, 58; 14:1; 20:28

<sup>67</sup> WCF 8:2-3; 11:1-2; Ps. 99:4; Isa. 11:1-5; 16:5; 32:1; 42:1-9; 53:11; 59:16-17; 63:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 3:15; 5:17-18; 27:19; John 12:13-15; Acts 3:14; Rom. 5:17-18; Heb. 1:9; 7:2; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:1, 29. He also fulfilled the civil and ceremonial law to point us to the new covenant realities they foreshadowed, WCF 19:3-4.

<sup>68</sup> WCF 8:4-5; Matt. 27: 11, 37; Rom. 3:25-26; Col. 1:20-23; Pet. 3:18

<sup>69</sup> WCF 11:1-2; 14:2; Ps. 106:31; Isa. 53:11; Rom. 3:31-22; 4:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 13, 22; 5:17-21; 8:4; 9:30; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9; 2 Tim. 2:8

<sup>70</sup> WCF 15:1-6; Luke 24:47; John 16:8-10; Acts 2:37-41; 13:10; 17:31; Rom. 8:4, 10; 14:17; 1 Tim. 3:16. Based on connections in the verses in this footnote and the following explanation, though not explicitly used in Scripture, *Righteous Spirit*, *Godly Spirit* and *Holy Spirit* could all be used to describe the third person of the Trinity. "Holy" is not the only biblical adjective used to describe the Spirit. He is also called the "Spirit of the Lord" (Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14; 1 Sam. 10:6; 16:13), "Spirit of God" (Matt. 12:28), "Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9), "Spirit of truth" (John 16:13), "Spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4), "Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2), "Spirit of adoption" (Rom 8:15), "Spirit of his Son" (Gal. 4:6), "Spirit of wisdom" (Eph. 1:17), "Spirit of grace" (Heb 12:29), "Spirit of glory" (1 Pet. 4:14), and especially note Isaiah 11:2, "And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the *Spirit of wisdom and understanding*, the *Spirit of counsel and might*, the *Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD*." We conclude that the Spirit can be described by his ambassadorial sending to represent the other persons of the Trinity, and by the various derivative attributes he imparts to men, including the Spirit's fruits (Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 5:9 where some textual variants and the KJV translates as "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth). Thus, we can infer the term "Righteous Spirit" is a biblically derived phrase, synonymous with "Holy Spirit" and use it in this outline to show coherence with the righteous/righteousness theme it expounds.

- of the elect from among all nations,<sup>71</sup> that they may pursue righteousness as a kingdom of priests,<sup>72</sup> rewarding the righteous,<sup>73</sup> keeping them in saving faith by his providence,<sup>74</sup>
- f. having authority over the elect angels, sending them to serve for the perseverance of the saints all over the world in all ages,<sup>75</sup>
7. **RKD Applied: GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM REALIZED: (RKD vision applied by royal law)**
- a. CH Church History shows the promised endurance of God’s righteous kingdom<sup>76</sup>
  - b. PT Evangelism, Missions, Apologetics proclaimed and demonstrated by his righteous ambassadors and other assembly ministries,<sup>77</sup>
  - c. PT Assembly: worship (his Sabbath days transformed to the Lord’s Day worship<sup>78</sup>) prayer,<sup>79</sup> partaking of righteous signs and seals of the covenant of grace<sup>80</sup> preaching, church government administering church discipline to guard righteousness by his appointed elders,<sup>81</sup>
  - d. PT Biblical Counseling for Marriage and Family: righteous husbands and wives giving birth to and raising righteous children,<sup>82</sup>
  - e. PT/Marketplace Ministry (MM) Righteous stewardship in the Cultural Mandate
8. **RKD Applied: GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM FINALIZED:**
- a. raising the souls of the elect, who die before his second coming, to perfection in righteousness until their bodies are raised,<sup>83</sup>
  - b. returning to glorify the elect by conquering the last enemy of death, raising their bodies in perfected moral-law-righteousness, ‘giving them crowns of righteousness,’<sup>84</sup> to dwell forever with the him and the elect angels in the new kingdom-creation of righteousness,<sup>85</sup> and to destroy all other unrighteous rule, power and authority, righteously judging the wicked by turning all his omni-attributes to curse them forever, and delivers the perfectly righteous, moral-law submissive kingdom to the Father.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>71</sup> WCF 11:5; 13:1, 3; 16:2; Rom. 8:4, 10; Heb. 8:10; 10:16

<sup>72</sup> WCF 20:3; Exod. 19:4-6; Ps. 23:3; Jer. 22:3; Hos. 10:12; Zeph. 2:3; Matt. 5:6, 19-20; 6:33; Rom. 6:13, 16, 18-20; 8:10; 14:17; Eph. 4:24; 1 Thess. 2:10; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22; Jas. 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:9, 24; 1 John 2:29; 3:7; Rev. 19:8  
<sup>73</sup> 1 Sam. 26:23; 1 Kings 8:32; Ps. 85:10-13; 89:16; 106:3; Prov. 8:18-20; 11:4-6, 18-19; 12:28; 14:34; 16:12; 21:21  
<sup>74</sup> Isa. 32:17; 54:14; 58:8; 60:17; 1 Pet. 3:12

<sup>74</sup> WCF 5:1, 4, 5; 33:3; Isa. 51:5-8; Jer. 18:7-9; Matt. 5:10; Rom. 8:28-30; Heb. 12:5-14; 1 Pet. 3:14; 5:6-10

<sup>75</sup> Heb. 1:13-14; Ps. 37:7; Ps. 91:11-12; Dan. 6:22; Acts 12:7; Matt. 1:20; 2:13; 24:31; Rev. 22:16

<sup>76</sup> Heb 12:1-4; 13:7; Dan. 2:44; Matt 16:18

<sup>77</sup> Here the categories of practical theology can be integrated with the moral law. WCF 14:1-2; 25:2; 26:2; Matt. 21:32; 24:14; Luke 24:48-49; Acts 1:8; 20:25; 24:25; Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Pet. 2:5

<sup>78</sup> WCF 21:7-8; Exod. 20:8

<sup>79</sup> WCF 14:1; 21:3-4; Matt. 6:9-13

<sup>80</sup> WCF 14:1; 27:1

<sup>81</sup> WCF 20:4; 30:2-3; Acts 20:28-31; 2 Cor. 6:7

<sup>82</sup> WCF 24:2-3; Mal. 2:15; 1 Cor. 7:14; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 6:4

<sup>83</sup> WCF 32:1; Heb. 12:23

<sup>84</sup> 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Gal. 5:5; 2 Tim. 4:8

<sup>85</sup> WCF 33:2; Dan. 7:18, 22, 27; Matt. 13:43; 25:46; 2 Pet. 3:13

<sup>86</sup> WCF 33:1; Ps. 9:8; 96:13; 98:9; Isa. 10:22; 11:4; 26:9-10; 28:17; 60:12; Acts 17:31; Rom. 1:32; 2:5; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 19:11

## RKD Summary Catechism

Q. 1: Elect believer, what do you believe about the meta-narrative of the righteous king's dominion (RKD)?

A. 1: That the righteous triune King has graciously given his self-breathed *Scripture* for establishing his dominion of righteousness on the earth among mankind: **to us** for revealing his righteous election, and in his time, in us teaching us to *pray* with saving faith by the Spirit, uniting us to Christ, the righteous Savior-Lord-King, to know our unrighteousness unto repentance for forgiveness of our sins by the propitiation of his cross and applying the dominion of his righteousness to us by Christ's resurrection, credited in justification, written on the heart for daily sanctification, joining us to his righteous assembly to bless us with edifying gifts, and to enduring hope in the finalization of his kingdom by bringing us body and soul into his newly prepared creation, the home of righteousness and representing, sealing and applying these truths by the *sacraments* of baptism and the Lord's Supper; **to others**, by the mystery of his sovereign will, these same means are used to provoke his enemies' unrighteousness, to blind and harden them unto religious pluralism, laziness, worldly wealth, cares of this world, fear of those who can kill the body, ignorance, superstition, idol worship, false religion, atheism, humanism, national and political pride, hatred and persecution, passing them by and leaving them in their sins, providing for their physical needs, administering temporal judgments, patiently enduring until he finally executes his unrestrained, eternal wrath in his prepared hell, and representing his judgment by barring them from profaning the sacraments.

## VII. Basic Growth using RKD vision and *lex Christi*, the Law of Christ's Kingdom

### Q. 89. How is the Word made effectual to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.[\[185\]](#)

### Q. 90. How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?

A. That the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer;[\[186\]](#) receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.[\[187\]](#)

### Q. 91. How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

A. The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.[\[188\]](#)

### Q. 92. What is a sacrament?

A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ;[\[189\]](#) wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.[\[190\]](#)

*I am united with the death and resurrection of Christ, such that my unrighteousness has been, is and will be cleansed and forgiven, crucified and killed by his death and I have received a new passport of citizenship in his righteous kingdom so my life belongs to Christ to live as his student in the classroom of righteousness.*

**Q. 93. Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?**

A. The sacraments of the New Testament are, baptism,[\[191\]](#) and the Lord's Supper.[\[192\]](#)

**Q. 94. What is baptism?**

A. Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,[\[193\]](#) signifies and seals our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.[\[194\]](#)

**Q. 95. To whom is Baptism to be administered?**

A. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him;[\[195\]](#) but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.[\[196\]](#)

**Q. 96. What is the Lord's Supper?**

A. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth;[\[197\]](#) and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.[\[198\]](#)

**Q. 97. What is required for the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?**

A. It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.[\[199\]](#)

**Q. 98. What is prayer?**

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God,[\[200\]](#) for things agreeable to his will,[\[201\]](#) in the name of Christ,[\[202\]](#) with confession of our sins,[\[203\]](#) and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.[\[204\]](#)

**Q. 99. What rule has God given for our direction in prayer?**

A. The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer;[\[205\]](#) but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer.[\[206\]](#)

**Q. 100. What doth the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?**

A. The preface of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *Our Father which art in heaven*, teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence[\[207\]](#) and confidence,[\[208\]](#) as children to a father,[\[209\]](#) able and ready to help us;[\[210\]](#) and that we should pray with and for others.[\[211\]](#)

**Q. 101. What do we pray for in the first petition?**

A. In the first petition, which is, *Hallowed be thy name*, we pray that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known; [212] and that he would dispose all things to his own glory. [213]

**Q. 102. What do we pray for in the second petition?**

A. In the second petition, which is, *Thy kingdom come*, we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; [214] and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, [215] ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; [216] and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened. [217]

**Q. 103. What do we pray for in the third petition?**

A. In the third petition, which is, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*, we pray that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, [218] as the angels do in heaven. [219]

**Q. 104. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?**

A. In the fourth petition, which is, *Give us this day our daily bread*, we pray that of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them. [220]

**Q. 105. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?**

A. In the fifth petition, which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*, we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; [221] which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others. [222]

**Q. 106. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?**

A. In the sixth petition, which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, we pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, [223] or support and deliver us when we are tempted. [224]

**Q. 107. What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?**

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen*, teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, [225] and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him; [226] and, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen. [227]

### VIII. Basic Counseling Methods using RKD vision and *lex Christi*, the Law of the Kingdom (counseling self or others)

The RKD meta-narrative and its integrating *lex Christi*, law of the kingdom applies to church leader preparation-qualifications and integrity-modeling, counseling, church member counseling, analyzing other people in relationship to the leaders and members (families, cultures), extra-biblical knowledge influencing any of the above people (worldviews, vocabulary and theories). There are at least six methods to use these themes: research, relate, restore, repel, reform and retreat.<sup>87</sup>

**A. Research/Inquiro:** analyze the patterns of a person's life by the RKD vision and the law of the kingdom. Ask appropriate questions.

1. What are the strengths, maturities and established healthy patterns of RKD? Who are the supporting people? What are the methods, resources and life contexts that have made this growth possible? Are these people are resources still available?
2. What are the presenting problems and who are the people involved? Start with disciple's definition of problems, but always be alert to redefining problems with biblical categories and with verification from other people involved. Discipler asks WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE? WHO? in both broad life patterns and detailed examination of problem areas, seeking clarification.
3. What is the story? Look at recurring phrases, past attempts to solve, physical health, verifying data, avoidance, blame, body posture, dress, mannerisms, eye contact, ways disciple talks about Scripture truth, God or mostly leaves Scripture & God out of the story, life schedules and routines, responsibilities. Where is the disciple in the RKD vision and how important is *lex Christi*?
4. What is the extent of the problem? Does the disciple have similar problems in other areas of life now?
5. What is the history/origin/duration of the problem? When did it begin and why?
6. What is the disciple's general attitude toward transformative discipleship?
7. In conflict resolution between two people, try to get stories from each person and compare.

**B. Relate/Explico**

1. WHY? Analyze the disciple's sin nature or the "former manner of life" (Eph. 4:22)—develop an inductive theory of his/her heart based on expressed words and actions. What wrong patterns have been learned in his fallen environment? What are the sinful responses to suffering?
2. Attempt a big-picture analysis of the disciple in life context. What metaphors define his/her life? What is the meta-narrative? Find key biblical phrases that define his/her suffering, sin, current weaknesses or needed areas of growth.

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<sup>87</sup> These six methods correspond roughly to the four words of Scripture's purposes to teach, reprove, correct and train in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16), with the clarification that pre-research and relating our model of righteousness to the counselee in analysis are required before we know what to teach or what to correct.

3. What aspect(s) of the RKD vision and *lex Christi* need to change the disciple? Which of the disciple's loves and hates need to be more like Christ? What aspects of the Lord's righteousness need to be better known and applied by the disciple with the Gospel of grace? How does Christ work those changes in union with him by the power of the Spirit?
  4. Are there additional people and resources that need to be accessed to help? Who can access them? Is the disciple willing to access these resources or utilize them if the discipler arranges them?
  5. Choose priorities for discipling response (comfort in suffering, then most important personal change issues first) and biblical teachings/texts (consider disciple's goals, aim for disciple's agreement with future discipleship agenda, but take the lead).
- C. **Restore/Integro:** Develop biblical themes to restore, recreate and renew soul-body righteousness in areas of weakness in relation to knowing the Lord, union with Christ, living constructively in the fallen creation and with other people, while affirming present maturity. In new believers this usually starts with the two Great Commandments to love God and love neighbor, then builds on the details of the *lex Christi* using the Westminster Catechisms. This includes peacemaking to restore relationships in conflict.
- D. **Repel/Dissolutio:** identify or diagnose weakness, brokenness or disintegration, so that the RKD vision will quarantine, remove and protect against unrighteousness in self and others, both behavior and witness, in both assembly and diaspora (1 Tim. 4:1-16; 1 Cor. 5), since such things should be given up to judgment and are under the Lord's curse and will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 1:6-9; 5:21; 1 Cor. 4:5; Jude 1:14-16).<sup>88</sup> For example, some claim that certain behaviors Christians call sin have a physical or genetic "*cause.*" Christians can agree the physical and genetic factors have some influence but reject theories determine these factors are the primary *cause.* (Rom. 1:26-32; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; 2 John 1:10-11; 2 Thess. 3:6-18)
- E. **Reform/Transeo:** cross over or transform partially wrong data using more accurate concepts, providing filtered integration, transforming knowledge about body, soul or world so that it can cross over into our functional RKD vision and submission to *lex Christi* (Col. 2-3; Rom. 2:29; Phil. 3:3; Acts 17:22-31); especially for cultural adaptation and RKD witness to the psychologized community (1 Cor. 9:17-22), and for better stewardship of the physical body, such as medical research and discoveries (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 9:27), or for provoking us to better study of Scripture to see things we formerly ignored.
- F. **Retreat/Sterilus:** meaning useless or unproductive, indicating that it will identify useless knowledge or practices that have no value for righteousness or for daily functioning (Col. 2:20-23; Tit. 3:9).

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<sup>88</sup> This category would include Powlison's *illustrative* uses of psychology, mostly in illustrating sinfulness in man, and that all he does apart from faith in Christ is still sin. *Co-belligerent* uses could also be seen within this category.

## IX. Case Study Applications

- A. SELF-COUNSELOR:** analyze and pursue change in yourself by the RKD vision and the *lex Christi* (see above themes). See logs in your own eye by the *lex Christi*'s interdependent and supra-morality patterns and remove them by strengthening knowledge to believe the grace of the Lord revealed in the RKD meta-narrative pattern (Matt. 7:1-5; Jas. 2:8-13).
1. The *lex Christi*'s replication as a standard of righteousness within the meta-narrative of redemptive history is where we can explore and explain connections to the Triune God and his saving work. The single most compact and illustrative text of this pattern that also implies commandments 1-4a duties to and sins against the Lord is the whole section of Ephesians 1:3-3:21. Paul's prayers in Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:14-21 ask for the Spirit to give believers a more comprehensive and tenacious faith to apply the Lord's work to our daily experiences.
  2. The *lex Christi*'s interdependent morality pattern shows us the interdependence of each commandment on the others. We cannot boast in our obedience to one command and use it to judge others, while also failing to keep other commandments. For example, a husband who holds to very high financial stewardship and responsibility standards (4<sup>b</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> commands) might use that to continually judge his wife's weaknesses in this same area or even to angrily threaten her, while himself neglecting to see his worry and fear of inadequate retirement income as symptoms of coveting (10<sup>th</sup> command), failure to trust in the Lord, seeking first his kingdom and righteousness (1<sup>st</sup> command) and misuse of authority (5<sup>th</sup> command) and sinful anger (6<sup>th</sup> command). The sabbath-Lord's Day command (4<sup>th</sup>) is given to enable us to better know the Lord, his works of creation and redemption and worship him (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> commands; see Ezek. 20:12, 19-20; WLC 121) The single most compact and illustrative text of this pattern for the commandments is also seen in Ephesians where all the "put off" and "put on" topics of Ephesians 4:25-6:9 are part of the unified renewal into the likeness of God, the reflection of Christ's righteousness (Eph 4:22-24). Putting on righteousness means putting on *every one of the duties and putting off every one of the sins*. We cannot affirm some and neglect the others. We cannot boast in some commands and use them to judge others while minimizing our disobedience to other commands. There is even interdependence between the three patterns. The meta-narrative of the Lord's righteousness has guaranteed results in the elect, and His calling to faith in that meta-narrative, as a gift of his grace, results in walking worthy of this righteous calling (Eph. 4:1).
  3. The *lex Christi*'s supra-morality pattern shows us the specific details of obedience and sin. This shows Christians what to put off as sin and what to put on as righteousness, both in the heart, in individual and corporate worship of the Lord and in family and community relationships (Eph. 4:24). The single most compact and illustrative text of this pattern for the commandments 4b-10 duties to and sins against one another is the whole section of Ephesians 4:1-6:9. You can judge yourself correctly by the *lex Christi*, removing 'logs from your own eye' before you help others remove their specks. We also need to assist others in that process of stopping sin and doing righteousness according to our location, callings, roles and gifts (Eph. 4:11-16; 5:11, 25-27; 6:4, 18-20; WLC 99:7-8).
  4. Without these details people will judge others with wrong rules: Judging can mean using faulty standards of moral good and evil. In the context of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus was

judged wrongly by the Pharisees, who disobeyed the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> commandments against Christ's deity calling him Satan or demon possessed, 6<sup>th</sup> by devising murderous plots; 8<sup>th</sup> stealing his cloak and gambling it away, 9<sup>th</sup> commandment in false witness against his humanity calling him a glutton and drunkard, 10<sup>th</sup> by jealously guarding their influential positions. The disciples were judged wrongly by the Pharisees (1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> commandment) by demanding adherence to traditions of elders over Christ's commands, (9<sup>th</sup> commandment false witness). Jesus will judge the world using the moral law (Rev 21:8; Rom 1:18-3:20).

## B. LEX CHRISTI AND EMOTIONS (AFFECTIONS)

1. According to WLC 99, “[the law] is spiritual, and so reaches the understanding, will, *affections*, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures.” However, a believer has a good bit of reading to do before getting at these themes. WLC teaches the relation of our will, motives, emotions, and reason to each of the Ten Commandment duties of righteousness as well as prohibitions against unrighteousness.

*First commandment. Duties:* “You shall have no other gods before me” requires heart changes like “thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him” (WLC 104). **Prohibitions:** “bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; self-love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part. . . distrust, despair, . . . pride . . . trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; lukewarmness . . . slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us . . .” (WLC 105).

*Second commandment. Duties:* “You shall not make any idols” requires heart changes like “receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God has instituted in his Word . . . disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship” (WLC 108). **Prohibitions:** “approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself . . . neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed (WLC 109).

*Third commandment. Duties:* “You shall not take the Lord’s name in vain” requires heart changes so “[t]hat the name of God, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the Word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and: Whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be *holily and reverently used in thought, meditation . . .*” (WLC 112). **Prohibitions:** murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God’s decrees and providences;

*Fourth commandment. Duties:* “You shall remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy and work the six other days” requires heart changes like “*making it our delight* to spend the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship” (WLC 117). being weary of [the duties

required] . . . **Prohibitions:** all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreation (WLC 119).

*Fifth commandment. Duties:* “You shall honor your father and mother” requires heart changes like “[t]he honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, *all due reverence in heart . . .*” (WLC 127). “It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, *to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors*” (WLC 129).

**Prohibitions:** [inferiors] envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their [superior’s] persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands and corrections. [Superiors] inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure.

*Sixth commandment. Duties:* “You shall not kill” requires heart changes like “patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit; . . . by charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild and courteous speeches and behavior; forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil” (WLC 135). **Prohibitions:** sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares (WLC 136).

*Seventh commandment. Duties:* “You shall not commit adultery” requires heart changes like “*chastity in . . . mind, affections . . .* and the preservation of it in ourselves and others; *watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses; temperance*” (WLC 138). **Prohibitions:** unnatural lusts; all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections.

*Eighth commandment. Duties:* “You shall not steal” requires heart changes like “*moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections concerning worldly goods*” (WLC 141). **Prohibitions:** covetousness; inordinate prizing and affecting worldly goods; distrustful and distracting cares and studies in getting, keeping, and using them; envying at the prosperity of others (WLC 142).

*Ninth commandment. Duties:* “You shall not bear false witness/lie” requires heart changes like “*from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth*, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things: Whatsoever; *a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for*, and covering of their infirmities” (WLC 144). **Prohibitions:** evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt, fond admiration (WLC 145).

*Tenth commandment. Duties:* “You shall not covet” requires heart changes like “*such a full contentment with our own condition, and such a charitable frame of the whole soul toward our neighbor, as that all our inward motions and affections touching him, tend unto, and further all that good which is his*” (WLC 147). **Prohibitions:** discontentment with our own estate; envying and grieving at the good of our neighbor, together with all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his (WLC 148).

## **2. The Spirit imparts derivative attributes enabling obedience to the *lex Christi* from the heart**

All the original attributes of God impart specific derivative attributes that make elect believers awoken to the fullness and beauty of the commandments: God's **omni-holiness** (gives love for God and man), **omniscience** (gives knowledge of himself and all the commands), **omnipotence** (gives power to do all the commands) **omni-faithfulness** (gives us faithfulness to keep the commands, gives us final resurrection to unchangeable righteousness), **omni-historicity** (gives us existence within chronological time to obey the law and in then in eternity; shapes our view of time past that he gave the law, present that the moral law is my duty, and future that he will judge law-breakers), **omni-harmoniousness** (gives us the law to submit for our earthly shalom), **omni-sufficiency** (gives material, pastoral, and civil-social resources to support obedience to the commands and gives us contentment in keeping all the commands derived from the self-existence of God), and **omnipresence** (gives us existence in physical space and is with us by the Spirit to apply all his attributes to bless us in fellowship/communion to do the commands with us).

## **3. Biblical Observations about emotions**

**a. We live in a world under God's curse on work and the human body:** We face numerous complexities of soul and body that are complicated with sin, aging and death, and missed opportunities. We groan under these curses that constantly influence our emotions (Rom. 8:19-23; Ecclesiastes; Gen. 3:16-19).

### **b. We are physical and live in a physical world:**

*a. Soul and body have mutual interactions that constantly influence emotions:* physical activity, sitting (working, reading Facebook posts or watching videos for hours), exercise, hunger, tiredness, sleep patterns, weakness, pain, sickness, injury, hormones (sexual orgasm, menstruation 經期, pregnancy, child birth, menopause 絕經), medications, treatments by medical practitioners, aging. Emotions themselves are accompanied by and produce physical feelings (tightness in chest, stomach fluttering, or pain, headaches, elevated blood pressure, eye swelling, rush of adrenaline, oxytocin, sudden loss of rationality, overcome by impulse). Foods, drinks and naturally occurring substances, vitamins and chemicals within those products (caffeine, alcohol, salt, sugar, cholesterol, unsaturated fats), and medications of diverse types all have effects on the way our bodies feel and our emotions, some directly intended and some as side-effects.

*b. Soul and body have mutual interactions with the created world around us:* Exposure to sunlight has a significant effect on our emotions. Our five senses mutually interact with our emotions: *sounds* (calming music vs. noisy jack-hammering), *smells* (pleasant drinks and foods vs. polluted air, sewer or rotten garbage), *sights* (well-managed gardens and well-designed spaces vs. chaotic, dirty, destruction and mismanaged property), *touches* (things

that fit our hands well and feel safe, secure vs. sharp, dangerous, broken, disgusting things), *tastes* (favorite flavors or foods and drinks, candies, gums vs. bitter, poisonous, infectious).

**c. We are rational, evaluating:** we constantly interpret our situations (body, self-perception, relationships, world, God-orientation) and make choices and evaluative judgments that constantly influence emotions.

**d. We are socio-cultural:** we constantly learn about, observe and experience emotional expressions from real relationships and human interactions (family, school, community, church, friendships, romance), both face to face and through our own and public media/technology communications (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TV, YouTube, movies). When we experience affirmation, we feel happy. When we face rejection, we feel sad and angry. Some of these models we are exposed to, or relationships we cannot easily escape, are explicitly sinful.

**e. We are influenced by unseen fallen angels:** By God’s permission, and by giving non-elect men up to their lusts, demonic forces of evil can blind the soul and heart to the Gospel of renewal into Christ’s image (2 Cor. 4:4). They can also for a time, in various ways, frighten, disturb and attack the elect in both their bodies and souls (including the heart: mind affections, will) (Luke 22:31-32; 1 Pet 5:8-9).

**f. We are time-conditioned by habits:** past ways of experiencing and interpreting the world generally lead us to form repetitive emotional “habits”. Some emotional habits may be so routine that we feel helpless to control the emotions that result from our experience and interpretations.

**g. We are heart-determined:** (**will** choosing, **emotions=affections** desiring or rejecting, **mind** receiving information and evaluating). The heart directs the whole course of our lives and our actions (Prov. 23:19; Matt 6:21; 12:34; 15:18-19; 22:37; Luke 6:35; 8:15). When the will chooses what the mind accepts and affections desire, there is a kind of pleasure and satisfaction. When our choices are blocked or we are forced to submit to what our minds reject and affections hate, all kinds of emotional chaos can result.

**h. We are heart-deceived:** All parts of the heart are shaped by the fall of man into sin (Eph. 4:17-19): **will** chooses against God’s will, **emotions=affections** desires evil and rejects righteousness, **mind** proudly selecting/receiving false information, rejecting truth, and makes self-deceived evaluations (Jas. 1:26). The

**i. Elect believers are heart-redeemed:** True salvation of God’s elect exposes the heart’s secrets (1 Cor. 14:25; Heb. 4:12-13) changes every part of the heart (Rom 2:29; 6:17; 2 Cor. 5:12), and puts emphasis on this change and integrity above mere outward appearance of cultural acceptability (2 Cor. 5:12, 16; 9:7; Eph. 6:5-6; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 3:12; 10:22; 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:4; 1 John 3:19). Emotional renewal (affections of the heart) is part of what saving faith accomplishes in us—what we love and hate, what gives us joy and makes us sad, what makes us worry or gives us peace, what we fear or what we confidently face, what creates guilt and shame or what brings assurance of acceptance—these are all truth or lie based. Sanctification of our affections/emotions is a life-long process of shaping us into the likeness of Christ’s glory (2 Cor. 3:18) including writing the moral law on our hearts (Heb. 10:16), which creates love, joy and

delight in this moral righteousness and grief, hatred and sorrow for anything unlike this righteousness. Elect angels minister to us (Heb. 1:13-14).

**j. Elect believers are body-redeemed:** The moral law teaches us the best ways to live and use our bodies in this fallen world (Rom. 8:4).

**k. Elect believers are waiting for the redemption of our bodies, including our emotions and souls** (1 Thess. 4:13-17)

#### **4. STRATEGIES FOR EMOTIONAL RENEWAL**

**a. Method: use the means of grace as an individual and with mature believers [face-to-face or by written, recorded material] to receive fellowship, discipleship, counseling, teaching, preaching)**

*i. Identifying what our heart is doing: self-investigation and self-analysis*

*ii. Restoring heart:* in union with Christ our Priest, repenting and experiencing forgiveness for sinful thinking, desires, and choices (Eph. 4:17-22; 1 John 1:9; Heb. 4:14-16; 10:22).

*iii. Guarding heart:* in union with Christ our King, protecting our minds from thinking about false or sinfully desirable things; warning our wills of consequences of choosing evil (1 Cor. 4:5; Rev. 2:23); strengthening biblically-informed affections/emotions (Heb. 13:9; 1 John 3:19-21).

*iv. Strengthening heart:* in union with Christ our Prophet, filling minds with truths about God's Triune person and work using the means of grace to study and pray and receive the Lord's Supper (Phil. 4:4-8); choosing to think about, speak, sing the truth with thankfulness to God (Phil. 4:8; Eph. 5:19-20); experience godly emotions/affections that accord with truth (example 1 Pet. 1:3-8; 1 Thess. 4:13; Rom. 8:14-16, 17-23, 28-38; 2 Cor. 4:16-18).

#### **5. BIBLICAL TRUTHS FOR EMOTIONAL RENEWAL**

**a Renewed emotions in relation to believing in God's omni-attributes . . .**

- i. **Omnipresence:** related to fear of suffering: "If God is for us, who [or what in all creation] can be against us [to condemn us, or separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus]" (Rom. 8:31, 33-34, 39).
- ii. **Omniholiness:** "Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate," (Rev. 2:6). Love God and your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:37-40).
- iii. **Omnisufficiency:** "Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb. 13:5). Seek first the kingdom and all these material things will be added to you as well; don't be anxious about material things in the present or for the future (Matt. 6:24-34).
- iv. **Omniscience:** because the Lord rescued Noah and Lot from the social pressures of wickedness, (2 Pet. 2:5, 7-8), "then *the Lord knows* how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment," (2 Pet. 2:9). Related to jealousy and proud human factions claiming exclusivity: "The Lord knows the

thoughts of the wise, that they are futile,” (1 Cor. 3:20).

- v. **Omniharmonious:** guilt, shame, fear of rejection by God: “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.” (Col. 1:19-23)
- vi. **Omnipotence:** “So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”” (Heb. 13:6)
- vii. **Omnifaithful:** facing discouragement, weakened faith, temptation to deny Christ to avoid suffering (Heb. 6:6-12): “So that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises,” (Heb. 6:12). “So that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us,” (Heb. 6:18).
- viii. **Omnihistorical:** related to proud certainty about success in the future: “Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that,” (Jas. 4:15).

## **6. Topical Approach to Renewed Emotions**

- a. **Curiosity, interest** (2 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 16:19)
- b. **Surprise, amazement, wonder** (Ps. 9:1; 139:14; Rev. 15:3)
- c. **Joy, happiness, satisfaction, relief, ecstasy** (Phil 3:1; 4:4; 1:3-4, 25; 2:2)
- d. **Sympathy, pity** (Heb. 4:14-16; Judg. 2:18; Ps. 72:13; 102:13; 109:12)
- e. **Love** (Matt. 22:37-40; 1 John 2:15-17)
- f. **Trust, admiration, praise** (Heb. 2:13; Prov. 3:5-6; Jer. 17:5-8)
- g. **Courage, Perseverance** (2 Cor. 1:8-11; 4:1, 16; 6:3-10; 1 Thess. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:9; Rev. 2:10)
- h. **Hope, expectancy, anticipation, desire, vigilance** (1 Pet. 1:13; 5:8-9; 2 Pet 1:3-4; Luke 2:25; Matt. 6:10; 26:41; Tit. 2:13; Ps. 37:4; 1 Thess. 1:10)
- i. **Greed, coveting, lust, envy, complaining:** (Acts 8:21-22; 1 John 2:15-17; Heb. 13:5)
- j. **Anxiety, worry, cares, panic:** Pastoral model of 1 Pet. 5:6 in context of 1 Peter; Philippians 4:6-7 in Phil.; Matt. 6:20-34; 2 Cor. 11:28-29
- k. **Fear, cowardice, timidity, terror:** (Ps. 46; Matt. 10:28; Heb. 13:5-6)
- l. **Guilt, shame, humiliation, regret** (*conscience can be renewed to discern true guilt before God and discern true duties to man*): Some guilt/shame is not biblically or morally based, but only cultural or familial based (failing other’s expectations). Distinguishing between shame that is before God for true guilt for sin and shame that is rigidly legalistic or cultural in specific issues is needed. Learn how to deal with the various expectations of others related to cultural or familial shame considering biblical categories. (Romans 1:18-3:23; Ten Commandments; see attachment Facing Other's Expectations; Romans 14:1-15:7 on weak conscience in relation to disputable matters)

- m. **Anger, irritation, rage:** Distinguish between righteous anger and destructive proud anger. Control anger by knowing how God deals with his anger (see Pastoral ministry context for anger in James and Ephesians; 6<sup>th</sup> commandment and Hebrews 10:16 promise to write the law on hearts by Spirit)
- n. **Loneliness, alienation, rejection** (Ps. 25:16; 27:10; 102:7; Lam. 1:1)
- o. **Sorrow, shock, grief** (Eph. 4:30; Rom. 9:2; 2 Cor. 2:4)
- p. **Discouragement, pessimism, frustration, hopelessness, depression** (Ps. 73; Eccles.; 2 Cor. 1, 4)
- q. **Aversion, dislike, disgust, hatred, bitterness** (2 Tim. 2:22-24; Heb. 1:9; Ps. 11:5)

### C. Marriage as a Ministry of Giving (Acts 20:35)

BLESSED FACE TO THOSE IN COVENANT: USING ALL RESOURCES TO BLESS, KEEP, SHINE GOD'S FACE and GIVE PEACE (Num. 6:24-26)

1. **Christ's example** of using his authority not to lord it over them so they would serve him, but to serve, give his life as a ransom for many, seek and save the lost (Matt. 20:25-28; Luke 19:10)
2. **Christ's teaching**
  - a. "As you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. . . . do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High." (Luke 6:31, 35)
  - b. The words of the Lord Jesus: It's More Blessed to Give than to Receive (Acts 20:35).
  - c. Not waiting to be served or thanked, but serving with humility as unworthy servants doing our duty (Luke 17:7-10).
3. **Paul's example** of financial independence to bless the churches with impartial, honorable and faithful service to his Lord, testifying to the gospel of the grace of God, declaring his whole counsel, caring for and protecting the flock (Acts 20:24-35; similar teaching in Eph. 4:28; 4<sup>th</sup> command to labor 6 days, even more than just teaching, to do additional labor to be financially self-sustaining; 2 Cor. 12:15 "I will gladly spend and be spent for your souls")
4. **Timothy's example** of seeking the interests of Christ on behalf of others, rather than seeking his own interests (Phil. 2:19-23).
5. **Elder & Deacon are Models of Moral Maturity (all these principles derive from the Ten Commandments)**
  - a. **Requires giving sacrificially:** willing and eager examples to the flock (1 Pet. 5:2-3; 1 Tim. 3:1); "above reproach, husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, . . . gentle, . . . manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, . . . well thought of by outsiders, . . . first tested, . . . faithful in all things" (1 Tim 3:2, 4, 7, 10-11); "lover of good, . . . upright, holy and disciplined, . . . hold form to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also rebuke those who contradict it" (Tit. 1:8-9).
  - b. **Prohibits self-centered leadership:** "not domineering" (1 Pet. 5:3); "not a drunkard, not violent . . . not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, . . . not a recent

convert→pride, . . . not double-tongued, . . . not slanderers,” (1 Tim. 3:3, 6, 8, 11); “not arrogant or quick-tempered” (Tit. 1:7).

#### YOUR PROMISES TO EACH OTHER

- A. **Remind yourselves often of your wedding vows:** they are unilateral, unconditional to the performance of the other person (unless there is marital collapse due to meeting biblical conditions for divorce by desertion [1 Cor. 7:15] or adultery [Matt. 19:9]).
- B. **Authority over bodies belong to the spouse**, so one spouse cannot unilaterally decide to deprive the other spouse of the benefits/rights of his/her bodily presence and blessing, including sexual rights. Any form of deprivation must be by agreement for a limited time, with a devotion to prayer to resist Satan, due to a lack of sexual self-control (1 Cor. 7:3-5).
- C. **It’s More Blessed to Give than to Receive** (Acts 20:35).
  1. **GIVER:** The general qualifications for a healthy marriage are each spouse’s *marriage personality tendency* is to seek and experience the greater blessing of being a “**giver**” rather than other self-centered marriage personality tendencies. Seeks not her own [benefit] (KJV 1 Cor. 13:5)
  2. **Blessing you** with all myself and all my resources, talents, gifts and time to *help form* Christ’s likeness in you, to seek Christ’s interests on your behalf, genuine concern for your welfare (Gal. 4:19; Phil. 2:20-23; 2 Cor. 11:28), seeking to please spouse (1 Cor. 7:33-35)
  3. **Husband & Wife Roles**
    - i. Sacrificing self, loving, nourishing, cherishing to produce cleansing, holiness-producing by the Word (Eph. 5:25-29) (yet love is required of both husband and wife)
    - ii. Wives submit, as to the Lord, with respect (Eph. 5:22, 24, 33; as if you were submitting to the Lord, Col. 3:23-25)
  4. **Not keeping a record of [other’s] wrongs** [against me to punish, attack, despise]. Not resentful 1 Cor. 13:5, not building up resentments by rehearsing and remembering failures, sins of spouse; but *keeping a record to restore, confirm/build up weaknesses, strengthen/protect from the evil one, establish saving faith* (1 Pet. 5:8-10)
  5. **Not keeping a record of [my doing] rights** [for them] to be seen and praised by others, so, do not let left hand know what right is doing (Matt 6:1-4). Service is noticed and will be rewarded by the Lord (Col. 3:23-25)
  6. **Blessing you** by seeing, saying and rejoicing in how Christ is already at work in you (Phil. 1:3-11; 2:2, 12-13; 4:10-20)

#### RESPONDING BIBLICALLY TO SELF-CENTERED MARRIAGE PERSONALITIES

- A. Adapting giving-love to various *marriage personality tendencies* “And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.” (1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Tim 3:16).

- B. Other types of self-centered marriage personality tendencies (can be combined in various sets), that cause much conflict and need reproof, admonishment, correction for seeking his/her own benefits
1. **Fool:** motivated to bless and serve, but, due to lack of communication and observation, or feelings of rejection for past efforts, does not build wisdom to speak, act and serve in ways that truly benefit spouse, or in ways preferred by spouse (Prov. 12:18; 14:8; Eph. 4:29; Phil. 1:9; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 5:10)
  2. **Depriver:** (1 Cor. 7:5) unilaterally takes away a spouse's physical/bodily rights to his/her help and blessed presence without agreement. Chooses to deprive spouse and threatens with more deprivation.
  3. **Exchanger:** Give to receive payback; may accept psychological theories about empty love tanks, and the need to have a full love tank to love in return (Luke 6:27-36). Example: money manipulator: "I did my part by earning income; now you do everything else I want. I did more than my share, now it's your turn."
  4. **Demander** (1 Cor. 7:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:7) does not live with spouse in an understanding way, or freely give agreement to limit some marital rights due to the demands of life and due to concern for the spouse. Unwilling to patiently accept a limited-time deprivation or devote self to prayer when spouse is weak, sick, physically tired, emotional unready, or stressed out from work and relationships. Often unsatisfied, ungrateful, proud, angry, domineering, manipulative or abusive.
  5. **Sluggard/Lazy** (Prov. 6:9; 24:30-34; 26:16) proud excuses not to invest in the marriage; irresponsible to complete expected tasks.
  6. **Fighter:** Repaying evil for evil (1 Thess. 5:15). You attack or hurt me, so I hurt or attack you in return. Often complicates arguments by changing the subject to a favorite blame-worthy fault in the spouse, while failing to hear the original complaint with humility.
  7. **Dumper:** speaking rashly, proudly, scornfully, in anger, without carefully listening, weighing truthfulness of words, or impact of words (Prov. 10:8, 18-19; 11:12; 12:16-18, 23; 13:3; 14:29; 15:2; 18:13; Isa. 32:6; Eph. 4:29).

#### D. God's Comforts for troubled emotions in Suffering

A summary of the kinds of suffering we experience, what the effects are on us as believers and how God promises to help us in suffering.

Because of his sin in the garden of Eden, we believe that the curse on Adam, as representative head of the human race, means that every one of his descendants is under the curse of sin and they all could justly be punished by God for this *original sin* as well as for their own sins. Through the sin of man, God reveals his grace, mercy, love, patience, power, justice and wrath and commands us to be humbled because of our many offenses against God, repent and seek God's grace and mercy. We believe we experience the effects of the curse daily by our own sin, other's sins against us, sickness, sorrow, deprivation, disaster, not knowing the best time to act for successful results, and death. These effects of the curse will never be completely removed until the Second Coming of Christ and often lead us to cry out, "Meaningless!" Until then, the normal result of the curse in the lives of believers is reversed. Formerly, as unbelievers, we experienced of the effects of the curse confirming our separation from God. Now, as believers,

the effects of God's curse draw us closer to God and help us imitate Christ during his earthly ministry. Christ our *High Priest* ministers grace and mercy to us because of what he already learned through suffering: *sending* his comforting presence by the Holy Spirit, *sending* elect angels to help us, *giving grace* to continue to witness for God in physical weakness, *strengthening faith* in God's promises as we are tested by persecution and loneliness and deprivation, *increasing our desire* to glorify and worship God, *helping us gladly submit* to God's will while suffering, *helping us repent and hate sin* more than suffering, *leading us* to diligent use of the means of grace (the Bible, prayer, sacraments, fellowship, fatherly discipline of suffering), *reminding us* of Christ's own sufferings, *delivering us* from evil (physical affliction, mental deception and pleasurable temptations), *strengthening patience*, *enabling us* to entrust our enemies to God's just judgment and rejoice when they are justly punished, *assuring us* of God's love and of our pure faith, and *fixing our hope* on God-centered joy as our inheritance, on our heavenly ministry as kings and priests, and on the complete removal of the curse and its effects. As Christ's sufferings flow over into our lives, so the comfort of the Father of all compassion comforts us. In the process, we are able to comfort others with the comfort we have received from God. Gen 2:16-17; 3:1-19; Hosea 6:7; Rom 3:10-18, 23; 5:12-19; 8:20; 1 Cor 15:56; Heb 9:27; Rom 3:25-6; 5:8; 9:14-23; 1 Tim 1:12-17; Titus 2:11; James 4:6-10; Ecclesiastes; Rom 8:18-39; Heb 4:14-16; 2:17; 5:7-10; John 14:16-18; Heb 1:13; Luke 22:43; 2 Cor 12:7-10; James 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:3-9; John 16:32; John 17:1-5; Matt 26:42; Heb 12:2-4; 2 Cor 8:9; 2 Tim 4:17-18; Matt 6:13; Rom 5:1-5; 1 Pet 2:23; Rev 18:20; 19:1-3; Rom 8:39; Rev 20:4-6; 2:26; 3:21; 21:3-7; 22:3; Phil 3:10-11; 2 Cor 1:3-11

### **E. DELIGHTING IN GOD AS A WAY TO FIGHT SIN AND ADDICTIONS**

What do you love? What do you hate? When we develop delight in the King's Righteous Dominion, we learn to love what he loves and hate what he hates, promote and develop what he love and resist and prevent what he hates.

1. Desiring God, delighting in God, joy in God, and love for God are inter-related heart affections. Delight in God should be derived not only from God and his saving work, but also the created world and his judging work. Delight is developed in the knowledge of God's blessed face (what has turn to me for salvation) and cursed face (what has turned to Christ on the cross in my place (1 John 4:10), turned to his and my enemies). I want to propose that these affections can be experienced in ways not typically considered by believers who know of the command to have these affections, and see examples of believers who experience these affections.
2. Delight is commanded, but the natural man cannot keep this command to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind (Matt 22:37). Thus, delight in God must be regenerated, imputed, imparted, expanded from heavenly things to all of life, guarded by self-discipline and part of the believer's eschatological hope. Since unregenerate man cannot come naturally to delight in God or his character, God must regenerate his elect to new delight in his total character.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> See Jonathan Edwards' *Religious Affections*, part three, principle two, that the elect are regenerated by a spiritual sight of the glory and beauty of God's holiness. However, I propose in this book, that regeneration brings a whole new series of delights, for example, delight in God's eight omni-attributes, not only his omni-holiness, but also his

This may start with awakening delights in mere shadows and types of himself, arousing desire for finding the source of delight.<sup>90</sup> The delight in God is imputed, since the perfect delight of the human Christ in the Triune God is counted to us who believe he was raised from the dead by decree of the Father through the agency of the divine Son in the power of the Spirit (Rom 1:3-4; 4:25; 8:11-13; 10:9-10). Imparted delight in God as righteous law-giver comes as a gift of the new covenant, when the law is written on the heart (Heb. 10:16). By the Spirit, a heart of flesh is transplanted for a heart of stone (Ezek. 36:26). Citizenship is granted into a new kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17; Phil. 3:20-21) from where we await a Savior who will renew our mortal bodies to become like his immortal body (1 Cor 15:42-49). This delight must be guarded, for the seed and soils parable in Scripture uses a metaphor of *choking thorns* to represent the deceitful cares and delight from worldly wealth (Matt. 13:22).

3. Finding, increasing and guarding joy in God by the sacraments, means of grace and physical things that bring delights as from God's hand, should lead us to delight in the Giver, more than the gift. It could be sparked by mediating and praying on a Bible text, seeing sights along the northern California coastline, photos of kids and grandkids on the refrigerator, listening to Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major symphony, the smell of a silver spruce Christmas tree next to a warm fireplace on Christmas eve with family, savoring a slice of warm buttered black raspberry jam on wheat toast with a cup of favorite coffee or tea or enjoying the pleasures of sexual intimacy in marriage. God created them all to be enjoyed by mankind, made in his image, as they see and enjoy his eternal power and divine nature reflected in those things, and glorify and give him thanks for those things (1 Tim. 4:3-5; Rom. 1:20-21).
4. The old delight-patterns of the sinful nature must be transformed by disconnecting delights in sinful things, and reconnecting them to affections of disgust and distaste. Delights in good things for sinful purposes must be rewired to God-glorifying motives. This happens in many ways within two main categories of life. First, we make sets of active choices which form habits. We count ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God and yield ourselves and instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:11-14). Second, we submit to God's discipline. For some believers God permits them to experience the natural consequences for sinful choices that reveal sin's bitterness, and those believers need to submit to that bitterness as a teacher and invest in new life choices that bear new sweet fruits. For other believers, God permits them to experience sickness, suffering and frustration in a fallen world. We know God disciplines those he loves, and his discipline painfully rewires our loves and hates (Heb. 12:6-14; Rom. 8:17-39; Phil. 4:4-13).
5. The greater the awareness of how God's omni-attributes are reflected and experienced in

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omnipresence, omni-sufficiency, omniscience, omni-harmoniousness, omnipotence, omni-faithfulness, and omni-historical nature.

<sup>90</sup> This pattern is expressed well in two works by C.S. Lewis, his narrative of his conversion in *Surprised by Joy*, where he longs for recurring experiences of joy, but realizes that the joy is a fleeting by-product of the thing desired. He also writes a post conversion essay, titled *The Weight of Glory*, proposing that the temporal pleasures of this life should be seen as diluted flavors of God's river of pleasures, the *torrens voluptatis*, flowing from his throne, and these heavenly pleasures of the new earth alone give substantial and enduring joy. We are fools who would be satisfied with the diluted flavors in this old earthly realm, when God has promised joys of drinking at the fountainhead in the new earth.

and through the created world, the greater the appreciation and delight that comes from enjoying anything. Our task then, is to seek God's gift of regenerative rewiring that begins to replicate itself into all areas of life, or to use a medical metaphor, something like a God-delight stem cell transfusion. Though Edwards' thesis that love for God's holiness should be our chief delight and the singular proof of true religious affections (see note #1 above), awareness of and delight in seven additional omni-attributes enlarges our capacity for joy and are also chief signs of true religious affections.

6. Consider how to enjoy the savor of a warm, crunchy, buttered slice of black raspberry jam on wheat toast leading to delight in God (or whatever you might like for breakfast). Toast is physically *present* to put in the toaster and hold in the hand acquired by *holy* means of faithful labor and exchange of goods (God's reflected omnipresence and omni-holiness) as a *provision* from God's hand on the produce of the earth (God's reflected omni-sufficiency) that requires God's gifts of *knowledge* and *wisdom* (God's reflected omniscience) giving *power to produce* creation's goods and distribute them by *unified* market services and family *cooperation* (God's reflected omnipotence and omni-harmoniousness) that are *faithfully* available to be purchased or made by God's people on six *theo-synchronic* days of the week (God's reflected omni-faithfulness and omni-historicity). The transformed Christian can enjoy a piece of breakfast toast while it brings him to delight in God! Of course, you can fill in the blank with your own favorite foods if you are on South Beach diet phase one or on a gluten-free, vegan diet, but hopefully without calling another's freedom's evil (Rom. 14:1-15:7).
7. These patterns leading out of nearly anything you enjoy experiencing, tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing, touching (within the bounds of the Ten Commandments and Christian freedom) can be connected to delight in God (who gives and sustains it). Therefore, fundamentalist legalism prohibiting many kinds of Christian freedoms that originate from church or institutional leadership codifying them in statements of faith or covenants of behavior are misguided (prohibiting participation in popular culture such as alcohol, card or mahjong playing, movies, computer games and apps, TV, social media, dancing, certain books, defining acceptable clothing, jewelry or hair styles). In addition to submitting to the Ten Commandments as the control standards for our duties and prohibitions (Westminster Larger Catechism 99-150 gives an excellent summary of the biblical theology of each command), the morality of something we enjoy is more conditioned by whether we can see God's eternal power and divine nature reflected in it or through it, giving him glory and thanks (contrast Rom. 1:20-21), than by prohibitions that seem to protect the holiness of God's people. Don't handle, taste or touch, as traditional rules developed to restrain the appearance of evil, are of no value in stopping the heart indulgence of the sinful flesh (Col. 2:20-23).
8. The renewed Christian needs to enlarge his/her capacity for joy in the joys of his spouse, family and students and connect these multiple circuits of joy to joy in God himself. In his witness to others, he/she will be able to help his hearers see new connections between the attributes of God and their reflections in Christ, the people of God and in earthly things his people experience. His/her teaching of delight in God will supply an unlimited capacity of recharging power to energize the daily Christian life.
9. Delight in God is *always* discerned through some created thing. Yes, that's right! There is no direct pathway to delighting in God. We always get redirected through means of created

things to discern God in the created thing. God spoke to the fathers through angels, dreams, visions and pre-incarnate appearances, which were then recorded in the Old Testament by the prophets. God's grace and truth was revealed through the incarnate Christ. Without going through his created humanity, no one can come to God (John 14:6; 1:14; Heb. 1:1-3; 7:25; Rom 5:17-20; 1 Cor. 15:42-49). Since we are pilgrims living after the New Testament era, we must go through the foundation of the prophetic and apostolic God-breathed, inerrant, created pages of Scripture to discern God, and Christ the cornerstone (Eph. 2:20; 2 Pet. 1:3-4, 21; 3:16-18; Rom. 15:4). By reading Scripture, we learn who God is and his providential works in the world in ruling over the created universe, the works he continues to do through his people, and the evil he permits in giving up his enemies to their lusts and conquering them. When looking at the text of Scripture or at people, or observing the interactions of time and space with created beings and objects, we can discern God's person and work, leading to delight in God who is discerned.<sup>91</sup> Then through Scripture in our hearts as the glasses with which to see the world, we can look at created things and discern God's eternal power and divine nature (Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19:1-2). When looking at his work, but failing to see God or his work, we go back to Scripture to try to understand more about what we have been missing in our spiritual perceptions of the world. Creation study by itself, without the glasses of Scripture, will reveal some "rebel facts" (it never *directly* reveals *truth*) and when interpreted by unregenerate man, will lead to distorted and erroneous ideas.<sup>92</sup> Those facts must submit to the authority and interpretive lens of Scripture to become a source of delight in God himself (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

10. This is something like Neo, in the movie the *Matrix*, when he is enlightened, and starts to discern the matrix into which all things connect, depicted in the movie by his ability to see the zeros and ones (lines of matrix code) as the structure behind all things visible. In the movie, the matrix is an imaginary or surreal world that can only be superseded by those who know the matrix is a digital image, a kind of imaginary lie created to keep people in submission. I'd like to use the matrix of digital-zeros-and-ones-overlaid-on-everything-we-see metaphor for another purpose, not as an imaginary digital lie that needs to be discovered and resisted, but as a way of seeing everything in this world as reflections of God's attributes, as our minds are renewed by Scripture to know who God is. Suppose we label each of the eight derivative attributes in the buttered toast paragraph above as 1a-8a in a digital matrix. After we are regenerated, we see lines of 1a-8a code reflected in all created things. It could be a piece of buttered wheat toast with jam, sharing intimacy with one's spouse, enjoying a scenic view, enjoying the social harmony of a system that works from production of goods to roadway distribution to market to functional credit cards and Google or Apple Pay apps that work for purchasing at a local convenience store, driving a well-made car, riding a well-performing bicycle, or seeing the city's well-built and designed buildings, stores, roads, transportation systems, parks, bike paths and sidewalks. Every created thing has discernable aspects of the derivative glory of God to those regenerated to see those attributes. This is the usual way to delight in God by created things. Another movie metaphor might also combine

<sup>91</sup> See John Piper *When I Don't Desire God: How to Fight for Joy* for a wonderful study about how Scripture, prayer and created things are all means to stir up and guard our delight in God.

<sup>92</sup> See *Redeeming Sociology: A God-Centered Approach* (Crossway 2011) for examples of how unregenerate sociologists leave God out of their sociological analysis, and falsify the data that they "see". Also available free in PDF form at <https://frame-poythress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/PoythressVernRedeemingSociology.pdf>

with the matrix metaphor, the *Avatar* movie. Selected humans enter a dreamlike trance while they are mentally united with avatar bodies. This enabled the avatar to experience Pandora as a living planet connected to Eywa, the tree of life. Though Christianity would teach us to reject all of the movie themes involving worship of the tree representing Eywa, the idea of biological interconnectivity, a neural network linking all life on the planet, is a useful metaphor. In an analogous way, regenerated believers have new eyes to see how “in [Christ] all things [in the universe] hold together,” (Col. 1:17), how he reflects his eternal power and divine nature to, on, in and by all created things (Rom. 1:20; 11:36; Eph. 1:10), including his Triune (omni-harmonious) all-wise (omniscient), sovereign control (omnipotent) over all the sequencing of all events in time (omni-historical) and space (omnipresence) also sustaining the biodiversity of our planet earth (omni-sufficiency) by the word of his promise (omni-faithfulness) to a holy purpose (omni-holiness), that he alone would be glorified, praised and worshiped (Rom. 1:21; 11:36; Rev. 15:4; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 4:8; 83:18; 86:10; Isa. 37:16; 44:24). The created world is infused with reflections of his glory!

11. Delight derived from created things that leads to delight in God as the source, this is the proper use of the temporal delight turned to the eternal source of delight! The sinful side, ignorance and blindness to the derivative attribute “matrix” instead will see in the things themselves some amazing substitutes that seem qualified for worship (Rom. 1:20-25). Much of our super-hero movie attraction in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century (Batman, Superman, Fantastic Four, Captain America, X-Men, Flash, Arrow) seems to be a quest for divine substitutes that seem worthy of worship. Similarly, this blindness is expressed in pantheism, a worldview that supposes everything created is some sort of god. The devil will ever seek to lead men to rejoice in God’s gifts, the created things themselves, or the actions we do, rather than using those things to lead us to delight in God himself.<sup>93</sup> Job worshiped God because God is glorious and worthy of worship, regardless of perceived benefits, unlike Job’s wife, who seemed to expect more benefits from God for all the toil of religion (Job 1:1-2:10). Without delight in God himself, the temporal “believer” will fall away both in times of trouble and times of pleasure (seed on rocky soil and among thorns Matt 13:20-22).
12. Seeing greater likenesses to God’s omni-attributes and the derivative reflections of those attributes in the created world ought to stir God’s regenerated-delighters to greater delight and attraction, while lesser reflections stir less delight or attraction. Thus, the greatest delight regenerate believers can experience is in knowing, believing in, and communing with Christ himself, the perfect reflection of the derivative attributes of God, and the fulfilment of the moral law as the definition of the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 1:1-3; Matt 5:17; 1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 8:3-4). All other delights in created things must be derivative subsets of our ultimate delight in Christ himself!
13. All lesser substitutes offered by the world, the devil or the left-over sinful delights of the unregenerate heart fail to reach the full delights of God-reflective intimacy. C.S. Lewis’ *The*

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<sup>93</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, section two lists false signs of conversion and spiritual life as rejoicing in the gifts of God and that they are loved by God and have received justification, rather than rejoicing in God himself. [cite source](#)). *David Brainerd’s Journals* show a resistance to this temptation in evaluating signs of true assurance of salvation, not satisfied to rejoice in his justification, but through that justification to rejoice in the God who justifies ([cite source](#)). C.S. Lewis *Screwtape Letters* develops a similar theme in the instructions to the junior devil to cause the man to rejoice with pride in his spiritual devotion and the fact that he did his Bible reading and praying, rather than whether these devotions actually caused him to have communion with God. [cite source](#)).

*Great Divorce* has a wonderfully creative illustration of this principle. The last scenario is about an angel spirit persuading a gray wisp of a human spirit to let it kill the lust lizard on its shoulder. The wisp human spirit cringes before the angelic spirit in anticipation of pain, while the lust lizard promises more satisfaction and more ability to be contained and quiet, so as not to cause future disturbances. Then with final permission, the angelic spirit crushes the lust lizard and throws it to the ground. Quite unexpectedly, the lizard turns into a beautiful horse upon whom the wisp human spirit rides into heavenly glory. Lewis has captured in imaginary story form what is true in life: sexual lust is a puny and slimy imaginary pleasure compared to the power and beauty of marital sexual pleasure, the latter of which is an aid to reaching heavenly glory, since in healthy marriages, sex reveals so much of God's reflective glory.

14. Of course, like God, God's people will learn to love those who are still sinners (Rom. 5:8; Matt. 5:44-45), but will not experience attractive delight when observing moral failure. Every Christian parent regenerated to God-delight will know this! When children reflect more of the likeness of Christ, the parent experiences more delight in that child, but when the child rebels against Christ and reflects the world, the flesh and the devil's likenesses, the parent experiences more grief and sadness (Prov. 17:25). Every minister, in the same way, will share delight when his disciples reflect more of Christ, and experiences grief and sorrow when disciples sin (Phil. 2:20-23; 2 Cor. 11:28-29). If the Spirit "rejoices with the truth," so his people will share this delight (1 Cor. 13:6). If the Spirit is grieved by sin and wrong-doing, so will his regenerate people share in his sin-grief (Eph. 4:30; 1 Cor. 13:6).
15. Another kind of delight that reflects God in the world is delight in discipline for sharing in greater likeness to God (Heb. 12:6-14). We engage the created world by *disciplining* people and creatures into the likeness of the derivative attributes, by *designing* all inanimate objects into the likeness of the derivative attributes, and *designating* them for uses that further show his derivative attributes, and *displaying or declaring* these objects so that God can be seen and glorified in those things. These themes hold true for all vocations, from the minister preparing a sermon to the carpenter building a tiny house.
16. Another kind of delight is in seeing and waiting for the justice and wrath of God to be poured out on his and our enemies (Rom. 1:18-32; Rev. 18:20; 1 Pet. 2:23; 4:19). If they will not be converted, we pray that God would "look upon their threats" and intervene with the extension of his kingdom rule as well as his evil-limiting, proud-humiliating, rich-impooverishing, throne-displacing judgments (Psalm 2 as used in the prayer of Acts 4:24-31; Luke 1:51-53; Acts 12:20-23; Dan. 4-5). "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," (Heb. 10:31).