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The material below is intended to be used to prepare to meet in small groups in eight meetings. The outline numbers represent the sections, so for the first meeting read and prepare questions for 1.1-1.6.5 Then for the next seven meetings , prepare the next sequentially numbered section (2nd meeting 2.1-2.1.2).

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SECTION ONE

ORIENTATION TO DISCIPLESHIP COUNSELING

1.1 HOW TO USE THIS DISCIPLESHIP COUNSELING CURRICULUM

The study leader first reads the assigned sections and the footnoted proof texts (**very important**) and individually answers the **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION** below the blue highlights. Participants should maintain confidentiality with the things shared by others in their groups. If some serious concern is shared, you should ask that group member to take his or her own initiative to seek out help from a pastor or counselor, rather than you reporting your concerns to those leaders.

For the English edition, please substitute a WLC PDF version with full footnotes printed below the text and study both the text and the Scripture proofs <https://www.pcaac.org/bco/westminster-confession/>

For paid a digital mouseover/pop-up proof text hyperlinked version such as LOGOS WLC US\$6.65 <https://www.logos.com/product/27116/the-westminster-larger-catechism> (bulky format, numbers as footnote links in text, but immediately below each answer all the numbers and texts are lined out and you mouseover those) or the entire Westminster Standards in a more professionally hyperlinked mouseover proof text version (only a letter footnote in text, pops up all texts for that letter) <https://www.logos.com/product/39475/the-westminster-confession-of-faith-larger-and-shorter-catechisms-and-subordinate-standards> for \$US 12.49

For a free English version, install eSword <https://e-sword.net/> on your computer, then go to www.biblesupport.com create an account and download the “Catechisms and Confessions - Library.topx” <http://www.biblesupport.com/e-sword-downloads/download/11204-catechisms-and-confessions-library/> click on the downloaded file. Windows 11 should automatically load it into your eSword program (click yes to request for install permission and let it install to the default location). Restart the eSword program and “Catechisms and Confessions - Library” should show up when you click Tools, Reference Library, then choose that title in the top selection bar. Scroll down to WLC on left side index. NOTE, this file uses same bulky format as the LOGOS WLC \$6.65 version above, numbers as footnote links in text, but immediately below each answer all the numbers and texts are lined out and you mouseover those). An free online version appears at <https://www.apuritansmind.com/westminster-standards/larger-catechism/>

For the Chinese editions, use online sources search for 威斯敏斯德大要理問答 copy this link to web browser <https://download.thereformedcatholic.org/信綱及教理問答/西敏准則%20Westminster%20Standards/西敏大問答%20Westminster%20Larger%20Catechism/威斯敏斯德大教理問答王志勇牧師譯註/威斯敏斯德大教理問答王志勇牧師譯註（附经文）.pdf> This

would be the best version that inserts the text references within the answers, then prints out all proof text below each answer.

All answers to all questions should be submitted in one .docx or .PDF as the homework for this study and small group assignment when the small groups are finished.

The study leader then meets together with other believers using the same material to discuss their answers to the questions and share reflections on the content and the Scripture texts associated with the assigned Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) section. Thus each segment first requires self study and answering the questions, then a meeting in small groups with each other to discuss the answers. If this material is used in the churches, a trained leader who has studied the material before would be most helpful since these small group interactions create opportunities for biblical counseling applications. Using this material in seminary assumes many students have already studied WLC, the Scriptures and biblical counseling. In this seminary situation, upper classmen can help under classmen without another trained leader.

1.2 PRINCIPLES FOR COUNSELORS/DISCIPLE-MENTORS

All the topics developed above are simply a sampling of how *lex Christi* categories can help those doing counseling reorganize the relevant biblical data for discipleship training. Using the practical theology definition below (section 1.4), those with teaching authority can research and reckon with disciples and apply the other R's. Are you, as their counselor, a linguistically, culturally competent ambassador of the dominion of the Righteous Lord (DRL), who exemplifies the *lex Christi* in the power of the risen Christ by the Spirit? Do you know how to proclaim it, pray using it and administrate your own household using it? Can you help disciples engage with the assembly, creation and diaspora contexts that they find themselves in? What aspects of the 6R's do you as counselor need to become more competent in administering? This takes engagement to understand by researching to accurately reckon, then choosing appropriate ways to build yourself up.

However, the counselor's measure of validity is the life-changing ministry of the Gospel in the power of Spirit-taught wisdom, *so that men might rest their hope on the wisdom of God, not the wisdom of men* (1 Cor. 2:1-16; 2 Cor. 7:10-11). In many ways, the fruits of a Gospel-centered counseling ministry that changes disciples' lives can be readily seen (2 Cor. 3:1-4; 12:12; 1 Thess. 1:3-10; 2 Pet. 1:3-11; 1 John). Indeed, such evident fruit is required for assembly leadership (1 Tim. 3:4-5; Tit. 1:6). Results are partially in the equation of whether we are/were faithful (1 Cor. 3:10-15). Yet counselors are merely servants who must skillfully plant and water the Gospel of Christ, while the validity of our counseling ministry is only confirmed by God who causes their growth (1 Cor. 3:5-11; 4:8)

The Bible affirms specific "tools" to bring about those changes toward mature Christ-likeness: ministry of the Word, prayer (and the prayer support of the believers) and sacraments to reach unity of the faith (Acts 6:4; Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Cor. 11:23-31; Phil. 2:20-23; Eph. 6:18-20; 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 1:19; WLC 152-196).

Counselors test themselves in their own consciences (2 Cor. 1:12; 1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Tim. 4:7-8), even submit to other mature leaders' evaluations (1 Cor. 4:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:10), so some forms of evaluation are biblically

justified. Yet in the end, biblical counselors submit themselves to and answer to Christ's evaluations of whether they were faithful to do what was entrusted to them (1 Cor. 4:3-5; 2 Cor. 2:17; 10:18; Luke 17:10).

Further, dependence on scientific measures of technique validity and statistical repeatability in counseling ministry (and all pastoral ministry) is impossible to measure due to dozens of variable conditions in every relationship. Satan blinds people. The timing and style of planting-watering Word ministries may not immediately correspond with God's causing growth. There may be false appearances of immediate change that later disappear (Luke 8:4-18; Matt. 13:24-30; 2 Cor. 4:3-4). Each counselor and counselee are unique individuals. All these factors tend to confound systematization and repeatable methods. Counselors who have tried to systematize all discipleship counseling methods as "one-size-fits-all" will usually find some counsees for whom the method did not work. Through frustrations and failures, the Lord usually teaches counselors less dependence on methods and more dependence on Him. God generally does not work by formulaic methods to bring about sanctification (see David Powlison, *How Does Sanctification Work*, Crossway, 2017).

It is proper to thank God for observed fruit from various healthy families and ministries, and to make observations about the factors that are present where good fruit has resulted from healthy families and ministries. Jon Nielson's (*Faith that Lasts: Raising Kids that Don't Leave the Church*, CLC Publications, 2016) ministry experience and Christian family research observed five, interdependent parenting styles of those who raised healthy adult Christian children [*and using the symphonic morality perspective, connecting the principle to the related commandments*]:

[1st-3rd Cs]

- 1) *Gospel* empowered by the Spirit is the transforming force that parents seek after in their children's lives, rather than a powerless morality,

[all the following are 5th C related]

- 2) *balance* between control and freedom, with natural gospel-centered conversations in everyday life,
- 3) *modeling* that shows the same integrity, such as tone of voice, at home and in church,
- 4) welcoming and joyfully *sharing* the responsibilities of parenting and influence with the larger Christian community, rather than isolating the children to themselves as the only correct authority and
- 5) *friendship* with children, enjoying spending time together, which forms a counterpoint to other times of serious spiritual guidance.

Reimagining Neilson's family research principles from the perspective of this WLC study confirms the major importance of the 5th C for discipleship counseling:

- 1) exemplifying *lex Christi* integrity.
- 2) knowing how God and his new covenant Gospel unites us to Christ by the effectual call of the Spirit to give us the grace to proclaim, intercede and administrate all the spiritual, relational and material details of life under WLC's six symphonic *lex Christi*-DRL^{6Rs} perspectives.
- 3) using authority as a leader who integrates the symphonic commandments perspective within healthy Christian assemblies, whether in family, church, school, business or society.
- 4) The most effective discipleship enjoys mutual friendships in multiple contexts of everyday life, not just a classroom or small group (thus families are the best discipleship contexts).
- 5) The best disciples are committed to these same truths and eager to learn from their discipler-counselors.

Nielson's research supports themes already noted in the 6Rs practical theology definition developed in section 1.4 below. That definition adapts Westminster's moral law motif to integrate systematic theology and pastoral practice. Counselors must be faithful in "planting and watering", modeling with integrity, and trusting God while praying for increase by his power (1 Cor. 3:6-7).

From WLC 159-160 we can identify themes that admirably define the roles of discipler-counselor and disciple-counselee, those that labor in ministry of the Word and those that receive that ministry.

Question 159: How is the Word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?

Answer: They that are called to labor in the ministry of the Word, are to preach sound doctrine, diligently, in season and out of season; plainly, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; faithfully, making known the whole counsel of God; wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers; zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of his people; sincerely, aiming at his glory, and their conversion, edification, and salvation.

Question 160: What is required of those that hear the Word preached?

Answer: It is required of those that hear the Word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine: What they hear by the Scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the Word of God; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.

Those who use this curriculum are advised to teach and learn using these WLC 159-160 foundational principles. This curriculum is not offering techniques and concepts that promise success but instead proposes a *manual of unified core strength and conditioning wisdom-exercises to better equip pastors and disciples to adapt to the complexities and nuances of life on life discipleship*. As faithful followers of Christ seek to know God and trust his Spirit to guide them to be his prophets, priests and kings remade in Christ's likeness, they will experience the daily challenges of living and growing to use their unique gifts to reveal God's glory.

1.3 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DISCIPLESHIP COUNSELING

- A. Healthy Christianity should reflect *lex Christi* qualities of his supremacy attributes. Below a series of questions as relationship-examination tests are developed to be used for discipleship (or self-counseling) to gauge sickness and health. Serious sickness in any one of these tests could be a cause for a counselor to recommend more personal counseling. The longer the sickness factors have pre-existed (to the point of being habitual), the more serious the sickness would be. The more signs of habitual sickness a counselor sees, the more likely that disciple will face proportional levels of conflicts, sorrows and difficulties beyond the normal troubles of life in a fallen world. A wise biblical counselor, small group leader or Christian parent who knows the disciple well may give a measured opinion that warns against future types of problems that disciple will likely face unless he/she seeks immediate help to bring specific changes into areas of greater health. One possible goal of evaluating is to develop early counseling intervention and prevention of repeated mistakes. Growing into all areas of health is possible by God's grace. One factor to look for is not so much perfect health in all areas as much as a willingness to learn, submit to the Word of God and repent of specific areas of sin

that may negatively affect his/her relationships. Basically, is this disciple “wise” in the Proverbs sense of the word? Self-deceived disciples may need to step back and look more carefully at themselves, since they usually assume that their spiritual life and relationships are healthy enough to face all problems and minimize the existing problems. This kind of disciple would benefit from this comprehensive WLC study to alert to areas where emotions may have clouded a needed evaluation phase in Christian growth or in preparation for church leadership. Is he/she living in the fear of the Lord, and seeking counsel and instruction from other mature Christians (Prov. 9:9-11; 11:14)? Is he/she willing to submit to the Word of God where that is made plain to him/her? If some important areas can be strengthened prior to taking church leadership positions, moving forward cautiously might be possible. If no signs of change or improvement in the “sick” areas are evident after a period of counseling, the disciple should not take large church leadership roles or (if unmarried) move too quickly into marriage.

INTRODUCTION: USING THE WESTMINSTER LARGER CATECHISM FOR DISCIPLESHIP COUNSELING

1.4 SYMPHONIC PEDAGOGICAL CATEGORIES OF DISCIPLESHIP (OR ANY OTHER RELATIONSHIP)

- A. Who is God and what has he done? Descriptive presuppositions for all of life (WLC 1-90)
- B. What is man's duty to God? Prescriptive presuppositions for all of life (WLC 91-196)

This overarching WLC perspective sets forth God and man in relation to each other. The WLC organizes its discussion under two headings: what the Scriptures principally teach us to believe concerning God and what the Scriptures principally require as the duty of man (WLC 91, 5). I call this the *symphonic pedagogical* perspective.¹ The Westminster catechisms use Exodus 20:2–17 as the organizing text for this framework that defines the Christian religion. The preface to the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20:2, “I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt,” is adapted by WLC 101 as a summary of what to believe concerning God. Thus, WLC 101 concisely summarizes WLC 1–90 into one terse sentence: “The preface to the ten commandments is contained in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Wherein God manifests his sovereignty, as being JEHOVAH, the eternal, immutable, and almighty God; having his being in and of himself, and giving being to all his words and works: and that he is a God in covenant, as with Israel of old, so with all his people; who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivers us from our spiritual thralldom; and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments.” The whole duty of man is reorganized under the headings of the moral law (WLC 91–151), followed by specific expansions of the meaning of the second and third commandments defining the means of grace (WLC 152–196, explaining the word sacraments and prayer).

Within the overarching *symphonic pedagogical* framework, five subsets of perspectives can serve as counselor tools to integrate and apply a mature systematic-practical theology:

the descriptive presuppositions of

- (1) the *symphonic attributes* perspective, meaning the vocabulary representing God's attributes in WCF 2:1-2 serve as symphonically repeated motifs throughout Westminster's systematic and practical theology.
- (2) the *symphonic persons* perspective, meaning that the persons of the Trinity are another unifying motif that are threaded throughout the various topics of systematic and practical theology.

¹ For the detailed explanation of this perspective, see Yates, *Westminster Foundations*, 101-110; “Adapting Westminster's Moral Law Motif,” 57–58, both available online at www.bethoumyvision.net

- (3) the *symphonic lex Christi* perspective, meaning that the *lex Christi* motif is repeated in the historical-redemptive topics of systematic and practical theology.
- the prescriptive presuppositions of the decalogue as an outline for
- (4) the *symphonic morality* perspective, meaning that all biblical duty or prohibition from anywhere in the Bible can be organized under the rubric of the *lex Christi* or the moral law.
- (5) the *symphonic commandments* perspective, meaning that each of the moral law commandments forms an irreducibly complex unit of ethics that interprets, supports, and reinforces the other commandments, while a sin against any commandment includes interrelated synergies breaking other commandments.

Lex Christi-DRL (Dominion of the Righteous Lord)

Symphonic pedagogical perspective

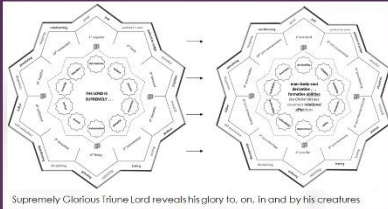
WLC 1-90 "what the Scriptures principally teach us to believe concerning God" (heading before WLC 91; WLC 5)

EXODUS 20:1-17 IS WLC'S MICRO-SCALABLE TEACHING MODEL: THE ENTIRE WLC CAN BE ORGANIZED UNDER EXODUS 20:1-17 OUTLINE.

Exodus 20:2 Preface to Ten Commandments


"I am the Lord who brought you out of Egypt . . ." WLC 101 summarizes WLC 1-90, the symphonic *lex Christi* perspective

Symphonic attributes & persons perspectives:
God's attributes and tritune persons are revealed in God's works



Supremely Glorious Tritune Lord reveals his glory to, on, in and by his creatures

Symphonic lex Christi perspective:
lex Christi integrates what we believe concerning God's works



Supremely Glorious Tritune Lord (attributes & persons) revealed in . . .

- MDK Scripture trains in righteousness
- MDK Election to righteousness
- MDK Created righteous
- MDK Permits fall into unrighteousness
- MDK Righteous One Promised
- MDK Righteous covenant renewed
- MDK Righteousness accomplished
- MDK Righteousness applied
- MDK Righteousness consummated

Lex Christi motif is a repeated refrain in systematic theology and pastoral practice

What we believe concerning God and his work in creation and providence to effectually call and unite the elect to Christ for communion with him in grace and glory . . . (WLC 1-90)

WLC 91-196 "what the Scriptures principally . . . require as the duty of man" (heading before WLC 91; WLC 5)

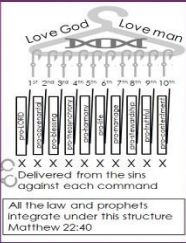
Exodus 20:3-17 Ten Commandments

WLC 91-100, 151 defines the moral law, its interpretation and its uses

WLC 102-150 uses supra-morality perspective to explain the moral law

WLC 108 (2nd C), WLC 112 (3rd C) summarize WLC 152-196 about duties of the means of grace (Word, sacraments, prayer).

Symphonic morality perspective: *lex Christi* provides the organizing outline for what Scripture requires as the duty of man



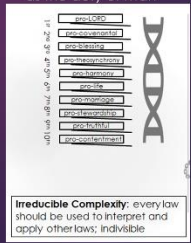
Love God Love man

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th

Delivered from the sins against each command

All the law and prophets integrate under this structure Matthew 22:40

Symphonic commandments perspective: *lex Christi* inseparably holds together what Scripture requires as the duty of man



Irreducible Complexity: every law should be used to interpret and apply other laws; indivisible

Renews them to fulfil their moral duty and receive its blessings while delivering them from moral evil and its curses (WLC 91-196)

This discipleship study combines WLC's descriptive and prescriptive presuppositions to give a wholistic understanding of the covenant-of-grace foundations for the duties of discipleship. Further, these six perspectives can be used as analytical tools for a counseling method using six "R" words: *research* a counselee's life in order to *reckon* strengths and weaknesses compared to any or all six perspectives, and *choose* counseling responses of *reassure*, *reform*, or *remove*, together with regular evaluation of counseling *results*. This definition below will help us structure the discipleship counseling curriculum.

Q. What do you believe about practical theology (biblical counseling, preaching, evangelism, apologetics, Christian education, worship)?

A. That all last days practical theology is the Father-decreed ministry of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to Spirit-indwell and send his linguistically and culturally adapted ambassadors to exemplify, mercifully proclaim, boldly intercede and skillfully administrate the past, present and promised dominion of the Righteous Lord by the six *symphonic perspectives* (*morality, commandments, attributes, persons, lex Christi* and *pedagogical*) in their realms (heavenly & earthly) and places (assembly, creation, diaspora) to their subjects using six "R" methods (6Rs) of redemptive engagement: research to accurately reckon,

choosing appropriate ways to build up the subject (reassure, reform and remove) with evaluation of the results.

1.5 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. RESEARCH the descriptive and prescriptive presuppositions of WLC for all of life.
 - a. Which of the six symphonic perspectives do you understand and why will it be helpful in your discipleship?
 - b. Which of the six do you least understand? Ask your leader or a classmate to explain it.
 - c. How do you think these WLC perspectives can strengthen discipleship and pastoral counseling?
2. RECKON EXPERIENCES of discipleship.
 - a. What models of Christian discipleship have you learned in the past?
 - b. What resources or books were used to do discipleship?
3. RECKON yourselves and your original families using those presuppositions and discuss strengths and weaknesses.

What *descriptive* presuppositions does your current family (or you individually if single) believe to be true about ____? Did you grow up in your original family believing the same or different things?

- a. the origins of the world
- b. the purpose of man
- c. the reason things happen in the world
- d. why the world has problems
- e. the hope for improving the world
- f. your path to a successful life as their child

What *prescriptive* presuppositions does your current family (or you individually if single) believe to be true about ____? Did you grow up in your original family believing the same or different things?

- a. Who were the authorities that defined right and wrong in your life?
- b. What were the actual standards of measuring right and wrong? How did those standards compare with the moral law?
- c. Who punished wrong behavior and rewarded right behavior?
- d. Did your authorities hold to a fair and consistent position in applying their punishments and rewards?
- e. Did your authorities act hypocritically in punishing wrong and rewarding good, or tell you to do things they didn't do themselves?
- f. Do you harbor any bitterness towards the authorities in your past?

4. REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as a disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name (Matthew 18:20; with friends, Christian parents, visible church groups, organizations, schools, seminaries, businesses, government entities).

- a. REASSURE: What positive elements of your original family and your past can you affirm and praise?
- b. REASSURE: How has God worked in your life (either through your family or in other ways) to bring you to this point of studying WLC in this small group?
- c. REFORM: How do you hope to grow and change through this course?
- d. REMOVE: What sinful attitudes, ways of speaking or actions do you wish would stop through this study?
- e. REMOVE: How can the Word, sacraments and prayer, together with the support of this small group, support you in these REASSURE, REFORM and REMOVE processes?

SECTION ONE: POSITIVE PASTORAL APPROACH (WLC 143-145)

1.6 POSITIVE PASTORAL APPROACH

1.6.1 WLC 143-145

Ninth Commandment Duties: Supremely truthful Lord recreates pro-truthful disciples

Question 143: Which is the ninth commandment?

Answer: The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Question 144: What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; and 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; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocence; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging talebearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requires; keeping of lawful promises; studying and practicing of: Whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

1.6.2 CAUTIONS ABOUT PERFECTIONISM

Many may agree with the high standards of the Reformed faith and life set by WLC but feel no one fits these required qualities or passes these tests. In truth, everyone needs some areas of growth in *lex Christi* virtues and resistance against the sins that so easily entangle. However, wise leaders need to develop an encouraging disciple making attitude towards those who are fainthearted, weak, and slow to grow, rather than an overly critical attitude (1 Thess. 5:14). Wise leaders serve others in love with words that build up and wait patiently for God's power to work changes (Eph. 4:15, 29-32). No relationship can survive under constant scrutiny! There are phases of scrutiny that can be helpful. But if we live under the threat of instant rejection for failure, this is not the Christian pattern of relationships. Christ first died for the elect while they were his enemies and brought them into a relationship of mercy and credited righteousness. Then Christ seeks their actual change in the security of that justifying covenant love. Some changes in a disciple will have to wait until various forms of human covenants of gracious acceptance are sealed (church membership, discipleship covenants, marriage). For all disciples there is a long, slow process of experiencing life together that works mutual sanctification and mutual interest in serving each other. Church membership, small group discipleship and marriage are three of God's redeeming institutions, in almost every sense of the possible areas of Christian growth! Wise

counselors need humility, patience with, acceptance of and joy in other imperfect Christians by trusting the perfecting grace of Christ. It can help to study Paul's attitude to the imperfect Philippian church. He rejoices because Christ will finish the work he begins in a person (Phil. 1:3-6; 2:12-13). However, God will use Paul's ministry for their progress in the symphonic pedagogical "faith" (Phil. 1:25; both knowing God and his saving work & knowing their *lex Christi* duties) and their mutual joy in seeing *lex Christi* virtues grow to maturity (Phil. 2:2-5; 3:1; 4:4-20). The author recalls a memorable metaphor used by Pastor Tim Keller in a taped message he gave to singles without the gift of singleness: 'Marry a good piece of marble, rather than seeking a perfectly formed statue! Enter into discipleship to share in the privilege of being used by God in shaping your future spouse into the image of Christ's holiness.' A solid core of maturing Christian qualities with unfinished form is sufficient to begin the adventure of discipleship.

1.6.3 RECKON DISCIPLESHIP SICKNESS AND HEALTH

A. *Sickness:*

1. Intentionally hiding serious family problems, health problems, sexual sins, financial obligations, debts or life-damaging sin habits that that could be helped in this group. You have no desire to benefit from the counsel, prayers and support of others in your group.
2. Sharing or dumping all past sins in such detail that the discipleship group must unnecessarily carry the burden of them as well as you.
3. Talking too much, so that others don't have a chance to share.
4. You don't carefully listen to others or try to remember what they said. You don't take any notes to remember how to pray for others in your group.
5. Participation in discipleship is perfunctory, joining the discipleship group half-heartedly or too busy with other things to invest in the assignments.
6. You create no pastoral connection with others because you don't carefully listen, remember or ask relevant relationship building questions. You are unable to identify and praise *lex Christi* virtues and spiritual gifts in yourself or others. You view discipleship as mostly finding other's sins in order to rebuke them. You maintain a critical sin-inspector attitude.
7. Disciple is isolated from the local Christian community, unknown to mature believers.
8. Your original family had very weak relational traits, frequently committing 9th C sins against each other without any reconciliation or evident patterns of "charitable esteem" of each other.

B. *Health*

1. Discipleship should be pursued with a desire to truly invest in preparation, discussion as well as listening and caring about others in your group.
2. Discipleship is an opportunity to relationally invest in other disciples in your group.
3. Discipleship groups create counseling opportunities to practice positive truth-speaking (9th C duties to have "charitable esteem of our neighbor") such as rejoicing in each other's *lex Christi* strengths, sorrowing over and protecting each other's confessed sins, encouraging each other during difficulties, supporting one another in honest goal-setting, and challenging each other in areas of blindness or resistance to godly change.
4. If you are well known in some Christian assembly (family, community, school or church context) and trusted by mature leaders in those contexts because of your years of faithful

service to others, you will be able to contribute more effectively to other weaker members in your group. Paul's mature Christian testimony about Timothy's genuine faith, love and his weaknesses (fear, timidity) came from serving together and from knowing Timothy's Christian family background (Phil. 2:20-23; 2 Tim. 1:5-7; 1 Tim. 3:10).

1.7 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1.7.1 9TH C RECKONING FOR YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *What traits of sickness or health have your parents modeled in discipleship of their children (including you) and others?*
- B. *Share some experiences you have had participating in or leading discipleship groups in the past (related to both sickness and health).*
- C. *Do you have tendencies to use a positive pastoral approach, or a perfectionistic, critical approach? How do the 9th C virtues correct negative, critical approaches to discipleship?*
- D. *What attitudes or skills will you need to strengthen to be a healthier discipler?*
- E. *Do any other mature Christians know you well and commend your discipleship strengths? (1 Tim. 3:10; 5:22; Prov. 11:15; Phil. 2:22)*

1.7.2 9TH C TO REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

use the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 9th commandment obedience in your life, (your current family if married) and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 9th commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process? (this discipleship group, your current or original family, your local church)*

SECTION TWO: HISTORY, HABITS & DESIRES (10TH C WLC 146-147; PRAYER WLC 178-196)

2.1 HISTORY, HABITS & DESIRES AS EVIDENCED IN OUR PRAYER

2.2 TENTH COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREMEY CONTENTED LORD RECREATES PRO-CONTENTMENT DISCIPLES

Question 146: Which is the tenth commandment?

Answer: 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 any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Question 147: What are the duties required in the tenth commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the tenth commandment are, 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.

KEY VERSE: Hebrews 13:5 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."

2.2.1 DESIRE FOR LEX CHRISTI VIRTUES

What are the *lex Christi virtues* that should be the focus of our desires? What are the things we should seek (Matt. 6:33)? What virtues should produce contentment in us?

meta-virtue (righteousness, put off unrighteousness) and the great commandments virtues in the Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC 103-148)

love God

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-Lord** (1st C) , requiring faith and obedience to this Triune God. Our highest allegiance belongs to his majesty. He is preeminent in all our thoughts and all our worship. We are jealous for his glory. WLC 103-106

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-covenantal** (2nd C): all proper worship must be according to the demands of the covenant under which God's people lived. He is uni-proachable, meaning we may only approach Him in worship in the way he commands by way of his condescension in covenant. These broader requirements are given more specific application in WLC 107-110, focusing on what defines proper corporate worship. WLC 107-110

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-blessing** (3rd C) requiring the proper use of the name of the Lord, namely to receive blessings from the Lord, in his name (Gen. 12:2; Num. 6:24-27; Ps. 5:12; 29:11), in their hearts and with their mouths honor and bless his holy name (Ps. 16:7; 103:1-2; Rev. 5:11-14), pray and worship in his name (John 14:13-14; Eph. 5:20), and give blessings in his name to others (Gen. 27:7; 28:1-4; 49:28; Deut. 33; Ps. 72:17). WLC 111-114

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-theosynchrony** (4th C, Sabbath rest): WLC 115–21, which focuses on the observance of the Lord’s Day.

love man

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-theosynchrony** (4th C, six days labor): requiring our submission to his appointed times for work and Sabbath rest, as well as submission to his providential times (Eccles. 3:1-14; Jas. 4:15) in weekly cycles, annual patterns, and lifetime perspectives, as well as with God’s interpretation of history, past, present, future.

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-harmony** (5th C) requiring our preservation of harmonious role relationships between those in authority, submission and equals. WLC 123-133

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-life** (6th C) requiring protection of human life from conception to death (so against abortion and euthanasia), and, for those who are married and able, to bear and raise children. WLC 134-136

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-marriage** (7th C) requiring preservation of one-man-one-woman heterosexual attraction within the marriage covenant. WLC 137-139

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-stewardship** (8th C) requiring man to preserve, protect and prosper all that is needed for the body in the material world, including family, Gospel ministers, fellow believers and neighbors in need (1 Tim. 5:3, 8; Gal. 6:6, 9-10). WLC 140-142

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-truthfulness** (9th C) requiring truthful witness. WLC 143-145

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-contentment** (10th C): requiring full satisfaction in the Lord and all that he provides for our earthly existence: “I shall not want . . . surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life (Ps. 23:1, 6; Phil. 4:11-13). WLC 146-148

2.2.2 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*: I have sickness in my desires. I desire many things that *lex Christi* prohibits that reveal my covetous heart. I envy my neighbors’ relationships and resources, spouse and children, vacations, cars and houses. (NOTE: Consider whether your reading social media, the various postings of your friends, creates an envious heart toward all that God has provided to them). I do not want my neighbors to succeed or to enjoy their blessings. I have an unthankful, grumbling, complaining attitude when I can’t get the sinful things I want. When I can’t get the righteous things I want, I also complain and blame God and others.
- B. *Health*: In relation to myself, my heart is not constantly being tempted by many sinful desires that *lex Christi* prohibits because I have resisted those temptations, stopped those mental habits and they have lost their attraction. I have a contented and thankful attitude about the relationships and resources God has given to me because God and whatever he provides is my

portion, my cup, and my allotment (Ps. 16:5-6; Joshua 14-17). I desire to support, improve and praise any virtuous *lex Christi* relationships and resources belonging to my neighbor.

2.3 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

2.3.1 10TH C RECKONING FOR YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *In relation to lex Christi related desires, what sicknesses or health do you observe in yourself or your current family?*
- B. *In relation to lex Christi related desires, what sicknesses or health do you observe in your original family? Do these original family patterns still deeply influence you in the present?*

2.3.2 10TH C TO REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

use the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 10th commandment obedience in your life or your current family life?*
- B. *In relation to 10th commandment disobedience, what weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people (family, small group, church members or leaders, biblical counselors) support you in this process?*

2.4 PRAYER AS EVIDENCE OF HEART DESIRES

Question 178: What is prayer?

Answer: Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

Question 179: Are we to pray unto God only?

Answer: God only being able to search the hearts, hear the requests, pardon the sins, and fulfil the desires of all; and only to be believed in, and worshiped with religious worship; prayer, which is a special part thereof, is to be made by all to him alone, and to none other.

Question 180: What is it to pray in the name of Christ?

Answer: To pray in the name of Christ is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake; not by bare mentioning of his name, but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation.

Question 181: Why are we to pray in the name of Christ?

Answer: The sinfulness of man, and his distance from God by reason thereof, being so great, as that we can have no access into his presence without a mediator; and there being none in heaven or earth appointed to, or fit for, that glorious work but Christ alone, we are to pray in no other name but his only.

Question 182: How does the Spirit help us to pray?

Answer: We not knowing: What to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helps our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and: What, and: How prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces which are requisite for the right performance of that duty.

Question 183: For whom are we to pray?

Answer: We are to pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth; for magistrates, and ministers; for ourselves, our brethren, yea, our enemies; and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter; but not for the dead, nor for those that are known to have sinned the sin unto death.

Question 184: For what things are we to pray?

Answer: We are to pray for all things tending to the glory of God, the welfare of the church, our own or others good; but not for anything that is unlawful.

Question 185: How are we to pray.?

Answer: We are to pray with an awful apprehension of the majesty of God, and deep sense of our own unworthiness, necessities, and sins; with penitent, thankful, and enlarged hearts; with understanding, faith, sincerity, fervency, love, and perseverance, waiting upon him, with humble submission to his will.

Question 186: What rule has God given for our direction in the duty of prayer?

Answer: The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in the duty of prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which our Savior Christ taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer.

Question 187: How is the Lord's Prayer to be used?

Answer: The Lord's Prayer is not only for direction, as a pattern, according to which we are to make other prayers; but may also be used as a prayer, so that it be done with understanding, faith, reverence, and other graces necessary to the right performance of the duty of prayer.

Question 188: Of how many parts does the Lord's Prayer consist?

Answer: The Lord's Prayer consists of three parts; a preface, petitions, and a conclusion.

Question 189: What does the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

Answer: The preface of the Lord's Prayer (contained in these words, Our Father which art in heaven), teaches us, when we pray, to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein; with reverence, and all other childlike dispositions, heavenly affections, and due apprehensions of his sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension: as also, to pray with and for others.

Question 190: What do we pray for in the first petition?

Answer: In the first petition (which is, Hallowed be thy name), acknowledging the utter inability and indisposition that is in ourselves and all men to honor God aright, we pray, that God would by his grace enable and incline us and others to know, to acknowledge, and highly to esteem him, his titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, works, and: Whatsoever he is pleased to make himself known by; and to glorify him in thought, word, and deed: that he would prevent and remove atheism, ignorance,

idolatry, profaneness, and: Whatsoever is dishonorable to him; and, by his overruling providence, direct and dispose of all things to his own glory.

Question 191: What do we pray for in the second petition.?

Answer: In the second petition (which is, Thy kingdom come), acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, we pray, that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; the church furnished with all gospel officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate: that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that are yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up of those that are already converted: that Christ would rule in our hearts here, and hasten the time of his second coming, and our reigning with him forever: and that he would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of his power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends.

Question 192: What do we pray for in the third petition?

Answer: In the third petition (which is, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven), acknowledging, that by nature we and all men are not only utterly unable and unwilling to know and do the will of God, but prone to rebel against his Word, to repine and murmur against his providence, and wholly inclined to do the will of the flesh, and of the devil: we pray, that God would by his Spirit take away from ourselves and others all blindness, weakness, indisposedness, and perverseness of heart; and by his grace make us able and willing to know, do, and submit to his will in all things, with the like humility, cheerfulness, faithfulness, diligence, zeal, sincerity, and constancy, as the angels do in heaven.

Question 193: What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

Answer: In the fourth petition (which is, Give us this day our daily bread), acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessings of this life, and deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them; and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us, nor we to merit, or by our own industry to procure them; but prone to desire, get, and use them unlawfully: we pray for ourselves and others, that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may, of his free gift, and as to his fatherly wisdom shall seem best, enjoy a competent portion of them; and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them, and contentment in them; and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort.

Question 194: What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

Answer: In the fifth petition (which is, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors), acknowledging, that we and all others are guilty both of original and actual sin, and thereby become debtors to the justice of God; and that neither we, nor any other creature, can make the least satisfaction for that debt: we pray for ourselves and others, that God of his free grace would, through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, apprehended and applied by faith, acquit us both from the guilt and punishment of sin, accept us in his Beloved; continue his favor and grace to us, pardon our daily failings, and fill us with peace and joy, in giving us daily more and more assurance of forgiveness; which we are the rather emboldened to ask, and encouraged to expect, when we have this testimony in ourselves, that we from the heart forgive others their offenses.

Question 195: What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

Answer: In the sixth petition (which is, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil), acknowledging, that the most wise, righteous, and gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things, that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptations; that Satan, the world, and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside, and ensnare us; and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption, weakness, and want of watchfulness, are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations, but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them; and worthy to be left under the power of them: we pray, that God would so overrule the world and all in it, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan, order all things, bestow and bless all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all his people may by his providence be kept from being tempted to sin; or, if tempted, that by his Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation: or when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it, and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof: that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected, Satan trodden under our feet, and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil, forever.

Question 196: What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

Answer: The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer (which is, For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.), teaches us to enforce our petitions with arguments, which are to be taken, not from any worthiness in ourselves, or in any other creature, but from God; and with our prayers to join praises, ascribing to God alone eternal sovereignty, omnipotency, and glorious excellency; in regard whereof, as he is able and willing to help us, so we by faith are emboldened to plead with him that he would, and quietly to rely upon him, that he will fulfil our requests. And, to testify this our desire and assurance, we say, Amen.

2.4.1 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. Sickness: Failure to pray (James 4:2). Praying for things that satisfy your covetous desires (James 4:3). Praying for things outside of *lex Christi* virtues. Praying without considering whether those things can be organized under the outline of the preface and six petitions of the Lord's Prayer.
- B. Health: Specific parts of God's will for his *lex Christi* purposes can be organized under the outline of the preface and the six petitions of the Lord's Prayer. Prayer fulfills our 2nd C duty to worship according to the new covenant through our mediator the Lord Jesus Christ in the union worked by the Holy Spirit (WLC 108), and our 3rd C duty to honor and bless the Triune name of the Lord, Father, Son and Spirit (WLC 112).

PREFACE: WLC 189 highlights the preface to the Lord's Prayer "Our Father in heaven" (Matt. 6:9) in a way similar to WLC 101, the preface to the Ten Commandments "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exod. 20:2). Both are used as headings to show us that God has revealed his Triune persons and attributes in his works of salvation. He has adopted all the elect as "children" who have a right to call him Father (Rom. 8:15-16), and requires our humble obedience to his will and our efforts to help others obey his will.

- 1. PETITION: "Hallowed be thy name" 1st-3rd C duties related to glorifying, loving, fearing and honoring God, his new covenant in Christ our mediator and his Triune name as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. PETITION: “Thy Kingdom come” 1st-10th C removal of all the *lex Christi* prohibitions and the flourishing of all *lex Christi* duties, but especially that all authorities (governments, husbands, parents, school and business leaders and church leaders) would properly represent God in as revealed in his Word, his sacraments and in prayer.
3. PETITION: “Thy will be done” God’s will for man is submission to the moral law, so the third petition is a prayer for the submission of all men to all the moral law, the *lex Christi*.
4. PETITION: “Give us this day our daily bread” is specifically related to 4th, 6th 8th and 10th Cs, the thankful and contented production and stewardship of resources for the benefit of human life.
5. PETITION: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” is a prayer for the Lord’s forgiveness of all our 1st-10th C sins, all that *lex Christi* prohibits in ourselves because of the propitiation of Christ our mediator, and from this basis, to teach us to continually forgive all *lex Christi* sins committed by others against us, first in our hearts (Mark 11:24-25), and if possible, to reconcile with them (Rom. 12:16-18; Matt. 18:15).
6. PETITION: “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” is a petition that we be protected from all 1st-10th C *lex Christi* prohibitions. One method is by our contemplation of the punishments and curses of sin (WLC 28) and contemplation of the blessed the enjoyment of all *lex Christi* duties, (study Proverbs, e.g. Prov. 7:7-27 compared to Prov. 31:10-31). We ask God, that beginning with our heart’s desires, we may resist temptation. If we fall by sinning, we ask that we may be delivered from all evil by the forgiveness of those sins and renewed in our pursuit of holiness to gain the unshakeable kingdom as our reward (Heb. 12:14, 28).

2.5 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

2.5.1 PRAYER PETITIONS TO RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *In relation to the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, what sicknesses or health do you observe in yourself or your current family?*
- B. *In relation to the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, what sicknesses or health do you observe in your original family? Do these original family patterns still deeply influence you in the present?*

2.5.2 PRAYER PETITIONS TO REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

use the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus’ name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to the Lord’s Prayer petitions in your life or your current family life?*
- B. *In relation to ignorance of the Lord’s Prayer petitions, or asking for sinful things (James 4:3), what weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God’s people (family, small group, church members or leaders, biblical counselors) support you in this process?*

SECTION THREE: GOD & HIS PURPOSES

3.1 GOD & HIS PURPOSES

3.1.1 RESEARCH GOD'S DECREES APPLIED IN CREATION AND PROVIDENCE TO SHOW TO HIS CREATURES THE GLORY OF HIS TRIUNE PERSONS AND ATTRIBUTES THAT THESE MIGHT BE REFLECTED ON THEM, IN THEM AND BY THEM

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, most free, most absolute, **working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory**; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; and withal, most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

WCF 2:2 God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, **but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them**: He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever Himself pleases. In His sight all things are open and manifest; His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent, or uncertain. He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works, and in all His commands. To Him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service or obedience He is pleased to require of them.

WCF 2:3 In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: **God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit**: the Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.

We can infer that the *Westminster Confession* suggests a *symphonic attributes* perspective as defined in WCF 2:2, namely that God shows aspects of his glorious attributes in his works. WCF repeats some attributes in other parts of the Confession. Notice the following: Scripture reveals God's *holiness* (called *Holy Scriptures*), *authority*, *truthfulness*, *unity of his unchanging, righteous will* ("consent of all the parts", interprets itself) (WCF 1:4, 5, 9). God's eternal decree reveals the glory of his *eternal, wise, holy and unchangingly determinate will*, showing *grace and love* to the elect, and his *sovereign power, wrath and justice* to those he passes by and leaves in their sins unto eternal judgment (WCF 3:1, 3, 5, 7). Creation reveals God's *eternal power, wisdom, and goodness* (WCF 1:1; 4:1). Providence reveals his *perfection, righteousness, wisdom, power, justice, goodness, graciousness and mercy in the unchanging decisions of his governing will* (WCF 5:1, 2, 4, 5) including his permission of sin and his *wrath and justice* on sinners outside of Christ (WCF 6:1, 6). God reveals his *grace* in the covenants (WCF 7:1-6) and his *authority* over all men by requiring them to obey his moral law (WCF 19:5). In God's *eternal purpose* he chose Christ as mediator of the covenant of

grace, dwelling in him with all fulness to reveal his *wisdom, knowledge, holiness, power, grace and truth* in redeeming his elect, satisfying the LORD's *justice* at the cross for the them (WCF 8:3, 5, 8). The LORD reveals his *almighty power* through the visible church as she properly proclaims the Word, administers the sacraments and vows, leads in worship, exercises discipline and meets in local, regional and national assemblies to determine how to best govern (WCF 25:1-6; 27:1-5; 28:1-7; 29:1-8; 30:1-4; 31:1-4) in effectually calling the elect into saving faith through his Word and Spirit (WCF 10:1; 14:1-3). The LORD credits Christ's satisfaction in propitiation to reveal his exact justice and his obedience in justification to reveal his free grace (WCF 11:1, 3), freeing their consciences to live unto moral law righteousness as defined only by his Word and submit to his ordained authorities who represent his righteousness (WCF 19:1-6; 20:1, 4; 23:1-4). The LORD adopts them as beloved children to show his pity, protection, provision and discipline (WCF 12:1), sanctifying them to overcome to sin and grow in *righteousness* (WCF 13:1, 3), graciously granting them *repentance from sin* unto *eternal life* (WCF 15:1) to do good works (WCF 16:3) especially in communion with the saints (WCF 26:1-3). By these means the LORD enables them to persevere until the end of this life by his *unchanging* decree to elect them by his *love* in the covenant of grace, though for a time the elect may *displease* him and *grieve* his Spirit through falling into sins (WCF 17:1-3). The LORD reveals his *perfect truth and powerful grace* in confirming, by the Word and Spirit, his election to the saints, by their recognition of the evidences of faith, hope, love and repentance in themselves, thus granting them assurance in peace, joy, thankfulness and cheerfulness in duties (WCF 18:2-3). By his *power* Christ will raise the dead bodies at the last *righteous* judgment to be reunited to their souls (the souls of the wicked already tasting torments while the souls of the elect have been in God's presence), revealing his *justice to the wicked* in condemning them to everlasting torment while revealing his *mercy to the righteous* blessing them to enter into the new earth in perfected *righteousness* (WCF 32:1-2; 33:1-3).

WCF understands that all the attributes belong together in the sense that all of the Triune God's attributes are functionally operative in everything He does. So when some are mentioned (as noted in *italics* above), the others are implicitly there, in the background. WCF uses representative patterns of attributes rather than repeating all the WCF 2 attributes in every doctrine. *Westminster's* list of God's *works* (as perspectives) are intertwined with his Trinitarian *persons* (as perspectives) and are in continuity with the *attributes* perspectives developed in WCF 2 that differentiate to his creatures based on his decree (WCF 3).

The *symphonic persons* perspective, meaning that the persons of the Trinity are another unifying motif that are threaded throughout the various topics of systematic and practical theology.

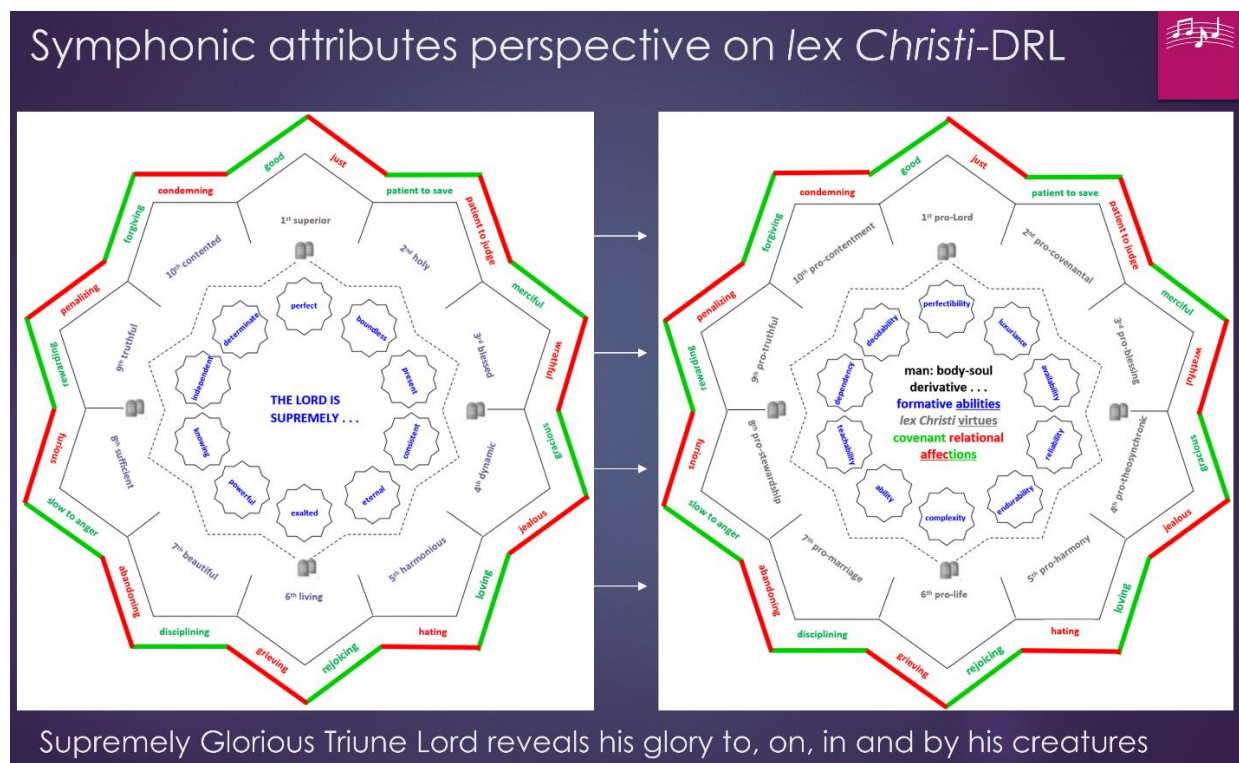
The *symphonic attributes* perspective is defined as the glory of God revealed by his attributes.

We combine them together as symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes. The Triune persons and various attributes (WCF 2:1-3) are revealed throughout the topics of Westminster's systematic and practical theology to, on, in, and by his creatures (WCF 2:2).² These four prepositions are key to Westminster's integrative systematic-practical theology and the reason why this *symphonic attributes* perspective must be creatively adapted for biblical counselor training. This perspective is key

² For the details on attributes, see Yates, *Westminster Foundations*, 39-80, and "Adapting Westminster's Moral Law Motif," 61-105. For the meaning of *symphonic*, see Vern S. Poythress, *Symphonic Theology: The Validity of Multiple Perspectives in Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2001), ch. 7, <https://frame-poythress.org/ebooks/symphonic-theology-by-vern-poythress/#ch7>.

to knowing what it means to honor and bless the name of the LORD (the I AM), our third-commandment duty, and to properly witness to who man becomes in union with Christ, our ninth-commandment duty.

We can adapt and augment the WCF 2:1 list of God’s attributes,³ unify the vocabulary with modern English, and arrange them into three attribute sets (totaling forty interdependent attributes), as below, where they are termed the ten *supra-actuating* attributes of essential being, the ten *supra-righteousness* attributes defined by moral law, and the twenty *supra-familial* attributes (one subset of ten pertaining to those in the covenant and another, contrasting, subset of ten pertaining to those outside the covenant) attributes.⁴ These three sets are revealed in symphonically repeating motifs throughout Scripture and have integrated connections with all subsections of systematic and practical theology. All three sets of attributes are noted to situate the creatively developed set of ten *lex Christi* attributes within the WCF 2 attribute list and highlight that the origin of the *lex Christi* motif is from God’s own attributes. In addition, I suggest that *all* Westminster’s divine attributes have derivative reflections in man.



³ This adaptation is for educational purposes, to show practically how WCF’s symphonic persons and attributes perspectives can be connected to the Christian life. Theologians who study the doctrine of God use many other variations to categorize these biblical attributes. Thus, I am not changing the doctrine of God. This is my variation on possible classifications and organizing perspectives, subject to modification, as other Scriptures, students and pastors interact with me.

⁴ Three sets of ten are suggested to create a motific illustration using nested ten point stars; see “2023 lex Christi–DRL Illustrations PDF,” <http://bethoumyvision.net>

3.1.2 THE LORD'S *SUPRA-ACTUATING* ATTRIBUTES⁵

“I am the LORD your God,” (preface to the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1-2 and the model of WLC 101 allows us to arrange a set self-identity, *supra-actuating* attributes of his being listed by WCF 2:1 under this heading. The true God, I AM, introduces himself—he who is incomparable to other gods), thus, I AM is supremely . . .

- . . . **perfect**: “God: who is infinite in . . . perfection” (WCF 2:1)
- . . . **boundless**: “God: who is infinite in being . . . a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions . . . immense” (WCF 2:1)
- . . . **present**: “immense” (WCF 2:1)
- . . . **consistent**: “without . . . passions, immutable” (WCF 2:1)
- . . . **eternal**: “eternal” (WCF 2:1) (without beginning or end)
- . . . **exalted**: “incomprehensible” (WCF 2:1)
- . . . **powerful**: “almighty” (WCF 2:1); [he] hath most sovereign dominion over [the creatures], to do by them, for them or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth” (WCF 2:2)
- . . . **knowing**: “most wise” (WCF 2:1); “his knowledge is infinite, infallible and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to him contingent, or uncertain” (WCF 2:2)
- . . . **independent**: “most free” (WCF 2:1); “and is alone unto himself all sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them” (WCF 2:2)
- . . . **determinate**: “most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory” (WCF 2:1, also 2:2; 3:3)

Man's Derivative *Formative Abilities*

Man has self-identity, in the likeness of the LORD's “I AM” supremacy, a *derivative* body-soul “i am” (self-consciousness)⁶ *ruling over the creation after the fall, in respective order with the ten above:*

⁵ I have chosen the term *actuating* because of their instrumental supremacy to will and to work for his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). They could also be called attributes of the LORD's being.

⁶ See C. VanTil, “The Christian view of inwardness rests upon the fact that the triune God is inwardly sufficient to himself. He is in himself the full expression of the law of his being. He is the full expression of the law of love of himself as the highest, the only ultimate, the only self-sufficient one. He it is that has created man in his image. He it is that renews man, his image bearer, into a relation of obedient love to himself. Here and here only, is exhaustive person-to-person confrontation. Here the *I-it* dimension is not set over against the *I-thou* and the *I-Thou* dimensions. For here all rests upon the one who alone says *I am*. On this basis human personality has unity within itself. To be sure, on this basis human personality does not know itself in terms of itself. It does not say *I am* until it has heard God say *I am* about himself, and *thou-art* to man. On this basis man the creature and covenant keeper says with David, the man after God's heart, O how love I thy law. And when he says this, he finds himself. Then he is free. For only in David's Son are men made free. . . . Man is always *coram Deo* as his creature.” *In Defense of the Faith: Christian Theistic Ethics*, vol. 3. 1980, 192, <https://presuppl101.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/van-til-christian-theistic-ethics.pdf>

perfectibility (able to increase competence in all abilities, virtues and affections)

luxuriance (symphonic abilities in immeasurable diversity and complexity beyond these terms)

availability (personal presence in daily life)

reliability (habitual)

endurability (desire to live, destined for eternal life or death)

complexity (man's body-soul is filled with mysteries)

ability (able to accomplish tasks)

teachability (able to learn)

dependency (dependent on God and society, family)

decidability (able to make decisions)

3.1.3 THE LORD'S *SUPRA-RIGHTEOUSNESS* ATTRIBUTES PAIRED WITH MAN'S *LEX CHRISTI* VIRTUES

The LORD is supremely (“most holy . . . most absolute” expanded to ten attributes)⁷ . . .

1st C . . . superior, implied in “You shall have no other gods before me (Exod. 20:3), linked with his reflection in the 1st commandment, requiring faith and obedience to this Triune God.⁸ WCF elaborates, noting that “There is but one only, living, and true God, . . . most absolute” (WCF 2:1). The Triune righteous LORD has zeal for the supremacy of his own person, existence, identity, and his authority to commission and forbid, in conformity with his supremacy (Isa. 43:10-11). He fulfils the desire [10th C] of those who fear him [1st C]; he also hears their cry and saves them” (Ps. 145:19). *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ's humanity and renewed man: pro-LORD*, highest allegiance belongs to his majesty, he is preeminent in all our thoughts and all our worship, being jealous for his glory.

2nd C . . . holy implied in ‘You shall not make or bow down to or serve images or idols for I am jealous to guard the worship of those who love me, but will punish those who forsake me’ (Exod. 20:4-6), linked with his reflection in the 2nd C requiring the proper way to worship God. He is uni-proachable, meaning we may only approach Him in worship in the way he commands by way of his condescension in covenant.⁹ Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, “He is most holy in all His counsels, in all

⁷ In order to limit unbounded complexity in this book, a one-attribute-to-one-commandment format has been chosen as a suggested *lex Christi* perspective.

⁸ “In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father: the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son,” (WCF 2:3).

⁹ Why does this thesis connect this theme of covenant with the 2nd commandment as a new contribution? The WLC 2nd commandment duties concern proper worship. The *Westminster Standards* (WCF 21-22 about keeping the Sabbath, elements of God-commanded worship, and vows) and current discussion tends to focus on the elements of formal worship in the assembly of the saints, also called the *regulative principle of worship*, and the concerns the Puritan pastors had for reforming Roman Catholic worship practices and the administration of the sacraments. Their primary explanation of the 2nd commandment related to proper assembly worship practices: “What should the elect pastors and worshippers do on the

His works, and in all His commands” (WCF 2:1-2). The Triune righteous LORD has zeal for his own covenant law and his pure worship, in conformity with his supremely holy nature (Deut. 4:13; 32:21). *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-covenantal* meaning the elect approach his holiness only through *heart attitudes and practices* defined in his covenants.

3rd C . . . **blessed** implied in “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain,” (Exod. 20:7), linked with his reflection in the 3rd C requiring the proper use of the name of the LORD. He is worthy of all blessing, honor, doxology, glory and esteem. He is the source and standard of all blessing, honor, glory. Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, “God hath all . . . goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself . . . nor deriving any glory from them” (WCF 2:2). The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy for his own name and reputation, in conformity with his supremely blessed nature (Ezek. 39:25). *Derivative reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-blessing*, meaning the elect receive blessings from the LORD, in his name (Gen. 12:2; Num. 6:24-27; Ps. 5:12; 29:11), *in their hearts and with their mouths* honor and bless his holy name (Ps. 16:7; 103:1-2; Rev. 5:11-14), pray and worship in his name (John 14:13-14; Eph. 5:20), and give blessings in his name to others (Gen. 27:7; 28:1-4; 49:28; Deut. 33; Ps. 72:17).

4th C . . . **dynamic** implied in “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy,” (Exod. 20:9-11). The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy for his ordered time patterns of sabbath & work in conformity to his supremely dynamic nature (Gen 1:31-2:3). The LORD is LORD of time, linked with his reflection in the 4th C requiring our submission to his appointed times for work and Sabbath rest, as well as submission to his providential times (Eccles. 3:1-14; Jas. 4:15). “And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest” (Exod. 33:14). “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). In the WCF we see numerous explanatory parallels. God is “eternal” (WCF 2:1). “It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good” (WCF 4:1). All of WCF 5 “Of Providence” proclaims the supremely dynamic LORD who accomplishes his will in time, but especially WCF 5:1: “God the great Creator of all things doth

LORD’S Day in the worship assembly?” This thesis takes a broader orientation to the 2nd commandment based on the WCF 7 theme of the covenants the LORD made with man, starting with Adam as federal head of the first covenant, citing a whole complex array of interdependent Scriptures (Gen. 1:26-27; Lev. 18:4-5; Matt. 19:16-17; 22:37-39; Rom. 1:17; 2:14-15; 5:12-21; 7:10; 8:3-4; 10:5; Gal. 3:11-12; 4:4-5, with Hos. 6:7 and Job 31:33 offered only as collateral arguments). The larger question of the 2nd C duties should be, “How is the worshipper properly related to God’s worship?” and sees the answer as the typology of the old covenants fulfilled in the new covenant, also called the Gospel. We can extend this attribute of God’s holiness to the Father making a covenant in the Trinity *ad extra* to reflect holiness in his creatures, permitting the fall and planning salvation by the LORD Jesus Christ as its anointed King and by the Holy Spirit as its vivifying comforter, these being the means of fulfilling his eternal decree (WCF 3:6; Ps. 89:19-37; Zech. 6:12-13; Isa. 42:6). The Triune God also made a covenant of works with angels, giving them a proper dwelling and authority to perform tasks, some elect, but damning those who rebelled (1 Tim. 5:21; Heb. 1:13-14; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6; Matt. 25:41) and covenants with creation (Gen 9:9-17; Hos. 2:18; Job 38). Thus, it seems appropriate to develop the LORD’S covenantal character since he relates to everything by covenants, and the entire plan of redemption is organized under God’s covenant-making nature. The theology of God’s holiness guarded by covenant should define the major duties of the 2nd commandment requirement of holiness to approach God. The details of Sabbath-LORD’S Day practice and assembly worship can be developed as a subset of the covenant theme, such as the *regulative principle of worship*.

uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.” The LORD is LORD of time, the source and standard of all measures and cycles of time, coordination of universe and space-times and all their variations, working perfectly according to his decree in time. He established the pattern in creation and rest (Gen. 1:31-2:3). In the fully realized *eschaton*, time structures appear to be perfected and in some sense, since in the holy Jerusalem, night will be dissolved and the LORD will be their light (Isa. 60:19; Rev. 22:5). Yet months are still measured, indicating that the days and seasons of time remain in some sense, perhaps outside the city where the sun and moon still give light.¹⁰ *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-theosynchrony.*¹¹

5th C . . . **harmonious**¹² implied in “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you,” (Exod. 20:12) linked with his reflection in the 5th C requiring our preservation of harmonious role relationships between those in authority, submission and equals. Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, “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,” (WCF 3:6). The LORD most-free to do his own will. He operates with a ‘Father decrees and Son & Spirit submit pattern’ within the Trinitarian work in the world. He is the source and standard of unity and peace. The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy for harmony among his representative ruling kings, their subjects and their equals, in conformity to his Trinitarian supremely harmonious nature.¹³ Using the metaphor of shepherd and sheep, the LORD himself will feed his people by means of his appointed leaders.¹⁴ *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-harmony.*

6th C . . . **living** implied in “You shall not murder,” (Exod. 20:13), linked with his reflection in the 6th C requiring protection of human life from conception to death (so against abortion and euthanasia), and, for those who are married and able, to bear and raise children. Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, he is “living”; “God hath all life, . . . in and of Himself . . . He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things,” (WCF 2:1-2). In this giving and sustenance of human life is included God’s patience and merciful kindness to all mankind, including his enemies.¹⁵ This Triune righteous LORD has jealousy for preserving man’s life who bears his kingship-image, in

¹⁰ Rev. 22:2; Ps. 148:1-6; 104:19; 78:69; 89:2, 29, 36-37

¹¹ God creates time (Gen. 1:1); he is not bound by time (Ps. 90:2, 4; Isa. 46:9-10; John 8:58; Exod. 3:14; 2 Pet 3:8); he determines our times (Acts 17:26; Rev. 22:5); he acts in time (Gal. 4:4-5; Acts 17:30-31). By looking for parallels between God’s *dynamic* 4th C attribute (this term suggested by Dr. Vern Poythress in email exchanges October 2020), this thesis contributes another insight to derivative attributes of God reflected in man’s *theosynchrony* related to the 4th C that hasn’t received much biblical exploration and exegetical development. In the first edition of this book this term was defined as “viewing and using time in *sync* with the ways [God in] Scripture defines sweeping scopes of time and my own life (past, present, future).”

¹² The idea is linked to “working all things according to the [harmonious] counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory,” (WCF 2:1) and expanded in Westminster’s understanding of God’s trinitarian cooperation and God’s eternal decree (WCF 3). The attribute “harmonious” was named by the suggestion of Dr. Vern Poythress in a personal meeting in June 2017.

¹³ Eph. 4:3-6; 1 Cor. 15:28; Rom. 8:27

¹⁴ Ezek. 34:13-14, 16, 23

¹⁵ Matt. 5:44-45; Acts 14:16-17; 17:25, 30; Rom. 9:22-23

conformity to his supremely living nature.¹⁶ “The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing (Ps. 145:15-16). *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-life.*

7th C . . . **beautiful**, implied in “You shall not commit adultery,” (Exod. 20:14), linked with his reflection in the 7th C requiring preservation of one-man-one-woman heterosexual attraction within the marriage covenant. Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, he is beautiful and splendid, “abundant in goodness” with “all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself.” (WCF 2:1, 2). The LORD is the source of all relational delight, intimacy and pleasure in sexual love and attraction to beauty, mysteriously working to mutually attract and join together one man to one woman in lifelong companionship (Matt. 19:6), guarding oneself from all other sexual attractions,¹⁷ especially used in Scripture of a bride’s splendid wedding garments, and ultimately of the beautiful church desired by Christ and prepared for the wedding day¹⁸ and the church’s attraction to the beauty and splendor of Christ.¹⁹ The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy for his kingdom cultivating institution of marriage, in conformity to his own supremely beautiful nature to recreate a beautiful bride attractive to him.²⁰ One hetero-spouse sexual attraction in human marriage is merely a type, a shadow of this human existence that will be transformed into Christ’s brother-sister family (Matt. 22:30), pointing to a singular spiritual desire for and holy affection for Christ (Eph. 5:23-33). *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-marriage.* “What God hath joined together let not man separate,” (Matt. 19:6; WCF 24:6).

8th C . . . **sufficient** implied in “You shall not steal,” (Exod. 20:15), linked with his reflection in the 8th C requiring man to preserve, protect and prosper all that is needed for the body in the material world, including family, Gospel ministers, fellow believers and neighbors in need (1 Tim. 5:3, 8; Gal. 6:6, 9-10). Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, the LORD is most-sufficient, “and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made,” (WCF 2:2). The self-existence of God provides material, pastoral, and civil-social resources to support obedience to the commands. The LORD is the supremely generous giver, the source of all resources that sustain life, The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy to protect man’s “loanership” of kingdom cultivation products (property, goods), in conformity to his ownership of all things he created and stewards, derived from his supremely sufficient nature.²¹ *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ’s humanity and renewed man: pro-stewardship.*

9th C . . . **truthful** implied in “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor,” (Exod. 20:16), reflected in the 9th C requiring truthful witness. Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, He is most-truthful; “abundant in . . . truth,” (WCF 2:1). “I AM the . . . truth” (John 14:6). The LORD deserves all reputational esteem, praise and honor from men (parallels 3rd C). The LORD is the source and standard of all truthful blessing, honor and glory among men. The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy to protect the name or reputation of his kingdom-representative citizens, in conformity to his

¹⁶ Acts 17:24-25; Deut. 32:29; Matt. 6:26; Rom. 8:11; Eph. 5:29; Ps. 136:25

¹⁷ Prov. 6:25; Job 31:1; 1 Tim 3:2

¹⁸ Exod. 28:2, 40; Ps. 45:11; Prov. 5:19; Song 1:16; Isa. 62:4-5; Ezek. 16:8, 14; Eph. 5:27; Rev. 4:2-3; 21:2, 9-21

¹⁹ Ps. 16:11; 27:4; 29:2; 96:6

²⁰ Mal. 2:15; 3:6; Lam. 3:22-23; Ezek. 16:8; Matt. 19:6; Rev. 21:2, 9-27

²¹ Ps. 50:10-12; Acts 14:17; 17:24-26; Deut. 8:18

supremely truthful nature.²² *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ's humanity and renewed man: pro-truthful.*

10th C . . . contented implied in “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s,” (Exod. 20:17), linked with his reflection in the 10th C requiring contentment and thankfulness for his goodness and mercy. Identifying parallels explaining God in WCF, God is most-content: “God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made, nor deriving any glory from them” (WCF 2:2). The LORD is the source and standard of satisfaction and contentment. The Triune righteous LORD has jealousy to protect his representative kings’ heart-desires in thankfulness to the LORD and contentment in his sovereign providence over their situations, first seeking righteousness, in conformity to his own supremely contented nature that makes the LORD most content and joyful in himself and all he does.²³ *Derivative lex Christi virtue reflections in Christ's humanity and renewed man: pro-contentment*, fully satisfied in the LORD and all that he provides: “I shall not want . . . surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life (Ps. 23:1, 6).

The LORD’S *Supra-Familial* Attributes Reflected in Man’s *Covenant-Relational* Affections

These *supra-familial attributes* are *ad extra* (God in relationship to his creatures) *applications* of the ontological, familial love of the Father eternally begetting the Son and the eternal procession of the Spirit as the bond of this love.²⁴ In other words, God’s essential being has not changed. These are applicational attributes that necessarily follow on the basis of the Father’s archetypal relational love for the Son when relating to creatures by covenants. These *familial attribute* applications are evident in his decrees before the foundation of the world, to permit the fall of some angels and Adam,²⁵ purposing to show his free grace and love to elect humanity,²⁶ contrasted with his power, wrath and justice to all fallen angels and those men passed by and left in their sins.²⁷ In his works of providence, the major applications are displayed by his immanent love on his redeemed, as those united to his beloved Son,²⁸ with a minor biblical emphasis on his immanent wrath against any creatures who do not share in this *supra-familial* love for his only begotten Son and do not share in his *covenant-relational* love for those united to him as adopted sons.²⁹ In the immanent unfolding of providence, administered by the decree of the Father, the exact mediate accomplishment of the Son and the exact mediate application of the

²² Num. 6:24-26; 1 Sam. 12:22; Ezek. 39:7; Dan. 9:19

²³ Job 41:11; Rom. 11:33-36; Acts 17:25; Job 1:21; Matt. 6:24-33; 1 Cor. 3:21-23

²⁴ WCF 2:3; The Father and the only begotten Son share mutual love before creation, (John 1:14, 18; 3:35; 5:20; 17:24; Heb. 1:2-3, 5), with the Spirit proceeding from both as the bond of the Father’s delight in the Son (John 15:26; 2 Cor. 13:14; Isa. 42:1; Matt. 3:16-17; 12:18; John 1:32-34; Rom. 1:4, see Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged in One Volume* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011) 238-239, 242). The term “familial” is derived from the metaphor God uses to describe himself as Father (1st person of the Trinity) to the Son (2nd person of the Trinity), used in our baptismal formulation (Matt. 28:19) and in the Trinitarian theology of WCF 2:3. It also provides one biblical motif for explaining the benefits of union with Christ as adopted sons by the Spirit (WLC 74; WCF 12; Rom. 8:14-16; Gal. 4:4-7; 1 John 3:1), and the restoration of human family love in Christ (Luke 1:17; Eph. 5:1-2, 25; 6:1-4).

²⁵ WCF 3:3; 5:4; 6:1

²⁶ Some call this an eternal covenant of redemption, see Wilhemus a Brakel, *A Christian’s Reasonable Service*, chapter 7, see his exposition of Ps. 89:19-37; Zech. 6:12-13; Isa. 42:6.

²⁷ WCF 3:6-7

²⁸ WLC 30-36; WCF 7:1-6; John 1:14; 2:11; 8:35; 11:40; 12:28-29; 14:21; 15:9-10; 17:26

²⁹ John 3:18; 3:35-36; 5:23; 14:21-24; 15:9; 17:12; Acts 4:25-29; 9:4. Obviously, the sonship metaphor includes females as daughters (2 Cor. 6:18). For similar ideas noted in this paragraph, see Vern S. Poythress, *The Mystery of the Trinity: A Trinitarian Approach to the Attributes of God* (Phillipsburg: P & R, 2020), 496-498, 514-515, 528-529, 563-566.

Spirit by the Scriptures³⁰ these *supra-familial attributes* are revealed through covenants *to, on, in* and *by* his creatures in various relations to his covenants and various degrees of likeness.³¹

The ten pairs of *supra-familial attributes* are listed below.³² The first word in the pair represents the LORD'S familial engagement with those in-covenant, revealed as *covenant-reconciliation* to the LORD. The second word of each pair represents the LORD'S exclusion-from-family with those out-of-covenant, revealed as *covenant-enmity* to the LORD. WCF 2:1 supporting quotes are inserted, along with additional attributes names found elsewhere in WCF.

The LORD is supremely . . .

. . . **Loving** // **hating**: “most loving” . . . // . . . “hating all sin” (WCF 2:1), hating wickedness (Heb. 1:9). The LORD holds [rebellious rulers] in derision (Ps. 2:4; also hold the nations, the enemies of God's people in derision, see Ps. 59:8).

Gracious // **jealous**: “gracious” (WCF 2:1). // “jealous . . . visiting the iniquity . . . on . . . those who hate me” cited in Exodus 20:5 as a proof text for WCF 21:1 that God commands worship only in ways he prescribes, and expressing his jealous enmity against those who practice false worship by abolishing evil. The primary uses of the word “jealous” in Scripture to describe God are in contexts of enmity against sins of the nations against his people (Ezek. 36:6-7; Zech. 1:14-15; 8:2-7) and especially against the idolatry of those belonging to the covenanted tribes of Israel, as a consuming fire to remove such sinners from his holy presence or his holy land (Exod. 34:14; Deut. 4:24-27; 6:15; Nah. 1:2). The LORD praised the jealousy of Phineas for representing his judicial enmity (Num. 25:11-13).

. . . **Merciful** // **wrathful**: “merciful” . . . // . . . “terrible in his judgments” (WCF 2:1); “to ordain them to dishonor and *wrath* for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice” WCF 3:7

. . . **Patient to save** // **patient to judge**: “long-suffering” (WCF 2:1); biblical support, the LORD is patient toward believers, wishing that they would come to repentance for their sins and walk in holiness, ready

³⁰ WLC 2-5, 19, 20, 30-32; Col. 1:15; Heb 1:3; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; John 8:28; 16:13-15

³¹ WCF 2:2; 7:1-6; 2 Sam. 7:12-16. WCF 7 theme of the covenants the Lord made with man, starting with Adam as federal head of the first covenant is based on a whole complex array of interdependent Scriptures Genesis 1:26-27; Leviticus 18:4-5; Matthew 19:16-17; 22:37-39; Romans 1:17; 2:14-15; 5:12-21; 7:10; 8:3-4; 10:5; Galatians 3:11-12; 4:4-5, with Hosea 6:7 and Job 31:33 offered only as collateral arguments. The Father makes a covenant in the Trinity *ad extra* to accomplish salvation with the Lord Jesus Christ as its anointed King and the Holy Spirit as its vivifying comforter, these being the means of fulfilling his eternal decree (WCF 3:6; Ps. 89:19-37; Zech. 6:12-13; Isa. 42:6). The Triune God also made a covenant of works with angels, giving them a proper dwelling and authority to perform tasks, some elect, but damning those who rebelled (1 Tim. 5:21; Heb. 1:13-14; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6; Matt. 25:41) and covenants with creation (Gen 9:9-17; Hos. 2:18; Job 38). Thus, the *Westminster Standards* develop the LORD'S covenantal character since he relates to everything by covenants, and the entire plan of redemption is organized under God's covenant-making nature. See Richard A. Muller, “The Covenant of Works and the Stability of Divine Law in Seventeenth Century Reformed Orthodoxy: A Study in the Theology of Herman Witsius and Wilhelmus a Brakel,” *Calvin Theological Journal*, 29 (1994): 75-101.

³² Some word choices are not absolute opposites, but at least have a possible meaning that differentiates between those reconciled to God and those in enmity against God. For discussion of “Attributes Relating to the Manifestation and Exercise of the Divine Will: Divine Affections and Virtues” of love, grace, favor and mercy to the elect, contrasted with hatred, aversion, disapproving, displeasure, withholding blessings, punishing, scorning, derision, jealousy and sorrow to those passed by in their sins, see Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, Vol. 3: *The Divine Essence and Attributes* 2003, 551-589. Recommending the use of biblical terms for attributes, while recognizing their active expression using a Trinitarian construct, balancing transcendence & immanence, see Vern S. Poythress, *The Mystery of the Trinity*, *Ibid.*, 487-516, 582-586.

for his return (2 Pet. 3:9, 14-15). // the LORD is patient, awaiting the appointed time for the judgment of the wicked (Rom 9:22; Matt 13:29-30).

... **Good // just**: “The LORD has all . . . goodness . . . in and of himself” . . . // . . . “most just and terrible in his judgments” (WCF 2:2; 2:1). The meaning of “just” used by WCF 2:1, (citing Neh. 9:32-33; Heb. 10:28-31) is giving the wicked what they deserve, executing his vengeance, but this is not the only biblical use of the word.

... **Forgiving // condemning**: “forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin” . . . // . . . “who will by no means clear the guilty” (WCF 2:1)

... **Rewarding // penalizing**: “the rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (WCF 2:1). // to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice” (WCF 3:7)

... **Slow to anger // furious**: as a proof text for God’s mercy in Christ (WCF 15:2), God is “slow to anger” (citing Joel 2:12-13), encouraging us to turn in hatred against sins with sorrow and repentance to God. // “Pour out thy *fury* upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name” (Jer. 10:25 cited as proof text in WCF 21:6 requiring families to call on God’s name in their homes)

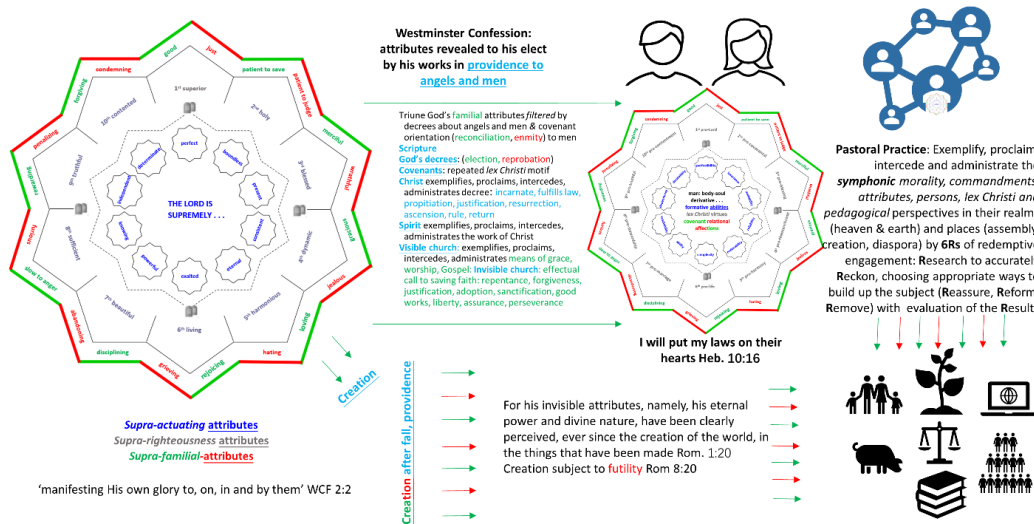
... **Disciplining // abandoning**: “to *chastise* them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled” (WCF 5:5, citing Deut. 8:2-3, 5, being tested and disciplined by the LORD in the wilderness); “are pitied, protected, provided for, and *chastened* by him, as by a father” (WCF 12:1). // “to *pass by*; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice” (WCF 3:7); “God, as a righteous Judge, . . . *gives them over* to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan” (WCF 5:6)

... **Rejoicing // grieving**: biblical support: “May the LORD rejoice in his works” (Ps. 104:31); “[The LORD] will rejoice over you with gladness” (Zeph. 3:17); “enter into the joy of the LORD” (Matt 25:21). // “resisting and *grieving* his Spirit” (WLC 105; Eph. 4:30).

Explanatory note on the Figure below: For pedagogical purposes, the internal **blue** ten-pointed star arranges ten *supra-actuating* attributes. These inner ones activate *all* of the external facets for *lex Christi* purposes toward two sets of creatures in creation depending on in-covenant or outside-covenant status. The middle gray ten point star represents the *supra-righteousness* attributes. The external star represents the LORD’S *supra-familial* attributes, using **red** to represent his enmity to those outside covenant, thus in disobedience to his *lex Christi*, and **green** to represent reconciliation to those in covenant. *However, there is no intention to pair the inner attribute with its adjacent middle or external attribute, since all the individual attributes interrelate as total sets with the other sets.* Because of the unity or indivisibility of God’s person, *all* his attributes have a relation to *all* the commandments. Derivative reflections in renewed man are grouped in three sets as well: *formative abilities, lex Christi virtues and covenant-relational affections.*

When we notice that the focus of redemption is the renewal of the *lex Christi virtues*,³³ how shall we relate these *virtues* to the other two sets of *formative abilities* and *covenant-relational affections* describing man's soul by the instrument of man's body? These *abilities* and *affections* are meant to be used to please God and promote human flourishing, but they are only properly redirected when the core *lex Christi virtues* are renewed. For example, *lex Christi virtues* command duties of love for all men within the details of the second table of the moral law. When nuanced with *covenant-relational affections*, counselors can distinguish between the duties of love to those in the covenant and those outside the covenant. While imitating God's display of patient common grace love to all, there should be a special display of *covenant-relational reconciliation affections* to "one another" in the visible church (Matt 5:44-45; Rom 9:22-23; Gal 6:9-10; Eph 4:1-6:4). Since God loves the saints as new creatures in Christ and shows them his *covenant-relational reconciliation* attributes, all the assemblies of believers need to show these same affections to one another, whether in the context of discipleship, family, schools, businesses, or churches.

Symphonic attributes perspective on the *lex Christi*-DRL^{6Rs}



3.1.4 WLC ON DECREES APPLIED IN CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

Question 13: What has God especially decreed concerning angels and men?

Answer: God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, has elected some angels to glory; and in Christ has chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof: and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will (whereby he extends or withholds favor as he pleases), has passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.

Question 14: How does God execute his decrees?

Answer: God executes his decrees in the works of creation and providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will.

³³ Ephesians 4:24 motivates us to research how Ephesians covers every commandment's renewal in union with the resurrected Christ.

Question 15: What is the work of creation?

Answer: The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, make of nothing the world, and all things therein, for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good.

NOTICE how WCF explains the Triune God revealing his attributes in creation WCF 4:1
(symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes)

WCF 4:1 It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,³⁴ for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness,³⁵ in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good.

Question 16: How did God create angels?

Answer: God created all the angels spirits, immortal, holy, excelling in knowledge, mighty in power, to execute his commandments, and to praise his name, yet subject to change.

Question 17: How did God create man?

Answer: After God had made all other creatures, he created man male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man, endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, and dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

Question 18: What are God's works of providence?

Answer: God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures; ordering them, and all their actions, to his own glory.

NOTICE how WCF explains the Triune God revealing his attributes in providence WCF 5:1
(symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes)

WCF 5:1 God the great [Triune]³⁶ Creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by His most wise and holy providence, according to His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

Question 19: What is God's providence towards the angels?

Answer: God by his providence permitted some of the angels, willfully and irrecoverably, to fall into sin and damnation, limiting and ordering that, and all their sins, to his own glory; and established the

³⁴ Explicit proof texts in WCF 4:1 showing God as Triune working in creation: the Father (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6); the Son (1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2; John 1:2-3) and the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4). This *symphonic persons* perspective is repeated throughout the WCF.

³⁵ Explicit proof texts in WCF 4:1 showing God's attributes displayed in creation: eternal power and divine nature (Rom. 1:20), power and wisdom (Jer. 10:12; Ps. 104:24) and goodness (Ps. 33:5). This *symphonic attributes* perspective is repeated throughout the WCF.

³⁶ See WCF 4:1 that creation is defined as a the work of the Triune God, so using the term "God" in providence is understood to mean his Triune persons.

rest in holiness and happiness; employing them all, at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, mercy, and justice.

Question 20: What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

Answer: The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Question 30: Does God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery ?

Answer: God does not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the covenant of works; but of his mere love and mercy delivers his elect out of it, and brings them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the covenant of grace.

Question 31: With whom was the covenant of grace made?

Answer: The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

Question 32: How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?

Answer: The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provides and offers to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promises and gives his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he has appointed them to salvation.

3.1.5 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. Sickness: the purpose of life is unrelated to the Triune God revealing his *lex Christi* glory to, on, in and by his elect people. The decrees of the Father applied by the Son and Holy Spirit in creation and providence, revealing shared attributes, are not known, studied and carefully applied to reflections in everyday life.
- B. Weakness: Based on familiarity with very obvious Scripture texts, the disciple is minimally aware of God showing himself in various ways that we should imitate (God is love, love one another, Eph. 5:1-2; I John 3:16-18), but the *symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes* perspective is not used as the main interpretive pattern to understand God, His creation and providence and our duties in it. Our duties to show his *supra-familial attributes* by our *covenant-enmity affections* are not noticed at all, such as showing his justice, wrath, hatred, grief (Rom. 1:18-24; Rev. 2:6; Eph. 4:30) by punishing evil-doers (governments with power of the sword Rom. 13:4), giving them up to their lusts and handing them over to Satan, (the church, with power of the heavenly kingdom Matt. 18:19; 1 Cor. 5:4-5; 1 Tim. 1:20; or a spouse uses power of divorce when the other dominates over the other by making independent choices to deprive of *lex Christ* rights without mutual consent, 1 Cor. 7:3-5, 12-15; Exod. 21:10-11).
- C. Health: The true disciple knows, studies and carefully applies the *symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes perspectives*, namely that the Triune God reveals his glorious attributes in

decrees, creation and providence. All disciple making in all the assemblies of two or more gathered in Christ's name (Matt. 18:20, church, family, school, business, politics) is done with these perspectives at the center.

3.1.6 RESEARCH PSALM 37

- A. Analyze Psalm 37, written by King David, using the *symphonic persons and symphonic attributes* perspectives.
- B. Notice ways that these attributes are revealed to, on, in and by his people in their various assemblies of two or more
 - i. families under the headship of husband-fathers
 - ii. children under the headship of parents
 - iii. geographic towns and cities under their local elders and spiritual leaders
 - iv. the nation of citizens under their kings, priests and prophets
- C. What deductive evidence in Psalm 37 shows the clearest connections between God's person and work and his reflection of those attributes by his people?
- D. Can we infer that whatever God does in this Psalm is reflected by his people to one another and to God's enemies?
- E. Can we infer that whatever God's people do is a reflection of God's Triune persons and attributes?

3.2 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

3.2.1 RECKON YOURSELVES, YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILIES AND YOUR VISIBLE CHURCH ASSEMBLY

- A. *Do you understand this perspective on the world, that the Triune God, by his decrees actuated in creation and providence, reveals His own glorious attributes to us, on us, in us and by us?*
- B. *Do you exemplify the perspectives of Psalm 37 in your relationships, that you know and study ways that the Triune God, by his decrees actuated in creation and providence, reveals His own glorious attributes*
 - i. *to you, as interpreted by a correct use of the means of grace (Word, sacraments and prayer in all your assemblies),*
 - ii. *on you (example, Christ's covenant reconciliation attributes declared on you [propitiation displays mercy, grace, patience, etc.] and his righteousness declared on you [justification credits the moral law on your person, your identity changed to become an adopted child], and*
 - iii. *in you (example, The Spirit writes the righteous moral law in your heart, Heb. 10:16)*
 - iv. *that he might show those attributes by you (example, as a mediate representative person, an ambassador of God and his kingdom, you show all the derivative attributes in your realms [heaven & earth] and places [assemblies, creation, diaspora] by your roles [spouse, parent, coworker, student, pastor, neighbor, citizen])?*
- C. *Did your original family (or your current family, if married) agree with and exemplify this perspective on the world and everything that happens in it? Explain using the sickness, weakness, and health distinctions noted above.*
- D. *Did your visible church assembly agree with and exemplify this perspective on the world and everything that happens in it? Explain using the sickness, weakness, and health distinctions noted above.*

3.2.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

- A. *Using the specifics of your research and reckoning from Psalm 37, what health can you reassure, meaning in what ways do you understand and exemplify 3.2.1 A, B above?*
- B. *What are your sicknesses or weaknesses to reform or remove?*
- C. *How can you improve results for growing in health related to this topic in yourself, your family and your other discipling relationships in your assemblies of two or more gathered in Christ's name?*

SECTION FOUR: SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

4.1 SIN WITH ITS COMPLICATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

4.1.1 RESEARCH WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS WORLD, IDENTIFY WHAT TYPES OF PROBLEMS WILL DEVELOP IN OUR DISCIPLESHIP

Question 22: Did all mankind fall in that first transgression ?

Answer: The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.

Question 23: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

Answer: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Question 24: What is sin?

Answer: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.

Question 25: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

Answer: The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called original sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

Question 26: How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?

Answer: Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.

Question 27: What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?

Answer: The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.

Question 28: What are the punishments of sin in this world?

Answer: The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections; or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes, and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments; together with death itself.

Question 151: What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?
Answer: Sins receive their aggravations, From the persons offending: if they be of riper age, greater experience or grace, eminent for profession, gifts, place, office, guides to others, and whose example is likely to be followed by others. From the parties offended: if immediately against God, his attributes, and worship; against Christ, and his grace; the Holy Spirit, his witness, and workings; against superiors, men of eminency, and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto; against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them, or any other, and the common good of all or many. From the nature and quality of the offense: if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins: if not only conceived in the heart, but breaks forth in words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation: if against means, mercies, judgments, light of nature, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments; and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants, and engagements to God or men: if done deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance, or relapsing after repentance. From circumstances of time and place: if on the Lord's day, or other times of divine worship; or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages: if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.

Question 152: What does every sin deserve at the hands of God?

Answer: Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law, deserves his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come; and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.

4.1.2 THE PROHIBITIONS OF THE MORAL LAW

Question 105: What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, atheism, in denying or not having a God; idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of anything due to him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; 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; vain credulity, unbelief, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair, incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments, hardness of heart, pride, presumption, carnal security, tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; making men the lords of our faith and conscience; 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; and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.

Question 109: What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion; the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in

our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature: Whatsoever; all worshiping of it, or God in it or by it; the making of any representation of feigned deities, and all worship of them, or service belonging to them; all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretense: Whatsoever; simony; sacrilege; all neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God has appointed.

Question 113: What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God's decrees and providences; misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the Word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or anywise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.

Question 119: What are the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the fourth commandment are, all omissions of the duties required, all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them; all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful; and by all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreations.

Fifth Commandment Sins

Question 128: What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?

Answer: The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.

Question 130: What are the sins of superiors?

Answer: The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them, an inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure; commanding things unlawful, or not in the power of inferiors to perform; counseling, encouraging, or favoring them in that which is evil; dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good; correcting them unduly; careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger; provoking them to wrath; or any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.

Question 132: What are the sins of equals?

Answer: The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement of prosperity one of another; and usurping preeminence one over another.

Question 136: What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, except in case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defense; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labor, and recreations; provoking words, oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and: Whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.

Question 139: What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, adultery, fornication, rape, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections; all corrupt or filthy communications, or listening thereunto; wanton looks, impudent or light behavior, immodest apparel; prohibiting of lawful, and dispensing with unlawful discipleships; allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews, and resorting to them; entangling vows of single life, undue delay of discipleship; having more wives or husbands than one at the same time; unjust divorce, or desertion; idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, unchaste company; lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays; and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.

Question 142: What are the sins forbidden in the eighth commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the eighth commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, theft, robbery, manstealing, and receiving anything that is stolen; fraudulent dealing, false weights and measures, removing land marks, injustice and unfaithfulness in contracts between man and man, or in matters of trust; oppression, extortion, usury, bribery, vexatious lawsuits, unjust enclosures and depopulations; engrossing commodities to enhance the price; unlawful callings, and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking or withholding from our neighbor: What belongs to him, or of enriching ourselves; 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; as likewise idleness, prodigality, wasteful gaming; and all other ways whereby we do unduly prejudice our own outward estate, and defrauding ourselves of the due use and comfort of that estate which God has given us.

Question 145: What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence, suborning false witnesses, wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, outfacing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence, calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calls for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, backbiting, detracting, tale bearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and partial censuring; misconstruing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vainglorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defense; 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; breach of lawful promises;

neglecting such things as are of good report, and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering: What we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.

Question 148: What are the sins forbidden in the tenth commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the tenth commandment are, 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.

4.1.3 RESEARCH PROVERBS 1:20-33

- A. The simple turn away from instruction, the scoffers enjoy ridiculing and the fools are complacent. They all hate the Lord's *lex Christi* instruction, choosing to desire and do things that God prohibits (Prov. 1:22, 24-25, 32; 5:22-23). Their ignorance of *lex Christi* instruction produces disaster: "The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble," (Prov. 4:19). What does God promise them?
- B. Skim over some of Proverbs' examples of the *lex Christi* punishments that come on these types of people (Prov. 3:33): 8th C Stealing and 6th C murder Prov. 1:18-19; 7th adultery (Prov. 2:16-19; 5:1-14; 6:23-35; 7:5-27); 10th C from greedy desires guaranteeing the loan for a stranger, 9th C being persuaded by his false witness to 8th C make easy money (Prov. 6:1-5)
- C. What hope for change is offered in this text (Prov. 1:23, 33), those who choose to fear the LORD, turn when corrected, listen to knowledge and do what the LORD says? What does the LORD promise them? (compare with Prov. 2:11-12, 16, 21; 3:2, 8, 16, 33-35) How can you explain these promises in comparison to WLC 28 above?

4.1.4 RECKON VIEWS OF SIN & ITS EFFECTS

- A. *Sickness*:
 1. I have very vague ideas about God's definition of sin. I do not understand my own sin as being born united with Adam and sharing his condemnation for original sin. I do not understand my own sin as defined by the moral law, with both inward habits of thinking and desiring and outward patterns of speech and actions.
 2. I use outward cultural standards to affirm myself as a good person (I don't hurt people, lie or steal, and I do well in school and work).
 3. I have an idealistic expectation that God protects obedient Christians from most of the punishments and curses of sin in this world. I expect that faith can bring healing to most sicknesses. I expect my career path to bring me prestige and material wealth. I have an idealistic view of relationships that most people are kind and trustworthy and will not purposefully hurt me.
 4. I am shocked and immediately question God's love when sin's curses and punishments happen to me. I cannot forgive others who sin against me. When troubles come into my life I get angry, bitter, and blame others.
- B. *Health*:
 1. I know my partnership with Adam in original sin, my own sinful desires and actions from WLC's moral law definitions.

2. I hope for some blessed joys from *lex Christi* obedience. I can be protected from many punishments and disasters that come from personal participation in sinful desires and actions (theft and murder often come back to bring trouble on oneself and family; Prov. 1:10-19; adultery brings great jealousy and vengeful actions from the offended spouse Prov. 6:32-35)
3. I'm prepared to face troubles from the punishments of sin in this world: the physical lack of health or resources, troubles from enemies of the gospel, troubles in culture and society, troubles from my own sinful nature, my own sins, the sins in my families and sin in the visible church. I know that relationships can be filled with frustrations, fears, conflict, disappointments, sorrow, temptations, loneliness, and failures.
4. I learn to live as a stranger and pilgrim in the non-Christian world while I seek to resist and remove of all sin where and when I have influence. I do not accept the modern sinful culture that practices and praises the moral law's prohibitions. Because I am counter-cultural in my obedience to the moral law, I pray for sustaining courage to face some forms of rejection by those in this immoral culture. I wait patiently to inherit the sinless kingdom without sin's curses.

4.2 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

4.2.1 RECKON YOURSELVES, YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILIES AND YOUR VISIBLE CHURCH ASSEMBLIES

Use the teachings of WLC above to reckon your own strengths and weaknesses.

- A. *In what ways have you already experienced the punishments of sin in this world, either by your own sins, other family member's sins against you, in the visible church assemblies or just living in this world under God's curse? (WLC 28)*
- B. *In what situations (yourselves, original families, visible church assemblies) have you seen sin's complicating factors, the aggravations of sins committed against multiple commandments all at once? (WLC 151)*
- C. *Against which commandments prohibitions do you struggle in your inward desires and outward speech and actions?*

4.2.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

Use the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as a disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name.

- A. *REASSURE: In what ways have you resisted sins against the moral law in desires and your actions? How do the promises of Proverbs help you in this resistance?*
- B. *REASSURE: In what ways have you used your influence over others to resist sins against the moral law (family, church, neighborhood, workplace)?*

- C. *REASSURE: Give some examples of how you are trusting God's sovereign providence over your experience of suffering the punishments of sin in this world?*
- D. *REASSURE: In what ways have your original families or your visible church assemblies resisted sins against the moral law in desires and your actions?*
- E. *How could you do better to REFORM any weakness or REMOVE any conformity to sin in yourself or in others over whom you have responsibilities to shepherd? How do the warning of Proverbs motivate you to reform weakness and remove sin?*

SECTION FIVE: SIN REMEDY IN THE COVENANT OF GRACE THROUGH CHRIST OUR MEDIATOR

5.1 SIN'S REMEDY

5.1.1 RESEARCH THE WORK OF CHRIST AS MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT

Question 31: With whom was the covenant of grace made?

Answer: The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

Question 32: How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?

Answer: The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provides and offers to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promises and gives his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he has appointed them to salvation.

Question 33: Was the covenant of grace always administered after one and the same manner?

Answer: The covenant of grace was not always administered after the same manner, but the administrations of it under the Old Testament were different from those under the New.

Question 34: How was the covenant of grace administered under the Old Testament?

Answer: The covenant of grace was administered under the Old Testament, by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the passover, and other types and ordinances, which did all foreshadow Christ then to come, and were for that time sufficient to build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they then had full remission of sin, and eternal salvation.

Question 35: How is the covenant of grace administered under the New Testament?

Answer: Under the New Testament, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the same covenant of grace was and still is to be administered in the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; in which grace and salvation are held forth in more fulness, evidence, and efficacy, to all nations.

5.1.2 THE DIVINITY OF THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD

WLC Question 36: Who is the Mediator of the covenant of grace?

Answer: The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the **Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, in the fulness of time became man, and so was and continues to be God and man**, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever.

WLC Question 37: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

Answer: Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her, yet without sin.

WLC Question 38: Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God?

Answer: It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death; give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience, and intercession; and to satisfy God's justice, procure his favor, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation.

The divinity of the LORD, the second person of the Trinity, is described as eternal Son of God (WLC 32). We can simply touch on the topic here by affirming that the supremacy-attributes of the LORD God the Father are the supremacy-attributes of the LORD God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, and they are the supremacy-attributes of the LORD God the Holy Spirit—shared equally as *autotheos*, God-of-himself, the self-existent Triune God.³⁷

These supremacy-attributes are revealed to Christ's human nature by the Spirit working through the Word made flesh. As the Second Adam, his human nature prototypically experiences the same pattern of triune glory-receiving transformations that elect believers will experience, except for

³⁷ Calvin used this Greek term *autotheos* to affirm and protect the biblical teaching about the divinity of Christ as self-existent God, God-of-himself, *ex se ipso*, but that the Son derives his *hypostatic identity* as second person of the Trinity from the generated relations he has with the Father from before the ages, see Robert Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998). Kindle e-book.

transformation from actual sinner to righteousness. Instead he was declared cursed sinner in his sufferings and death and declared blessed righteous one in his resurrection.

5.1.3 CHRIST'S HUMANITY PERFECTLY REPRESENTS *LEX CHRISTI'S* SPIRITUAL-RELATIONAL-MATERIAL BLESSINGS

WLC Question 39: Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be man?

Answer: It was requisite that the Mediator should be man, *that he might advance our nature, perform obedience to the law*, suffer and make intercession for us in our nature, have a fellow feeling of our infirmities; that we might receive the adoption of sons, and have comfort and access with boldness unto the throne of grace.

WLC Question 40: Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God and man in one person ?

Answer: It was requisite that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this in one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us, as the works of the whole person.

Another way to describe Christ's righteousness is that he loves, rejoices in, and fulfills the duties of the moral law (WCF 8; WLC 39 "*perform obedience to the law*"), and he hates and resists sins against the moral law. That law is best described by WLC 91-150, called the law of Christ, or *lex Christi*.³⁸ As Christ's teaching on the Sermon on the Mount shows, the law requires purity of character and reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart. Christ Jesus in his perfected humanity obeys the law's heart requirements, which is essentially a display of the LORD's derivative attributes. These derivative attributes are a larger category of character traits that include the fruits of the Holy Spirit,³⁹ love for righteousness and hatred for wickedness,⁴⁰ the attributes of the love chapter,⁴¹ the character of those who make their calling and election sure,⁴² and the qualifications of elders and deacons.⁴³ Christ fulfilled that law,⁴⁴ even as the Beatitudes also represent Christ's own heart qualities.⁴⁵

Consider a few of the details of the second Adam's fulfillment of the covenant of works that demands perfect *lex Christi* righteousness on our behalf: 'Christ seeks and saves the lost, eating and drinking with sinners.'⁴⁶ Christ established friendship with neighbors in the specifics of each of the 4th-10th Cs in order to represent the 1st-3rd Cs and call them back to reconciliation with the true God. By these actions, he shows his leadership compassion for the weak and sin-weary (5th C). He contentedly and thankfully shares in the common man's six-day labor resource-blessings of life-sustaining socio-economic, agricultural, housing, furniture, kitchens, food and drink (4th 6th 8th 10th Cs). He testifies to sexual integrity as a single man in building brother-sister respect for marriage (7th C). Though famous and sought after by crowds, He humbly uses his reputation for kingdom influence, while knowing man's propensity to vilify even his kindness, and that some he eats with will plot his murder and call for his crucifixion (9th C; John 13:26-27). So while seeking and saving the lost was part

³⁸ Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21

³⁹ Gal. 5:22-23

⁴⁰ Heb. 1:9

⁴¹ 1 Cor. 13:4-8

⁴² 2 Pet. 1:3-11

⁴³ 1 Tim. 3:1-12; Tit. 1:5-9

⁴⁴ Matt. 5:17-18, 22, 28-30, 39-48; 6:3, 6, 15, 18, 20-22, 24-25, 33-34; 7:1

⁴⁵ Matt. 5:3-9

⁴⁶ Luke 15:1-32; 19:10

of his ministry, his calling was primarily focused on *exemplifying* a seeking and saving ministry to the eleven for their apostolic ministries to become his authoritative representatives (John 14-17; Matt. 28:18-20). So it should be with the visible church today, to entrust our representative ministry to other faithful representatives (2 Tim. 2:2).

1st-3rd Cs: In the power of the Spirit, Christ obeys the greatest commandment by glorifying,⁴⁷ loving,⁴⁸ delighting in, rejoicing in, praising,⁴⁹ and honoring the Father⁵⁰—and the Father reciprocates. Christ hallows the Father in prayer.⁵¹ He never used created things as worship-representations of or substitutes for the true God.

4th C: ⁵² Christ observes the Sabbath rest by worship in the LORD's presence with his people.⁵³ He obeyed the fourth commandment cycles of one day rest and six days of work in the created world (his teaching and ministry was his work after his baptism with the Spirit), and the LORD provided material resources through that work by his miracles and by the generous gifts of others.⁵⁴

5th C: As submissive Son, by the power of the Almighty, Christ also became incarnate in the virgin Mary.⁵⁵ Christ listens to the Father.⁵⁶ Christ prays to the Father as an evidence of submission to his will and the Father hears and answers those prayers.⁵⁷ Christ, with much patience and common-grace love, served and endured vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, even submitting without fear to their injustice against him.⁵⁸ Christ committed his spirit into the Father's hands.⁵⁹ Christ accomplishes salvation for those adopted children chosen by the Father, reconciling them to God in peace and grace and giving them his Spirit.⁶⁰ He continues to show his kind help, grace, and patience—thereby mediating priestly gentleness and mercy to bring them into his eternal kingdom.⁶¹

Because he received the Spirit without limit to be Messiah, he was anointed prophet-priest-king with surpassing gifts.⁶² Christ led a greater Exodus than Moses, leading his people out of the "Egypt" of evil, sin, and death.⁶³ In this, he used all his gifts, skills, and powers to bless, keep, and shine his face upon his elect to renew their spirits daily, but he never used power for his own selfish benefit.⁶⁴ Christ used his knowledge of Scripture to answer Satan during his temptation in the desert.⁶⁵ Christ is the wisdom of God in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He taught the truth as a prophet to his disciples, with wisdom greater than Solomon's. He rightly applied the Scriptures in all contexts, yet publicly hid their meaning until after the Spirit was sent.⁶⁶ To his disciples and the

⁴⁷ John 17:1, 5; 16:14

⁴⁸ John 3:35; 5:20; 14:31

⁴⁹ Matt. 12:18; 17:5; Luke 3:22; 10:21; John 6:27; Ps. 22:8; Isa. 61:10; Jer. 9:23-24; WLC 104 on 1st commandment; HC 94

⁵⁰ John 8:49; 5:23

⁵¹ John 11:41-42; 17:1-26; Luke 10:21

⁵² John 14:10; 16:32; 3:34; Luke 3:22; John 5:17; 10:38

⁵³ Mark 1:21

⁵⁴ Luke 8:3

⁵⁵ Luke 1:30-35

⁵⁶ John 11:41-42; 16:13

⁵⁷ Matt. 6:9-10; 26:39-42; John 11:41-44; Heb. 7:25; 1 Pet. 3:12

⁵⁸ Rom. 9:22; John 6:26; 13:2, 11, 18-19, 21, 26-27; Matt. 23:36-38; 5:43-48; John 18:7-11; 19:10-11; Heb. 2:13-18; 12:1-4; Ps. 23:4; 1 Pet. 3:6

⁵⁹ 1 Pet. 2:23; 4:19; Luke 23:46

⁶⁰ Luke 19:10; John 10:27-29; 17:4, 12; 18:9; 19:30; Rom. 5:1; 9:23; 14:17-18; John 15:26; Acts 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:2-6; 2 Cor. 5:18-19

⁶¹ 2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25; 13:20-21; 1 Tim. 1:12-16

⁶² John 3:34; 10:38; Acts 10:38

⁶³ Luke 9:31

⁶⁴ John 18:8-9; Heb. 2:14-15; Rev. 3:21; 5:5; 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 1:17-23; John 10:11, 27-29; Eph. 4:7-16; Col. 1:13; 2:15; Num. 6:24-26; Matt. 4:1-10; Luke 23:37

⁶⁵ Matt. 4:1-10

⁶⁶ 1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 2:3; Matt. 12:42; Luke 20:21; Matt. 13:11-17, 44

crowds, Christ blessed them in all things they needed for *body* and *soul*. He turns the hearts of fathers to their children and children to their fathers.⁶⁷

4th, 6th, 8th 10th Cs: Christ is in theosynchrony with the LORD's biblical revealed views and uses of time and particular actions required at certain time. In the fullness of time, Christ came to be incarnate, and so was born into time, born of a woman, and born under the law, so as to redeem those who were under the law.⁶⁸ Christ understands that his place in history is to fulfill previously-given Scripture, and he knows what he must do to glorify the Father in light of his promised resurrection to glory.⁶⁹ Christ fulfilled the fourth commandment.⁷⁰ Christ's view of his own relation to history and of world history is shaped by God's perspective.⁷¹ Christ waited patiently until the appointed time for his last entry into Jerusalem and his crucifixion,⁷² and he now waits patiently for his Second Coming.⁷³ Christ shepherds and disciplines his elect according to their situations in time.⁷⁴ He used his time wisely.⁷⁵ Christ's human body entered into eternal life.⁷⁶ Christ fulfilled the six-day work command by responsible work, ruling over, tending, and keeping the created world.⁷⁷ Specifically, he displayed his power over the wind and waves,⁷⁸ the beasts of the field (donkey),⁷⁹ and the fish in the Sea of Galilee,⁸⁰ to name a few examples. He was raised from the dead and ascended to the Father's right hand.⁸¹ Since then he has continued to be fruitful by bearing spiritual children through the Spirit, and giving regenerating spiritual birth to adopted children of promise.⁸² Christ continues his providential rule as the second Adam, through the blessed service of the angels,⁸³ subduing the earth, nourishing, and providing for all living things, holding all things in the universe together⁸⁴ (including his own resurrected physical body).⁸⁵ Christ will finally raise the bodies of his elect to the glory of the children of God, and he will set the entire creation free from bondage to decay—when death, mourning, crying, and pain will pass away.⁸⁶

Christ experienced the LORD's provision for his own daily bread through family and also through outside sources, such as the gifts of the wise men.⁸⁷ Though he owned all things, Christ was content with basic essentials like food and clothing.⁸⁸ He enjoyed many physical gifts of God, and stewarded the offerings received during his ministry and the places that he borrowed.⁸⁹ He showed mercy, kindness, generosity, and impartiality by providing for the physical bodies of men (reversing pain and

⁶⁷ Mal. 4:6; Luke 1:17; Matt. 20:28; Isa. 9:6

⁶⁸ Gal. 4:4-5

⁶⁹ Luke 4:18-21; John 13:1-3; 17:1-5; Heb. 12:2; Rev 1:5, 8, 17-18

⁷⁰ Mark 2:23-3:6

⁷¹ John 8:24, 28, 58; Luke 15:11-32; Matt. 20:1-16

⁷² John 7:6-8; Matt. 20:18-19

⁷³ Matt. 24:36; Rev. 6:11

⁷⁴ Acts 17:26; Gen. 48:15; Ps. 23; Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 34:15; Mic. 5:4; Heb. 12:7-14; 13:20-21

⁷⁵ Ps. 90:1-17

⁷⁶ John 12:50; 1 Cor. 15:44-49; Rev. 1:5, 8, 17-18

⁷⁷ Ps. 8:5-8; Heb. 2:5-8

⁷⁸ Luke 8:24

⁷⁹ Matt. 21:2-7

⁸⁰ Matt. 17:27; John 21:5-7

⁸¹ Acts 2:33

⁸² 6th-7th Cs; Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 9:8; Gal. 4:28; Heb. 2:13

⁸³ Heb. 1:14

⁸⁴ Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 8:6; Heb. 2:5-8; Acts 14:17; 17:25; Matt. 6:25-34; Eph. 1:23; 1 Cor. 15:45-58; 2 Cor. 9:8-11; Col. 1:17

⁸⁵ Luke 24:39-43

⁸⁶ Rev. 21:1, 4; Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; Isa. 11:6-9

⁸⁷ Acts 17:25; Matt. 2:11

⁸⁸ Ps. 50:10-13; Matt 8:20; 1 Tim 6:8

⁸⁹ Luke 5:30; 7:34; John 12:4-6; Matt. 26:17-20. Christ submitted to the ceremonial law to fulfill all righteousness, so he did not eat ceremonially unclean foods. But later believers would be set free from these laws to enjoy all foods. He also did not marry. See 1 Tim. 4:3-5; Col. 2:16-23.

other effects of the curse of death on the body⁹⁰ and the curse on the ground⁹¹ against the produce of man's labors) by healing illnesses, diseases, disabilities, disfigurements,⁹² by hospitably feeding the hungry,⁹³ and casting out demons (also enmity to Satan).⁹⁴ The LORD and his elect from every nation are Christ's inheritance.⁹⁵ He is preparing places for reward⁹⁶ and judgment.⁹⁷

9th C. Christ upholds all things by his powerful word.⁹⁸ Christ is honest, truthful, faithful, self-controlled, promise-keeping, and self-disciplined in relation to his elect who the Father has decreed to save.⁹⁹ He is faithful until death.¹⁰⁰ He gives us unchangeable righteousness at the final resurrection.¹⁰¹

5.1.4 CHRIST'S HUMANITY PERFECTLY REPRESENTS *LEX CHRISTI'S* SPIRITUAL-RELATIONAL-MATERIAL CURSES

Conversely, Christ hates sin perfectly: he has "loved righteousness and hated wickedness."¹⁰² He is grieved and angered by sin.¹⁰³ Christ exposes error and rejects it.¹⁰⁴ Christ showed his enmity towards the greed of the scribes and Pharisees and the tradition of the elders which allowed them to pledge to God in order to avoid giving to and honoring parents in need.¹⁰⁵ Christ gives up some of the spiritually and morally blind to sin and reprobation.¹⁰⁶ He gives them up to chrono-chaos, chaotic views and uses of time. They reject his ordered patterns for time, invent their own interpretation of the past and waste time in laziness. Some will live a short life due to their own rebellion against authority. He left the rich young ruler in his sins.¹⁰⁷ Christ knew that Judas would betray him.¹⁰⁸ At the right time, He *separates* from Satan's sinful temptations, and gives up the unbelieving crowds, wicked leaders, and the apostate "disciple" Judas to their sins and Satan's deceptive voice.¹⁰⁹ Christ does not entrust himself to them.¹¹⁰ He will pass these people by and leave them in their sins until final judgment, giving them up to distorted logic, will, reason, emotions, language, philosophies, ideas, writings, traditions, and cultures.¹¹¹ Fallen angels are still under Christ's authority and will be judged.¹¹² Christ casts out demons and leads the final battle when Satan is defeated.¹¹³ The risen Christ also hinders his enemies' plans to persecute or takes away their authority.¹¹⁴ Angels are sent with power to perform the Father's will on the things in the created world by Christ's command (for example, judgments, disasters, and

⁹⁰ Gen. 2:17; 3:16

⁹¹ Gen. 3:16-19

⁹² Matt. 4:23; 9:35; John 9; Acts 10:38

⁹³ John 6:5-14

⁹⁴ Mark 1:39

⁹⁵ Num. 18:20; Deut. 10:9; Ps. 2:8; Col. 3:24

⁹⁶ Matt. 20:23; 22:4; 25:34; John 14:2-3; Rom. 9:22-23; 1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:1, 5; Heb. 11:16; Rev. 21:2

⁹⁷ Matt. 25:41

⁹⁸ Heb. 1:3

⁹⁹ Ps. 2:6-12; 2 Cor. 1:20; John 10:27-29, 35; Heb. 2:17; 3:2; Mark 3:5; 9:29; 2 Thess. 3:3; Rev. 1:5; 3:14; 19:11; e.g. He fulfills all the "I am ___" statements in John's Gospel (e.g. "I am the . . . truth," John 14:6).

¹⁰⁰ 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Heb. 12:2-3

¹⁰¹ John 6:39-40; 1 John 3:2-3

¹⁰² Heb. 1:9

¹⁰³ Mark 3:5

¹⁰⁴ Matt. 23:1-39; 15:1-20; Matt. 5:21-6:34

¹⁰⁵ Mark 7:9-13; Matt. 23:25

¹⁰⁶ Matt. 15:14

¹⁰⁷ Mark 10:17-23

¹⁰⁸ John 6:64, 71; 13:2, 11, 18-19, 21, 27

¹⁰⁹ Matt. 4:1-10; Matt. 15:14; 16:23; Luke 13:34; John 6:64-66; 10:26; 13:18, 27

¹¹⁰ John 2:24

¹¹¹ Rom. 1:20-32; 9:22

¹¹² Rom. 16:20; Job 1-2

¹¹³ Rev. 19-20

¹¹⁴ Acts 4:24-37; 5:34-40; 28:30-31; Ps. 1:4-6; Luke 19:44; 21:6; Acts 12:23

plagues).¹¹⁵ Christ is faithful to judge all who disobey, both those who deny him or liars who break their vows.¹¹⁶ When he returns he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and the hills shall melt.¹¹⁷ All will face eternal death.¹¹⁸ Hell will display all the powers of the LORD turned to curse his enemies.

5.1.5 CHRIST'S HUMANITY PERFECTLY REPRESENTS THE COVENANT-RELATIONAL AFFECTIONS

Below are a few selected examples of the human emotions of Christ, that were developed in chapter 5 as *covenant-relational affections*. He reflects *covenant-reconciliation affections* whenever Scripture describes his love, joy, and praise. He reflects *covenant-enmity affections* whenever Scripture describes his sinless hate, grief, sorrow, and anger. These emotions can be explained as derived from the LORD's supremacy-attributes.

Christ experienced all the emotions of humanity,¹¹⁹ but he was without sin.¹²⁰ Christ expressed love, joy, praise, and delight when *lex Christi virtues* were reflected by God's work or derivatively by his elect people¹²¹ in acts of righteousness. For example, we notice Christ's joy in the symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes in both salvation and judgment: "In that same hour *he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit* and said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that *you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children*; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will'" (Luke 10:21). Christ rejoiced over one lost sheep who repented, meaning, that he was found and brought back.¹²²

When reflections of the *lex Christi virtues* were diminished, obscured, scorned, or resisted, Christ expressed compassion for the sick, hungry, marginalized, and misled. In many cases his compassion moved him to heal the sick and disabled, feed the poor, cast out demons, raise the dead and teach the lost sheep.¹²³ When men displayed unrighteousness in disobedience to the moral law, he showed hatred of sin and wickedness.¹²⁴ He expressed anger and grief at persecution of himself and his people,¹²⁵ and sorrow and weeping about his own cross, about hardness of hearts, and about the coming judgment and physical death.¹²⁶ He also displayed zeal against the hindrance of prayer in God's house.¹²⁷

The Westminster perspectives developed in section one help us understand the these *covenant - relational virtues* revealed by Christ.

¹¹⁵ Rev. 8:5-9:21; 16:1-12

¹¹⁶ Rev. 20:12-15; 21:8; Exod. 20:7; Eccles. 5:1-2; Nah. 1:15; Ps. 15:4; Mal. 2:10-17

¹¹⁷ Isa. 11:4; Nah. 1:5

¹¹⁸ 2 Thess. 3:6-18; Deut. 4:26; 8:17; 30:18; Rom. 13:2-4; Matt. 25:41; Jude 1:7

¹¹⁹ See B.B. Warfield, "The Emotional Life of Our Lord" in *The Person and Work of Christ* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1950), 98-145 and Octavius Winslow, *The Sympathy of Christ*, reprint (Harrisonburg: Sprinkle, 1998).

¹²⁰ Heb. 2:17-18; 4:15-16

¹²¹ John 15:10-11

¹²² Luke 15:5-7

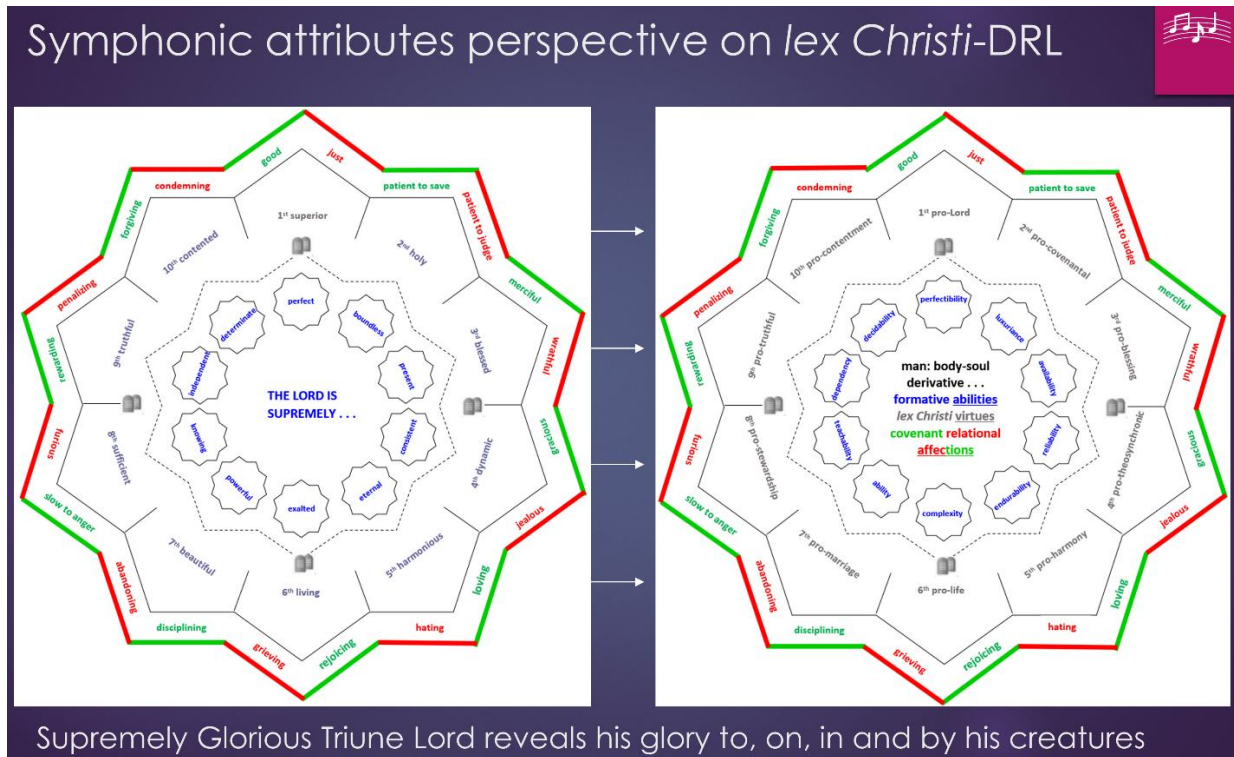
¹²³ Mark 8:1-9, 6:34; 1:40-42

¹²⁴ Rev. 2:6; Heb. 1:9

¹²⁵ Mark 3:1-6, implied in Christ's confrontation with Saul on the Damascus Road in Acts 9:1-5

¹²⁶ Matt. 26:37-38; Luke 19:41-44; John 11:33-35

¹²⁷ John 2:14-17



5.1.6 CHRIST'S HUMANITY PERFECTLY REPRESENTS ABILITIES, VIRTUES AND AFFECTIONS *BY HIS ANOINTED OFFICES*¹²⁸

WLC Question 42: Why was our Mediator called Christ?

Answer: Our Mediator was called Christ, because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure; and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the offices of prophet, priest, and king of his church, in the estate both of his humiliation and exaltation.

The anointed offices of Christ, as prophet, priest, and king, demonstrate the LORD's derivative attributes. Christ's offices reflect the LORD's blessed-face by *peacemaking* and his cursed-face by *enmity*.

John's Gospel provides the best explication of these anointed roles of Christ. The thesis of John's Gospel is to select teachings and miracles done by the human Jesus to prove that he is the Christ, the anointed Messiah—meaning human-anointed prophet, priest, and king¹²⁹—and to prove he is the Son of God, likely meaning both his human kingship and his divinity.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Though it is difficult to trace every specific intellectual debt or dependence which contributed to my development of John's Gospel themes, I have relied significantly on D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, IL: Eerdmans, 1990), and Meredith Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, reprint (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1999). In Kline, see chapters 2 and 3 on priestly and prophetic models of the image of God for many of the "seed" ideas below. For further study, see an excellent resource on the work of the Spirit in the human person and ministry of Christ. See Gerald F. Hawthorne, *The Presence and the Power: The Significance of the Holy Spirit in the Life and Ministry of Christ*, reprint (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2003).

¹²⁹ John 20:31

¹³⁰ Jesus is the unique Son (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18). As the Son of God, he is God himself (John 1:34, 49; 3:35-36; 5:19-27; 6:40; Isa 9:6 refers to a son who is also mighty God). As human king, he has authority to judge (John 5:27, 30; 8:16, 26; 12:48), just as OT kings were also given this authority (Ps. 2:8). As human king-Son, Christ is submissive to the Father as obedient

Christ was anointed by God with the Spirit without limit,¹³¹ to be lamb, priest, prophet, and king.¹³² In the book of John, Christ is *king*,¹³³ with related offices of shepherd¹³⁴ and Savior.¹³⁵ John writes about Christ as a *prophet* with authority (demonstrated by signs of blessing and cursing¹³⁶) to speak for and represent all the will of God for their edification and salvation.¹³⁷ John relates symbols associated with OT prophets with Christ: serpent in the wilderness,¹³⁸ Passover and the Lamb of God,¹³⁹ bread from heaven,¹⁴⁰ the Holy One of God,¹⁴¹ light of the world,¹⁴² the resurrection and the life.¹⁴³ Some of Christ's prophetic teaching represents God's cursed face, such as when he rebukes the Pharisee as children of their father the Devil.¹⁴⁴ The book of John paints Christ as *priest*¹⁴⁵ as John relates OT symbols associated with the priesthood with Christ as the Lamb of God:¹⁴⁶ new tabernacle,¹⁴⁷ the new temple,¹⁴⁸ the Holy One of God,¹⁴⁹ and the new vine.¹⁵⁰ As priest representing God's cursed face, Christ cleanses the temple, and ultimately destroys the temple of his own body in a propitiating sacrifice.¹⁵¹

Another unique proof of Christ as Messiah is the way John shows the mutual relationship Christ has with the Father and the Spirit, similar to the relationship that Old Testament kings, prophets, and

Son (John 5:19, 30; 14:10-11, 20, 31; 15:10; in prayer John 11:41; 12:28; 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24-5). See God's covenant promise to David and his chosen king-sons (2 Sam. 7:14-16).

¹³¹ Acts 10:38; John 3:34

¹³² John 1:29-34

¹³³ John 1:49; 6:15; 12:13; 18:37; 19:19, 21.

¹³⁴ Jesus is the *Good Shepherd* (John 10:11). Shepherd relates to the Davidic kingship and judging between sheep (2 Sam. 5:2; Ezek. 34:15, 23). Shepherd is also connected with judges, the pre-kingship leaders of Israel (2 Sam. 7:7). Jesus is the *Door of the sheep* (10:7).

¹³⁵ Jesus is the *Savior of the World* (John 4:42). Note that the OT savior was a deliverer from enemy oppression, like the judges and faithful kings (Isa. 19:20; 43:11-15).

¹³⁶ Deut. 18:18-22; Exod. 3:13-4:17; 7:16; Num. 16:28-35; 1 Kings 11:36-38; Jer. 26:12, 15; Isa. 61:1-2; Zech. 2:8-11; John 6:19; 7:31; 10:38; 11:42; 14:11; 17:8; 20:21. Jesus executes a sign of judgment on himself (John 2:18-19; 12:23-29). Jesus signs are those of blessing, reversing the curse of the post Eden fall (Gen. 3:14-19); they are also curses against disobedience to law (Deut. 27-29; John 2:7-11; 5:11; 6:11; 9:6-7; 11:25, 43-44)

¹³⁷ John 5:24; 38; 6:14, 29; 7:40; 11:42; 13:20; 17:3, 8, 21, 23, 25. Also, see wording of the WLC 43 on Christ's office as prophet.

¹³⁸ John 3:14-15; Num. 21:8-9

¹³⁹ John 1:36; 6:51-56; 19:14; Exod. 12

¹⁴⁰ John 6:51; Exod. 16:4

¹⁴¹ John 6:69; Isaiah uses the *Holy One of Israel* frequently; holiness was a particular trait noted of Moses the prophet (Acts 3:21).

¹⁴² John 8:12; like the pillar of fire and cloud that led Israel in the wilderness

¹⁴³ John 11:25; See OT where Elijah raises the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24); God saves his king from death by prophetic guidance (1 Sam. 22:5) and by priestly lot drawing in answer to David's questions (1 Sam. 22:20-23:12; Ps. 72:13); Moses intercedes to save the people from the Egyptians (Num. 14-16).

¹⁴⁴ John 8:23-26, 37, 44, 59

¹⁴⁵ John 11:51-52

¹⁴⁶ See note 154

¹⁴⁷ John 1:14; Exod. 36-40

¹⁴⁸ John 2:19; see 2 Chron. 7

¹⁴⁹ John 6:69; Isaiah uses the *Holy One of Israel* frequently; Holiness was a particular duty of the priests, with immediate consequences for neglect (Lev. 16:32; 21:7; Heb. 7:26)

¹⁵⁰ John 15:1; Isa. 5:1-7; there seem to be striking parallels with the almond vine budding on Aaron's priestly rod in Num. 17.

¹⁵¹ John 2:13-21

priests had with the Lord: glorifying,¹⁵² listening,¹⁵³ indwelling,¹⁵⁴ testifying,¹⁵⁵ inhabiting (with you),¹⁵⁶ honoring,¹⁵⁷ loving,¹⁵⁸ knowing,¹⁵⁹ delighting, praising,¹⁶⁰ and possessing.¹⁶¹

5.1.7 THE LORD'S CURSES ON CHRIST'S HUMANITY

WLC 39: “*suffer and make intercession for us in our nature*”

The divine Trinity's *covenant-enmity attributes* were poured out *on* Christ's humanity during his propitiation at the cross on behalf of the elect, because he was declared a substitute for *lex Christi* sinners.

The LORD declared the curse *on* Christ to make propitiation and forgiveness of sins for his elect. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us . . .” (Gal. 3:13). As John's epistle puts it, “[i]n this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10). Below is a list of derivative enmity aspects related to the *lex Christi* that Christ experienced for the sake of elect believers when he was on the cross. But careful attention to the New Testament will show that while divine justice was satisfied when Christ was offered up as a substitute, it was divine love which delivered him up for elect believers.¹⁶² The symphonic Triune persons poured out their covenant-enmity attributes on Christ a sin-bearing representative. The spiritual-relational-material punishments of *lex Christi* fell upon him as representative.

1st-3rd Cs: Because Christ was declared a sinner in place of the elect, God's hatred of sin and the consequences of the curse fell on him.¹⁶³ The Father turned his cursed face to Christ. Described another way, on the cross Christ experienced the absence of the LORD's reconciliation attributes and called out, “Why have you forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46).

4th C: At the appointed time, Christ was cut off from the land of the living, bearing the curse for the chrono-chaos of his people, and making a final sacrifice with application to eternity.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵² John 17:1-5; 16:14. See 2 Sam. 7:9; Ps. 86:12 in relation to King David.

¹⁵³ John 11:41; 12:28, 34, 47; 3:32; 5:24, 28, 30, 37; 16:13; 14:24; Kings must listen to God's word through the prophets (Deut. 18:15); 1 Sam. 15:1, 22; 1 Kings 11:38; God listens to the prayers of the anointed king (1 Kings 8:29-30).

¹⁵⁴ *in you* John 14:10, 20; 10:38; 17:21-23; includes *mutual co-working* John 4:34; 5:17-20; 9:3; 16:8-15

¹⁵⁵ John 5:37; 8:16, 18, 26; 12:26, 28; 15:26; 16:14; 10:25. Moses writes a song as God's witness of the judgments he will pour out on Israel when they disobey (Deut. 31:19-28). Samuel requires the people to take oaths of testimony about truthfulness before God (1 Sam. 12:5-6).

¹⁵⁶ John 15:9; 16:27. See God with David (2 Sam. 7:9).

¹⁵⁷ John 5:23; 8:49; 12:26; 7:18; 4:44; 12:2. The Lord will honor his obedient people who honor him (Deut. 26:19; 1 Sam. 2:30). God honors Solomon for his prayer for wisdom (1 Kings 3:13). King David observes that God gives honor to men, and by implication, honor to him by making him king (1 Chron. 29:12).

¹⁵⁸ John 13:35; 5:20; 10:17; 17:24. See David & Solomon in relation to mutual love (2 Sam. 7:15; 12:24; 1 Kings 3:3).

¹⁵⁹ John 10:15; 8:55; 17:3, 25. Moses known by God (Exod. 33:17; Deut. 34:10; Num. 12:8).

¹⁶⁰ John 6:27; 5:41; 11:41. God is pleased with Moses (Exod. 33:17). God delights in his people and will prosper those who delight in him and his word (Deut. 30:9-10; Ps. 1:1-3; 37:4; Isa. 58:14). King David praises the Lord (Ps. 7:17). God will bring praise to those who obey him.

¹⁶¹ John 16:14-15. God gives the king an inheritance of the nations (Ps. 2:8; 16:1-11).

¹⁶² Rom. 3:25-26; 5:8; 8:32

¹⁶³ Isa. 53:6; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

¹⁶⁴ Isa. 53:8; Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4; 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 10:12

5th C: In his Passion, he was unfriended by the Father, treated as ignorant, unknown, uncircumcised, an alien, and a stranger to the covenants of promise.¹⁶⁵ Christ submitted to earthly authority that declared him a blasphemer and to heavenly authority that declared him a sinner in our place.¹⁶⁶ Christ submitted himself as the powerless lamb to earthly powers.¹⁶⁷

6th C: Christ earthly life experienced physical deprivation, and he suffered horrible tortures in his Passion. On the cross he cried, "I thirst!"¹⁶⁸

7th C: Christ had no beauty that we should desire him.¹⁶⁹

9th C: Christ reputation was despised and rejected, bearing the charges of hypocrite, liar, and blasphemer.¹⁷⁰

Jesus Christ, in his human nature, bore the *covenant-relational enmity* attributes of the Trinity for elect sinners at the cross, with some similarities to WLC 28 about the punishments of sin in this life.

5.1.8 THE LORD 'S BLESSINGS ON CHRIST HUMANITY

WLC Question 32: How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?

Answer: The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, *in that he freely provides and offers to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him*; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promises and gives his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he has appointed them to salvation.

The structure of this discipleship curriculum highlights the Westminster Confession 2:2 on how God reveals his glory *to, upon, in, and by* his creatures, especially men and angels. Through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, we can see God's glory perfectly represented in the face of Christ (2 Cor. 4:6; 3:18). The supremacy-attributes of the Trinity are imparted in their complete derivative sense to the humanity of Jesus Christ, as he received the Holy Spirit without measure.¹⁷¹ The resurrection is the climax of how that glory was declared *upon* or *on* Christ, proving he possessed the perfection of the derivative attributes and fulfilled the law because it was written on his heart. Christ Jesus was justified, adopted and sanctified through his resurrection from the dead. "Justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification as applied to believers are derived from the significance of the resurrection for Christ. . . . Justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification as applied to Christ are not separate distinct acts. Rather each describes different . . . aspects of the *one act* of being raised from the dead."¹⁷² "Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, *justified by the Spirit*, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Tim. 3:16). Christ was adopted by his resurrection. "And was declared to be the

¹⁶⁵ Matt. 27:46; Eph. 2:12; Matt. 7:23; 1 John 3:1

¹⁶⁶ Matt. 26:65; Mark 14:64; John 10:33; 19:10-11; Isa. 53:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:21

¹⁶⁷ Isa. 53:8; 1 Pet. 2:20-23; 4:19; John 18:8; 19:11

¹⁶⁸ Matt. 8:20; John 19:28

¹⁶⁹ Isa. 53:2

¹⁷⁰ Isa. 53:3, 9; Matt. 27:40, 42-43; John 18:20; 19:7

¹⁷¹ John 3:34

¹⁷² See Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Resurrection and Redemption: A Study in Paul's Soteriology*, 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1987), 114-127.

Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 1:4). Christ was sanctified by his resurrection. “We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God” (Rom. 6:9-10). Christ was glorified by his resurrection. “Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor. 15:49).

The divine Trinity’s *covenant-reconciliation attributes* were poured out *on* Christ’s humanity, also on behalf of his elect, through raising Christ by the Spirit to the right hand of glory. This is Christ’s justification, in the sense that it proved his sinlessness. The resurrection proved that he completely displayed the derivative *abilities, virtues* and *affections* in his humanity.¹⁷³ He is the perfected humanity, the Second Adam, now fulfilling all the commission given by the Father’s decree from his seated authority at the Father’s right hand.

WLC Question 41: Why was our Mediator called Jesus?

Answer: Our Mediator was called Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins.

Christ’s resurrection-as-his-justification is linked to elect believers’ justification *by faith in* the resurrection.¹⁷⁴ Christ’s resurrection-as-his-sanctification is linked to elect believers’ sanctification *by faith in* the resurrection.¹⁷⁵

5.1.9 PRACTICE THE METHODS TO RECEIVE THE BENEFITS OF CHRIST’S MEDITATION

Question 153: What does God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?

Answer: That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requires of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.

Question 154: What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation?

Answer: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his mediation, are all his ordinances; especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation.

Question 162: What is a sacrament?

Answer: A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his church, to signify, seal, and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace, the benefits of his mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces; to oblige them to obedience; to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another; and to distinguish them from those that are without.

¹⁷³ 1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 1:3-4; 10:9-10; 8:11-13

¹⁷⁴ Rom. 4:24-25; 10:9-10

¹⁷⁵ Rom. 6 & 8; Col. 3:1-17

Question 178: What is prayer?

Answer: Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

Question 179: Are we to pray unto God only?

Answer: God only being able to search the hearts, hear the requests, pardon the sins, and fulfil the desires of all; and only to be believed in, and worshiped with religious worship; prayer, which is a special part thereof, is to be made by all to him alone, and to none other.

Question 180: What is it to pray in the name of Christ?

Answer: To pray in the name of Christ is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake; not by bare mentioning of his name, but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation.

Question 181: Why are we to pray in the name of Christ?

Answer: The sinfulness of man, and his distance from God by reason thereof, being so great, as that we can have no access into his presence without a mediator; and there being none in heaven or earth appointed to, or fit for, that glorious work but Christ alone, we are to pray in no other name but his only.

Question 182: How does the Spirit help us to pray?

Answer: We not knowing: What to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helps our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and: What, and: How prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces which are requisite for the right performance of that duty.

5.1.10 APPLYING COVENANT-RELATIONAL AFFECTIONS TO OUR TRIUNE LORD

Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man?

Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.

WLC 1 means that we glorify and enjoy Christ, the God-man, as our mediator forever, which is our 1st C duty.

Each commandment defining our duty to God (1st – 4th Cs) also defines our duty to Christ, the God-man, our mediator in the new covenant of grace.

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-Lord** (1st C) , requiring faith and obedience to this Triune God. Our highest allegiance belongs to his majesty. He is preeminent in all our thoughts and all our worship. We are jealous for his glory. WLC 103-106

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-covenantal** (2nd C): all proper worship must be to the Father, Son and Spirit, offered in the name of Christ as mediator of the new covenant, asking for the help of the Spirit to perform our duties and resist sin. These broader requirements are given more specific application in WLC 107–10, focusing on what defines proper corporate worship. WLC 107-110

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-blessing** (3rd C) requiring the proper use of the name of the Lord, namely, to receive blessings in the Triune name of the Lord, Father, Son and Spirit (Gen. 12:2; Num. 6:24-27; Ps. 5:12; 29:11). In our hearts and with our mouths, we honor and bless his holy name, Father, Son and Spirit (Ps. 16:7; 103:1-2; Rev. 5:11-14), to pray and worship in his name (John 14:13-14; Eph. 5:20), and to give blessings in his name to others (Gen. 27:7; 28:1-4; 49:28; Deut. 33; Ps. 72:17; Matt. 28:19). WLC 111-114

Lex Christi virtue: **pro-theosynchrony** (4th C, Sabbath rest): WLC 115–21, which focuses on the observance of the Lord's Day.

5.1.11 RESEARCH HEBREWS

Hebrews 7:24 but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. **25** Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. **26** For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

Hebrews 9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) **12** he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, **14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. **15** Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, **23** and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, **24** and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. . . . **28** Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe **13:1** Let brotherly love continue. **13:15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. **16** Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

5.1.12 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness: We forget the saving and keeping power of his interceding priesthood (Heb. 7:25). We have not listened to and obeyed Jesus as authoritative apostle, priest and mediator of the covenant of grace (Heb. 1:2; 2:3; 3:1, 6; 4:2). We harden our hearts and stop believing and obeying his Word (Heb. 12:25; 3:7-12). We grow weary and fainthearted in the Lord's disciplining through persecution (Heb. 12:3-5). We fear man and imagine that God has forsaken us (Heb. 13:5-6). We become discontent, bitter and disobey the duties of the moral law to avoid persecution (Heb. 12:15-16; 13:5; Deut. 29:18; Matt. 7:16-18).*

- B. *Health: united to Christ in the covenant of grace, we have learned the significance of his mediation. He teaches us that our sins are forgiven by his blood (Heb. 9:12, 14; 12:24). He teaches us confidence to draw near to the throne of grace to receive mercy for our sins and find strengthening grace to obey the moral law in time of need (Heb. 4:16; 10:21-25; 12:12-14). He teaches us perseverance in moral law holiness, even if persecuted (Heb. 4:14; 12:1-14; 13:1-17).*

5.2 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

5.2.1 RECKON YOURSELF AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *According to Hebrews 7:24-26; 9:11-15 and 12:22-24, 28, what benefits do believers receive from Jesus Christ, the mediator?*
- B. *What responses should we have to this mediation of Christ (Heb. 12:28; 13:1-17)? How can you categorize these responses according to the moral law?*

5.2.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

Use the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name.

- A. *For reassurance, give some examples of how you have already experienced the benefits of Christ as mediator and how you are properly responding to Christ as mediator by obedience to the moral law, for yourself and your families.*
- B. *What are some weaknesses in relation to knowing the benefits of Christ's mediation or responding in moral law obedience that need to be reformed? What sins need to be removed, either unbelief in his mediation (2nd C sin) or sins against other moral laws?*
- C. *How is the assembly of God's people helping you to know Christ as mediator and respond with applications of the moral law? How could they give you more help than you are currently receiving?*

SECTION SIX: UNION WITH CHRIST IN THE COVENANT OF GRACE

6.1 BENEFITS OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE

6.1.1 RESEARCH HOW CHRIST MERITED OUR BENEFITS IN THE COVENANT OF WORKS

The structure of this discipleship curriculum highlights the Westminster Confession 2:2 on how God reveals his glory *to, upon, in, and by* his creatures, especially men and angels. Through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, we can see God's glory perfectly represented in the face of Christ (2 Cor. 4:6; 3:18). The supremacy-attributes of the Trinity are imparted in their complete derivative sense to the humanity of Jesus Christ, as he received the Holy Spirit without measure.¹⁷⁶ The resurrection is the climax of how that glory was declared *upon* or *on* Christ, proving he possessed the perfection of the derivative attributes and fulfilled the law because it was written on his heart. Christ Jesus was justified, adopted and sanctified through his resurrection from the dead. "Justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification as applied to believers are derived from the significance of the resurrection for Christ. . . . Justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification as applied to Christ are not separate distinct acts. Rather each describes different . . . aspects of the *one act* of being raised from the dead."¹⁷⁷ "Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, *justified by the Spirit*, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Tim. 3:16). Christ was adopted by his resurrection. "And was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 1:4). Christ was sanctified by his resurrection. "We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God" (Rom. 6:9-10). Christ was glorified by his resurrection. "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:49).

The divine Trinity's *covenant-reconciliation attributes* were poured out *on* Christ's humanity, also on behalf of his elect, through raising Christ by the Spirit to the right hand of glory. This is Christ's justification, in the sense that it proved his sinlessness. The resurrection proved that he completely displayed the derivative *abilities, virtues and affections* in his humanity.¹⁷⁸ He is the perfected humanity, the Second Adam, now fulfilling all the commission given by the Father's decree from his seated authority at the Father's right hand.

¹⁷⁶ John 3:34

¹⁷⁷ See Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Resurrection and Redemption: A Study in Paul's Soteriology*, 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1987), 114-127.

¹⁷⁸ 1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 1:3-4; 10:9-10; 8:11-13

6.1.2 RESEARCH THE BENEFITS OF UNION WITH CHRIST

Question 32: How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?

Answer: The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provides and offers to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promises and gives his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he has appointed them to salvation.

Question 57: What benefits has Christ procured by his mediation?

Answer: Christ, by his mediation, has procured redemption, with all other benefits of the covenant of grace.

Question 64: What is the invisible church?

Answer: The invisible church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head.

Question 65: What special benefits do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ?

Answer: The members of the invisible church by Christ enjoy union and communion with him in grace and glory.

Question 66: What is that union which the elect have with Christ?

Answer: The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace, whereby they are spiritually and mystically, yet really and inseparably, joined to Christ as their head and husband; which is done in their effectual calling.

Question 67: What is effectual calling?

Answer: Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace, whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto) he does, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his Word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.

Question 68: Are the elect only effectually called?

Answer: All the elect, and they only, are effectually called; although others may be, and often are, outwardly called by the ministry of the Word, and have some common operations of the Spirit; who, for their willful neglect and contempt of the grace offered to them, being justly left in their unbelief, do never truly come to Jesus Christ.

Question 69: What is the communion in grace which the members of the invisible church have with Christ?

Answer: The communion in grace which the members of the invisible church have with Christ, is their partaking of the virtue of his mediation, in their justification, adoption, sanctification, and: Whatever else, in this life, manifests their union with him.

Question 70: What is justification?

Answer: Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardons all their sins, accepts and accounts their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.

Question 71: How is justification an act of God's free grace?

Answer: Although Christ, by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in the behalf of them that are justified; yet inasmuch as God accepts the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them, and did provide this surety, his own only Son, imputing his righteousness to them, and requiring nothing of them for their justification but faith, which also is his gift, their justification is to them of free grace.

Question 72: What is justifying faith?

Answer: Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assents to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but receives and rests upon Christ and his righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

Question 73: How does faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?

Answer: Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it, nor as if the grace of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification; but only as it is an instrument by which he receives and applies Christ and his righteousness.

Question 74: What is adoption?

Answer: Adoption is an act of the free grace of God, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, whereby all those that are justified are received into the number of his children, have his name put upon them, the Spirit of his Son given to them, are under his fatherly care and dispensations, admitted to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, made heirs of all the promises, and fellow heirs with Christ in glory.

Question 75: What is sanctification?

Answer: Sanctification is a work of God's grace, whereby they whom God has, before the foundation of the world, chosen to be holy, are in time, through the powerful operation of his Spirit applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them, renewed in their whole man after the image of God; having the seeds of repentance unto life, and all other saving graces, put into their hearts, and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened, as that they more and more die unto sin, and rise unto newness of life.

Question 76: What is repentance unto life?

Answer: Repentance unto life is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby, out of the sight and sense, not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, and upon the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, he so grieves for and hates his sins, as that he turns from them all to God, purposing and endeavoring constantly to walk with him in all the ways of new obedience.

NOTE: the covenant-enmity affections are useful to understand repentance (grief and hatred for sins), that is leading to new life, to walking after God in new obedience as expressions of the covenant-reconciliation affections (love for, and joy in God and his truth).

Question 77: Wherein do justification and sanctification differ?

Answer: Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification, yet they differ, in that God in justification imputes the righteousness of Christ; in sanctification his Spirit infuses grace, and enables to the exercise thereof; in the former, sin is pardoned; in the other, it is subdued: the one does equally free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation; the other is neither equal in all, nor in this life perfect in any, but growing up to perfection.

Question 78: Whence arises the imperfection of sanctification in believers?

Answer: The imperfection of sanctification in believers arises from the remnants of sin abiding in every part of them, and the perpetual lustings of the flesh against the spirit; whereby they are often foiled with temptations, and fall into many sins, are hindered in all their spiritual services, and their best works are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God.

Question 79: May not true believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace ?

Answer: True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God, and his decree and covenant to give them perseverance, their inseparable union with Christ, his continual intercession for them, and the Spirit and seed of God abiding in them, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Question 80: Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation?

Answer: Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavor to walk in all good conscience before him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation.

Question 81: Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in the estate of grace, and that they shall be saved?

Answer: Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it; and, after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions; yet are they never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.

Question 82: What is the communion in glory which the members of the invisible church have with Christ?

Answer: The communion in glory which the members of the invisible church have with Christ, is in this life, immediately after death, and at last perfected at the resurrection and day of judgment.

Question 83: What is the communion in glory with Christ which the members of the invisible church enjoy in this life?

Answer: The members of the invisible church have communicated to them in this life the firstfruits of glory with Christ, as they are members of him their head, and so in him are interested in that glory which he is fully possessed of; and, as an earnest thereof, enjoy the sense of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and hope of glory; as, on the contrary, sense of God's revenging wrath, horror of conscience, and a fearful expectation of judgment, are to the wicked the beginning of their torments which they shall endure after death.

6.1.3 RESEARCH WLC USING SYMPHONIC PERSPECTIVES

Notice the similarities with the WLC section above and the symphonic *lex Christi* perspective. The *symphonic lex Christi* perspective means the recurring *lex Christi* motif, most commonly summarized by the terms righteousness or unrighteousness (also includes holiness, godliness, good works and sinfulness), throughout the topics of Westminster's systematic and practical theology. WLC also provides a *lex Christi* integrating motif that helps explain the God's providence over the OT-NT biblical narrative and various aspects of systematic and practical theology. It can also be used to explain the luxuriant complexities of every created thing in the universe, each with *lex Christi* reflected *on, in and by* it.

To represent the *symphonic lex Christi* motif I use an icon of the DNA helix representing righteousness. When we first grasp the integrative unity of the biblical *lex Christi* motif (chapter 3) as a revelation of the glory of God, we begin to notice its replication in the structure of the created universe and in the biblical narrative. This motif recurs in infinitely complex patterns, integrated into the full scope of systematic theological topics (see below) as well as within the patterns of the created world and its natural environment (see chap. 10).

The following provides a summary for biblical doctrine and history. Scripture trains in righteousness. The LORD is righteous. The LORD elects some men to righteousness. The LORD creates Adam righteous and gives him His entire righteous law in Eden. The LORD permits man's fall into unrighteousness, and passes by some, leaving them in their unrighteousness unto final judgment. The LORD promises Christ, the Righteous offspring of the woman, who come incarnate to fulfill righteousness as the second Adam. Though effectual call by the Word and Spirit, believers are united to Christ to commune with him in grace and glory. We are credited with *lex Christi* righteousness in justification, imparted with *lex Christi* wisdom in sanctification, appropriating the means of grace in communion with the saints to exemplify, proclaim, intercede and administrate these *lex Christi* virtues in all assemblies of two or more. The LORD leads his church to discipline according to *lex Christi*. The saints hope for a perfected *lex Christi* world and relationships in glorification. The LORD consummates judgment on unrighteousness and eternally prepares a home of righteousness in the new heavens, new earth, while hell is the application of justice, a place filled with the total chaos of an anti-*lex Christi* environment.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ See the author's PhD thesis 2.2.3 for the specific symphonic WCF patterns cited and adapted in 4.7 with biblical texts. See a related article highlighting two theologians who use this perspective after the Westminster Standards were published, Richard Muller, "The Covenant of Works and the Stability of the Divine Law in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Orthodoxy: A Study in the Theology of Herman Witsius and Wilhelmus A Brakel," *Calvin Theological Journal*, 29 (1994): 75-101.

Details of the Symphonic *Lex Christi* Perspective

The dominion of the righteous LORD (DRL) for the elect, could be expounded using this detailed symphonic *lex Christi* outline below into which *righteousness* (as explained by the *lex Christi* motif) is the repeated refrain. Footnotes provide links to Scripture, WCF, WLC and other supportive sources. This adaptation makes the integrative patterns more obvious as an aid to teachers and students of all ages.¹⁸⁰ This motif was already highlighted in WCF comparisons in chapter 2, but with a great diversity of biblical terms. The key contribution of this outline is to *unify the language* of systematic theology and pastoral practice around the righteousness motif, potentially transforming our understanding of God and our place in the world, reducing dualism that separates faith and life by providing a grand unifying theory (GUT).

1. **Scripture trains in righteousness:** *Scripture reveals God's righteousness and trains in righteousness:*¹⁸¹ revealed to man in history by special revelation, his holy Word,¹⁸² and for interpreting general revelation, leading the saints to saving faith.
2. **The LORD is righteous:** *The supremely glorious Triune LORD revealing himself.*
3. **Election to righteousness:** *election to righteousness:* all glory be given to the righteous Triune LORD revealed in his kingly dominion,¹⁸³ the Father who by grace alone decreed the fall while righteously choosing his elect in Christ by the Spirit for royal-law-righteousness and justly passing by the rest in their sins.¹⁸⁴
4. **The LORD creates man righteous:** *created righteous:* creating man in his image to rule over the earth,¹⁸⁵ writing the royal law of Christ on his heart to receive creation ordinances as perfect rule of righteousness.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁰ For example, the author used a similar outline to develop a communicant's class for teens preparing for church membership in the PCA using the BCO 57-5 five membership questions, also used to prepare to baptism for those not baptized as infants, and to prepare for taking communion, which, according to feedback received, was immensely helpful in providing students with a integrative way to understand the Bible. See "Youth Foundations Communicants Class pptx" at <https://bethoumyvision.net/resources-en/>

¹⁸¹ 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 5:13. The *lex Christi* motif integrates with the doctrine of Scripture, since the law itself reflects and performs the righteousness it commands, when appreciated through union with Christ by the Spirit. 1st C: the *lex Christi* is pure, perfect, clean, supreme as epistemic truth criterion for all other knowledge, the law is God-breathed, God-written on tablets of the human heart and conscience. 2nd C: The *lex Christi* is part of the covenant that the LORD makes with man. 3rd C: The *lex Christi* uses the name of the LORD properly and is a true witness to men about God's honor and blessedness. 4th C: The *lex Christi* is used for ordering our times, reading-hearing-resting on the Sabbath/LORD's Day and for working on the six days of labor. 5th C: The *lex Christi* is the authority that all human authorities must use to teach, reprove, correct and train in righteousness, that which those under authority must obey and that standard of righteousness which equals must mutually encourage. 6th C: The *lex Christi* is life-promoting and protecting, the bread by which we live. 7th C: The *lex Christi* is a marriage license between God and his people. 8th C: The *lex Christi* is provided by the LORD on written tablets, scrolls and hearts he created, preserved in all eternity. 9th C: The *lex Christi* is the witness of truth to men about themselves and one another. 10th C: The *lex Christi* is soul-satisfying, causing men to love, rejoice and meditate on it day and night. See chapter 3.4.1-3, 3.5.1-2.

¹⁸² WCF 16:1; Ps. 119:160

¹⁸³ 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.

¹⁸⁴ 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 LORD's rule over his kingdom.

¹⁸⁵ Gen. 1:26; Acts 17:25-26; Eph. 4:24; WCF 4:2; 6:2

¹⁸⁶ For details see *Westminster Foundations* Chapter 11; WCF 4:2; 19:1-2

5. **The LORD permits man's fall into unrighteousness** (original sin): Adam disobeyed and fell into bondage to sin, the LORD permitting the fall for the display of his righteousness and condemning sin due to lack of conformity to royal-law-righteousness.¹⁸⁷
6. **Righteous One promised:** Gospel promises proclaimed after the fall.¹⁸⁸
7. **Righteous covenant renewed:** refreshed the creation ordinances' perfect rule of righteousness in the royal law¹⁸⁹ and the evident historical inability of all men in Adam to perfect royal law righteousness.¹⁹⁰
8. **Righteousness accomplished:** fulfilled in the second Adam, Christ's Gospel ministry, who as LORD, establishes an eternal kingdom of righteousness by uniting his elect kingdom citizen-priests and ambassadors under his dominion by saving faith¹⁹¹
 - a. the Son, as second person of the Trinity, fully God with all the supremacy-attributes,¹⁹²
 - b. taking full humanity upon himself, as Christ, filled with the Spirit to fulfil royal-law-righteousness, the *lex Christi*,¹⁹³
 - c. enduring the passion and crucifixion, suffering the wrath and curses of the law for Gospel propitiation on behalf of the moral-law unrighteousness of the elect,¹⁹⁴
 - d. raised and exalted to the Father's right hand with all authority.¹⁹⁵
9. **Righteousness applied to practical theology (PT) and pastoral practice (examples):**
 - a. By the decree of the Father, Christ sends the righteous Spirit to apply election, work saving faith through effectual calling (WLC 67),
 - b. convicting the elect of all *lex Christi* unrighteousness unto repentance for forgiveness of sins through Christ's propitiation¹⁹⁶ to flee from the danger of being under God's cursed wrath (WLC 27), and his threat of hell's justice (WLC 29), mourning our experience of the punishments (WLC 28) and aggravations of sin (WLC 151) from this

¹⁸⁷ 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. For details see *Westminster Foundations*, Chapter II. As with WLC 151, and because of the interdependence of the moral law, any one sin usually breaks multiple commandments, such that failure to fear and trust the LORD and worship him in biblically defined ways leads to many other sins against man, or conversely, any unmortified discontentment, unthankfulness, grumbling, complaining or lust can lead to breaking other commandments (see Jas. 2:10; 1 Tim. 6:9-10; 1 Cor. 10:6-12).

¹⁸⁸ 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

¹⁸⁹ WCF 6:6; 15:2; 19:2; Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:1-21; Rom. 7:12

¹⁹⁰ Rom. 9:31; 10:3; 2 Cor. 3:9; Gal. 2:21; Phil 3:9; Tit. 3:5

¹⁹¹ 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; 5:17-19; 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

¹⁹² WCF 8:2; John 1:1; 4:10; 8:24, 58; 14:1; 20:28

¹⁹³ 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.

¹⁹⁴ WCF 8:4-5; Matt. 27: 11, 37; Rom. 3:25-26; Col. 1:20-23; Pet. 3:18

¹⁹⁵ Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:31-36

¹⁹⁶ 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*." I 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.

fallen world, others' sins and Satan, hating and grieving the corruption and offensiveness (WLC 76) of our original sin in Adam (WLC 25-26), and our personal contribution to our own and others' experience of the punishments (WLC 28) and aggravations (WLC 151) of *lex Christi* sins

- i. against communion with God (1st-3rd Cs; WLC 27),
 - ii. against our own and others' work and rest, against biblical views of history (4th C),
 - iii. against roles of authority, submission and equality (5th C)
 - iv. against life (6th C)
 - v. against one-man-one-woman marriage (7th C)
 - vi. against property and resources (8th C)
 - vii. against reputations (9th C)
 - viii. against virtuous desires (10th C)
- c) crediting Christ's *lex Christi* righteousness in justification,¹⁹⁷ all ten aspects of *lex Christi* righteousness, now with declared . . .
- i. access to behold the Lord's glory, as in a darkened mirror¹⁹⁸
 - ii. access to communion with Christ by the Spirit¹⁹⁹
 - iii. with God's name, as God's city name, and Christ's name written on us (3rd C)²⁰⁰
 - iv. entrance into spiritual rest from our labors (4th C)²⁰¹
 - v. adopted to sonship from every nation, joined to our brother-sister family as equals, initiating the healing of enmity between nations by ruling over them (5th C)²⁰²
 - vi. right to eat from the tree of life, the hidden manna (6th C)²⁰³
 - vii. married to Christ, clothed in white wedding garments (7th C)²⁰⁴
 - viii. co-heirs with Christ (8th C)²⁰⁵
 - ix. written names in the book of life, confessed as worthy before the Father (9th C)²⁰⁶
 - x. hunger and thirst for righteousness is satisfied; built as a permanent pillar in the temple of God (10th C)²⁰⁷
- d) writing *lex Christi* righteousness on the sanctified hearts of the elect from among all nations,²⁰⁸ that they may pursue righteousness as a visible church, a kingdom of priests,²⁰⁹

¹⁹⁷ WCF 11:1-2; 14:2; Ps. 106:31; Isa. 53:11; Rom. 3:22-31; 4:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 13, 22-25; 5:17-21; 8:4; 9:30; 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9; 2 Tim. 2:8

¹⁹⁸ 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 13:12

¹⁹⁹ 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 12:22-24; John 1:14; 14:6; Rev. 3:20; 22:3-4; 1st C and 2nd C, respectively

²⁰⁰ Rev. 3:12, 3rd C

²⁰¹ Heb. 4:3

²⁰² Rom. 8:14-16; Gal. 4:4-6; 2 Cor. 6:18; Matt. 12:50; Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 21:7

²⁰³ Rev. 2:7, 17

²⁰⁴ Rev. 3:4-5, 18; Eph. 5:24-27; for allusions to white garments in marriage and weddings, see Eccles. 9:7-9; Matt. 22:11-12

²⁰⁵ Gal. 4:7; Rom. 8:17

²⁰⁶ Rev. 3:5

²⁰⁷ Matt. 5:6; Rev. 3:12

²⁰⁸ WCF 11:5; 13:1, 3; 16:2; Rom. 8:4, 10; Heb. 8:10; 10:16

²⁰⁹ 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

rewarding the righteous,²¹⁰ keeping them in saving faith by their mutual support²¹¹ and the ministry of elect angels.²¹² Exercise the grace of the new covenant (WLC 32) to . . .

- i. *behold the Lord's glory, as in a darkened mirror (1st C)*²¹³
 - a) Practical theology of symphonic persons revealing symphonic attributes.
- ii. *commune with the Father through Christ by the Spirit in grace and glory (2nd C)*²¹⁴
 - a. Practical theology of prayer.²¹⁵
- iii. *live like God's name, as God's city name, and Christ's name are written on us (3rd C)*²¹⁶
 - a) Practical theology of evangelism, missions, apologetics proclaiming God's name as ambassadors and other diaspora ministries.²¹⁷
- iv. *enter into spiritual rest from our labors daily (4th C)*²¹⁸
 - a) Practical theology of LORD'S Day worship,²¹⁹ partaking of righteous signs and seals of the covenant of grace.²²⁰
- v. *live like holy sons from every nation, without fear of condemnation or Fatherly discipline, joined to our brother-sister family as equals, ruling over nations (5th C)*²²¹
 - a) Practical theology of preaching, teaching, counseling, small groups, Sunday school.
 - b) Practical theology of church government administering church discipline to guard righteousness by his appointed righteous elders.²²²
 - c) Practical theology of family and youth; adoption.²²³
- vi. *eat from the tree of life, the hidden manna, know that we have eternal life (6th C)*²²⁴
 - b. Practical theology of peacemaking.²²⁵
 - c. Practical theology of health care (psychiatric medicines, birth control methods, in vitro fertilization, elderly care and end of life issues).
- vii. *enjoy marriage to Christ, submitting to him to purify our garments (7th C)*²²⁶
 - a) Practical theology of gender and marriage.
- viii. *co-heirs with Christ, as the meek who begin to inherit the earth (8th C)*²²⁷
 - a) Practical theology of natural world stewardship.
 - b) Practical theology of marketplace ministry.

²¹⁰ 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; Isa. 32:17; 54:14; 58:8; 60:17; 1 Pet. 3:12

²¹¹ 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

²¹² Matt. 28:18-20 (presumably the Great Commission is the primary duty of the elect angels to elect humanity); 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

²¹³ 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 13:12

²¹⁴ WLC 69, 82, 83; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 12:22-24; John 1:14; 14:6; Eph. 2:18; Rev. 3:20; 22:3-4

²¹⁵ WCF 14:1; 21:3-4; Matt. 6:9-13

²¹⁶ Rev. 3:12, 3rd C

²¹⁷ 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

²¹⁸ Heb. 4:3

²¹⁹ WCF 21:7-8; Exod. 20:8

²²⁰ WCF 14:1; 27:1

²²¹ Heb. 12:7-14; Rom. 8:1, 14-16, 34; Gal. 4:4-6; 2 Cor. 6:18; Matt. 12:50; Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 21:7

²²² WCF 20:4; 30:2-3; Acts 20:28-31; 2 Cor. 6:7; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9

²²³ WCF 24:2-3; Gen. 1:28; Ps. 8:2; 127:3-5; Mal. 2:15; 4:6; Luke 1:17; Matt 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:14; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 6:1-4; Proverbs

²²⁴ 1 John 5:13; Rev. 2:7, 17

²²⁵ Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:14-21; 2 Cor. 5:18-21

²²⁶ Rev. 3:4-5, 18; Eph. 5:24-27; for allusions to white garments in marriage and weddings, see Eccles. 9:7-9; Matt. 22:11-12

²²⁷ Gal. 4:7; Rom. 8:17; Matt. 5:5

- ix. *make our calling and election sure as those with reputational integrity who bear faithful witness to others* (9th C)²²⁸
 - a) Practical theology of journalism and church history.²²⁹
 - x. *thankful and content in all that God provides* (10th C)²³⁰
 - a) Practical theology of the soul: conscience, heart, and mind.
- 2) **Righteousness consummated:** *the righteous promises of God are all fulfilled* in righteous judgments and rewards:
- a. raising the souls of the elect, who die before his second coming, to perfection in righteousness until their bodies are raised,²³¹
 - b. returning to glorify the elect by conquering the last enemy of death, raising their bodies in perfected moral-law-righteousness, to dwell forever with the him and the elect angels in the renewed kingdom-creation of righteousness,²³² and to destroy all other unrighteous rule, power and authority, righteously judging the wicked by turning all his supremacy attributes to curse them forever, and delivers the perfectly righteous, moral-law submissive kingdom to the Father.²³³
 - i. we shall “see his face” (1st C) . . .
 - ii. “worship him” (2nd C) . . .
 - iii. “have his name on [our] foreheads.” (3rd C)²³⁴
 - iv. we shall enter his work-rest in the creation rhythms of days, weeks, months, seasons and years (4th C)²³⁵
 - v. joined our brother-sister family as harmonious co-rulers, enjoying the healed enmity between nations (5th C)²³⁶
 - vi. forever living in the abundant food-water, life sustaining new heavens and new earth with a physical home (6th C)²³⁷
 - vii. married to Christ (7th C)²³⁸
 - viii. given stewardship over lands and cities with control over the wealth of the nations (8th C)²³⁹
 - ix. honored with the testimony of our reputations, ‘giving them crowns of righteousness,’ (9th C)²⁴⁰
 - x. satisfied with all we need (10th C)²⁴¹

²²⁸ 2 Pet. 1:3-11; Rev. 3:5

²²⁹ Heb. 12:1-4; 13:7; Dan. 2:44; Matt 16:18

²³⁰ 1 Tim. 6:6-10; Phil. 4:11-13; Heb. 13:5-6; Matt. 5:6; Rev. 3:12

²³¹ WCF 32:1; Heb. 12:23

²³² WCF 33:2; Dan. 7:18, 22, 27; Matt. 13:43; 25:46; 2 Pet. 3:13

²³³ 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; 21:8

²³⁴ Rev. 22:3-4

²³⁵ Rev. 22:2; 14:13; 6:11; Christ fulfills the patterns of time as Jerusalem’s light (eternal daylight, Isa. 60:19-20; Rev. 21:23-25; 22:5). However, the time-patterns and signs of stars, sun, moon, seasons, day and night, weekly rhythms, Sabbaths, and years will remain the same: months are still marked by new fruit, the heavenly bodies will remain forever fixed. (Rev. 22:2, 5; 21:23-24; Gen. 1:14-18; Ps. 89:35-37; 104:19; Isa. 60:11; Jer. 31:35-36). “From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD,” (Isa 66:23).

²³⁶ Rev. 22:2, 5; Rev. 21:2; Matt. 22:30; 12:50; the number of God’s children is completed and the will be earth filled Matthew 22:30; Rev. 21:2, 9-27; 14:1-5; 19:7-9; Genesis 1:28; 15:5; 22:17; 32:12

²³⁷ Rev. 2:7; 21:3, 6; 22:2

²³⁸ Rev. 21:2

²³⁹ Rev. 21:1-3, 24-26; Matt. 5:5; 19:29; Luke 19:17

²⁴⁰ The saints’ reputation of faith and good works are written in the Lamb’s book of life and truthful testimony about them is given for proof of their salvation, Rev. 3:5; 20:15; 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Gal. 5:5; 2 Tim. 4:8

²⁴¹ Rev. 21:6, 22-23, 24, 26; 2:7

Significance of this Perspective

Why is this perspective important in biblical counseling? First, this perspective prevents the legalistic application of the other perspectives. Everything we are commanded to do in the moral law is an exercise of the grace received in the symphonic *lex Christi* perspective. The work of Christ and the Spirit intimately integrate the *lex Christi*, such that faith-union with Christ applies the *lex Christi* righteousness required to see God.²⁴²

Second, this perspective provides a unifying structural motif for understanding the biblical history of redemption and the integration of systematic and practical theology. All ages of believers can understand this repeated pattern. Though WCF 7:2-3 also uses covenants as a unifying motif, the detailed structure of that covenant of works is *lex Christi* righteousness—failed by the first Adam and fulfilled by the second Adam (Rom. 5:12-21). Because he accomplished this active righteousness, the covenant of grace can be applied as the Spirit effectually calls to saving faith in his death for forgiveness and dying to sin and his resurrection for credited righteousness and vivification of the *lex Christi* life.²⁴³

Third, this perspective provides Westminster motif for integrating systematic and practical theology. Notice that the outline structure above unifies the phrasing of the various systematic theological doctrines of Scripture, God, man, Christ, salvation, the visible church and the Last Things. Within the application of *lex Christi* righteousness by the Spirit in the visible church, various topics of practical theology have been itemized, including church history, church ministries, family and counseling ministries, marketplace ministries, evangelism and apologetics. Each of these are applications of the details of the moral law duties and prohibitions (WLC 91-152), and their extrapolations to the duties and prohibitions for those who administrate and those who receive the ministries of the Word, sacraments and prayer (WLC 153-196).



²⁴² 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 8:10-12; 10:16; 12:14; Rom. 8:1-4; Tit. 2:11-14; WLC 65-69

²⁴³ Rom. 1:2-6; 4:24-25; 6:1-21; 8:1-16; 10:9-10; Acts 2:33; Gal. 3:5-14, 23-29; WLC 31-32, 69-81

Figure 9: Symphonic *Lex Christi* perspective

Fourth, based on the themes above in d) writing *lex Christi* righteousness on the sanctified hearts of the elect from among all nations, we can formulate a new definition of the blessings of sanctification.

Q: What are the blessings of *lex Christi* (moral law) obedience in this life?

A: In this world still under the creational-providential post-fall curses, all blessings²⁴⁴ related to restoration of Christ's *lex Christi* rule in us and in the entire creation are sourced from the Father and come to us through mediate representatives. Exact representatives are Christ, the Spirit and God's Word, approximate representatives are creation order, angels, man, creatures. These blessings are inward, in the soul, such as mutually synergistic peace of conscience toward God and his law in union with Christ, adoption to sonship, spiritual discernment, renewed holy affections and hope of glory (1st-3rd Cs).²⁴⁵ These blessings are outward, in the multi-sensory body, experiencing material-relational blessings in time-space synchronies (4th C), physical bodies (6th C), material resources on a portion of this earth (8th C), relationships (5th authority-submission; 7th C discipleship, family) and reputations (9th C). We respond to these inward and outward glory-blessings revealed *to* us, *on* us, and *in* us with a legitimate derivative happiness that must be disciplined with thankful contentment (10th C). These all combine to nurture our chief and highest purposes to glorify and enjoy God (1st-3rd Cs; WLC 1). Further, these blessings must be reflected by us to others, while awaiting their eternal perfection in the new heavens and new earth and the removal of the punishments of sin in this world.

6.1.4 RESEARCH ROMANS

By the covenant of grace, the Spirit regenerates the elect to faith, with the specific content that the Father forgives their sins through believing that the He accepted the merits of Christ's Spirit-empowered propitiation on their behalf, counts them as righteous and adopts them as children through believing that the Father raised Christ from the dead by the Spirit.²⁴⁶ Through elect believer's union with the resurrected Christ by the Spirit in the visible church, the obedience of our faith is vivified, (called sanctification), applying the power of his death to sin to our sin and the power of his living for righteousness to our obedience.²⁴⁷

Rom 1:1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, **2** which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, **3** concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh **4** and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, **5** through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, **6** including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, **7** To all those in

²⁴⁴ WCF 19:6 captures this nuance exactly by identifying 'what blessings we may expect from moral law obedience under the covenant of grace,' as stated explicitly in the Decalogue: "showing steadfast love to [us]" (2nd C), and "that [our] days may be long, and that it may go well with [us] in the land that the LORD [our] God is giving [us]," (5th C to honor father and mother) (Deut. 5:10, 16; Eph. 6:1-3), also citing spiritual, relational and material blessings in Leviticus 26:1-13.

²⁴⁵ WLC 83 explanation of 'communion with Christ in glory in this life' has some parallels with the inward blessings noted above: "The members of the invisible church . . . enjoy the sense of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy [Spirit], and hope of glory . . ."

²⁴⁶ Heb. 9:14 "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God." Rom. 1:4-5; 3:25-26; 4:24-25; 8:15-16; 10:9-10

²⁴⁷ Rom. 6 & 8; Col. 3:1-17

Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 3:21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— **22** the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **25** whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. **26** It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Rom 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Heb 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. **11** If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. **12** So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. **13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **14** For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. **15** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" **16** The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Rom 10:9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

6.1.5 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*: trusting in self-help methods of psychology and humanism to change and grow in discipleship. Failing to exercise true repentance for the various aspects of sin. Failing to appropriate the freedom and joy of these salvation realities by living in self-pity, guilt, depression, self-condemnation for sins and mistakes (Rom. 8:1). Rehearsing bitterness and remembering sins in order to condemn others whom Christ has forgiven (2 Cor. 5:16-17; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15). Failure to notice the blessings that *lex Christi* righteousness brings and praise God for them.
- B. *Health*: The only method for real inward and outward change into the likeness of Christ in obedience to the duties of the moral law is by union and communion with Christ in grace and glory in the visible church. You daily experience the symphonic *lex Christi*, *the repeated refrain of righteousness*, such as repentance from sin into freedom from sin's condemning guilt and freedom

from sin's power, receiving justification as the declarative aspect *lex Christi* righteousness, living in the blessed experiential joy of moral law obedience, and hoping for the future fulfillment of *lex Christi* righteousness. You reflect mercy to all whom Christ has given his Spirit (*covenant-reconciliation affections; Acts 15:8-11*).

6.2 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

6.2.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *In your own words, briefly state the benefits you have received in union and communion with Christ.*
- B. *Summarize the Romans texts above (6.1.4) to explain definitions of repentance, justification and sanctification.*
- C. *Compare the symphonic *lex Christi* in relation to WLC's definitions of repentance, justification and sanctification. Do these symphonic details help you to appreciate the deeper meaning of these doctrines?*
- D. *Does the new definition of the blessings of obedience help motivate your daily Christian life?*
- E. *How do these truths help you in your own Christian life and help you in discipling others?*
- F. *Have these truths been exemplified, proclaimed, interceded and administrated by your families?*

6.2.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *For reassurance, give some examples of how you are growing to experience union with Christ in grace and glory, for yourself and your family.*
- B. *What are some weaknesses that need to be reformed or sins that need to be removed?*
- C. *How is the assembly of God's people helping you to experience union and communion with Christ in grace and glory? How could they give you more help than you are currently receiving?*

SECTION SEVEN: INTRODUCTION TO MORAL LAW, LOVING GOD

7.1 OUR MORAL LAW DUTIES IN RESPONSE TO CHRIST'S MEDIATION

Question 92: What did God at first reveal unto man as the rule of his obedience?

Answer: The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, besides a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.

Question 93: What is the moral law?

Answer: The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding everyone to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he owes to God and man: promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.

Question 94: Is there any use of the moral law to man since the fall?

Answer: Although no man, since the fall, can attain to righteousness and life by the moral law; yet there is great use thereof, as well common to all men, as peculiar either to the unregenerate, or the regenerate.

Question 95: Of what use is the moral law to all men?

Answer: The moral law is of use to all men, to inform them of the holy nature and will of God, and of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly; to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives; to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery, and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience.

Question 96: What particular use is there of the moral law to unregenerate men?

Answer: The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their consciences to flee from wrath to come, and to drive them to Christ; or, upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof.

Question 97: What special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate?

Answer: Although they that are regenerate, and believe in Christ, be delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned; yet, besides the general uses thereof common to them with all men, it is of special use, to show them: How much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and enduring the curse thereof in their stead, and for their good; and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness, and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience.

7.2 RESEARCH FIRST COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREME LORD RECREATES PRO-LORD DISCIPLES

Question 103: Which is the first commandment?

Answer: The first commandment is, Thou shall have no other gods before me.

Question 104: What are the duties required in the first commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man?

Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.

Question 153: What does God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?

Answer: That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requires of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.

Question 154: What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation?

Answer: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his mediation, are all his ordinances; especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation.

7.2.1 RESEARCH THE MEANING OF DELIGHTING IN GOD: CREATION MEDIATELY REPRESENTS THE LORD'S BLESSINGS

- A. The rule of the LORD-King causes the flourishing establishment of the world. "Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved" (Ps. 96:10). By this blessing,²⁴⁸ the LORD limits the curse factors that cause pain, sorrow, suffering, groaning of creation and its creatures.²⁴⁹ Instead the created universe (non-sentient environments of habitation: heavens, earth, seas, fields) conforms to its blessed purposes for the good of its inhabitants, including everything that the Lord created to fill those environments: all forms of vegetation and all creatures in water, air and land (Gen. 1:12, 20-28).
- B. Since God made a covenant with the earth, and with man and all its living creatures,²⁵⁰ God is still reflecting his *lex Christi* attributes, his supremely dynamic (4th C), living (6th C), sufficient (8th C) related blessings on the lands of the entire world, fixing the seasons and the stars,

²⁴⁸ Deut. 28:1-14

²⁴⁹ Gen. 3:14-19; Deut. 28:15-68; Rom. 8:19-22

²⁵⁰ Gen. 9:9-17

sending rain and sun and filling men's hearts with joy from abundant harvests.²⁵¹ God fixed the boundaries of earth and water, scattered the peoples across the whole earth, confused their languages, and appointed the rise and fall of their families, clans, nations and land boundaries.²⁵² From God's national apportioning, we, being born in his appointed time and place, ask for our daily bread, "we pray for ourselves and others, that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may, of his free gift, and as to his fatherly wisdom shall seem best, enjoy *a competent portion* of them; and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them, and contentment in them; and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort." (WLC 193). We ask for the Lord to provide any resources of land, housing, food and clothing that enables our life to continue, either directly or mediately through representatives.²⁵³

- C. Christians should not become spiritualizing ascetics. We affirm the new covenant enjoyment of any physical blessings within their *lex Christi* uses, whether sex within discipleship, children, families with social-economic stability, land, houses, food or clothing.²⁵⁴ Though indeed, some are Christian refugees, fleeing their country of origin due to war, social-economic chaos and religious persecution, they are still praying for and seeking ways to obtain a competent portion of the Lord's earthly blessings.
- D. This petition for daily bread comes after the primary petitions. First, we address the heavenly Father, knowing him and his works. We pray that we would learn to honor His name as living sacrifices united to Christ by the Spirit.²⁵⁵ We pray for his kingdom to come and his will to be done, which is the application of the entire *lex Christi* in the world in response to His name and works (*symphonic pedagogical* perspective). Thus, we first pray for the coming of his kingdom and his righteousness, then ask for a competent portion of material blessings to use in exemplifying, proclaiming, interceding and administrating the King, his kingdom and righteousness.²⁵⁶ God promises to provide any inward-spiritual or outward-creaturely thing from among "all things" that he deems needed for our adopted embodied-souls to conform to the Son.²⁵⁷
- E. However, this 'enjoyment of a competent portion' of this world's material goods is not simply a means to the end of giving us resources to enable us to do kingdom work. They also serve as mediate representatives of the Triune LORD's *symphonic persons* revealing his *symphonic attributes*. To "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8) requires more than physical senses. It requires that our embodied-souls have glory-senses, the ability to perceive the symphonic attributes in the creation. Thus, we need to explore how the symphonic attributes perspective is derivatively revealed in the creation.
- F. As we enjoy and partake of the entire creation, by faith receiving their mediate representation of God's glory, our embodied joys synergize with the six perspectives, uniting our soul's in

²⁵¹ Gen. 1:14; Ps. 104:19; Jer. 31:35-36; 33:25; Matt. 5:44-45; Acts 14:17

²⁵² Gen. 11:6-9; Deut. 32:8; Ps. 46:5-11; 74:17; 104:5-9; Prov. 15:25; Isa. 10:5-19; Dan. 2:21; Acts 17:24-26

²⁵³ Eccles. 5:18-20

²⁵⁴ 1 Tim. 4:3-5

²⁵⁵ 1st-3rd Cs; Eph. 2:18; Rom. 12:1

²⁵⁶ Matt. 6:33

²⁵⁷ Rom. 8:32, in context of 8:23-30

Christ by the Spirit to the ultimate enjoyment of God himself, which is our chief and highest end (WLC 1).

7.2.2 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*: Delight is in earthly things and relationships only without any connection to enjoyment of God through those things. Delight in God is interpreted with only a private, spiritual meaning, disconnected from earthly, sensory and physical joys and delights and human relationships. The Lord's Day corporate worship and fellowship experience doesn't teach me to experience any delights.
- B. *Health*: God is my treasure and my joy, and he is my delight to worship and praise. Everything in my relationships and discipleship show that I observe all that Jesus commanded. He is Lord of my relationships and my daily decisions.

7.3 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

7.3.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Within the limits of obedience to lex Christi, do all your thoughts, words and behaviors enjoying physical, earthly experiences connect to delight in God and a desire to love and worship him above all other things?*
- B. *How did your original family relate earthly delights to delight in God?*

7.3.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 1st commandment obedience in your life and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 1st commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

7.4 RESEARCH SECOND COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREME HOLY LORD RECREATES PRO-COVENANTAL DISCIPLES

Question 107: Which is the second commandment?

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

Question 108: What are the duties required in the second commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God has instituted in his Word; particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the Word; the administration and receiving of the sacraments; church government and discipline; the ministry and maintenance thereof; religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him: as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing, all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.

Question 3: What is the Word of God?

Answer: The holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.

Question 4: How does it appear that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

Answer: The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.

Question 5: What do the Scriptures principally teach?

Answer: The Scriptures principally teach,; What man is to believe concerning God, and: What duty God requires of man.

Question 157: How is the Word of God to be read?

Answer: The holy Scriptures are to be read with an high and reverent esteem of them; with a firm persuasion that they are the very Word of God, and that he only can enable us to understand them; with desire to know, believe, and obey the will of God revealed in them; with diligence, and attention to the matter and scope of them; with meditation, application, self-denial, and prayer.

Question 160: What is required of those that hear the Word preached?

Answer: It is required of those that hear the Word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine: What they hear by the Scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the Word of God; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.

7.4.1 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*: I am guided by tradition, parents' opinions, cultural expectations, false religious superstitions about luck and prosperity. I function using a secular or traditional cultural view of relationships.
- B. *Health*: I maintain a commitment to regular worship with God's people on the Lord's Day as well as personal devotion in praise and worship, Bible reading and prayer. These Lord's Day experiences are physical sensory, including singing, praying, reading, hearing the Word, talking and praying with each other and enjoying meals and designed buildings together with the physical space of the city and its resources. Every day of my life is patterned after that

Lord's Day experience. I seek advice from mature Christians who know the Bible better than I do.

7.5 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

7.5.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Are all your important decisions guided by the Bible and wise Christian counselors?*
- B. *Have all the important decisions of your original family been guided by the Bible and wise Christian counselors?*

7.5.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 2nd commandment obedience in your life and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 2nd commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

7.5.3 THIRD COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREME BLESSED LORD RECREATES PRO-BLESSING DISCIPLES

Question III: Which is the third commandment?

Answer: 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 takes his name in vain.

Question II2: What is required in the third commandment?

Answer: The third commandment requires, That 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, word, and writing; by an holy profession, and answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves, and others.

7.5.4 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*: I misuse Scripture, sacraments and prayer to destructively criticize, point out faults, attack and accuse others with no purpose to build others up. I neglect Scripture, sacraments and prayer, giving the devil a foothold in attacking my faith (1 Pet. 5:8-9; Luke 22:31-32; Eph. 4:26-27). I regularly make demands about my desires that relate to my own preferences or cultural standards that are coupled with threats to end relationships if my demands are not met.
- B. *Health*: I know Scripture, historical context, laws, logic, culture, language, myself, and others in order to biblically describe what I see and constructively define how change needs to take

place. I use all three means of grace to bless and build up myself and others. I have biblical theological skill and gracious gentle wisdom to apply various Bible texts to the challenges of encouraging others to grow in the Lord. I have regular godly participation in the Lord's Supper and properly use prayer and use the Lord's Prayer for structuring prayer. There is evidence of mutual "as is" acceptance of other believers (with a real knowledge of sin areas) with a patient, long-term view of the potential to be used by God to influence others toward godly change in Christ. I can maintain thankful joy (guards against presumptive negative interpretations of behavior, will ask about/check for facts) for the power of God seen at work in others' lives. Areas of personal preference are not imposed on others as requirements for change but are given as requests that seek "win-win" solutions. I know and apply the Gospel to myself and others. I know all Christians are saved and changed by grace alone, through Christ alone, by faith alone. The fruits of the Spirit are evident through me because I practice constructive conflict & emotion management. I give grace that ministers to hearers when feeling offended, ignored or sinned against. I have learned how to speak constructively using this pattern: "It would be better next time if you did it this way . . ." (Phil. 1:3-6).

7.6 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

7.6.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Do you honor God's name by faithful and reverent use of his Word, sacraments and prayer in the contexts that you live?*
- B. *Do you faithfully represent God's name by demonstrating God's grace to others, his supra-familial attributes displayed in covenant-reconciliation affections (loving, gracious, merciful, patient to save, good, forgiving, rewarding, slow to anger, disciplining, rejoicing) ?*

7.6.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 3rd commandment obedience in your life and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 3rd commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

7.7 FOURTH COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREME DYNAMIC LORD RECREATES PRO-THEOSYNCHRONOUS DISCIPLES

Question 115: Which is the fourth commandment?

Answer: 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.

Question 116: What is required in the fourth commandment?

Answer: The fourth commandment requires of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he has appointed in his Word, expressly one whole day in seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian sabbath, and in the New Testament called the Lord's day.

Question 117: How is the sabbath or the Lord's day to be sanctified?

Answer: The sabbath or Lord's day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all the day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to betaken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.

Question 118: Why is the charge of keeping the sabbath more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors?

Answer: The charge of keeping the sabbath is more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone oftentimes to hinder them by employments of their own.

7.8 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

7.8.1 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*: Chronos-chaos is my normal pattern, with little time set aside for relationship with God and others, with little flexibility to adapt to other's times and needs. I do not consider God's interpretation of my own history, memories and future. I proudly boast about future plans as if these plans would surely come true. I have disordered patterns in weekly cycles (God requires 6 days labor and 1 day rest). I am unable to enjoy leisure time.
- B. *Health*: I invest in covenantal relationships to sacrificially synchronize significant portions of my daily and weekly schedules to be together to bless each other (those within my spheres of responsibility). The memories of my relationships are shaped by God's providential involvement with my past, present and joyful hope in his promises for the future. I am an alert shepherd with historical and social awareness to be alert to and flexible enough to respond at appropriate times to moods, teachable moments of conflict, disobedience, and life challenges in others. I make plans with humility. I make wise use of time and live within the six days of labor, one day of rest cycle that God has established for my own refreshment. I enjoy leisure time with others in my relational spheres, having fun in God's created world.

7.8.2 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Do you make a conscious effort to think, speak and live under God's determinations of your times?*
- B. *Have you adjusted your schedules to engage constructively with others in the spheres of your responsibility?*
- C. *Did your original family synchronize life with God's structure for weekly work and rest, and with His interpretation of life, history and the future?*

7.8.3 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 4th commandment obedience in your life and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 4th commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

SECTION EIGHT: LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

8.1 LOVING NEIGHBOR

8.1.1 FIFTH COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREMELY HARMONIOUS LORD RECREATES PRO-HARMONY DISCIPLES

Question 123: Which is the fifth commandment?

Answer: The fifth commandment is, Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God gives thee.

Question 124: Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?

Answer: By father and mother, in the fifth commandment, are meant, not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.

Question 125: Why are superiors styled father and mother?

Answer: Superiors are styled father and mother, both to teach them in all duties toward their inferiors, like natural parents, to express love and tenderness to them, according to their several relations; and to work inferiors to a greater willingness and cheerfulness in performing their duties to their superiors, as to their parents.

Question 126: What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?

Answer: The general scope of the fifth commandment is, the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.

Question 127: What is the honor that inferiors owe to their superiors.?

Answer: The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart, word, and behavior; prayer and thanksgiving for them; imitation of their virtues and graces; willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels; due submission to their corrections; fidelity to, defense and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places; bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.

Question 128: What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?

Answer: The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.

Question 129: What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?

Answer: 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; to instruct, counsel, and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproof, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God has put upon them.

Question 130: What are the sins of superiors?

Answer: The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them, an inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure; commanding things unlawful, or not in the power of inferiors to perform; counseling, encouraging, or favoring them in that which is evil; dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good; correcting them unduly; careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger; provoking them to wrath; or any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.

Question 131: What are the duties of equals?

Answer: The duties of equals are, to regard the dignity and worth of each other, in giving honor to go one before another; and to rejoice in each other's gifts and advancement, as their own.

Question 132: What are the sins of equals?

Answer: The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement of prosperity one of another; and usurping preeminence one over another.

Question 133: What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment, the more to enforce it?

Answer: The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, in these words, That thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God gives thee, is an express promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment.

8.1.2 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

A. *Sickness:*

1. Relationships (with equals or those under your authority) are for the purpose of satisfying your own agenda. You become manipulative. Emphasis on "I want" shows selfishness.
2. You dump all your history of past troubles, abuse or sexual sins early on in the relationship in hopes of developing honesty and connection, scaring the other person away.
3. You ignore other's preferences. You are unable to understand and communicate your own preferences, creating many painful experiences.
4. You believe an egalitarian view of all relationships, that everyone submits to everyone as equals.

B. *Health:*

1. You develop ability to comfortably relate to the opposite sex, have curiosity about others, and make new friendships as equals until married.
2. Any relationship that has mutual agreement and develops a "win-win" approach will make for better friendships. Speak first about common interests, shared vision, religious and family backgrounds. You do not manipulated or overload your friends with past negative history.

3. In relationships with equals, you have learned to discuss, compromise, and use gracious persuasion of others. As priest-ambassadors of reconciliation, you pray for, counsel, and engage your gifts and relationships to seek the peace and welfare of your own home. You bring order to and submission of the creatures (pets, animals) and aspects of material creation under your authority (house, car, garden, yard, tools, toys, gadgets, and so on).
4. You make covenant promises to be present with others to bless, enjoy, protect, and maintain peace in ways that please others within the moral law (Num. 6:24-26; 1 Cor. 7:33-34).
5. You learn how to exercise godly authority in proper roles, and humble submission to godly authority in other roles.

8.2 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

8.2.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Have you developed a casual freedom to enjoy relationships with equals?*
- B. *Do you know how to relate to others in Christ as equals and express submission or authority that creates flourishing in your own areas of responsibility?*
- C. *Do you know how to knowledgeably bless and please others according to their preferences/desires within the moral law?*
- D. *Do you accept the biblical roles designed by God where you should exercise authority or submission?*
- E. *How well did your original family model health in relationships?*

8.2.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as a disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 5th commandment obedience in your life and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 5th commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

8.2.3 SIXTH COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREMEY LIVING LORD RECREATES PRO-LIFE DISCIPLES

Question 134: Which is the sixth commandment?

Answer: The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

Question 135: What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the sixth commandment are, all careful studies, and lawful endeavors, to preserve the life of ourselves and others by resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any; by just defense thereof against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit; a sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreations; 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; comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.

8.2.4 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

A. *Sickness:*

1. You believe the earth is overpopulated or that family size needs to be limited to “save the earth” from more resource consuming, global-warmth-producing humans. You have very definite career goals that you are not willing to change for the sake of marriage (if single) or raising children (if married) with no other medical reasons for not being able to bear children. Most governments of the world see more children as their country’s greatest resource, and countries with very low birth rates see impending economic problems due to the aging of the population and the lack of an income earning population to fuel the social welfare systems for the elderly (Taiwan & Japan, somewhat in the USA).
2. If married, work is all about making money to buy things like cars and homes at the expense of family dynamics (no plan for daily time together, or for one primary parent to work, one primary parent to care for children at home until they are in school). Ministry in the church should not take priority over each other, as church leaders must manage their own households well, before they are qualified for church service (1 Tim. 3:2, 4-5; Titus 1:6).

B. *Health:*

1. You develop relationships based on friendship, giving, caring for the other. You demonstrate love, respect and patience to others (parents, family, friends, missions service, evangelism efforts) without obvious personal benefits, showing good evidence of the character fruit of love.
2. If married, you exert active, consistent, gentle, godly rule and discipline over you family and engage with the world as king-stewards of the cultural mandate to produce wealth, goods and services that bless the family, the created world, and their social communities.
3. Though not explicitly developed in the WLC on 6th C, “pro-life” virtue for married couples includes having children to extend godly rule over the earth.
4. You evidence stewardship of body to know and develop bodily health: self-controlled in sleep, eating, exercise; no addictions to created things.
5. You control your emotions (anger and bitterness) and practice forgiveness and peacemaking.

8.3 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

8.3.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Do you show sacrificial love for others? (Rom. 12:9; Acts 20:35)*
- B. *Do you desire children and live a family centered life?*
- C. *Do you care for your body and discipline your emotions to be a productive peacemaker in all your relationships?*

8.3.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as a disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 6th commandment obedience in your lives and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 6th commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

8.3.3 SEVENTH COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREMELY BEAUTIFUL LORD RECREATES PRO-DISCIPLESHIP DISCIPLES

Question 137: Which is the seventh commandment?

Answer: The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Question 138: What are the duties required in the seventh commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior; and the preservation of it in ourselves and others; watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses; temperance, keeping of chaste company, modesty in apparel; discipleship by those that have not the gift of continency, conjugal love, and cohabitation; diligent labor in our callings; shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto.

8.3.4 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness*
 1. Outside of a marriage relationship, using the physical body of others in sexually abusive ways that exceed brother-sister fellowship.
 2. Strong disagreements about the createdness of male-female gender, each with their own sexual orientation to the opposite sex in God's timing and binary gender identity (SOGI), the purposes of discipleship and family, roles and leadership. Insisting on other cultural viewpoints and denying the biblical view. Actively practicing generalized hetero *sexual* attraction (looking at any potential opposite sex person with sexual thoughts) or homosexual attraction (looking at or desiring any forms of sexual contact with same gender people). Propensity to same sex attraction (SSA, defined as desire for sexual activities with the same sex), even when not dwelling on it in the mind, is also a creation disorder and for those not united to Christ, part of the condemned sin-package. Same sex attraction (SSA) for those in Christ is illegitimate and disordered, and this whole set of lusts needs to be put to death through Christ and the Gospel: the propensity to be sexually attracted, any sexual arousal of the imagination, any masturbatory practices associated with those attractions, and any sexually arousing behaviors toward people of the same sex. "Opportunities" that present as temptations are outside the individual and thus the opportunity doesn't equal sin. Disordered attractions are what make us susceptible to temptations that lead us to sin, and that disordered attraction of coveting breaks the 10th C (Jas. 1:14-15). Any *sexual* attraction to any person other than one heterosexual spouse

breaks the 7th commandment. Any illegitimate attraction is itself part of the sin package. If a Christian is attracted to any forbidden lust (heterosexual oral sex with a prostitute, bribery to get a political position, gossip to put others down), that “attraction” is also disordered, part of the old man, sinful flesh package, and needs to be renewed.

3. If married, you defer to parents to solve all emotional and financial problems. Parents’ advice is accepted as correct by wife (or husband) and undercuts the authority of the husband (or valuable input of the wife).
4. If married, you continue to spend excessive free time with friends, family or the opposite sex (if heterosexually attracted) or the same sex (if same sex attracted).
6. If single, dating is more like a game or a hobby to prevent boredom and reduce feelings of loneliness, but with no desire to become attached to any permanent relationship. Lustfully pursuing any relationships for the purpose of immorality of sexual experiences. A relationship that begins with or quickly moves to a focus on taking what you want (kissing, touching, sex, money, job connections, promise of visa through discipleship) does not develop trust or respect. If a couple is already very physical or is having sex, as a counselor or parent, I will tell them to stop/repent of the mutual “using” and start showing mutual respect and love as Christian brother and sister. If an individual has poor relationships with others and shows little concern for others apart from the romantic partner, this is a dangerous sickness that will likely reveal the true character of the person. If an individual is too attached emotionally, without a sense of independent identity or emotional stability without the partner, unable to separate when many signs of sickness are evident, this is not a true love relationship, but emotional dependence.

B. Health

1. If single, any dating relationships consistently model and set rules based on moral-law clarity (they honor and obey the new covenant) and show how true holiness comes by heart change through the Gospel in a covenant-keeping community. True love waits until marriage, then offers a body holy to the spouse, pure from all lustful and immoral defilements. Men should desire to marry someone who will be a good mother, who loves kids and who sees raising kids as one of life’s highest callings. Of course, women are very capable of having fine careers and earning money inclusive of family and children (Prov. 31:10-31).
2. If in a dating relationship, you both share a common understanding of the Bible’s framework for male-female gender, each with their own sexual orientation to the opposite sex in God’s timing and binary gender identity (SOGI). Christian marriage is a reflection of Christ’s marriage to the Church (Eph. 5:22-31). God’s rule is one-hetero-spouse-sexual-attraction (OH-SSA) and permits no other sexual attractions. As part of the preparation for marriage, Scripture permits a *gradual* shift towards sexualized attraction after engagement, as intention to exclusively be set apart as holy for the other has been personally agreed on, as usually this comes with parental agreement and public announcement with a symbol of the engagement ring for the woman in many cultures. For example, premarital counseling usually includes a reading and discussion on loving sexual technique and ethical birth control methods, and the couple begins to prepare mentally and physically for the wedding and honeymoon. The couple’s growing affection and

closeness should start to shift to a holy sexual attraction but must still honor the fiancé(e) as a brother or sister until after the full matrimonial commitment of the wedding. “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the does of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases” (Song 2:7; 3:5; 8:4).

3. We could develop a comprehensive list of biblical orientations of the soul to disenfranchise the cultural debate about sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) as if it were an isolated issue:

5th C : SOGR “soul orientation to godly roles”

6th C : SOGL “soul orientation to godly life”

8th C : SOGF “soul orientation to godly finances”

9th C : SOGR “soul orientation to godly reputations”

10th C : SOGC “soul orientation to godly contentment”

Each of these categories could develop its own set of specific dysphorias, showing how humanity has lost its proper orientation to the truth and moral flourishing in each category. Gender dysphoria is symptomatic of 7th C disorientation, while we can explore multiple disorienting categories to truth and proper righteousness related to other commandments. Mankind, by losing proper orientation to the fear of God (1st C) and contentment (10th C), has lost proper orientation to stewardship of roles, life-sustenance, sexuality, resources, and reputations. With this enlarged set of acronyms, Christians would be in a better position to rename the current culturally dividing SOGI with another phrase, “*soul orientation to gender interactions*” related to the 7th C.

4. If you are engaged to be married, both of you are prepared to leave the single life of freedom, leave financial dependence on parents, emotional dependence on parents. This also assumes you are biblically free to marry, without previous relational entanglements or an unbiblical divorce. Though it has been done by some newly married disciples with beneficial results, it is not normally wise to live with either sets of parents after marriage unless there are serious health problems or other emergency factors. Saving money on rent does not seem to be a good enough reason to live with parents.
5. If you are married, you are strengthening a one-spouse mentality, ready to shift from seeking various heterosexual relationships to steadiness with one person. You agree that investment in the marriage relationship takes the priority over the relationship to the children and that the best example you can give your children is to love each other. In non-crisis situations, you will not habitually neglect the marriage in favor of the children's desires or preferences. You share basic agreement on major life directions and goals for lifestyle, church service, denomination, financial expectations and spending habits, home ownership, future expectations for kind of relationship with parents.
6. God as Creator and Redeemer has authority to regulate the proper expression of sexuality in his world so that people will fulfil his cultural mandate to fill the earth with godly children, rule over the earth and its creatures for the glory of his name. God ordained marriage between one man and one woman (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-25) and its preservation from all dissolution. “What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate,” (Matt. 19:6) includes the God-ordained institution of marriage, and individual marriages. This is the primary way God protects his obedient children from sexually transmitted diseases and mutually abusive relationships (1 Cor. 7:2, 9).

8.4 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

8.4.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Do you exercise self-discipline to guard the brother-sister holiness of all relationships with Christians outside of marriage?*
- B. *Do you agree with the biblical definition of gender, marriage and family?*
- C. *By college age, assuming you don't have the gift of singleness, are you pursuing dating as part of a search for a good life partner?*
- D. *If married, have you left your parents (emotionally, financially, physically) to faithfully cleave to each other and bear children?*

8.4.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 7th commandment obedience in your life and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 7th commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

8.5 EIGHTH COMMANDMENT DUTIES: SUPREME SUFFICIENT LORD RECREATES PRO-STEWARDSHIP DISCIPLES

Question 140: Which is the eighth commandment?

Answer: The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.

Question 141: What are the duties required in the eighth commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the eighth commandment are, truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce between man and man; rendering to everyone his due; restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof; giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others; moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections concerning worldly goods; a provident care and study to get, keep, use, and dispose these things which are necessary and convenient for the sustentation of our nature, and suitable to our condition; a lawful calling, and diligence in it; frugality; avoiding unnecessary lawsuits and suretyship, or other like engagements; and an endeavor, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.

8.5.1 RECKON CULTURAL VIEWS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. *Sickness: Addictions to certain types of wasteful entertainments (computer games, TV, movies, internet) or over-indulging in permissible physical pleasures (foods, alcohol, exercise, hobbies, sports) or abusing the world's resources in explicitly sinful ways (pornography, gambling,*

discipleship sex, gang involvement; illegal polluting or intentionally destroying physical or natural resources)

- B. *Health*: Commitment to fulfil the Great Cultural Mandate to care for the world and prosper its resources, using the gifts and resources God has entrusted to us. Nurture and use your spiritual gifts to bless others in the church, wisely use money, faithful to your promises, nurture family relationships, concern for others, willing to sacrifice resources for other's benefit. Show habits of six days of labor (not lazy), one day of rest (not a work-a-holic). Show evidence of learning new useful skills for future employment. Show evidence of good financial stewardship (saving, controlled spending, no major debt). Evidence of proper use of the created world. As a stewardly disciple you should be preparing to provide all that is materially necessary for the wellbeing of those to whom you have made promises, contracts, commitments. Furthermore, you strive to exhibit good stewardship over your resources to enable generous provision for your family, the church, and the needy, while teaching each others to model that stewardship. You use resources to enjoy recreation. If married with children, or you have elderly parents in need, you share the resources of the home to nourish and cherish your family.

8.6 QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

8.6.1 RECKON YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORIGINAL FAMILY

- A. *Do you show evidence of responsible stewardship of resources in order to fulfil the cultural mandate to rule over the earth and subdue it for the glory of Christ? (Gen. 1:28)*

8.6.2 REASSURE, REFORM, REMOVE, TO IMPROVE RESULTS

using the methods God has designed to develop maturity within the saving power of the covenant of grace, individually, together as an disciple and in assemblies of two or more gathered in Jesus' name

- A. *What strengths can you reassure related to 8th commandment obedience in your lives and the experience of your original family that have produced blessings?*
- B. *What weaknesses should be reformed and what sins should be removed in relation to 8th commandment disobedience?*
- C. *How can the assemblies of God's people support you in this process?*

NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS ALREADY COVERED IN FIRST TWO SECTIONS

END OF EIGHT LESSONS