



Statement of Faith

January 31, 2009

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Introduction

The final authority of faith and practice of SGBC is the Word of God as found in the sixty-six books of the Bible. We also adopt, with the modifications set forth below, as a reasonable expression of what the Scriptures teach and the faith we confess, “The Baptist Confession of Faith” of 1689 republished in 1975 as “A Faith to Confess”. This confession of faith gives a concise statement of biblical doctrine. It, nor our modifications, are equal to the infallible authority of the Word of God. Nevertheless, it and our modifications, are an assistance to us in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness.

Paragraphs 1.11-12 are added to Chapter 1 - “The Holy Scripture”

11. We are not expecting additional Scripture. The pattern of God giving *Scripture* throughout history has been for Him to perform a major redemptive work¹ and give His *written* Word following the work; that written word *preserves* a knowledge of the work and provides an *explanation* of what He has done.² The New Testament was given in response to God’s greatest redemptive works; the giving of His Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.³ The New Testament teaches that there is only one more major redemptive work to expect, the return of Jesus Christ.⁴ Then we shall know as we are known.⁵ Thus, we do not expect God to give any new words (i.e. Scripture).

¹ The calling of Abraham, Moses and the exodus, conquest and entrance into the promised land, establishment of the theocracy, destruction of the theocracy, sending John the Baptist, the life, death and resurrection of the Messiah, pentecost, the destruction of Jerusalem and the first century spreading of the Gospel throughout the world. ² Ex. 17:14, 34:27, Isa. 8:1, 30:8, Jer. 36:2, 28. ³ Jn. 14:26, 16:13, 1 Cor. 2:6-16, 1 Pet. 1:23-25, 2 Pet. 3:15-16, Heb. 1:1-3. ⁴ Heb. 9:26-28, Acts 1:11, Isa. 25:9, Rom. 8:23, Phil. 3:21, 2 Thes. 1:10. ⁵ 1 Cor. 13:12

Furthermore, since the Scriptures are sufficient (see para. 6) to *thoroughly* equip the church and its ministers for *every* good work⁵ no additional Scripture is required by the church in the present age. To insist on the need or desirability of additional Scripture is to deny the inherent character of the Scripture God has already given to His church.⁶

⁵ 2 Tim. 3:17 ⁶ Deut. 4:2, 12:32, Pro. 30:5-6, Rev. 22:18-19

12. Those revelatory gifts exercised by the prophets prior to Christ’s first coming and by the apostles and prophets during the founding of the New Testament church¹, which provided an infallible verbal and written word of God, have ceased. The generation of church leaders after the apostles exemplified in Timothy and Titus were not taught to expect to receive additional revelations from God which would be of equal authority to the existing Scripture and apostolic tradition already received. Instead, they were directed to teach and remain faithful to the existing Scripture and the sound doctrine they received from the apostles.²

¹ Eph. 2:20, 3:3, Gal. 1:11-2, 1 Cor. 2:6-16, 11:23, 2 Cor. 12:1 ² 1 Cor. 15:1-3, 2 Tim. 2:2, 3:14-15, 2 Thes. 2:15, 3:6, 3:14, Rom. 16:17, Jude 1:3.

Chapter 7, “God’s Covenant,” is replaced with the following

1. *General* - God’s purpose to save a people for Himself is revealed first to Adam in the promise of salvation by ‘the seed of the woman’.¹ Since the fall and God’s curse,² God has further made known His commitment to show mercy to mankind in the covenants He has initiated. God’s covenants are the means He has used to objectify³ and solemnize⁴ His promises of mercy to mankind throughout history. These covenants are given to form the foundation of our trust in God.⁵ People throughout the ages are brought to trust Him as they hear His commitment expressed to them in the covenants He has initiated with them. In these covenants God graciously has bound Himself to mankind in special relationships.

¹ Gen. 3:15 ² Gen. 3:14-19 ³ to define in clear terms ⁴ to place a special emphasis upon ⁵ Heb. 6:13-18

2. *Covenantal signs* - In initiating covenants with mankind God condescends to speak to us in a manner that reassures our faith. God did not need an external sign (i.e. the rainbow) in order for Him to remember to keep His promise. But the signs *remind us* that God has solemnized His promise *to cause us to remember what He has promised*, thereby establishing and maintaining our faith.

Gen. 9:8-17, 8:20-22, Isa. 54:9, Gen. 17:10-11, Ex. 31:12-17, Eze. 20:12,20, Luke 22:20

3. *The redemptive covenants* - Salvation of Jew, Gentile and all creation is brought by God into human history by the redemptive covenants. The Noahic Covenant is God’s general covenant promise regarding the

redemption of all creation from the bondage of corruption. The Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic and New Covenants express God's specific fundamental commitment to His people expressed in His promise, "I will be your God and you shall be My people." Each of the redemptive covenants promise Christ and His work as the means of God fulfilling His most basic promise.¹

¹ Gen. 17:8, Ex. 29:44-45, Lev. 26:11-12, Jer. 24:5-7, 31:33, 32:37-38, Eze. 11:19-20, 37:26-27, Zech. 8:7-8, 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1, Heb. 8:10, 1 Pet. 2:9, Rev. 21:3-7, 2 Sam. 7:14, Rev. 21:10-13

4. *The Noahic Covenant* - After having destroyed every living creature on the earth except those gathered with Noah, God initiated a covenant between Himself and every living creature for perpetual generations that the waters of the earth would never again destroy all flesh. The sign of God's covenant was mercifully associated with rainfall which would have terrified Noah and his descendants had not God said, "I will look on it (the rainbow) to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth". The redemptive hope for the creation is in the consummation through Jesus Christ and the glorious resurrection of His people.

Gen. 9:14-16, Rom. 8:19-24, 2 Pet. 3:5-13, Rev. 21:1-5

5. *The Abrahamic Covenant* - God's gracious purpose to bless all nations was further revealed in the Covenant He established with Abraham and his descendants.¹ God's promise to crush the serpent's head by 'the seed [descendant] of the woman' was to be fulfilled through Abraham and Sarah. Through their seed (descendants) blessing would come to all nations, ultimately through one of their descendants, that is Christ.² When God initiated the covenant with Abraham and his descendants they became "His people" and He became "their God". This relationship with Yahweh, established by their covenant membership, distinguished them from all other peoples.³

¹ Gen. 12:1-3, 15:1-15, 17:1-21. The promise was given in 12:1-3 but it was "solemnized" in the "cutting" of a covenant in Genesis 15 and 17 at which time a sign was also established to ensure that the covenant would not be forgotten.

² Gen. 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, Acts 3:25-26, Rom. 4:13-17a, Gal. 3:8, 3:15-16. ³ Gen. 17:7-8, Ex. 19:4-6.

The ethnic descendants of Jacob would remain God's covenant people throughout history unless they 1) refused circumcision, 2) persisted in idolatry (breaking the Mosaic Covenant, see below) or 3) in unbelief rejected Abraham's Seed, the Christ.¹ In such cases an Israelite became in the category of "not my people" and was "cut off from Israel".² Prior to or after Christ's coming, any Israelite could be restored to covenant membership by repentance and faith in Christ. Throughout Israel's history many Israelites broke the Mosaic covenant. However, God always through His gracious election reserved a remnant of Abraham's ethnic descendants to be His people. Therefore ethnic Israel would never be *fully* cut off, that is, excluded from covenant relationship with Yahweh as other nations had been.³

¹ Gen. 17:14, Deut. 18:15-19, Acts. 3:22-23, Matt. 3:7-12, John 8:39-41, Rom. 11:19-21, Heb. 10:26-30. ² Hos. 1:9-10, Jer. 31:32, Heb. 8:9b, Eze. 14:7-8, Hosea 8:3-4, Lev. 20:3-6, Gen. 17:14, 1 Kings 14:10, 1 Kings 21:21. ³ Rom. 11:23, Jer. 31:32, Rom. 11:1-5, 9:27-28.

The full blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant could only be received by faith apart from works of the law.¹ Those members of the Abrahamic Covenant who did not believe in Yahweh were not justified nor given an eternal inheritance in the eternal kingdom of God. However, many of them did receive the promise of an earthly inheritance in the land of Canaan in accordance with God's promise to Abraham.²

¹ Rom. 4:1-14, Gal. 3:5-6, 18, 22, Heb. 11:8-16. ² Josh. 21:43-45, 1 Kings 8:55-56, 1 Kings 4:20-21, Gen. 15:18.

The full blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant would bring salvation to all nations according to the covenant promise that "in your seed all the nations shall be blessed".¹ Those Gentiles who believe in Christ, the Seed of Abraham (Abrahamic Covenant), the Son of David (Davidic Covenant, see below), the Lamb of God (Mosaic Covenant, see below) become the people of God and inherit, along with believing Israelites, the full blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. In Christ, believing Gentiles are brought into the people of God and God calls those, "who were not His people", "My people".² They are "grafted into" the covenants of promise and become one body with believing Jews and are fellow heirs with Israel and of the same body. This one body is the "my people" of the New Covenant (para. 8) in Christ, the New Testament church.³

¹ Gen. 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, 49:10, Gal. 3:8, Rom. 3:28. ² Rom. 9:25-26, 1 Pet. 2:9-10. ³ John 10:16, 11:52, Acts. 2:39, 15:14-18, Rom. 4:9-25, 11:17-19, Gal. 3:13-14, 26-29, Eph. 2:11-3:11, 1 Pet. 2:9-10.

6. *The Mosaic Covenant* - The Mosaic Covenant was a temporary institution¹ which further revealed mankind's need of salvation,² God's means of salvation in types and shadows,³ and the obligation of those whom God graciously redeems to love the Lord their God⁴. The Mosaic Covenant with its Aaronic priesthood functioning in the earthly tabernacle was binding upon Israel until God established the New Covenant with Israel through the priesthood of His Son functioning in the heavenly tabernacle.⁵ With the establishment of the Messianic priesthood in the heavenly tabernacle, the Mosaic Covenant and its earthly priesthood was brought to an end.⁶ The manifest presence of God is no longer among His people in an earthly tabernacle, therefore all priesthoods and prayers, etc. centered around an earthly sanctuary are void and ineffectual.⁷ The presence of God is found in Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God. The presence of God is also found in His people wherever they are gathered in the name of Christ.⁸

¹ Gal. 3:19, 23-25, 4:1-3, 21-31, Heb. 7:11-13, 28, 8:13, 9:9-10, 2 Cor. 3:7-11. ² Gal. 3:19, 22, Rom. 3:19-20, 5:20, 7:5-13, Heb. 9:7-9, 10:1-3. ³ Col. 2:16-17, Heb. 10:1, 9:9, 2 Tim. 3:15. ⁴ Ex. 19:3-6, Deut. 5:6, 15. ⁵ Heb. 7:11-13. ⁶ Psa. 110, Zech. 6:12-13, Heb. 6:20-7:21, 4:14, 7:26, 8:1, 8:13. ⁷ John 4:20-24. ⁸ Heb. 1:1-3, 9:24, 10:19-22, Col. 3:1-3, Matt. 18:20, Eph. 2:19-22, 1 Cor. 3:16, 1 Pet. 2:4-9.

Only those who had true faith in Yahweh¹ would remain faithful to the Mosaic Covenant. Those without a true trust in Yahweh would break the covenant² and experience the weight of its curses and finally be considered not one of Yahweh's people.³ Though the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants established a distinction between Jew and Gentile,⁴ this distinction was temporary and brought to an end when God inaugurated the New Covenant in Christ (para. 8).

¹ Deut. 1:31-36, 9:23, 30:20, Psa. 106:24, Heb. 3:19, 4:2, Jud. 1:5. ² Jer. 9:25-26, 11:10, 31:32, Eze. 44:7. ³ Deut. 28-29, Hos. 1:1, 1:9, Jer. 15:1, Matt. 3:9-10, Luke 21:22-23. ⁴ Ex. 12:48, Acts 10:28, Eph. 2:14-15, Ex. 31:13, Eze. 20:12, 20.

7. *The Davidic Covenant* - God's commitments in the Davidic covenant, like the Abrahamic covenant, became a basis for the faith and hope of Israel and the Gentiles.¹ God committed to provide Israel a King from

among David's descendants who's reign would endure forever and would bless Israel *and* all the nations.² Through this King the promises of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants would be fulfilled. The prophets described this Davidic King by the titles given to Him; the Lord's Anointed, that is the Christ, the Branch, a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, God's Servant, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Son of God, a Priest upon His throne, the Son of Man, Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.³ Jesus of Nazareth born of Mary and Joseph is the promised King of the Davidic Covenant.⁴ When Jesus rose from the dead and was seated at the right hand of God the Davidic throne which had fallen down was restored. At that time Jesus, being given all power and authority in heaven and earth, began His forever reign.⁵ His throne was established so that mankind from all nations may seek the Lord and worship the God of Israel, the one true God.⁶ Jesus, as the Christ, has been exalted as a Prince and Saviour to grant repentance to Israel and the Gentiles.⁷

¹ 2 Sam. 7:1-24, 2 Chron. 21:7, Psalm 89:3, Luke 2:25, 38, Mark 15:43, John 4:25. ² Jer. 33:14-16, Isa. 11:10. ³ Psa. 2:2, Isa. 11:1, Jer. 23:5, 33:15, Zech. 3:8, 6:12, Psa. 110:4, Heb. 7, Isa. 42:1, 49:6, 52:13, Gen. 49:9-10, Num. 24:9, Rev. 5:5, Psa. 2:7, Luke 1:32, 35, Zech. 6:13, Dan. 7:13, Isa. 9:6. ⁴ Matt. 1:19-25, Luke 2:28-32, Matt. 16:13-19, John 1:45. ⁵ Psa. 110:1, Luke 22:69, Acts 2:34-36, Eph. 1:20, Heb. 1:13, 8:1, Luke 1:31-32, 69, Acts 15:13-17, Jer. 33:24-26, Matt. 28:18, Eph. 1:20-22, Luke 1:33, Psa. 2, 110:1-2, Isa. 9:7. ⁶ Acts 15:13-17, Isa. 11:1-3, 10-12, 42:1-12, 49:5-8. ⁷ Acts 5:31, Acts 11:18, Luke 2:32, Acts 26:23, John 10:16, 11:52.

8. *The New Covenant* - The Mosaic Covenant being preparatory and not the covenant that would bring the fullness of salvation to the people of God was to be replaced with the New Covenant.¹ In the New Covenant God initiates a binding relationship with all of His people in Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant. This covenant between God and His people is ratified and secured on the basis of Christ's blood.² By the New Covenant God creates a new and faithful Israel that will not depart from Him. All members of this covenant savingly know the Lord, have His law written in their hearts, have their sins forgiven³, and enjoy the presence of God among them forever.⁴

¹ John 4:21-23, Heb. 8:13, 2 Cor. 3:11, Gal. 3:19, 25, 4:1-3. ² Matt. 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, 1 Cor. 11:25, Heb. 9:15, 18, 20, 12:24, 13:30. ³ Jer. 31:31-34, 32:36-40, Eze. 36:26-27, Eze. 37:12-14. ⁴ see note 1 paragraph 4.

Gentiles who believe in Jesus Christ become members of the New Covenant as joint heirs with believing Jews. God calls them, “My people” who were not His people.¹ Ethnic Jews who reject Christ are excluded from membership in the New Covenant. God calls them, “Not my people”. They are broken off from covenant membership and may regain a covenant relationship with God *only* by faith in Christ. With the ending of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants, ethnic Jews, while remaining in unbelief, lose the unique covenantal status with God which they enjoyed under the earlier covenants. Now that Christ has come a person’s covenantal status hinges solely on their relationship to God’s Son, the Christ.² All the promises made to Israel in the Old Testament continue for *believing* Jews and Gentiles in Christ³ without distinction.⁴ Gentiles are saved by joining themselves to New Covenant Israel by believing in Israel’s Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of David who would restore Jacob and bring salvation to the ends of the earth.⁵ Believing Gentiles are “grafted into” the covenants of promise and become one body with believing Jews and are fellow heirs with Israel and of the *same body*. This one body is the “my people” of the New Covenant in Christ, the New Testament church, the New Covenant “house of God”.⁶ The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper which is a communion of the one body of Christ with Christ reminds believing Jews and Gentiles that they are bound to God by His New Covenant made between Him and them by the blood of Christ.⁷

¹ Eph. 2:13, 19, 3:6, Rom. 9:23-26, Isa. 55:5, Hos. 1:10, Zech. 2:11. ² John 1:11-13, Gal. 5:2-6, Heb. 10:26, Acts 3:23, John 8:31-39, Matt. 3:11-12, Luke 3:9, 15:25-28, Rom. 11:17-23. ³ Eph. 2:12, 19, 3:8, Rom. 4:16, 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1, Heb. 13:5-6, Acts 2:39, 11:17, 15:18. ⁴ Gal. 3:28-29, 6:15-16, Col. 3:10-12, 1 Cor. 12:13, Acts 10:34-35, 15:8-9, Rom. 10:12. ⁵ Isa. 11:2-3, 10, 49:6, Acts 15:15-17, Zech. 8:20-23, Mal. 1:11, 2:11, Micah 4:1-2, Joel 2:32, Hos. 2:23, Jer. 16:19, ⁶ John 10:16, 11:52, Acts 2:39, 15:14-18, Rom. 4:9-25, 11:17-19, Gal. 3:13-14, 26-29, Eph. 2:11-3:11, 1 Pet. 2:9-10, Heb. 3:5-6, 10:19-21, 1 Tim. 3:15, Eph. 2:19, Gal. 6:10. ⁷ Matt. 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, 1 Cor. 11:25

Now that Christ has come the unbelieving Jew stands in relation to God on the basis of the covenant of works. The temporary requirements of the law of Moses instituted under the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants, required of the members of those covenants, are no longer required of the ethnic Jew since that form of worship has been ended and the God’s presence is no longer in the earthly tabernacle. The practice of circumcision and obedience to those aspects of the law of Moses done away with

with the coming of Christ are not required by God of the ethnic Jew (or Gentile). Nor does the obeying of such laws result in the unbelieving Jew having any special status before God that would distinguish them from unbelieving Gentiles in His sight. Circumcision and the obligation that comes to keep the law of Moses with circumcision profits nothing.

OT prophetic passages refer to how people become members of the New Covenant. The pattern of Divine initiative in the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Davidic covenants is not diminished but heightened in the New Covenant. In the earlier covenants the Lord initiated the covenantal bond and relationship and set the conditions. Men responded in faith to God’s initiative and agreed to His conditions and found themselves in a relationship with God. The establishing of the New Covenant Community was foretold in numerous ways by the Old Testament prophets; God calls His sons and daughters from afar, He gathers His people, He puts His Spirit within them, He writes His law into their hearts and He searches for His sheep and gathers them into His flock.¹ The Old Testament prophets also foretold that Gentiles would become part of the people of God, part of the New Covenant Community and members of God’s household.² The New Testament refers to the Father’s effectually calling Jew and Gentile to believe in His Son. A person becomes a member of the New Covenant when they hear the call of the gospel and when under the blessing of the Holy Spirit’s effectual call they respond to the gospel by believing in Christ.³ No act or rite of men or clergy performed on behalf of others can cause a person to become a member of the New Covenant.⁴

¹ Jer. 31:31-34, Eze. 11:17-20, 20:34-44, 34:11-31, 36:26-27, 37:12-14, Isa. 11:1-12:6, 43:1-7, 56:1-8. ² Rom. 15:9-12. ³ Rom. 9:23-26, 1 Pet. 2:9-10, Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:29. ⁴ complete refs.

In Scripture the New Covenant is also referred to as; the “better covenant”, the “everlasting covenant”, and the “covenant of peace”.¹

¹ Heb. 7:22, 8:6, 13:20, Eze. 37:26, Isa. 54:10

9. *The Covenant of Redemption* - God’s initiating the redemptive covenants in history is based upon a Covenant of Redemption that was transacted in eternity past between the Father and the Son. In this covenant the Father made the Son responsible to save His people, promised the Son all things necessary to accomplish this task and the Son willingly accepted this responsibility.¹ All of the elect were contemplated and included as the

objects of the saving purpose of this covenant.² The Father did not make the Son responsible to save all men indiscriminately, but made him responsible to save all of those contemplated within this covenant.³ At the last day it will be evident to all that the Son has entirely fulfilled all obligations of this covenant, as the Father's glory will be displayed as intended and the Son will have lost nothing of all those given to Him by the Father, having raised them up to glory on the last day. He will have fully accomplished the will of the Father.

The redemptive covenants throughout history increasingly reveal the intent of the Father and the Son agreed upon in this covenant, and are an outworking of this original covenant. It is solely through the grace conveyed by this Covenant of Redemption that all the descendants of fallen Adam who have been saved have obtained life and blessed immortality.

¹ John 6:33-40, 44-45, John 10:1-30, 4:34, 17:3-4, 12:27-28, Luke 17:42, Isa. 42:1-7, 45:5-9, Acts 2:23-31, 33-36, Heb. 10:1-10, Phil. 2:5-11. ² See Jn. refs in note 1. Eph. 1:4-5, Rom. 8:29-30, 2 Thes. 2:13-14. ³ John 6:64-65, 10:25-26, 17:8-9, Rom. 9:6-7, 15, 11:3-7

Chapter 19, "The Law of God," is replaced with the following

1. God gave Adam a law written in his heart that required his full obedience; also one command in particular, namely, that he must not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Thereby Adam and all his posterity were bound, in a covenant of works to personal, complete, exact and perpetual obedience. God promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of His commandments and endued Adam with power and ability to keep His law. The same law that was first written in man's heart continued as a perfect rule of righteousness after Adam fell into sin and as the basis of a covenant of works between Adam and all his posterity and God. For purposes of discussion this law is known as the unchanging moral law or simply, moral law.

Gen. 2:16-17, Rom. 1:32, 2:12-16, 3:19, 5:12-19, Gal. 3:10-12, Hos. 6:7, Lev. 20:23.

2. At any time in history a person's obligation to God is defined by the moral law plus any additional revelations of God's will given to them in the covenant God has entered into with them.¹ Besides the moral law God also gave to the people of Israel, *in written form*, the law of Moses² when

He established the Mosaic Covenant with them.³ The moral law is entirely contained within the law of Moses.⁴ In addition to the moral law, the law of Moses contains additional commandments relating to the purposes of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants. The portion of the Law of Moses called The Decalogue (Ten Commandments) is given a special prominence within the Mosaic Law. The decalogue summarizes the obedience required of Israel in order to remain faithful to and members of the Mosaic Covenant.⁵ The decalogue contains both moral law and obligations unique to the relationship established between God and Israel by the Mosaic Covenant.

¹ Gen. 17:9-14, Ex. 4:24-26. ² The Pentateuch. ³ Ex. 24:4, 12, 34:28, Deut. 4:13, 5:22, 31:9 ⁴ Rom. 2:14-15 ⁵ Ex. 34:28, Deut. 17:2-5, 28:1-3, 13-14.

3. In addition to the moral law, the law of Moses contains laws in four categories, each category having unique purposes in relation to God's unfolding plan of redemption and Israel's unique historical setting.

Covenantal provisions - Those laws which relate to the administration of specific aspects of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants. For example; laws dealing with circumcision as a sign of the Abrahamic Covenant, laws dealing with the Sabbath as a sign of the Mosaic Covenant, and inheritance laws that regulated the division of the land of Canaan throughout the generations of Abraham's descendants.

Gen. 17:9-14, Ex. 31:13,17, Eze. 20:12, 20, Num. 26:54-55, 33:3-6.

Historical provisions relating to idolatry - Certain commands and practices required by the Mosaic law were designed in relation to *specific* customs of the Canaanites inseparably associated with idolatry. Other commands were designed to lessen the temptation to idolatry. For example; laws addressing how one's hair was to be worn, beard cut, tattooing and laws forbidding intermarriage relate to the historical situation into which Israel was to settle when surrounded by various forms of idolatry.²

² Those laws which made it virtually impossible for Jews to live with Gentiles "on their turf" for any length of time (i.e. the dietary laws) were likely designed to preserve Israel from idolatry and were part of the wall of separation of which Paul speaks (Eph. 2:14). Deut. 7:3-4, 12:29-32, Lev. 19:27-28, Deut. 14:1, 1 Ki. 18:28.

Typological provisions - Many practices established by the law of Moses related to how one was to worship, come into God's presence, and

seek His blessings. These practices pre-figured Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and the blessings He procured for us. For example; the Aaronic priesthood and all the rites associated with it have numerous typological elements that point to Christ and His redeeming work.

Heb. 8:1-3, 9:9, 10:1, Col. 2:16-17.

Theocratic provisions - God also gave various judicial laws to Israel as long as they remained a nation. The principles of equity which appear in these laws are still valid, not because they are found in the law of Moses only, but in virtue of their reflecting unchanging moral law. Israel as a theocracy was given the power of the sword. Certain commands in the law of Moses were given to regulate and direct Israel's use of this power. The theocracy itself was typological of God dwelling with His people and He being exclusively worshipped, the final eschatological condition of the kingdom of God. The New Covenant community, the church, is not given the power of the sword.

Deut. 17:2-7, 14-20, 21:10-14, 15-17, 25:5-10, 15:1-18.

Some laws contained in the law of Moses are complex, i.e. a single law may reflect multiple aspects.¹ Careful study of the law of Moses itself, and further revelation given during the New Covenant (the New Testament) enables the church to distinguish which laws (or aspects of a single law) apply to the church and mankind today. The members of the Mosaic Covenant were to obey all of the law of Moses without distinction. However, the law of Moses itself contains a God given hierarchy of significance which was of great importance in properly applying the law to all of life.² By divine appointment all of the laws (or aspects of a single law) in the four categories were to be obeyed only until they were fulfilled and abrogated in New Testament days by Jesus Christ, the true Messiah and only law-giver, who was empowered by the Father to fulfill them and terminate them.³

¹ For example, circumcision is both a covenantal provision and typological (Deut. 30:6, Rom. 2:28, Col. 2:11-13). In Deut. 21:10-14 the law of how to treat female captives is a theocratic provision but is significantly "colored" by the unchanging moral laws of love your neighbor as yourself and honor your father and mother. ² Deut. 4:34-36, 6:4-5, Mk. 12:28-34, Lev. 19:18, Matt. 22:36-40, 23:23, Am. 5:21-28, Mic. 6:6-8, 1 Sam. 15:22. ³ Matt 5:17-18, John 4:21-24, Mk. 7:18-19, Acts 10:9-16, Heb. 7:12, 8:13, 2 Cor. 3:4-18, Rom. 14:1-9, 14, Col. 2:11-13, 16-19, Gal. 5:1-6.

4. Obedience to the moral law remains forever binding upon both justified persons and all others, and that in respect of the actual content of the law, and also of the authority of God, the creator, who is its Author. In the gospel Christ in no way cancels the necessity for this obedience; on the contrary He greatly stresses our obligation to obey the moral law, and by His grace and power provides His people the ability to do so, but not to perfection.¹ However, so far as the law is a basis for the covenant of works under which justification or condemnation is awarded, it has no application to true believers.²

¹ Matt. 5:17-19, Jn. 14:15, 2, 15:9-10, Rom. 3:31, 8:4, 13:8-10, Jas. 2:8, 10-12, Phil. 2:12-13, Rom. 8:4, 12-16, Eze. 36:27, Jer. 31:31-34, 32:40, ² Rom. 3:20, 4:4-6, 6:12-14, 7:6, 8:1, 10:4. Gal. 2:16.

5. Now that Christ has come, in addition to the moral law, believers are called to obey those revelations of the will of God unique to the New Covenant contained in the New Testament. In addition to the moral law, the New Testament contains additional commandments relating to the purposes of the New Covenant. For example; the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, the proclamation of the gospel to all nations and commands governing the order and worship of the New Covenant house of God which is the church.¹ The combination of moral law and new covenant obligations is the law written into the heart of the believing Jew and Gentile in Christ.²

¹ These commands are not part of unchanging moral law and as such are not required of unbelievers, i.e. non members of the New Covenant. Matt. 28:18-20, 1 Cor. 11:23-26, 1 Tim. 3:14-16 ² Jer. 31:31-34

6. Although portions of the law of Moses have been fulfilled by Christ and abrogated, since all Scripture is profitable for the New Testament church, those "abrogated" portions of Scripture continue to have a proper use for the New Covenant people of God.¹ In a real sense we continue "obeying" these commands, not by practicing the external type, but now that Christ has come, *we do what the external type pointed to and symbolized*. For example, we "do" the Leviticus ritual of taking a bull to the priest, laying our hands on it and confessing our sins over it by believing in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, as we confess them to God and approach Him by Jesus Christ our High priest. Christ is both the bull and priest of the Leviticus ritual. We look to the serpent lifted up on the pole, we gather manna daily to sustain our life as we live by faith in Jesus

Christ who is the bread of life. We continue to offer free will and thank offerings in a fulfilled in Christ manner.²

¹ Lk. 24:25-27, 44-47 ² Lev. 4:1-6, Eph. 2:21-22, Heb. 13:15-16, 10:20-22, 1 Pet. 2:4-5, Rom. 12:1-2, Rev. 5:8, 8:3-4.

The moral law revealed in all of Scripture and those additional revelations of the will of God in the New Covenant are of great use to true believers as a rule of life. The sum total of it informs them of the will of God and instructs them in their duty. This done, it directs and binds their consciences to obey it. It also reveals to them the sinful defilement of their natures, their hearts and their lives, so that as they examine themselves by the light of the law, they may be convinced more deeply of sin, and caused to humble themselves on account of it and to hate it the more.¹ At the same time the law also gives them a clearer sight of their need of Christ, and the perfection of Christ's own obedience to the law.² Similarly, as the law forbids sin, it causes the regenerate to fight against the evil inclinations to sin that they find in themselves. Furthermore, the threatenings of the law are of value in showing the regenerate what their sins deserve, and what afflictions their own disobedience may cause them in this life, even while they stand delivered from the curse and the unrestricted rigour of the law. In similar manner the promises attached to the law intimate God's approbation of obedience and set forth the blessings which flow from the fulfilment of the law, but with the proviso that those blessings do not accrue to men from the law viewed as a covenant of works. The fact that a man does good and refrains from evil because the law encourages the former and deters from the latter, is no evidence that the man is under the law and not under grace.

¹ Eze. 16:59-63, Rom. 3:20, Rom. 7:7, 24. ² Gal. 3:22, Heb. 9:22, 10:3-4, Gal. 4:4-5, Rom. 5:19, 10:4

7. The aforementioned uses of the law of God do not run contrary to the grace of the gospel, but are most happily in line with it, for the Spirit of Christ subdues the will of man and enables it to do freely and with cheerfulness that which the will of God, as revealed in the law, requires to be done.

Gal 3:21, Rom. 3:31, Phil. 2:12-13, Rom. 8:12-16, Eze. 36:27, Jer. 31:31-34, 32:40, Psa. 119:31-32, 97, 113, 163, 165.

8. Notwithstanding the proper uses of the law, mankind universally, many in Israel in particular, and also New Covenant believers, have often misused the law, attempting to use it for purposes for which it was never given. The most universal misuse of the law is that of men seeking to establish a righteousness before God on the basis of observing its commands. The law was not given as a means of being justified in God's sight. Because men's consciences had become calloused by sin, the law was given to maintain and restore a knowledge of sin within them and an awareness of their deserving the just condemnation and punishment of God.¹ New Covenant believers misuse the law when they begin to depend upon the observance of the law as a means of maintaining their right standing before God, or using it in some way as a basis for their access to Him and the promises of the Gospel. Another misuse is when believers pursue sanctification on the basis of the law instead of by the provision of the Spirit and union with Christ.² Still others boast in the law, vainly believing that by it they have become more righteous than others and acceptable in the sight of God.³

¹ Rom. 3:18-20, 5:20, 7:5, 10:4-6, Gal. 3:11, 21-22, 1 Tim. 1:8-11, Rom. 2:13-14, 1:32, see addl. refs. in note 2 para. 9 ² Gal. 3:2-3, 16-18; Rom. 4:13-18, 8:3-4, Col. 2:8-23, Rom. 6:1-18 ³ Lk. 18:9-14, 15:1-2, 25-32, Rom. 2:17-24, Phil. 3:1-6.

9. Though the moral law and the law of Moses are of significant benefit to mankind and to the church, they are not a full revelation from God,¹ are not a full or partial means of obtaining righteousness,² cannot in whole or in part provide a deliverance from the power of sin,³ and cannot bring those who are being redeemed to a state of perfection.⁴ Though the law informs the conscience of the unbeliever and believer it has no power to impart life. These limitations do not point to any imperfection in God's law.⁵ Rather Scripture points out these limitations in order to dissuade men from the misuse of the law and an improper dependence upon the law which God never intended (see para. 8).

¹ Jn. 1:16-17, Heb. 10:1, Col. 2:16-17, 2 Cor. 3:5-11. ² Rom. 3:20-24, 28, 4:4-5, 13, 5:17-19, 9:30-32, Gal. 2:21, 3:10-11, 21-22, Phil. 3:9 ³ Rom. 5:20, 7:5, 8:1-4, 2 Cor. 3:6-7 ⁴ Heb. 7:11, 19, 28, 9:9, 10:1, 11:40. The meaning of perfection in Hebrews has an objective and subjective element. Objectively, that sins are *actually* forgiven and the wrath of God is *really* removed (9:15, Rom. 3:25-26). This objective state was never achieved under the law (10:4, 11), not in heaven (9:8), the true tabernacle (9:23). Based upon this objective achievement

(9:12b, 10:14), a subjective perfection is attainable for the people of God. They can be made perfect in conscience (9:9,14, 10:22) and have confidence to enter the most holy place (4:15-16, 10:19-22) instead of being reminded of sins year after year by the repeated sacrifices of the law which can never take away sin (10:2-3).⁵ Rom. 7:7, 10, 14, 3:31.

Paragraphs 20.5-6 are added to chapter 20 - “The Gospel and Its Gracious Extent”

20.5 - The invitations and commands of the gospel are to be proclaimed and applied indiscriminately to all men. All men are to be urged to come to Christ, and in the name of God are to be assured of the certainty of their welcome and forgiveness on condition of their repentance and faith.

Matt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15, Lk. 24:47, Acts 3:19, 13:38-39, 17:30, Rom. 10:12-13, Rev. 22:17, Isa. 55:6-7

20.6 - Unbelievers find the warrant for faith on the basis of God’s promises recorded in Scripture and addressed to them personally. On this basis alone they have the right to proceed and place all their trust in Christ to save them. When they do He will most certainly save them. Every unbeliever may be assured that if God commands him to believe and be saved, then he has a warrant to do so at once, without delay.

1 John 3:23, Acts 17:30, Isa. 45:22.

Paragraphs 22.7-8 on “Religious Worship and the Lord’s Day” are replaced with the following

7. The Sabbath has been variously understood by devout Christians throughout the centuries and in recent years it has been the subject of intense discussion among churches that hold the reformed confessions of the 16th and 17th centuries in high esteem. In view of these discussions we openly express our understanding in the following paragraphs.

8. When God created the heavens and the earth He assigned a special significance to the day following the completion of creation, the seventh day. God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, that is, set it apart for a special use, because on that day He rested from all His work. Additional works of God and Scripture associated with those works explain the special uses intended by God for the seventh day. In Scripture the seventh day is first given the title “Sabbath”, meaning rest, when God provided

manna for Israel in the wilderness. On the Sabbath day, the rest day, the Israelites were to cease from their daily labors because God had provided two days of provisions for them on the sixth day.

Gen. 2:2-3, Ex. 16:23-30

9. God defined how the Sabbath day was to be observed when He gave Israel the decalogue. On the seventh day they were to rest from their labors of the previous six days as God had rested from all His labors of the six days of creation.¹ At Sinai the Lord also explained that the Sabbath day was a sign between Him and His covenant people that they would know and remember that He was the one who sanctifies them, that is, He had separated them from all other nations to be His people.² In the covenant renewal performed prior to Israel taking possession of the land, the Lord further defined the purpose for the Sabbath observance: on the day of rest the people were to *remember* that they had been slaves in Egypt, having no rest, and that it was Yahweh, “the Lord *Your* God”, their covenant keeping God who delivered them from this bondage of labor.³ The fourth commandment sustains a close relationship to the first two which forbid idolatry; if Israel would remember that *Yahweh* gave them rest, something they were to do weekly, they would not turn to other gods who did not deliver them from being slaves in Egypt.⁴

¹ Ex. 20:8-11 ² Ex. 31:12-17, Eze. 20:12,20. ³ Deut. 5:12-15 ⁴ Deut. 29:25-26, 32:17-18, Jer. 44:3

10. In addition to the Sabbath being a reminder to Israel of their covenant relationship with Yahweh distinguishing them from all the nations and of His past deliverance from bondage, the Sabbath institutions of the Mosaic law pointed forward to a rest that would be given to the people of God in the land of Canaan, and ultimately in Jesus Christ. “Entering God’s Rest” (Ps. 95:11) is a description of the blessing God graciously provided for ethnic Israel in Canaan which points to the greater salvation provided through Israel’s Messiah, Jesus Christ, in His kingdom now present and consummated in the future.¹ The meaning of the fourth commandment should be understood in the light of the additional Sabbath institutions given in the Law of Moses and not distanced from them. The dominant themes in all Sabbath institutions of the Mosaic law are liberty, rest and provision provided by Yahweh, the one true God. The Sabbaths were designed to bring this to remembrance.²

¹ Gen. 5:28, Ex. 33:12-16, Deut. 12:10, Jos. 1:12-15, Ps. 95:7b-11, Matt. 11:29-30, Heb. 3:7-4:11. ² Ex. 21:2, 23:10-11, Lev. 16:29-32, 23:39, 25:2, 8-50, 26:33-36, Lam. 2:6, Hos. 2:11.

11. Since in Christ a new covenant is established with the people of God and those who believe in Christ enter the true rest¹ that was typified by the Mosaic Covenant Sabbaths², the New Testament teaches that the observance of the types, in this case weekly and seasonal Sabbaths, has been ended, the substance of the Sabbath observances now being in Christ.³ Regarding the observance of days Christians are to respect one another's consciences and avoid either judging their brethren or using their liberty in a way which causes their brethren to stumble.⁴

¹ Matt. 11:28, Heb. 4:3 ² Gen. 2:2-3, Ex. 21:2, 23:10-11, Lev. 25:2, 8-10 ³ Col. 2:16-17, Gal. 4:10, Rom. 14:6. ⁴ Rom. 14:5-6.

12. Although there is no longer an appointed physical place of worship where a special presence and blessing of God is promised¹ or specific days appointed for worship², God's special presence and blessing is now promised in the New Covenant temple, which is the gathered body of Christ, the church.³ The authority to determine the time and place for worship has, by Christ, been given to the leaders of local congregations. Members of local congregations ought to gather for public worship as called for by those whom Christ has placed in authority in His churches.⁴ Exercises of private worship, though very valuable and honoring to God, cannot take the place for such public worship since in the New Covenant God's *special presence and blessing* is promised in the temple, the gathered body of Christ.⁶

¹ Such as God's presence in the altar, the tabernacle, the land, in Jerusalem, in Zion, and in the temple; Ex. 20:24, Deut. 12:1-14, Psa. 5:7, 76:1-2, 84, 99:1-2, 9, 132:13-14, 138:1-2, 1 Ki. 8:26-30, Eze. 6:12. ² The Jewish calendar of Sabbaths and special feast days. ³ Jn. 4:19-24, Eph. 2:13-22, 1 Cor. 3:10-17, 1 Pet. 2:1-9. ⁴ Heb. 10:24-25, 13:17, 1 Tim. 3:15, 1 Pet. 5:1-4. ⁶ Matt. 18:20, Rev. 1:12-13, 2:1.

As it is a law of nature (moral law) that all men ought to seek and worship God¹, and that God is worshipped and found where He chooses to reveal Himself, unbelievers ought to attend the gatherings of the people of God as a primary means of seeking God, His mercy, and of God revealing Himself to them.²

¹ Rom. 1:21, 25, 3:9, 11, 18, Psa. 9:16-17, 10:4, Acts 17:25-26, Rev. 14:6-7, 15:3-4, Isa. 55:4-6. ² 1 Cor. 14:24-25, Isa. 45:14, Zech. 8:23.

Paragraphs 25.5-7 are added to Chapter 25 - "Marriage"

5. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood.¹ Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order.² Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall and was not a result of sin.³ The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women.⁴

¹ Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18. ² Gen. 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14. ³ Gen. 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9. ⁴ Gen. 3:1-7, 12, 16.

6. The Old and New Testaments manifest the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women.¹ Both Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the church.²

¹ Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28. ² Gen. 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15.

7. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by sin and the curse. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership.¹ In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men.²

¹ Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7 ² Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15.

Paragraph 26:4, the sentences following, "invested in Him" are replaced with the following

As the Lord Jesus is the single head of the universal church it is impossible that any person has been or ever will be the single head of the universal church on earth.

Paragraph 30.7 - “The Lord’s Supper”

It is acceptable to use either fermented or unfermented grape juice at the Lord’s table.