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§1 History from Adam up to the Deluge

- 1.1 *Q:* How did the Lord create Adam?
A: Immortal, with true knowledge, righteousness and holiness.
- 1.2 *Q:* What do you think of the theory of evolution?
A: We cannot accept that one kind of creature developed from another kind — higher from lower. Today each kind of existence in creation still has its own place as it already was in the beginning. Only within the boundaries of each kind is there development.
- 1.3 *Q:* What is the probationary command?
A: With it God tests Adam's and Eve's obedience to Him: “¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:16-17).
If Adam were to fall in sin, it would include all people born of him. If he were to not fall in sin, then all people born of him, would eternally remain in a state of grace. Adam did however fall in sin.
- 1.4 *Q:* What is the covenant of works?
A: It is the agreement between God and the human race whereby each promises fidelity to the other. It is a one-sided agreement which God concludes with man. Man is involuntarily the second party to the agreement. The content is that man must discharge his obligation by complete obedience to the Lord. The promise is that man will share in the glorious result of the union.
- 1.5 *Q:* Why did the covenant of works fail?

A: Adam could not keep the probationary command. Because he could not discharge his responsibility in this covenant, the covenant was breached.

1.6 Q: What is the consequence of this covenantal breach for us?

A: Man will no more be able to accomplish his salvation by his works or achievement. As a result death as punishment came into force over us. All of Adam's descendants share in this disaster.

1.7 Q: What is the covenant of grace?

A: God's grace is revealed in Jesus Christ because He –in Adam's stead, as a second Adam– is completely obedient to all of the commandments of the Lord. Thus He accomplished eternal salvation for us. Thereby the wrath of the Lord was also satisfied.

1.8 Q: What does it mean that man is created in God's image?

A: Man is image bearer of the Lord in two respects: In broader - and in narrower sense.

In broader sense:

- General distinction from the rest of creation: gifts, talents, *etc.*
- Man has qualities which animals do not have. Man has a mind, can think and plan for good.
- Man has a heart that can love.
- Man can deliberately work toward God's honour.

In narrower sense:

- Man alone possesses true knowledge, righteousness and holiness.

1.9 Q: How do you, with the Fall in mind, explain the words: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21)?

A: This means that before one does something, one

must first determine whether it is good and pleasing to God. One does not do so by first doing the deed to thereby establish whether it is sin or not. One need not roll in mud, in order to say that mud is dirty.

1.10 *Q:* What was the nature of the first two humans' relationship amongst themselves?

A: They were created within a holy bond of matrimony, wherein each received a particular task from God: as image of God, Adam had to rule and Eve had to be subservient to her husband and be a help unto him. Herein she is image of God's church. Together, they had to rule over God's creation and guard it, against attacks from Satan.

1.11 *Q:* What was the nature of their relationship with their Creator?

A: With respect to God, man stands in the relationship of creature to Creator. Man is completely obedient and subservient to God.

1.12 *Q:* Motivate how Adam initially also held a threefold office of prophet, priest and king?

A: God placed him in this threefold office as head of the covenant of works.

1.13 *Q:* How was he a prophet?

A: He could know his Creator aright and apply his whole life to the service of the Lord.

1.14 *Q:* How was he a priest?

A: He could love the Lord sincerely and devote himself to the Lord.

1.15 *Q:* How was he a king?

A: He could rule well over creation and with his life serve God.

- 1.16 *Q:* Where does sin come from?
A: From the angelic realm. Satan rebelled against God because he was not satisfied with his position. Satan wanted to be as God. He seduced a third of the angels to fall with him. Satan wanted to bring this temptation into the world of man. Adam and Eve then transgressed the probationary command, they ate of the tree of knowledge. It was not accidental or from ignorance. It was volitional.
- 1.17 *Q:* Did man after the Fall lose his office as faithful — prophet, king and priest?
A: No. But, due to sin he could no longer rightly fulfil it.
- 1.18 *Q:* In which way did something of the good giftedness of man's prophetic office still remain?
A: After his fall, man can still recognise the power, righteousness and worth of truth. Man can comprehend God's purposes sufficiently to know his own misery and with repentance, to repent where he does sin.
- 1.19 *Q:* Did God still show mercy unto Adam and Eve after the Fall?
A: Yes. With the proto-gospel (first gospel/promise of Salvation), which witnesses and prophesies grace for sinners. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:15).
- 1.20 *Q:* Where is the proto-gospel (first gospel) found and what is it?
A: Genesis 3:15.
God reveals that a separation between men will take place. From out of the covenantal lineage —the redeemed— the Redeemer will be born. Over against this lineage there will be one of

reprobation. It is immediately revealed in Cain — rejected, and Abel — redeemed.

1.21

I: Describe the events surrounding Cain’s and Abel’s sacrifices.

A:

1.22

Q: Cain says: “My punishment is greater than I can bear” (Gen. 4:13). Explain this. Did he ever really have remorse?

A:

-
-
-
-
- 1.23 *Q:* What becomes of the descendants of Cain?
A: After the Lord cursed Cain, he and his descendants departed from the faithful. Out of them comes Lamech who had two wives — Adah and Zillah. This Lamech was already so consumed with sin that he declared his vengeance is seventy times greater than that of the Lord's. This generation also anticipates the gifts of grace which God gives to man, such as: music, culture and science.
- 1.24 *Q:* How is the grace of God which He promises in Genesis 3:15 already visible in the first children on earth?
A: Although the Lord did not accept Cain's sacrifice, He proved His mercy by accepting Abel's sacrifice. It shows that from amongst men, in his generations, there will nevertheless be those who believe in God and receive grace from Him.
- 1.25 *Q:* Who came to repair man's inability to execute his office, which ability he damaged?
A: Jesus Christ did. He conquered - and rose from death. With this He reveals that He recreates the elect to be able to again fulfil this threefold office. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the church is anointed with the presence and indwelling of God who makes man competent to again exercise these offices. It is finally fulfilled with the Second Coming of the Lord.
- 1.26 *Q:* How does it concern us as His faithful children?

A: We are His church. The church is the body of the Lord –He is the Head and we are the members– and therefore we are with Him, the Head, anointed with the Holy Spirit. It is publicly confirmed with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Therefore each one of the faithful also fills the offices today.

1.27 *I:* Name the ways wherein the Lord Jesus’ prophetic office is revealed on earth.

A: In His sermons, *e.g.* the sermon on the mount, conversations with people, instruction of the disciples and the multitudes, as well as in His parables.

1.28 *Q:* What is each one of the faithful’s prophetic calling?

A: We must be witnesses who proclaim to all people the Word of the Lord.

1.29 *Q:* What were the official duties of the priests of the Old Testament dispensation?

A:

- They sacrificed, in such a way as to, do conciliation for the people.
- They interceded/prayed for the people.
- They blessed the people in the Name of the Lord.

1.30 *Q:* Why was the priesthood incomplete and limited during Old Testament times?

A: It was hereditary. Transferred from one generation to the next, within the lineage of Levi. Thus it was temporary.

These priests had to first sacrifice for themselves and only thereafter for the people.

1.31 *Q:* What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

A:

- He begins faith in our hearts.
- He applies the blessings of Jesus Christ's works in our lives.
- He prepares Jesus Christ's church for the Second Coming.

1.32 I: Name the line of the covenant from Adam up to Noah

A: Adam, Seth, Enos (Enosh), Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared (Jered), Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah.

1.33 Q: In what respect is Noah a type of Christ?

A: He is a preacher of righteousness which is later fulfilled by Jesus.

1.34 Q: For how long was judgement postponed?

A: 120 years.

1.35 Q: What is the meaning of the Deluge (Great Flood)?

A: For the human race it was a baptism unto preservation and a new life. The purpose of the Deluge was not the destruction of mankind but the realisation of the counsel of God.

1.36 Q: What do we call the covenant established with Noah and what is the content thereof?

A: Noahitic covenant ('*covenant of nature*'). God — Noah — obedience — seasons and rainbow.

1.37 Q: What happens with Noah after the Deluge and who does he curse?

A: Noah packed grapevines and planted it after the Deluge. Of the fruit he made wine and got himself drunk. In the process he got rid of his clothes and his son Ham saw him lying naked in his tent in that condition. The sin is that Ham did not solve the

matter himself and did not keep it quiet. He told his brothers and they in turn took a cloak, entered the tent with their backs turned toward their father and so doing, covered his nakedness (shame). Noah cursed Ham's eldest son, Canaan (Chenaar).

§2 *History from Noah up to Joseph — Egypt*

- 2.1 *Q:* How does the covenantal line proceed from Noah up to Abraham?
A: The following patriarchs: Shem, Arphaxad (Arpachshad), Salah (Shelah), Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug (Seruch), Nahor, Terah, Abraham.
- 2.2 *Q:* Where was the tower of Babel built and what did the people intend with it?
A: On the plain in Shinar. They wanted to remain together and make a name for themselves. Thus, they wanted to oppose the instruction of the Lord to fill the earth.
- 2.3 *Q:* What were the consequences of the building of the tower of Babel?
A: The Lord forced them to obedience. He causes different languages to originate so that mutual confusion develops and they are forced to disperse. In this way the different peoples came about. The origin of peoples –dominions– is thus a reminder that humanity was in revolt against God and the Lord intervened to force them into obedience.
- 2.4 *Q:* Why does the Lord call and set Abraham apart?
A: The motive for setting Abraham apart lies in the coming of the Messiah, the Redeemer. Therefore it

was necessary that God set His people apart in the midst of the nations.

- 2.5 *I:* Describe the covenant with Abraham.
A: The Lord had established a covenant of grace with Abraham. It was a blood covenant and circumcision was the sign thereof. It was a renewal of the covenant of Genesis 3:15. The promise consisted of two parts: the one was that Abraham's descendants would inherit the land of Canaan and the second was that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea.
- 2.6 *Q:* What is the meaning of the separation between Abraham and Lot?
A: Lot was not part of the covenant which the Lord entered into with Abraham. Yet he wanted to parasitically sponge off the advantages of the covenant. Therefore the Lord brings about the separation between the two, so that Lot could thereafter go his own way. Lot's bad disposition clearly comes to the fore in the fact that he chooses the best pastures for himself, so that he goes to live in Sodom and later in drunkenness fathers a child with each one of his daughters.
- 2.7 *Q:* What heathen nations are borne of Lot and how are they conceived?
A: In his drunkenness Lot had intercourse with all his daughters. He fathered a child with each of them. The one grandson becomes the father of the Moabite and the other the father of the Ammonite.
- 2.8 *I:* Describe the line of the covenant and the line of reprobation as it became manifest from Abraham up to Jacob.
A: Abraham's eldest son, which was to have received the blessing of the first born, is rejected and

becomes head of a heathen people, the Ishmaelite. Isaac carries the promise further. Of his two sons the eldest is also rejected and he (Esau) becomes head of a heathen people, the Edomite, while the covenant is continued in Jacob.

- 2.9 *Q:* What is the meaning of Bethel and Penuel?
A: God appeared to Jacob at both places.
 The Lord appeared to Jacob at Bethel (Gen. 28:10-22). During this appearance Jacob was passive / impassive. Jacob realises the omnipresence of the Lord, therefore he names the place “House of God”. However, Jacob had still to learn to trust the covenant of God.
 Jacob was active at Penuel (Gen. 32:22-32): He wrestled with God. He therefore names the place “Countenance of God”. For Jacob it was a humiliating discovery to know how God views him. All at once he understands that his great adversary is the Lord, not his brother Esau. Jacob also received a new name –Israel– therefore Jacob changes: converts and henceforth lives in the holiness of God.
- 2.10 *Q:* What is the revelation historical meaning of Joseph? In what respect is he a type of Christ?
A: Like Christ, he is also rejected by his people.
- Where Jesus is betrayed, he is sold for a sum of money.
 - As Jesus Christ prepares a place so does Joseph.
 - Joseph is a mediator for his people as Jesus is Mediator for the elect.
 - Joseph saves his people — from famine, while Jesus redeems His elect — from a death of sin
- 2.11 *Q:* What is the revelation historical meaning of Moses? In what respect is he a type of Christ?
A: Moses is born, instructed and called to lead his

people out of slavery. Thus he is a saviour. Herein he is a type of Christ.

2.12 *Q:* What was the purpose with Moses' sojourn in the Pharaoh's palace?

A: He is there trained and prepared for his future task; to lead the people and to command them.

2.13 *Q:* What is the content of the Law at Sinai?

A: It is a renewal of the covenant with Abraham. Therefore it is also a blood covenant, because Moses had to pour the blood on the altar. It foretold the new covenant in the blood of Christ which was established with the crucifixion: "This cup is the new testament in My blood." (Luke 22:20 & 1 Cor. 11:25).

There are two tables: The first four commandments concern the relationship between God and us. The second table concern our relationship with our neighbour.

2.14 *Q:* Is the covenant at Sinai a new covenant?

A: No. It is still the same covenant of grace which is now continued with Abraham's descendants. This covenant is also sealed with blood — Moses sprinkles blood on the people after he receives the Law of God.

§3 The time of the Judges/Aristocracy

3.1 *I:* Name the judges.

A: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson, Eli, Samuel.

- 3.2 *Q:* What is the significance of the judges?
A: They are, time-and-again, used to save the people from their enemies.
- 3.3 *Q:* What is the significance of Ruth?
A: She is a Moabite, thus a heathen. In the genealogy of Jesus — part of his humiliation.

§4 The time of the Kings

- 4.1 *Q:* What is the significance of Saul?
A: A transitional figure from the judges to the kings.
- 4.2 *Q:* What is the significance of David and in what respect is he a type of Christ?
A: A king of war. A type of Jesus in His battle and victory.
- 4.3 *Q:* What is the significance of Solomon and in what respect is he a type of Christ?
A: He is a prince of peace. A type of Christ as regent of eternal peace.
- 4.4 *Q:* What was the position of Elijah in Ahab's time?
A: Ahab was godless, driven by Jezebel. Naboth was murdered for a vineyard. Elijah prays. Drought ensues for three-years-and-six-months. On Carmel there was a conflict between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. Their prayers to Baal yielded nothing, while the Lord heard Elijah's prayer and consumed his sacrifice with fire. Then all the Baal prophets were killed and it rained again.
- 4.5 *I:* Describe the dividing of the kingdom.

A: *Rehoboam*: The old counsellors warned that taxes must be decreased, so that the people would serve the king in love. The young counsellors demanded that the penalties and taxes must be increased. Rehoboam took Adoniram, the overseer, of the forced labour along with him. Adoniram is killed and Rehoboam narrowly escapes. Schism was a fact.

Jeroboam was Solomon's overseer of the forced labour of the house of Joseph. The prophet Ahijah anointed him as king and prophesied that he will rule ten tribes of Israel. Jeroboam flees to Egypt. At Shechem he acts as the peoples' spokesman. Subsequent to the schism he becomes king of the Ten Tribes (Northern kingdom/Israel).

4.6 *Q:* What were the causes of the exile?

A: Unbelief and idolatry

4.7 *Q:* What kingdom is exiled first and which one thereafter? Whereto are they banished?

A: First Israel — to Assyria
Thereafter Judah — to Babel

4.8 *Q:* Under who do the Jews return from Babel? How long after their return is the temple rebuilt?

A: The Jews returned under Zerubbabel, Jeshua and Ezra.
Under Nehemiah the temple is again rebuilt, twenty-years ($\times 20$ yrs) later.

§5 *The time of Christ*

5.1 *Q:* What is the fullness of time?

A: The time was right for Jesus' birth. There was:

- One world language
- One world government
- Good connecting roads between cities
- All heathen religions were at that stage redundant and the people were ready to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

5.2 *Q:* Where does the conflict between Jacob and Esau –line of the covenant and that of reprobation– again present?

A: In the infanticide: Herod is an Edomite, descendant of Esau, and Jesus is a descendant of Jacob. With the infanticide an attempt is made on the life of the Redeemer who is of the lineage of Jacob.

5.3 *Q:* What is the significance of Jesus’ miracles?

A: It exhibits His omnipotence over creation. He is not constrained by the boundaries which exist in creation.

5.4 *Q:* What is the significance of the healings?

A: It exhibits Jesus’ power and ability to restore and recreate.

5.5 *Q:* What is the significance of the parables?

A: A parable is a comparison wherein an earthly image is used to explain heavenly –spiritual– matters.

5.6 *Q:* What is the difference between the resurrection of Lazarus and the resurrection of Jesus?

A: Lazarus is resurrected by the Lord. He had to again die. Jesus rose of His own power. He does not again die.

5.7 *Q:* Why is Jesus in the New Testament often referred to as the “Son of David”?

A: God made a promise to David. “And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.” (2 Sam. 7:16)

5.8 *Q:* To what do the words “Son of man” refer?

A: Time-and-again it refers to the passion of Christ.

5.9 *Q:* To what do the words “Son of God” refer?

A: Time-and-again it refers to the victory of Christ.

5.10 *Q:* How does the Messiah govern His church in New Testament times?

A: By His Word and Spirit

5.11 *Q:* Why could the Jews not accept the words “... the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15 & Luke 10:9)?

A: They thought their Messiah would establish an earthly kingdom and liberate them from the Romans — one does not convert oneself to such a thing!

5.12 *Q:* As highest Prophet what does Jesus proclaim to us?

A:

- That He is the Son of God
- That God is the Father of also those who believe in Jesus
- That His kingdom did come and breaks through everyday
- That He is the Son of man who suffered and died and rose from the dead for us
- That He sent the Holy Spirit as Comforter That He is the Son of God
- That God is the Father of also those who believe in Jesus
- That His kingdom did come and breaks through

everyday

- That He is the Son of man who suffered and died and rose from the dead for us
- That He sent the Holy Spirit as Comforter

5.13 *Q:* Why is Jesus named a priest according to the order of Melchizedek?

A: We know nothing of Melchizedek's descent or family. He was not captive within the lineage of sinful man. He was a priest and a king of the Almighty God. It was all prophetic of the later birth of Jesus.

5.14 *Q:* Why is Jesus Christ the perfect sacrificial lamb?

A: He is without blemish. He is slaughtered in our stead as true sacrificial lamb. It means that the Lord Jesus himself had no sin for which He could/had to be punished. For our sins He is fully punished. For our burden of guilt before God and reconciliation with Him there is no longer any lamb necessary.

5.15 *Q:* How does Jesus Christ today still continue His High Priestly work?

A: He intercedes for us in prayer with our Heavenly Father. He does so, on grounds of His blood which paid for each one of us, so that we can be reconciled with God.

5.16 *I:* Name Scripture passages which prove God to be a Triune God

A: Genesis 1:26-27 — "Let Us make man ..."
Luke 3:21-22 — Jesus' baptism
Matthew 28:19 — "Go ye therefore ... baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"

§6. *The time of the planting of the New Testament churches*

- 6.1 *Q:* Where is the starting point of Christian church history?
A: With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit over the first congregation in Jerusalem — Acts 2.
- 6.2 *Q:* What benefits did Rome's worldwide domination hold for Christendom?
A:
- The apostles could easily move about without problems with passports.
 - The Roman legal system offered a fair trial to the persecuted.
 - Everyone understood Greek as the world language.
 - The Romans built very good road networks.
- 6.3 *Q:* What did the people who did not yet know of Jesus Christ worship?
A: They had many gods, *e.g.* a god of agriculture, one for war, *etc.* They even worshiped the Roman emperor.
- 6.4 *Q:* What is service to God?
A: It is the conscious love and complete devotion to God with my whole heart, soul, body and mind. So doing we satisfy the highest revelation of being human.
- 6.5 *Q:* How powerful is the grip of sin on our religious practice?

A: It affects our heart and will. We nevertheless retain the ability to believe. The seed of service to God remains in every human.

6.6 *Q:* Where does heathendom originate?

A: From man who does not want to serve God. His will now inclines in a different direction. He moves away from the Lord and he sets his heart on transient things as if it were more important than God. All heathen nations were initially joined with God himself.

6.7 *I:* Name two differences between false and true service to God.

A:

- All false religions direct themselves toward something or someone other than God. The true service to God directs itself to God as He reveals Himself in the Bible.
- False religions believe in salvation which is of the earth — of man and his own ability.

6.8 *Q:* Where does the Lord Jesus give the great commission? What does He command with regards to Baptism?

A: Matthew 28:19: "... baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

6.9 *Q:* What is the significance of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

A: With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit God takes up residence in His church. The Holy Spirit leads the faithful to conversion and leads the church to proclaim the Name of God.

6.10 *Q:* Who is the great evangelist-apostle?

A: Paul.

- 6.11 *Q:* What was the sin of Ananias and Zaffirah?
A: Sin against the Holy Spirit. They lied to God, regarding money they obtained from the sale of their property, which they transferred to the church.

§7 *The Faith*

- 7.1 *Q:* Are all people saved by Jesus?
A: No.
- 7.2 *Q:* Who then *does* He save?
A: The elect.
- 7.3 *Q:* Who grafts you into Christ?
A: The Holy Spirit.
- 7.4 *Q:* What does the “order of salvation” mean?
A: That the riches and results of Christ’s death finally reaches us and can be applied in our lives. It is the way by which God’s work of grace is manifest in us.
- 7.5 *Q:* What is the beginning of God’s work with His child?
A: The calling with a vocation, not only by general revelation –nature– but also with the call of Holy Scripture.
- 7.6 *Q:* We are saved by grace. Why does the Bible then encourage us to contend and enter through the narrow gate?
A: Indeed we are saved by grace, but it does not cancel our responsibility to live aright. I cannot simply sit around and wait that the Lord saves me.

I must serve and obey God as He commanded it in His Word.

- 7.7 *Q:* What is the primary purpose of preaching?
Motivate with a Scripture text.
A: To bring people to faith — Romans 10:14 and 15.
- 7.8 *Q:* Do all people positively answer the call?
A: No. The parable of the sower teaches that with many the seed falls on dry ground.
- 7.9 *Q:* What is regeneration (‘being born again’)?
A: The second step in the order of salvation when the Holy Spirit generates the new life in the heart of the faithful. Man is passive and God works His grace. God the Holy Spirit effects conversion in the heart of man. God the Holy Spirit, not man’s goodness or achievement, unlocks hardened hearts by regeneration — ‘being born again’.
- 7.10 *Q:* Can we observe when regeneration (‘being born again’) has occurred in someone?
A: Yes. Although it is a secret event, the fruits thereof are visible. The result, true faith, is visible in the regenerate.
- 7.11 *Q:* What is a true faith?
A: A sure knowledge and a solid trust.
- 7.12 *Q:* What is historical belief?
A: One knows all the facts of the Gospel and of God’s counsel, but it holds no meaning — as is the case with Satan.
Q: What is time bound belief?
A: One converts but believes for a while only.
Q: What is wonder belief?
A: One believes as long as miracles occur.
- 7.13 *Q:* Why do you want to profess your faith?
A:

God?

A: Every person experiences phases of doubt. But happily certainty of faith does not rest on our experiences or circumstances — it rests upon the solid truth which God in His Word reveals concerning our salvation. My certainty rests not on my feelings but on Jesus Christ's perfect sacrifice of atonement.

§8 *Holy Scripture*

8.1 *Q:* Where does the Bible's authority come from?

A: From God.

8.2 *Q:* What is the relationship between the church and the Bible?

A: The Church never elevates itself above the Bible, because the Bible is the revelation of God and His will. The church is perfectly obedient to God and His will.

8.3 *Q:* Explain the following:

- The Bible is transparent

A: All people can read and understand the Bible. But one will not understand as much as the other.

- The Bible is its own expositor

A: In order to understand the Bible, Scripture must be compared with Scripture. So doing the Bible explains itself.

- The Bible is sufficient

A: God's will is sufficiently revealed in the Bible including all spheres and circumstances of life. Therefore we need no more than the existing Bible books. The Apocrypha are unacceptable as measure

of faith.

- 8.4 *Q:* How does God reveal Himself clearest?
A: By his Word and Spirit — most profoundly in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit who works faith in us, because the entire Bible is, as it were, a systematic publication of Jesus Christ to us. In Him God reveals His saving grace perfectly.
- 8.5 *Q:* Does God today, still reveal knowledge of Himself in ways new, different from and outside of Scripture?
A: No. What God wanted to say to humanity, through the ages, He has already said in His Word, and fully declared in Jesus Christ.
- 8.6 *Q:* What is the content of the Old Testament?
A: It shows God's revelation to humanity under the old dispensation of the covenant of grace when everything was still obscure and only partially revealed.
- 8.7 *Q:* What is the content of the New Testament?
A: It describes the new dispensation which perfectly fulfilled the old — *NB:* not replaced it! This happened with the coming of Jesus Christ. He is the Messiah for whom all the faithful waited.
- 8.8 *Q:* Who wrote the Bible?
A: God the Holy Spirit.
- 8.9 *Q:* What does it mean when we say that Scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit?
A: The Holy Spirit lead men, each with an own nature and character, to write down God's infallible Word. The Old Testament prophets explicitly state: "So saith the Lord GOD." (*e.g.:* Isa. 7:7).
- 8.10 *Q:* Should we select God's Word from amongst

the human words in the Bible, as if it were packaged/concealed?

A: No. Although humans wrote it, we accept the entire Bible as the Word of God. It does not concern us how the Holy Spirit shaped it into an end product.

8.11 *Q:* What are the Apocrypha?

A: Books which pretend to be true –canonical– but are not included in the Bible because in essence, style and content it does not corresponds with the canonical Bible books. As such it has no authority.

8.12 *Q:* What authority does the Bible have?

A: Divine authority.

8.13 *Q:* Why must we read the Bible?

A: Without the Bible we cannot possess true knowledge of God, nor know how we are saved, nor what life hereafter holds in store for us.

8.14 *Q:* May we add to *or* subtract from Scripture?

A: No. The Lord pronounces His judgement and His wrath over such as would do so — Revelation 22:18.

8.15 *Q:* What was the purpose of the ceremonial laws in the Old Testament?

A: These were precepts which governed Israel's worship services. It symbolically anticipated the work of the Christ who was yet to come.

8.16 *Q:* Why then did it lapse in our time?

A: Christ fulfilled for us the works to which the laws had referred. Certain things, *e.g.* sacrificial offers lapsed, as Jesus has already sacrificed Himself for us. *NB:* Other things, such as the worship service, respect for the Name of God and the prohibition on murder, *etc.*, remain enforce.

- 8.17 *Q:* Out of all possibilities available in this life; is man of himself capable to decide aright?
A: Initially — at creation God’s law was in the heart of man. However the Fall brought about a warped image and now God’s guidance — His Law is necessary.
- 8.18 *Q:* What then is the quality of your knowledge?
A: Deficient, for we do not know exactly what is right and what is wrong. Our conscience is cauterised and blunted by our habits, upbringing and environment. It can therefore never be a final measure.
- 8.19 *Q:* How then do we today learn right from wrong?
A: We hear the Law of God and He, as it were, writes it with His Spirit in our hearts.
- 8.20 *Q:* Is book knowledge of the Law enough?
A: No. I must also heartily long to obey it.
- 8.21 *Q:* What is the purpose of God’s Law in our lives?
A:
- It is a source of knowledge of our misery. It is like looking into a mirror — in it one sees ones own sin and wretchedness.
 - Furthermore it is a tutor unto Christ — the more the Law convicts you of your sins, the more you will realise that you need Christ.
 - As the rule of our life of thankfulness it arouses in us the desire to henceforth live thankfully and thereby glorify God.
- 8.22 *Q:* How is the Law divided?
A: In two parts:

- 1-4: Our relationship with God
- 6-10: Our relationship with our neighbour

§9 Creeds

9.1 *Q:* Into which major groups would you divide heathen religions?

A:

- Heathen religions — all native splinter groups of primitive cultures.
- The Jewish religion — rejects the New Testament, the Trinity. It emphasises the works of the Law and the Old Testament.
- Mohammedanism — Islam — Muslims. Founder Mohammed. Their god is Allah. Their Holy book: Qur'an.

9.2 *Q:* Can one claim that all religions are essentially equal, and that we will all attain salvation, in our own way and view?

A: No. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6.

9.3 *I:* Name the main groups in Christendom.

A:

- The Roman Catholic Church (RCC). They err with regards to papal authority. Their ecclesiastical traditions are placed on a par with the Bible. They venerate saints. They believe that they achieve salvation with their good works. They over emphasise the sacraments.
- The Eastern-Orthodox Churches. They err with

regards to their view of the Trinity: the Son is subordinate to the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father only.

- The Protestant churches. During the Reformation they broke with the RCC. There are Lutheran and Calvinistic churches — as well as all the Baptist groups. We are Calvinist. Our point of departure is that we honour God because we have already received salvation in Christ.

9.4 *Q:* What are the cardinal moments of truth of the Reformed Churches?

A:

- Holy Scripture is the infallible Word of God.
- We profess our faith with our creeds. These are documents in which the church summarised what it holds to be true according to God's Word.

9.5 *Q:* What is the ultimate goal with the creeds?

A:

- It is a weapon against heresy and against personal error.
- What true religion is, is thereby expressed.
- It binds the faithful in unity.
- Sound and true religion, as well as interpretation, is thereby passed onto posterity.

9.6 *Q:* What creed was drafted, as the Reformed exposition of the doctrine of election, at the Synod of Dort?

A: The Canons of Dort.

9.7 *Q:* Which other important principle pronouncement was made, with regards to the organisation of the church, on that occasion?

A: The Church Order of Dort with its eighty-six (×86)

articles

- 9.8 *Q:* Why does the church have a church order?
A: Because ecclesiastical organisation is thereby arranged in a Biblical way.
- 9.9 *Q:* Why is the Synod of Dort 1618/19 important to our church?
A: Because it is with this Reformed doctrine, arrangements and Scriptural view that Jan van Riebeeck and his folk arrived in South Africa.
- 9.10 *Q:* What are creeds?
A: Summaries of particular truths of our faith which are present in the Bible.
- 9.11 *Q:* What is the relationship between the Bible and the creeds?
A: Creeds always appeal to Scripture for the truth it contains.
- 9.12 *I:* Name the universal creeds.
A: The Apostle's -, Nicean - and Athanasian creed.
- 9.13 *Q:* What creed deals with Jesus being of one Substance with the Father?
A: Nicean creed — written 325 *c.e.*
- 9.14 *I:* Name the forms of unity.
A: The Belgic Confession (BC), Heidelberg Catechism (HC) and the Canons of Dort (CD)

§10 *The Church*

- 10.1 *Q:* What does the word church mean? What does *kuriakê* and *ekklesia* mean in the Greek New Testament?
- A:*
- That which belongs to the Lord
 - Assembly of the congregation of the faithful — literally: the elect
- 10.2 *Q:* What does the universal (catholic) Christian church mean?
- A:* It means all the faithful through the ages across the entire world.
- 10.3 *Q:* What is meant by a local church?
- A:* The visible gathering of the faithful that exists independently at a specific location.
- 10.4 *Q:* Who is the Head of the Church on earth?
- A:* Jesus Christ.
- 10.5 *Q:* What means does Jesus Christ use to gather His church?
- A:* His Word –the Bible– and the Holy Spirit.
- 10.6 *Q:* Why do we study the history of revelation?
- A:* Because therein we see how that in the midst of world history Jesus Christ gathers, protects and preserves His church.
- 10.7 *Q:* What is the church on earth called?
- A:* The Church Militant.
- Q:* What is the church in heaven called?
- A:* The Church Triumphant / Victorious.
- 10.8 *Q:* Who does Christ use to exercise governance in His church?

A: Elders. They are chosen from the congregation by the congregation guided by God the Holy Spirit.

10.9 Q: How many kinds of elders are there?

A: Two:

- Teaching elders — ministers
- Ruling elders — we call: the elder

10.10 Q: Which office supplanted the elder in the early church by which human power usurped governance?

A: The office of the bishop (Bishopric).

10.11 Q: Did the bishops still conform to the requirements of the Word?

A: No. Some provided human leadership without the Word. They worked for a position of power where their word alone held sway.

10.12 Q: What do you believe of yourself and the church?

A: That I am a living member of the church and shall remain so for as long as I live.

10.13 Q: What does *kuriakê* and *ekklesia* mean?

A: *kuriakê* means that which belongs to the Lord. *ekklesia* means called out / gathered.

10.14 Q: Do all church folk go to heaven?

A: No. Many hypocrites are in the church. They do not truly believe.

10.15 Q: Who is the only Head of the church and why?

A: Jesus Christ is the only Head of the Church. Therefore our own interests, preferences or conveniences may not play a ruling or a decisive role in the church. We must honour and glorify the Lord Jesus, because He is our King.

- 10.16 *Q:* What is a holy, universal, Christian church?
A:
- The congregation of the faithful who all believe in Jesus Christ. The word holy means that the church obtains its holiness by Jesus Christ's blood alone. The word universal means that the church is chosen from out of all tribes, nations and languages.
 - They are all chosen by God even before the creation of heaven and earth — Ephesians 1:4.
 - By His Word and Spirit the Triune God preserves, protects and increases them, from creation up to the Second Coming.
 - These faithful view themselves as freed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - They view themselves as hallowed and sealed by God the Holy Spirit.
- 10.17 *Q:* What is my duty to Jesus Christ's church as one of the faithful and where is it written in the Bible?
A: I must add myself to the body — the congregation of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12.
- 10.18 *Q:* What creed echoes this?
A: Belgic Confession of Faith, Art. 28.
- 10.19 *Q:* How does the church differ from other human organisations?
A: It is an organism, a planting and a beginning by the Lord Himself. Therefore it is no association or partnership.
- 10.20 *Q:* Name the extra ordinary offices by which Jesus Christ ruled His church in the beginning?
A: Prophets, apostles, evangelists.

10.21 *Q:* What were the characteristics of the apostles?

A:

- They were eye- and ear witnesses of Jesus' sermons and works.
- They worked particularly with the power of the Holy Spirit.
- They had particular gifts and their work was confirmed by miracles.

10.22 *Q:* Name the ordinary offices in the church?

A:

- Parsons and teachers — prophetic office
- Elders — royal office
- Deacons — priestly office

10.23 *Q:* What do you understand by office of the faithful?

A: Every one of the faithful is himself also a prophet, king and priest.

We act as God's prophets when with our lives – word and deed– we proclaim His Name.

As kings, in our own lives we contend with and conquer sin.

When we help other people –especially the needy– and intercede for them, we act as God's priests.

10.24 *I:* Name the five main church governance systems.

A:

- The RCC — the Pope has highest authority.
- Lutheran — the regent determines the religious course and the church becomes the whole nation's church — national church.
- Independentist — each congregation adopts its own resolutions without taking other churches into consideration.
- Collegial — the highest assembly makes the decisions and everybody must obey, similar to

different branches of an association.

- Presbyterian — each local congregation is independent and governs itself. On common matters more churches together decide at greater assemblies.

10.25 *Q:* What say does the state have in the church?

A: None. The church and state each has its own sphere with tasks and rights. It is also true that the Reformed Churches in South-Africa nominates a set of deputies to liaise with government. These deputies draw government's attention to matters of principle and negotiates with them about it.

10.26 *Q:* Which church order does the Reformed churches hold to?

A: The Church Order of Dort comprising eighty-six (×86) articles.

10.27 *Q:* When do local churches –congregations– form one denomination?

A:

- When there is unity in confession — the three forms of unity: Belgic Confession of Faith, Heidelberg Catechism and Canons of Dort.
- When there is unity in service — ministry of Word and sacraments is the same.
- When there is unity in church governance — discipline.
- In sum it is known as unity of ministry, doctrine and discipline.

10.28 *Q:* What is an attestate?

A: *NB:* It is not a membership certificate. It is simply a testimonial of one's ecclesiastical doctrine and life which allows one to integrate with the next congregation.
It is only valid within one denomination of

churches. This attestate –testimonial– must be requested from the church council as quickly as possible when you depart. You personally hand it in at the next congregation.

10.29 *Q:* What are the marks of the true church?

A:

- True ministry of the Word
- True administering of the sacraments
- True exercise of discipline

10.30 *Q:* What is true ministry of the Word?

A:

- Each sermon must be pure proclamation from God’s Word. There may be no ‘story telling’.
- Each sermon must proclaim Christ.
- Each sermon must contain the elements of judgement — admonition of sin, but also grace — comfort of forgiveness.
- Each sermon must also be doctrinal or instructive in nature.

10.31 *Q:* How does the Word of God work — how comprehensively?

A:

- Inward — builds the congregants’ faith
- Outward — compels us to proclaim the gospel to the outside world

10.32 *Q:* Why is there, also such a thing as, discipline in the church?

A:

- In the first instance it is to serve God’s honour.
- Furthermore it preserves the sinner.
- In addition it keeps the congregation’s name holy.

10.33 *Q:* Who exercises discipline?

A: In essence Jesus Christ does. He does so by means of the elders who execute His will.

10.34 *Q:* What is the character of ecclesiastical discipline?

A: It is spiritual, convincing in nature. It is not retribution or punishment as is the case in civil legal practice and judgements of law courts.

10.35 *Q:* What is the course discipline takes?

A:

- It begins in the congregation with elders' admonitions, when they notice that a fellow member misbehaved in doctrine and/or life — Matthew 18:15.
- If there is no repentance, then they take along another witness.
- If there is still no remorse, or if it is a public gross sin —many already have knowledge thereof— it must be reported to the church council.

10.36 *Q:* When is someone kept from the Lord's Supper?

A: When a gross sin has been committed, or an investigation into a matter has not yet been concluded, or when a person still persists in sin after having been admonished.

10.37 *Q:* How do the final steps of censure or excommunication proceed?

A:

- It begins in the congregation with elders' admonitions, when they notice that a fellow member misbehaved in doctrine and/or life — Matthew 18:15.
- If there is no repentance, then they take along another witness.

- If there is still no remorse, or if it is a public gross sin –many already have knowledge thereof– it must be reported to the church council.

§11 Perseverance of the saints

- 11.1 *Q:* Is the true believer without sin?
 A: No. However he must not remain in his sin.
- 11.2 *I:* Name an example of someone who was grievously ensnared by sin, but who had sincere remorse.
 A: David. He transgressed with Bathsheba. His remorse is clearly rendered in Psalm 51 and 32 both of which he wrote after the Lord sent Nathan to him to speak with him about this event.
- 11.3 *Q:* May one doubt one’s salvation?
 A: No. When we doubt, we must always remember that the certainty of our salvation lies not in our own strength, but in the power of the Lord’s grace and His redeeming counsel.
 Do you doubt your salvation?
- 11.4 *Q:* Wherein does the certainty of your salvation rest?
 A: In the counsel of God the Father. In the merit of Jesus Christ’s expiatory death. In the powerful operation of God the Holy Spirit in me.
- 11.5 *Q:* What is true religion according to the first commandment?

- A:* Worshiping God with surrender:
- With your head — knowledge of God
 - With your heart — trust in God
 - With your hands — doing His will
- 11.6 *Q:* What does the second commandment forbid?
- A:*
- Making an image of God.
 - All wilful service to God.
- 11.7 *Q:* If not form an image, how then must we get to know God?
- A:* As He has revealed Himself in his Word.
- 11.8 *Q:* What does the third commandment forbid?
- A:* It forbids us to curse, make false oaths, or to unnecessarily swear. It also forbids the omission of His Name. It must indeed be used, but then in worship and with reverence.
- 11.9 *Q:* Why do people curse?
- A:* Because it
- is every sinner’s inclination;
 - is carelessness done of weakness, and
 - adds force to poor arguments.
- 11.10 *Q:* Why may we not swear at all?
- A:* Because we thereby call upon God as our Witness, which more often than not, means that God is called upon to confirm our lies. (Rather err on the side of caution.)
- 11.11 *Q:* What do you answer when you are called to swear an oath in court?
- A:* “I confirm that what I am about to testify, is the truth and only the truth.”
- 11.12 *I:* Name a text where this is expected of a

Christian?

A: Matthew 5:37: “But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay ...”.

11.13 Q: How must we use God’s Name?

A: Reverently and respectfully.

11.14 Q: Do we make any binding promises in church?

A: Yes, when

- professing faith;
- marrying;
- confirming office bearers and
- baptising a child.

11.15 Q: Why must the Sabbath be observed?

A: It is the occasion for remembrance of our redemption.

11.16 Q: Why do we no longer celebrate the Sabbath on the seventh day, but on the first day of the week?

A: Because:

Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week — Sunday;

- subsequent to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the earlier congregations fixed their assembly time on the first day of the week, and
- on this day alms are collected for the poor and the needy. Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week — Sunday;
- subsequent to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the earlier congregations fixed their assembly time on the first day of the week, and
- on this day alms are collected for the poor and the needy.

11.17 Q: How does our rest differ from that in the Old Testament?

A: They worked six days and then rested — symbolic of work with the expectation that the rest which the Messiah was to bring, is yet to come, and that the salvation of heaven awaits once we have worked hard all our lives.

We, however, first rest and then we work our six days –beginning with the first day– it is symbolic of Christ who completed the covenant of works. Now we may first rest in His grace and thereafter strengthened go forth and work for six days. Gratitude follows God’s works of grace.

11.18 *Q:* How was Sunday celebrated in the New Testament?

A:

- Christ already worshiped with others in the synagogue.
- It may not happen according to new human stipulations.

11.19 *Q:* How do we celebrate Sunday?

A:

- By resting from our usual daily work, but still being actively busy with the Lord’s work:
- Worship services, fellowship with the faithful and almsgiving.

11.20 *Q:* Name a text that encourages assembly on Sunday?

A: Hebrews 10:25: “... Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is ...”

11.21 *Q:* Where does authority come from?

A: God is the absolute Authority and He executes it by investing people with authority.

11.22 *Q:* Name a text as motivation?

A: Romans 13:1.

- 11.23 *Q:* Are authority figures infallible?
A: No. They are sinners, but they are means in God's hand.
- 11.24 *Q:* What does the sixth commandment prohibit?
A: Homicide by deed, feelings, thoughts or words.
- 11.25 *Q:* Why do people marry?
A:
- It is a creational ordinance of God, not merely a contract between two people.
 - It orders one's life. We are not like lawless animals.
- 11.26 *Q:* What is the purpose of marriage?
A:
- Orderly rearing and preservation of the human race
 - Thus the covenant of grace extends through the generations until the end of time
 - Mutual aid
 - A shadow of the congregation's relationship with her Bridegroom, Jesus Christ
- 11.27 *Q:* Why is chastity necessary?
A: One's body is a chaste temple of Christ.
- 11.28 *Q:* What does the eighth commandment teach?
A: Everything belongs to God. We are at best stewards.
- 11.29 *Q:* How do we obtain our possessions?
A: By labour and trade.
- 11.30 *Q:* What are my obligations toward my fellow man with regards to my possession and gifts?
A:

- I must work in such a way that I can in so doing give to the poor.
- It means that I must also sustain the lives of others.

11.31 *Q:* What does the ninth commandment forbid?

A:

- False witness, twisting of words
- To judge others without hearing them
- Speaking evil

11.32 *Q:* Why may you not wrongfully desire that which belongs to another?

A: Not only outward obedience is required of us, but also inward obedience.

11.33 *Q:* What is the Law in sum?

A: Read Matthew 22:37-40.

11.34 *Q:* Was Christ merely an example of good living?

A: No. He is more — our Guarantor and Mediator, our Governor, but Himself also the Door to eternal life.

11.35 *Q:* What do the words “thy kingdom” indicate?

A: It indicates God’s dominion over our lives, but also over all other spheres of life.

11.36 *Q:* Name a Scripture passage which indicates that we must also pardon our debtors?

A: Parable of the unforgiving servant — Matthew 18:15-35.

11.37 *Q:* What does Amen mean?

A: It is true. I rest and trust in God.

§12 *Life after death*

12.1 *Q:* Where are you the moment you die? Where do you read it?

A: The faithful are at peace with their God — Luke 23:43; 16:21.
The unfaithful are in perdition and misery without God — hell.

12.2 *Q:* Is conversion possible after death?

A: No. God's judgement of the person who died then takes place.

12.3 *Q:* When do you enter perfect salvation?

A: At the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

12.3 *Q:* What is:

the first death?

A: The physical death which all people die.

the first resurrection?

A: When those who die a blessed death are immediately with Christ in heaven at their death (*cf.* Lazarus in Luke 16:21 *ff.*).

the second death?

A: When the people who died in unbelief, get their bodies back, their bodies and souls being united, they are cast into eternal hell.

the second resurrection?

A: This second resurrection takes place with the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. It is when the people who died a blessed death, get back their bodies. Their bodies and souls being united, they

enter the perfect blessedness of the Lord.

12.5 *Q:* What are the signs of the times?

A:

- Great decline of faith, false prophets
- Wars, love grows cold
- Famine and earthquakes
- Love of delight

12.6 *Q:* How do we distinguish between:

spiritual death

A: It is a breaking of the bond with God in one's life; to live without God; being dead in sin and trespass. Such a person can only be saved through re-generation.

temporary death / physical death

A: It is when one dies — the fact that man goes to the grave.

eternal death

A: It is the final breaking of the bond with God in eternal hell. It is that some must eternally endure punishment in hell.

12.7 *Q:* How do the last days before Jesus Christ's Second Coming compare with the days of Noah?

A: The days will be as evil as in the days of Noah.

§13 *Sin*

- 13.1 *Q:* Where does the first fall take place?
A: In heaven.
- 13.2 *Q:* What happened?
A: The devil fell in sin. A third of the angels fell with him. We do not know exactly what happened. What we do know, is that insurrection, lies and conceit played a role.
- 13.3 *Q:* What is sin in reality?
A: Wilful pride and disobedience against God by openly rebelling against Him with word and deed. Sin directs one's life toward death, because it changes us into haters of God. 1 John 3:4 teaches that sin is unrighteousness — breaking and violating any form of obedience to the Lord.
- 13.4 *Q:* How are we freed from death / hell?
A: We can only be freed from the eternal death of hell by being rid of spiritual death. This happens by the operation of the Holy Spirit when we come to true faith in Jesus Christ.
- 13.5 *Q:* What urges Satan to seduce man to sin?
A:
 - Jealousy of God. He still wants to appropriate for himself the worship owing to the Lord.
 - Hate of God.
 - Jealousy of the perfect relationship that existed between God and man.
- 13.6 *Q:* Why does he approach Eve?
A: He approached Eve to force her to move outside of

the boundaries of her commission. (As head of the human race Adam was supposed to have guarded against Satan's intrusion.)

13.7 *Q:* What is original sin and natural depravity?

A: Original sin is sin we inherit from our ancestors. Natural depravity is the filth or stain of sin that cleaves to us.

13.8 *Q:* Did the entire human race fall in sin with Adam?

A: Yes — 1 Corinthians 15:21 and 22.

13.9 *Q:* When is forgiveness possible?

A: After sincere remorse and repentance.

§14 God

14.1 *Q:* How does God make Himself known to man?

A:

- Through general revelation — creation and nature says that a mighty God created it (cf. Rom. 1:18).
- Through particular revelation of His Word: God's redemption in Jesus Christ. General revelation teaches that there is a God, but says nothing about exactly who He is nor about one's own redemption and salvation.

14.2 *Q:* How did God reveal Himself to humanity in the past?

A: Theophany — to Abraham, cloud column, visions, angels. He especially revealed Himself through the prophets and thereafter by the coming of Jesus Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

- 14.3 *Q:* Can man excuse himself, saying he never knew of God?
- A:* No. God's revelation in nature is sufficient for everyone to know that a living God exists (*cf.* Rom. 1:18 *ff.*).
- 14.4 *Q:* How does God reveal Himself clearest?
- A:* By His Word and Spirit. Most profoundly in Jesus Christ, for the whole Bible is, as it were, a systematic publication of Jesus Christ. In Him God reveals His redemptive grace perfectly.
- 14.5 *Q:* Why did God so perfectly reveal Himself?
- A:* Because He thereby reveals that He has complete control of Satan. He thereby establishes His honour and His will to save lost people.
- 14.6 *Q:* What comfort does the doctrine of providence hold for us?
- A:*
- That God's preservation and governance is specifically focused on His people.
 - We therefore confess that there is no such thing as chance nor that fate disposes of anything.
 - Even though I do not understand it, I may be comforted in the knowledge, that God allows everything to happen to the benefit of His faithful.
- 14.7 *Q:* In how many persons does God exist?
- A:* Three — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- 14.8 *Q:* How does God exist?
- A:* God is Spirit. He exists eternally and is one Being.
- Q:* What is the meaning of:
LORD?
- A:* The name is YHWH (Yahweh) which means

God in His eternal existence. It is the Lord's covenant name.

Messiah?

A: The Hebrew name meaning the exact same as the Greek name Christ. Both mean Anointed and indicate the official nature of Jesus' work.

14.10 *Q:* What work does each the Person of the Godhead perform?

A:

- Father — Creator and Ruler.
- Son — Redeemer.
- Holy Spirit — Guide and Fortifier of Faith.

14.11 *Q:* What is the counsel of God?

A: God's disposing of everything that happened, happens and will happen. The content is: creation, fall, redemption.

14.12 *Q:* What is election?

A: It is

The eternal counsel of God.

- He established an elect human race.
- He calls this particular elect group to faith.
- He preserves them through the ages and all generations.
- He declares them righteous in the Last Judgement.
- He calls them His church.

14.13 *Q:* How am I certain that I share in the divine election?

A:

- When I believe that by the Holy Spirit I am by true faith grafted into Jesus Christ.
- My faith in the sovereignty of Jesus Christ.
- When I, with childlike faith, fear and respect God.

- Because my sin causes me real grief.
- Because I hunger for and thirst in God's proximity.

14.14 *Q:* Can one ever claim that the choice to be one of the elect rests with man, so that he can himself choose whether he will accept or reject God?

A: No. If someone in faith accepts the Gospel, it is a sign of God's grace. If someone persists in unbelief –his life will show it– he himself brings the result to pass, namely reprobation.

14.15 *Q:* What is written in Romans 9?

A: The divine election.

14.16 *Q:* What is the final purpose of God's counsel?

A: The coming of the kingdom of God and the rejection to hell of the godless.

14.17 *Q:* When are you elected and where do you read this?

A: Ephesians 1:4 and Romans 9.

14.18 *Q:* Is Jesus a God-man? What is the difference between God and man and God-man?

A: No, Jesus was not a God-man. That is the type of caricature which we always find in the falsifications of God's revelation. It means that such a character is a human being with divine characteristics. Jesus was, however, truly God himself, while He was hundred percent human.

14.19 *Q:* Why is Jesus very man? Why is He very God?

A: Jesus was a true man, because God wished to punish only a human for the sins committed against Him by humans. On the other hand Jesus had to be true God, or else He would not have been able to

endure God's wrath over the sins of man. The wrath of God would otherwise have destroyed Him.

14.20 *Q:* Why is Jesus' priesthood perfectly sufficient?

A: He was equally King and Priest according to the order of Melchisedek. Which is to say, eternal and not dependant on the generations of men.

14.21 *Q:* How did Jesus exercise His priesthood on earth?

A:

- By sacrificing Himself as High Priest of God!
- By praying for the people and blessing them.

14.22 *Q:* Are we the faithful also priests of God?

A: Yes. Because we must present ourselves as living sacrifices of thankfulness to God.

14.23 *Q:* How did Jesus reveal His royal excellencies on earth?

A:

- By His miraculous power
- By doing battle with Satan from the beginning.

14.24 *Q:* What does it mean to us to also be kings — in faith?

A: To contend with sin with all our might and to overcome.

14.25 *Q:* Do you view the Holy Spirit as a power additional to Jesus Christ (to continue His work)?

A: No. He is the third Person in the divine Trinity, but works as a power within us.

14.26 *Q:* How are we taught in Scripture that also He is God?

A: He

- is called by a divine Name — “The Lord is the

Spirit ...” — 2 Corinthians 3:17.

- has divine excellencies.
- does divine works.
- receives divine honour.

14.27 *Q:* Does the Holy Spirit work independently of and separate from Jesus Christ?

A: No. He reveals nothing more than Jesus Christ, who explained all that we need to know.

14.28 *Q:* What is sin against the Holy Spirit?

A: To deliberately scorn the works of the Holy Spirit, or to attribute it to the devil as if it were of no worth to you. It comes to the fore most clearly in those people who by the work of the Holy Spirit came to faith and converted, but who then rejected the Lord and all faith and in place thereof accepted atheism or any other religion.

14.29 *Q:* How does that differ from the faithful who grieve the Holy Spirit with their conduct?

A: The faithful realise their sin and tardiness and every time exhibit penance and remorse. Remorse is evidence that it is not sin against the Holy Spirit. That is why the Holy Spirit leads such people to repent and sin no more.

14.30 *Q:* How does the Holy Spirit reveal Himself in the Old Testament?

A: By endowing individuals with talents and gifts, *e.g.* the artists Bezaleel and Aholiab.

14.31 *Q:* What does the Holy Spirit do?

A: He is the other Comforter promised by Jesus Christ. He proceeds from the Father as well as from the Son. He continues the work that Jesus did on the cross.

- 14.32 *Q:* Where does the outpouring of the Holy Spirit
 –Pentecost– fall on the ecclesiastical calendar?
A: Fifty days after Easter — Good Friday
 Ten days after Ascension
- 14.33 *Q:* What signs accompany the Spirit’s coming?
A: Tremendous squalls, tongues as of fire, speaking in
 other languages.
- 14.34 *Q:* How do I know that I possess the Holy
 Spirit?
A: He who believes in God, believes in Jesus Christ,
 has the Holy Spirit. No one can believe in Jesus
 Christ unless the Spirit grants him the gift of faith.
- 14.35 *Q:* What do you know of the angels?
A: They are not physical beings but serving spirits.
 Since the beginning their number is fixed and
 complete. We know two types, namely cherubim
 and seraphim. They are the Lord’s messengers and
 warriors. They protect the faithful. Thus children
 who die young, do not turn into little angels with
 small wings!
- 14.36 *Q:* Where do evil spirits come from?
A: Revelation 12 speaks of a third part of the angels
 who became disloyal. They were proud and
 conceited and no longer wanted to serve God.
 Satan is their head.

§15 Gratitude

- 15.1 *Q:* What is the most important part of gratitude?
A: Prayer.

- 15.2 *Q:* Why is prayer necessary?
A:
- We thereby thank God and thus confess our dependence on the Lord.
 - It is also His Will that we must pray.
- 15.3 *Q:* How must we pray?
A:
- With the right disposition of heart
 - With a realisation of my humble condition
 - In the Name of Christ
 - Reverently and with profound dependence
- 15.4 *Q:* What must we keep in mind with regards to the answer to our prayers?
A:
- That God's will can be different.
 - That our view of 'what is good for us' is not always God's view of 'what is good for us'.
 - We nonetheless trust that we will be heard when in faith we pray sincerely.
- 15.5 *Q:* Besides my own physical and spiritual needs, what forms another important part of my prayer?
A: Intercession for my neighbour.
- 15.6 *Q:* What does the supplication "Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9 & Luke 11:2) indicate?
A: That we may rightly know and serve God.
- 15.7 *Q:* Why do you do good works?
A: To show ourselves thankful for all God's grace. Thus to honour God.
- 15.8 *Q:* What is the dying of the old man (mortification)?
A: Daily repentance: to flee from sin.

- 15.9 *Q:* What is the rising of the new man (vivification)?
A: Also daily repentance, but then growing in holiness. It is to overcome sin more-and-more and thereby exhibit the royal image of the Lord evermore.

§16 Keys

- 16.1 *Q:* What is a sacrament?
A: It is
- true signs and seals whereby we can better understand the promises of God's Word visibly, and
 - it is something done to us.
- 16.2 *Q:* What is the relationship between Word and sacrament?
A: The Word awakens and the sacrament strengthens faith.
Hence the sacrament follows the proclamation of the Word.
Hence one can also not receive a sacrament separate from and outside of worship service.
- 16.3 *Q:* Who's competence does the church council handle when they exercise discipline?
A: The competence of Jesus Christ.
- 16.4 *Q:* What is the character of ecclesiastical discipline?
A: Spiritual and serving.

- 16.5 *Q:* Who is disciplined?
 A: People who persist in their sins.
- 16.6 *Q:* Where does discipline begin?
 A: In the congregation — Matthew 18.
- 16.7 *I:* Describe the three steps of censure.
 A: *First step:* The person is forbidden use the sacraments. The matter and the commandment transgressed are announced to the congregation. The sinner's name is omitted. The congregation is exhorted to pray on this matter.
 Second step: If there is obduracy, advice is obtained from the classis. Then the sin and sinner's name is announced to the congregation. The sinner is still forbidden use of the sacraments. The congregation is exhorted to pray for this person and to speak with him.
 Third step: The sinner is expelled from the congregation by way of excommunication.
- 16.8 *Q:* How many sacraments are there?
 A: Two.
- 16.9 *Q:* Name the sacraments?
 A: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- 16.10 *Q:* Do the sacraments seal something *in* or *to* the recipient?
 A: It seals something *to* the recipient: because the sacrament, itself, does not change the person; sacraments save no one — they are merely signs and seals of what Jesus Christ does for us.
- 16.11 *Q:* What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper?
 A: Reconciliation of sin through the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

- 16.12 *Q:* What are the signs of the Lord's Supper?
A: Bread and wine.
- 16.13 *Q:* What does the Lord's Supper indicate?
A: The faithful partake of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ unto a reconciliation of all our sin — bread and wine symbolises the participation.
- 16.14 *Q:* Who may use the Lord's Supper?
A: One who has professed the faith and is a member of the congregation or if from another denomination, a letter from the member's church council granting permission.
- 16.15 *Q:* Why at a table?
A:
- The idea of a meal underlies it. Instituted at a table as a meal.
 - Symbolises unity of the congregation.
- 16.16 *Q:* What must the focus of your personal preparation be?
A: I must:
- know my sins, confess it and humble myself;
 - despise my sin and believe in Jesus Christ's merciful redemption, and
 - undertake to henceforth live a life of gratitude.
- 16.17 *Q:* What is the meaning of baptism?
A: It indicates the washing away of my sins by the blood of Christ.
- 16.18 *Q:* What is the sign of baptism?
A: Water.
- 16.19 *Q:* Is the sacrament of baptism a guarantee of your salvation?
A: No. I must daily still prove my faith in Jesus Christ

by word and deed. Thus, I must always live godly.

16.20

Q: Why were little boys circumcised in the Old Testament?

A: Even though they did not yet know it, nor could themselves believe it, they were with Abraham included in the covenant throughout. Isaac was circumcised at eight days of age, knowing nothing of faith. Little children being part of a faithful generation, share in the covenant from birth, hence they also received the sign.

16.21

Q: Why do we say that baptism replaced circumcision?

A: In the Old Testament circumcision was the sign which specifically ministered the meaning of the covenant to little children. In the New Testament we minister the fulfilled sign, namely baptism – without blood shedding– to little children (*cf.* Col. 2:10-12).

16.22

Q: Must you wait until you are a believing adult, before you are baptised?

A: No.

Man is not active in his baptism. A sacrament is ministered to him whereby he is assured of God's covenant of grace in Jesus Christ.

- It is not an occasion where the baptised must achieve. God does not wait until I believe before He includes me in the covenant.
- Adult-baptism only concerns people who come to faith later in life. Logically such a person would profess his faith in God prior to being baptised.
- However important my faith is, the grace of God precedes it. Nowhere in the Bible are we taught that the children of faithful parents must first grow-up, before being baptised. Covenant-

community means the entire family.

16.23

Q: What do you say of the re-baptism of people who later convert and are baptised again?

A: It may not happen.

16.24

Q: When is baptism valid?

A: When it is ministered

- with the Trinitarian formula;
- with water;
- by an ordained minister (pastor/priest), and
- during a worship service.

Baptism is a sacrament and not a barometer of man's spiritual level and progression of faith whereby one says: "now, I'm ready" — that you do when you profess the faith.

1. Once baptised, is baptised in the death of Jesus Christ. It is done once for all, as His death was once for all.
 2. Where the covenant people strayed in the Bible, God required repentance, not a repetition of the covenant sign! — Jeremiah 31:18.
 3. Re-baptism is a scorning of God's covenantal grace: preaching, being reared in faith, and His promises throughout the years.
 4. Re-baptism is a new human precept for salvation, namely: 'my own choice and faith-experience'. This may not. Re-baptism is clearly baptism with a human addition: my willingness and my surrender.
- Any addition to our sure faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ (our salvation) is heresy — sin against the Holy Spirit.

§17 General Church History

- 17.1 *Q:* What is Marcion's heresy?
A: He rejected the Old Testament because the Creator-god was, according to him, cruel and without love.
- 17.2 *Q:* What is the Montanists' heresy?
A: They believe that the Holy Spirit gives an inner light to everyone, with which to prophesy and make new revelations known, independently of the Bible.
- 17.3 *Q:* What is the Arian heresy?
A: That
- God is not Triune.
 - Jesus Christ was merely a (good) creature and does not eternally exist as God.
- 17.4 *Q:* What does his adversary, Athanasius, profess?
A: That the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is God. Had Jesus not been the Son of God, then He would not have been able to conquer death, which He indeed did.
- 17.5 *Q:* What anti-Christian sect also claims that Jesus is not God?
A: The Jehovah's witness.
- 17.6 *Q:* Name the Pelagian heresies?
A:
- Original sin does not exist.
 - Adam was merely a bad example.
 - Everyone has a free will, with which to choose, who he wishes to serve. No election.
 - Death is not the result of sin.
- 17.7 *Q:* On what does the pope base his authority?

A: That he is the direct successor of Peter and as such, the foundation of the church. This is an erroneous interpretation of Matthew 16:18.

17.8 *Q:* What were the early churches' weapons against heresy?

A:

- The true preaching of Scripture
- The creed — Twelve articles
- The office of the bishop — he had power.

17.9 *Q:* What tendency characterises the 15th century church?

A: The Word of God is shoved to the background and other things and people are deemed of greater importance.

17.10 *Q:* Name a few precursors to the Reformation who were severely persecuted because they resisted the RCC?

A:

17.11 *Q:* Can man alone change the errors of a church?

A: No. God Himself must with His Word intervene in hardened hearts. For that purpose He called reformers to emphasise His Word a new and to fight on the side of truth.

- The Waldense in Southern-France
- John Wycliffe in England
- John Hus in Hungary — burned at the stake!
- “De Broeders des gemenen levens (Brethren of the common life)” a group in the Netherlands, who sounded a wake-up call for a more devout and pious life in the following of Christ alone.

17.12 *Q:* What does the concept reformation mean?

A: The church is reformed as it must be according to

the Bible.

- 17.13 *Q:* Who were the two most famous reformers?
A: Luther and Calvin.
- 17.14 *Q:* What did Luther discover in the Bible that exposed the RCC’s “good works” doctrine as false?
A: Man is saved by grace alone and not by his merit — Romans 1:17.
- 17.15 *Q:* With what did Luther defend the Bible truth against the false Roman Catholic doctrine on salvation?
A: His 95 thesis on the church door of Wittenberg on 31 October 1517.
- 17.16 *Q:* Why is Luther’s contribution deemed very important for the church?
A: Because he restored to splendour, above all doubt, the authority of the Bible.
- 17.17 *Q:* Why can it be said that Luther did not yet progress far enough with the reformation?
A: He retained certain Roman Catholic views — the state’s voice in the church and that Christ is, as it were, each time eaten during Eucharist (Mass) *in* and *with* the bread — doctrine of consubstantiation.
- 17.18 *Q:* Which reformer brings clarity with regards to the Lord’s Supper?
A: Zwingli — it is a meal-of-remembrance.
- 17.19 *Q:* Did the RCC repent of, and convert from their errors?
A: No. With the contra-reformation they anew:
 - equated their traditions with Holy Scripture;
 - condoned the veneration of Mary (Marianism); and,
 - as it were, re-established the use of mass and the

idea of purgatory.

17.20 *Q:* What were the persecuted Reformed brethren in France called?

A: Huguenots.

17.21 *Q:* What do we call the occasion when about 20 000 Reformed brethren were murdered in France on Augustus 1572?

A: Night of Bartholomew.

17.22 *Q:* Who were the Reformer's enemies?

A: The RCC and the Anabaptist.

17.23 *Q:* Who were the Anabaptists?

A: Fanatics (zealots) who:

- rejected the authority of the Bible and relied solely on their own so called “internal light”;
- rejected infant baptism; and
- emphasized experiences of the Spirit.

17.24 *Q:* From which country did we inherit our Reformed –Calvinistic– religion?

A: The Netherlands.

17.25 *Q:* What was Arminius's heresy in the 17th century?

A: He rejected election and said that man can be chosen only if (after) he believes.

17.26 *Q:* What led to the Synod of Dort?

A: This synod had to provide a final and decisive answer to the above mentioned heretical teachings which were presented to the assembly in a document containing five points.

17.27 *Q:* What are the disadvantages of a nation church?

A:

- The masses enter, but with them their heathen habits.
- Instead of refinement membership is easily attained and brings about a superficial approach to religion.
- The state gains a voice in the church.

17.28

Q: What do you know of Islam?

A:

- Mohammed is Allah's, their god's, greatest prophet.
- They acknowledge no Mediator, death on the cross or resurrection.
- Their Holy book is the Qur'an.
- Adherents call themselves Moslems.
- Their main seat is Mecca in Arabia.

17.29

Q: What is the fundamental error of the RCC?

A:

- Her misuses and views regarding God's Word.
- The Bible is read by the priests only.
- Their Bible also contains the apocrypha — read BC, Art. 6.
- Their traditions are considered equal to the Bible.
- Papal pronouncements (potentially) have the same authority as the Bible (ex cathedra).

17.30

Q: What led to decay in the churches in the Netherlands during the 17th and 18th centuries? Is it significant?

A:

- Yes. It is indeed significant as the errors below, also present today, albeit in a refined form.
- Rise of humanism — man's rather than God's honour is paramount.
 - Rationalism — man wants to apprehend everything, even the Bible, with his limited

mind.

- Mysticism — to live from out of your own so called inner ‘spiritual light’, and not so much from the Word.
- A generally lawless view of life: freedom, equality and fraternity.

17.31 *Q:* How did these changes influence preaching in church?

A: In stead of sound proclamation of the Word, pleasant fictions are told which caress peoples’ feelings (*cf.* 2 Tim. 4:3).

17.32 *Q:* How did this free spiritedness –importance of man rather than the honour of God– influence life?

A:

- The External gained more importance than the inner power of faith.
- Unbelief and superstition replaced the sure certainties of God’s promises.

17.33 *I:* Name a couple of unfortunate affairs in the Netherlands which negatively influenced the church in the Cape during its first years.

A:

- The Reformed Church in the Netherlands increasingly became a nation church.
- The Church Order of Dort was supplanted.
- Rationalism — intellectual religion pushed the creeds to the background.
- Emotional-religion which emphasises man’s emotion, gained prominence at the expense of the truth and Scriptural doctrine on salvation.
- Evangelical/Gospel songs were imported on 1 January 1807 with neither ecclesiastical study nor - approval.

17.34 *Q:* How did commissioner J.A. de Mist view

the church's role and task?

A: He viewed

- the church as an association which one joins by choice. Over against that, we know the covenantal view according to which the faithful are grafted into the church according to their generations.
- The church must simply train good citizens for the state.
- The synod is the actual “church” and the congregations are merely the branches thereof.

17.35

Q: How does de Mist's view influence the character of schools?

A:

17.36

Q: How does that influence church governance?

A:

- Parents and the church have no voice.
- The State controls everything.
- No religion in school.
- The Church Order of Dort is thrown overboard.
- The system of Collegialism is implemented, consequently greater assemblies (synods) rule the lesser assemblies (church councils), as if they were mere management meetings.
- Canons of Dort are omitted.

17.37

Q: But, are our church councils then not also ruled by a classis, as if it were a greater assembly?

A:

No. A classis is a gathering of more churches during which only matters of mutual concern are handled. Each church council's delegation participates, with warrant to reach decisions jointly. Hence decisions are binding as each church council did participate in those decisions.

§18 *Ethics*

18.1 *Q:* Why does the Word reject lotteries and all things connected thereto, *e.g.* soothsaying and palm reading?

A: It is a transgression of the first commandment. Without consideration of God's care and providence, trust is placed elsewhere.

18.2 *Q:* Why do we burry our dead and not burn (cremate) them?

A:

- The body remains a gift of God.
- Jesus Christ was also buried.
- In Bible times only evildoers were burned.
- The symbolism of a kernel of grain that is sown and grows into a new life

18.3 *Q:* Is the elect without sin and does he/she live completely holy?

A: No. Jacob, elected to be a covenant-head of God's people, was also a cunning cheat. Which yet again serves to emphasise that man deserves nothing in the covenant of grace, wherein God's grace makes of you what you are.