

THE 1689 BAPTIST
CONFESSION OF FAITH

IN MODERN ENGLISH



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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

The Second London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 has been one of the most significant confessions for Reformed Baptist believers since its origin. Since 1677, this confession has been, as Charles Spurgeon said, an “assistance to you in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness.” Desiring to make the confession accessible for contemporary readers, Stan Reeves took on the painstaking task of modernizing the text while keeping the theological intent of the original.

Since 2014, the modern English edition has made this important document accessible to many, with more than 100,000 copies distributed. In preparation for this most recent edition, we partnered with Stan Reeves to make a few changes that further increase the alignment with the original authors’ intentions and remove confusion for the modern reader.

The most notable updates in this new edition are a return to the original, gendered language and changes to the language of “changeable emotions” and “real persons” in chapter 2, paragraphs 1 and 3. The decision to revert to the less modern language surrounding gender stems from a desire for both doctrinal fidelity and modern clarity. With recent changes to the Chicago Manual of Style and similar resources, it is abundantly clear that the push toward gender-neutral language in the publishing world is not meant for clarity, but as part of a larger agenda tied in with the sexual confusion so prevalent in our age. While this had no bearing on the previous choice for neutral language, we believe that a principled stand on this ground is essential for the gender-confused world in which we find ourselves. Additionally, the change better aligns the language with the doctrinal and historical heritage that has preceded this edition. The language of headship, male representation, etc. is not antiquated, but simply

a right understanding of how God made His world.

As for the changes made in chapter 2, while we affirm that the language used in previous editions of 2.1 has always been orthodox and representative of the intent of the paragraph, the decision was made to revert the line to “and has no body, parts, or passions.” The change was made because a modern understanding of passions will likely be different than what was originally intended, so the new edition includes a brief footnote to help with clarity. This diverges from the pattern held throughout the work of inserting a modern replacement for older words and footnoting the original. We believe that this change moves to helpful language that is used widely concerning the doctrine of God.

In 2.3, we removed the qualifier of “real” in front of “persons” and retained “subsistences” in the footnote. We did this while understanding the importance of the framers’ decision to use “subsistences” in the 1689 over the use of “persons” in the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration. Since a substantial goal of the document is ease of understanding for the body of the text, we retained “persons” in the body and footnoted the original “subsistences.” For a deeper explanation of the distinctions between persons and subsistences, we would encourage all readers to do further study using Dr. James Renihan’s *To the Judicious and Impartial Reader: An Exposition of the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith*.

We believe that these changes have provided further clarity for this generation of Baptists as we seek to understand with our forefathers those things most surely believed.

FOREWORD

Historically, Baptists have been, and thankfully many still are, a confessional people. Yes, they are supremely a people of the Book, the Holy Scriptures. But confessions have been central to their experience of the Christian life. The twentieth-century attempt to explain Baptist life and thought primarily in terms of soul-liberty seriously skews the evidence. Of course, freedom from external coercion has always been a major concern of Baptist apologetics. But up until the twentieth century, this emphasis has generally never been at the expense of a clear and explicit confessionalism.

Of the many confessions of faith that Baptists have produced—and they have produced a goodly number—none has been more influential than the *Second London Confession*, popularly known as the *1689 Confession*. It was not only the confession of faith adopted by the majority of Baptists in the British Isles and Ireland from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, but it was also the major confessional document on the American Baptist scene, where it was known as the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith* (1742) and which added an article on the laying on of hands and also one on the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Among Southern Baptists this confession played an influential role as *The Charleston Confession* (1767),¹ which became the basis of the *Abstract of Principles*, the statement of faith of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary that was drawn up in 1858 by Basil Manly, Jr. (1825–1892).²

¹ The sole area of difference between the *Philadelphia Confession* and the *Charleston Confession* was the latter's omission of the article on the laying on of hands. The 1767 *Charleston Confession* was reprinted in 1813, 1831, and 1850.

² For details of the links between the *Charleston Confession* and the *Abstract of Principles*, see Michael A.G. Haykin, Roger D. Duke and A. James Fuller, *Soldiers of Christ: Selections from the Writings of*

The truths that this confession promoted fell out of favor for much of the twentieth century, but in the last fifty years there has been a great recovery of gospel truth among Evangelicals and once again there are those deeply committed to the doctrines of this confession. The English language, however, has changed over time, and just as there are phrases in the Authorized Version (1611), also known as the King James Version, that are no longer as clear as they once were due to linguistic change, so it is the case with the *1689 Confession*. For this reason, this new rendition of the confession by Dr. Reeves is indeed welcome. He has sought to render it readable by the typical twenty-first-century Christian reader, but with minimal change and without sacrificing any of the riches of the original text. I believe he has succeeded admirably in both of these aims. With confidence, then, we can say of this version of the *1689 Confession* what the Victorian preacher C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) once said with regard to the confession when he had it republished in 1855:

This little volume is not issued as an authoritative rule, or code of faith, whereby you are to be fettered, but as an assistance to you in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification in righteousness. ... Cleave fast to the Word of God which is here mapped out for you.³

Michael A.G. Haykin
Dundas, Ontario

Basil Manly, Sr., & Basil Manly, Jr. (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2009), 36–40.

³ Cited in the “Foreword” to *The Baptist Confession of Faith with Scripture Proofs* (Choteau, MT: Gospel Mission, n.d.), 6.

INTRODUCTION

Those of us who love the *1689 Confession* love it because we love the Scriptures. Far from denying or competing with the authority of Scripture, a historic biblical confession such as the *1689* actually promotes and confirms the Scriptures as our final authority. If there is any doubt in our minds, the confession removes it in the very first line: “The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.” But the confession affirms more than the authority of Scripture. It affirms that these authoritative Scriptures actually teach specific doctrines. The authoritative Scriptures will do us no good if we cannot say what they actually teach. The confession expresses the conviction that the Scriptures deliver to us a coherent, life-altering body of teaching—the *faith* (Jude 3).

Pastors are called to preach the Word—to restate, interpret and apply God’s Word—and not merely to read it. A creed or confession of faith is little different from a sermon in this sense. It is a restatement of the Word for a particular purpose—in this case to summarize the overall teaching of that Word on various topics. To the degree that it expresses the doctrines of Scripture accurately, it is an expression of the Word just as accurate preaching is said to be an expression of the Word (2 Timothy 4:2). In fact, the impulse to compose confessions of faith finds biblical encouragement by the example of brief confessions quoted in Scripture itself (1 Corinthians 15:3, etc.; Ephesians 4:4–6; 1 Timothy 3:16). Though similar to a sermon in one sense, a confession has at least one important difference. It is usually produced by many godly minds deliberating over a long period, and it has been further reviewed and accepted by a group of churches. As a result, a confession is often more precisely crafted and more thoroughly examined for accuracy than an individual sermon.

A confession is a tried and true teaching tool. It lays out the faith in a clear, systematic way and shows the connections among doctrines. It also serves as a standard by which teaching in the church can be measured. An overseer “must be able to give instruction in sound doctrine” (Titus 1:9), and a deacon “must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Timothy 3:9). Hearing an officer merely quote the Bible does not tell us whether he understands the overall teaching of Scripture on a subject. A confession gives us a tool for evaluating his understanding and teaching in summary form.

Though we may agree that confessions in general are useful, why would we use this particular confession? Why not a freshly written statement instead of a dusty old confession that is over 300 years old? First, the age of a confession should commend it rather than condemn it. Truth does not change. If the confession was accurate when it was composed, then it is accurate now. Those who hammered out the confession were men of a different day—men who had been refined by the fires of persecution. These were no arm-chair doctrines to them but a living faith that had stood up under trial. The men who first owned this confession were not those who were likely to bow to the spirit of the age—not their age and certainly not ours—either in their doctrine or their lives.

We now have the advantage of over 300 years to have examined the doctrines of the *1689 Confession* and to see its outworkings in the lives of churches and individuals. This confession more than any other in Baptist life has stood the test of time. The *1689 Confession* is the most mature statement of theology that has found broad acceptance among Particular (Calvinistic) Baptists. It is based broadly on the Presbyterian *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WCF). The WCF was hammered out by 121 divines who labored daily for two years (1644–1646) to express the doctrines of Scripture as understood in the light of the Reformation. The Independents followed in 1658 with the *Savoy Declaration*, a revision of the WCF that reflected their independent form of church government along with a few other changes and additions. The Baptists, finding the Savoy to be closer to their views of church government, modified this confession in the area of baptism

and made further refinements. Their confession was composed and published by the Particular Baptist churches of England in 1677. It was subsequently adopted by a national assembly of Particular Baptists in 1689, giving it the nickname that is often used today. Thus, this confession had the privilege of standing on the shoulders of the giants of the Reformation and Puritan eras and the advantage of 31 intervening years for its authors to study and refine the statements of the WCF. This confession was able to express the common faith Particular Baptists shared with others having a Reformed heritage and also articulate their distinctive doctrines.

The *1689 Confession* has been in continuous usage since it was written. It was used widely not only in England but in America, beginning with the Philadelphia Association. The same confession was used in the South, and with one additional paragraph it became known as the Charleston Confession. The *1689 Confession* was the confessional statement of the church or association of every one of the 293 delegates who gathered in Augusta, Georgia, to organize the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845. It was also the doctrinal statement that Charles H. Spurgeon used in his church. At one time, it was so widely used that it was referred to simply as *The Baptist Confession*. The *Abstract of Principles* of two SBC seminaries is self-conscientiously an abstract or summary of this confession.

Such a time-tested statement of biblical doctrine can give us clarity beyond our present level of study. Here is how it works. As we study the various doctrines articulated by the confession, we find that the confession faithfully summarizes the teaching of Scripture in these areas. Then we realize that countless godly pastors, theologians, and churches sharing these same convictions through the centuries have held that they are part and parcel of a biblical system of doctrine that is summarized by the confession. Through this process we become increasingly confident that the parts we do not yet understand are just as biblical and mesh well with the parts that we do understand! This is a wonderful blessing to impart to new believers and those who are still investigating some aspects of our doctrine. There is safety and wisdom in

beginning with a theological foundation reflecting the tried and proven faith of a large body of God's people rather than the relatively untested opinions of private individuals.

I have long wanted to update the language of the 1689 *Confession* to make its blessings more accessible to modern readers. I am thankful for other modern versions, but I have also wanted to produce a version that is at the same time affordable, consistent and modern in style, and meticulously careful in preserving the meaning of the original. I have approached this effort with fear and trembling. Above all, I have wanted to preserve the doctrine and maintain the clarity of the original. I have circulated this effort widely and received helpful suggestions and corrections from many people, for which I am grateful. This has not been a solo effort.

My goal has been to maintain the structure and language to the extent that these lend themselves to clarity for the modern reader. When the structure or language was archaic, only then did I consider modern equivalent terms or rephrasing. In more difficult cases, I reworked the structure of a paragraph when it could be stated in a significantly more natural way in modern English without compromising the meaning. I don't pretend that the result is readable on a sixth-grade level. The concepts in the confession simply don't lend themselves to such simplistic expression. Furthermore, I have avoided changing well-established theological terms unless I judged that they were obscure and could be greatly clarified by a modern expression. In a few cases the meaning of the original term was unclear, or the term could not easily be rendered by an equivalent modern term. In these cases, I used footnotes. Footnotes in italics indicate the original term. Non-italic footnotes clarify the meaning.

I commend this modern-language version in the words of the preface to the original:

We shall conclude with our earnest prayer, that the God of all grace, will pour out those measures of His holy Spirit upon us, that the profession of truth may be accompanied with the sound belief, and diligent practice of it by us; that His name may in all things be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Stan Reeves
Auburn, Alabama

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1:1 The Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient, certain, and infallible standard of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.¹ The light of nature and the works of creation and providence so clearly demonstrate the goodness, wisdom, and power of God that men are left without excuse; however, these demonstrations are not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and His will that is necessary for salvation.² Therefore, the Lord was pleased at different times and in various ways to reveal Himself and to declare His will to His church.³ To preserve and propagate the truth better and to establish and comfort the church with greater certainty against the corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and the world, the Lord put this revelation completely in writing. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures are absolutely necessary, because God's former ways of revealing His will to His people have now ceased.⁴

¹Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20; 2 Timothy 3:15-17 |

²Psalms 19:1-3; Romans 1:19-21; 2:14-15 | ³Hebrews 1:1 | ⁴Proverbs 22:19-21; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19-20

1:2 The Holy Scriptures, or the Word of God written, consist of all the books of the Old and New Testaments. These are:

THE OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

THE NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation.

All of these are given by the inspiration of God to be the standard of faith and life.⁵

⁵2 Timothy 3:16

- 1:3 The books commonly called the Apocrypha were not given by divine inspiration and so are not part of the canon or standard of the Scriptures. Therefore, they have no authority for the church of God and are not to be recognized or used in any way different from other human writings.⁶

⁶Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 3:2

- 1:4 The authority of the Holy Scriptures obligates belief in them. This authority does not depend on the testimony of any person or church but on God the author alone, who is truth itself. Therefore, the Scriptures are to be received because they are the Word of God.⁷

⁷1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19–21; 1 John 5:9

- 1:5 The testimony of the church of God may stir and persuade us to adopt a high and reverent respect for the Holy Scriptures. Moreover, the heavenliness of the contents, the power of the system of truth, the majesty of the style, the harmony of all the parts, the central focus on giving all glory to God, the full revelation of the only way of salvation, and many other incomparable qualities and complete perfections, all provide abundant evidence that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Even so, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Scriptures comes from the internal work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.⁸

⁸John 16:13–14; 1 Corinthians 2:10–12; 1 John 2:20, 27

- 1:6 The whole counsel of God concerning everything essential for His own glory and man's salvation, faith, and life is either explicitly stated or by necessary inference contained in the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is ever to be added to the Scriptures, either by new revelation of the Spirit or by traditions of men.⁹ Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the inward illumination of the Spirit of God is necessary for

a saving understanding of what is revealed in the Word.¹⁰ We recognize that some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church are common to human actions and organizations and are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian wisdom, following the general rules of the Word, which must always be observed.¹¹

⁹Galatians 1:8–9; 2 Timothy 3:15–17 | ¹⁰John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9–12 | ¹¹1 Corinthians 11:13–14; 14:26, 40

1:7 Some things in Scripture are clearer than others, and some people understand the teachings more clearly than others.¹² However, the things that must be known, believed, and obeyed for salvation are so clearly set forth and explained in one part of Scripture or another that both the educated and uneducated may achieve a sufficient understanding of them by properly using ordinary measures.¹³

¹²2 Peter 3:16 | ¹³Psalms 19:7; 119:130

1:8 The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the native language of the ancient people of God.¹⁴ The New Testament was written in Greek, which at the time it was written was most widely known to the nations. These Testaments were inspired directly by God and by His unique care and providence were kept pure down through the ages. They are therefore true and authoritative,^a so that in all religious controversies the church must make their ultimate appeal to them.¹⁵ All God's people have a right to and a claim on the Scriptures and are commanded in the fear of God to read¹⁶ and search them.¹⁷ Not all of God's people know these original languages, so the Scriptures are to be translated into the common language of every nation to which they come.¹⁸ In this way the Word of God may dwell richly in all, so that they may worship Him in an acceptable manner and through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.¹⁹

^a*authentic* | ¹⁴Romans 3:2 | ¹⁵Isaiah 8:20 | ¹⁶Acts 15:15 | ¹⁷John 5:39 | ¹⁸1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11–12, 24, 28 | ¹⁹Colossians 3:16

1:9 The infallible rule for interpreting Scripture is the Scripture itself. Therefore, when there is a question about the true and full meaning^b of any part of Scripture (and each passage has only one meaning, not many), it must be understood in light of other passages that speak more clearly.²⁰

^b*sense* | ²⁰ Acts 15:15–16; 2 Peter 1:20–21

1:10 The supreme judge for deciding all religious controversies and for evaluating all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, teachings of men, and individual interpretations,^c and in whose judgment we are to rest, is nothing but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit. In this Scripture our faith finds its final word.²¹

^c*private spirits* | ²¹ Matthew 22:29, 31–32; Acts 28:23; Ephesians 2:20

II GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

2:1 The Lord our God is one, the only living and true God.¹ He is self-existent² and infinite in being and perfection. His essence cannot be understood by anyone but Him.³ He is a perfectly pure spirit.⁴ He is invisible and has no body, parts, or passions.^a He alone has immortality, dwelling in light that no one can approach.⁵ He is unchangeable,⁶ immense,^{b,7} eternal,⁸ incomprehensible, almighty,⁹ in every way infinite, absolutely holy,¹⁰ perfectly wise, wholly free, completely absolute. He works all things according to the counsel of His own unchangeable and completely righteous will¹¹ for His own glory.¹² He is most loving, gracious, merciful, and patient. He overflows with goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. He rewards those who seek Him diligently.¹³ At the same time, He is perfectly just and terrifying in His judgments.¹⁴ He hates all sin¹⁵ and will certainly not clear the guilty.¹⁶

^aemotions arising from external causes | ^btranscends all space |

¹Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6 | ²Isaiah 48:12; Jeremiah 10:10 | ³Exodus 3:14 | ⁴John 4:24 | ⁵Deuteronomy 4:15-16; 1 Timothy 1:17 | ⁶Malachi 3:6 | ⁷1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23 | ⁸Psalms 90:2 |

⁹Genesis 17:1 | ¹⁰Isaiah 6:3 | ¹¹Psalms 115:3; Isaiah 46:10 | ¹²Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36 | ¹³Exodus 34:6-7; Hebrews 11:6 | ¹⁴Nehemiah 9:32-33 | ¹⁵Psalms 5:5-6 | ¹⁶Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:2-3

2:2 God has all life,¹⁷ glory,¹⁸ goodness,¹⁹ and blessedness in and of Himself; He alone is all-sufficient in Himself. He does not need any creature He has made nor does He derive any glory from them.²⁰ Instead, He demonstrates His own glory in them, by them, to them, and upon them. He alone is the source of all being, and everything is from Him, through Him, and to Him.²¹ He has absolute sovereign rule over all creatures, to act through them, for them, or upon them as He pleases.²² In His sight everything is open and visible.²³ His knowledge is infinite and infallible. It does not depend upon any creature, so for Him nothing is contingent or uncertain.²⁴ He is absolutely holy in all His plans, in all His

works,²⁵ and in all His commands. Angels and men owe to Him all the worship,²⁶ service, or obedience that creatures owe to the Creator and whatever else He is pleased to require of them.

¹⁷John 5:26 | ¹⁸Psalms 148:13 | ¹⁹Psalms 119:68 | ²⁰Job 22:2-3 | ²¹Romans 11:34-36 | ²²Daniel 4:25, 34-35 | ²³Hebrews 4:13 | ²⁴Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 15:18 | ²⁵Psalms 145:17 | ²⁶Revelation 5:12-14

2:3 This divine and infinite Being consists of three persons,^c the Father, the Word or Son, and the Holy Spirit.²⁷ These three have the same substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence without this essence being divided.²⁸ The Father is not derived from anyone, neither begotten nor proceeding. The Son is eternally begotten of the Father.²⁹ The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.³⁰ All three are infinite and without beginning and are therefore only one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being. Yet these three are distinguished by several distinctive characteristics and personal relations. This truth of the Trinity is the foundation of all of our fellowship with God and of our comforting dependence on Him.

^c*subsistences* | ²⁷Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 5:7 | ²⁸Exodus 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6 | ²⁹John 1:14, 18 | ³⁰John 15:26; Galatians 4:6

III GOD'S DECREE

3:1 From all eternity God decreed everything that occurs, without reference to anything outside Himself.¹ He did this by the perfectly wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably. Yet God did this in such a way that He is neither the author of sin nor has fellowship with any in their sin.² This decree does not violate the will of the creature or take away the free working or contingency of second causes. On the contrary, these are established by God's decree.³ In this decree God's wisdom is displayed in directing all things, and His power and faithfulness are demonstrated in accomplishing His decree.⁴

¹Isaiah 46:10; Romans 9:15, 18; Ephesians 1:11; Hebrews 6:17 |

²James 1:13; 1 John 1:5 | ³John 19:11; Acts 4:27-28 | ⁴Numbers 23:19; Ephesians 1:3-5

3:2 God knows everything that could happen under any given conditions.⁵ However, His decree of anything is not based on foreseeing it in the future or foreseeing that it would occur under such conditions.⁶

⁵Acts 15:18 | ⁶Romans 9:11, 13, 16, 18

3:3 By God's decree, and for the demonstration of His glory, some men and angels are predestined (or foreordained) to eternal life through Jesus Christ,⁷ to the praise of His glorious grace.⁸ Others are left to live in their sin, leading to their just condemnation, to the praise of His glorious justice.⁹

⁷Matthew 25:34; 1 Timothy 5:21 | ⁸Ephesians 1:5-6 | ⁹Romans 9:22-23; Jude 4

3:4 These predestined and foreordained angels and men are individually and unchangeably designated, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or decreased.¹⁰

¹⁰John 13:18; 2 Timothy 2:19

3:5 Those men who are predestined to life were chosen by God before the foundation of the world, according to His eternal and unchangeable purpose and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will. He chose them in Christ for eternal glory, purely as a result of His free grace and love,¹¹ without anything else about them serving as a condition or cause moving Him to do so.¹²

¹¹ Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:4, 9, 11; 1 Thessalonians 5:9; 2 Timothy 1:9 | ¹²Romans 9:13, 16; Ephesians 2:5, 12

3:6 Just as God has appointed the elect to glory, so He has by the eternal and completely free purpose of His will foreordained all the means.¹³ Therefore, those who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ¹⁴ and effectually called to faith in Christ by His Spirit working at the appropriate time. They are justified, adopted, sanctified,¹⁵ and kept by His power through faith to salvation.¹⁶ None but the elect are redeemed by Christ, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved.¹⁷

¹³ 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2 | ¹⁴ 1 Thessalonians 5:9–10 |

¹⁵ Romans 8:30; 2 Thessalonians 2:13 | ¹⁶ 1 Peter 1:5 | ¹⁷ John 6:64; 10:26; 17:9

3:7 The doctrine of the high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care so that those heeding the will of God revealed in His Word and obeying Him may be assured of their eternal election by the certainty of their effectual calling.¹⁸ In this way this doctrine will give reasons for praise,¹⁹ reverence, and admiration of God, as well as humility,²⁰ diligence, and rich comfort to all who sincerely obey the gospel.²¹

¹⁸ 1 Thessalonians 1:4–5; 2 Peter 1:10 | ¹⁹ Romans 11:33; Ephesians 1:6 |

²⁰ Romans 11:5–6, 20 | ²¹ Luke 10:20