

TRUTH AND LIFE

Doctrinal and Ethical Notes on the Bible

G. Wright Doyle, MDiv, PhD

Part II

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Volume 7

**THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVES:
GOSPELS AND ACTS**

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DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL NOTES ON THE BIBLE

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G. Wright Doyle, MDiv, PhD

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Note: *Truth and Life* is a work in progress. Sections will be posted over time and may be incomplete. Check back for new and updated documents. This is *Truth and Life: The New Testament - The Historical Narratives: Gospels and Acts (June 2018)*.

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INTRODUCTION to *TRUTH AND LIFE*

Origin and Nature of this Book

Truth and Life: Doctrinal and Ethical Notes on the Bible grew out of a study that I did with several men over a period of three-and-a-half years. Following the order found in *Search the Scriptures*,¹ a Bible reading guide I used at the beginning of my Christian life, we asked two questions of each passage:

What does it say about the usual topics discussed in books on systematic theology (such as the doctrines of revelation, God, Christ, man, sin, salvation, God's people, and "the last things")?

What does it say about how we should live? That is, what does it say about what is usually called "Christian ethics"?

As time went on, I discovered that this way of looking at the Bible was quite helpful for me, since it required me to look closely at the biblical text and to search it carefully for teachings not only on doctrine – that is, general "truth" – but also on the application of doctrine to daily life. Thus, the title: "Truth and Life." Of course, all that the Bible says is true, and all of it bears upon life. Indeed, Jesus said, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."² We cannot separate doctrine from our proper response to it.

That is why this book includes notes both about general truths revealed by God in the Bible and about ways in which we could apply these truths at home, school, work, and church, and in society. As much as possible, the advice in each "Life" section comes directly from the corresponding passage of the Scriptures.

Distinctive Features

To my knowledge, this book is unique, at least at present.

There are plenty of study Bibles, Bible commentaries of all sorts, and books on systematic theology and on Christian ethics. I am not aware that anything exists that

1. Alan M. Stibbs, general editor, *Search the Scriptures: A Three-Year Bible Study Course* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984).

2. John 6:63.

provides brief comments on what each passage of the Bible says both about the usual topics [*topoi*, or *loci*] of theology and about ethics.

As a glance at any page of this book will show, the “Truth” sections follow a topical order based on the standard theological categories, as mentioned above. The “Life” sections follow the order of the passage itself and are not arranged topically.

In treating the theology of each passage, I sometimes spend a large amount of time drawing out what we can learn from it about the doctrine of revelation – that is, mostly about the Scriptures themselves (“special revelation”). How God has revealed himself to us in his written Word is foundational to everything else we believe about him and his works in the world and in our lives. Sometimes we also find teaching on what is often called “general revelation” – revealed through our moral constitution, the created order, and the events of history.

You will also see that I devote significant attention to the doctrine of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – which I usually discuss under the headings of “His greatness” and “His goodness.” My goal is to draw our attention away from ourselves and this world so that we may focus again on our great, glorious, and gracious God. Such a reorientation of thinking has been very beneficial to my own soul and life.

After looking at God and his works, we examine what the passage might teach about angels, Satan and demons, mankind, sin, salvation, God’s people, and the last things.

Other Characteristics

Since the Bible is a big book and since the authors of the Scriptures, under God’s inspiration, frequently write about the same topics many times, you will encounter a great deal of repetition here. It simply could not be avoided. Please be patient with me – and with how God has chosen to present what he thinks we need to know! I have found in my own life that I need constant exposure to the same truths day after day, year after year, for them to “sink in” and then be “worked out” into my life.

I have attempted to express myself as concisely as possible. Most sections are presented in outline form for easy reading. I have not aimed for literary elegance or fullness of expression; otherwise, the book would be twice as long. My goal is to give

you as much information as possible in the briefest format. I have written other non-scholarly commentaries and thematic biblical studies in the usual expository style.³

Truth and Life is not a study Bible or a commentary in the usual sense. It is not at all meant to replace these fundamental aids to understanding the Scriptures, but to be used in conjunction with them. You will not find extensive explanations of historical or cultural backgrounds, word studies, or a verse-by-verse or even paragraph-by-paragraph running commentary.

This book is not exhaustive, but suggestive; much more could have been said. Nor is it an academic publication, though I have drawn upon the writings of learned scholars.

In addition, the wording and format of these notes are not always consistent. I wrote them over a period of several years and did not always adhere to the same format. My editorial assistants and I have tried to make the text consistent as much as possible, but irregularities remain.

Some passages receive very detailed treatment, while others are discussed much more briefly. Further, some include references to several parallel or related passages of Scripture, while others merely cite the relevant verse(s) in the section under consideration. Again, this disparity reflects the long time I have spent writing the notes, as well as the amount of energy I had on any particular day! As I said above, the notes are meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive.

Note: When only verse numbers are given, they refer to the chapter (or psalm) being discussed. Thus, in the notes on Romans 1:1–17, “1, 5” means “1:3, 5.” If chapter and verse are given, but no book, the reference is to the book being discussed.

My Background

Though I am not now a professional biblical scholar or an academic theologian, I have had some opportunities to engage in advanced study of the Bible and theology.

3. G. Wright Doyle, *Worship and Wisdom: Daily Readings from Psalms and Proverbs with Commentary* (Durham, NC: Torchflame Books, 2015); *Christ the King: Meditations on Matthew* (Durham, NC: Light Messages, 2011); *Jesus: The Complete Man* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008); and *The Lord's Healing Words: Six Months of Daily Readings from the Bible on Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Health (with Commentary)* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2008).

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I majored in Latin but also took three years of classical Greek. After graduation I attended the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. Though it was (and is) a theologically liberal Episcopal school, the seminary faculty included a few outstanding evangelicals, and I was able to learn some things even from those who did not believe that the Bible is God's Word written.

From seminary I moved to the pastorate, serving three small Episcopal churches in Eastern North Carolina for two years. This entailed careful study and exposition of the Scriptures along with daily pastoral visitation and care for the people of these congregations.

In 1971, I began doctoral studies in Classics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with the aim of equipping myself to teach in a seminary. For two years, I read Greek and Latin literature under the instruction of some of the finest Classicists in the world. My doctoral exams dealt with the Greek New Testament, Hellenistic philosophy, and early Christian rhetoric – that is, preaching. My dissertation focused on Augustine's theory of the exegesis and exposition of Scripture as outlined in *de Doctrina Christiana*, as well as on how Augustine "applied" his theory to his sermons on the Gospel of John. The year that I spent with this master-student of the Bible has profoundly affected the way I read and teach the Bible. Always, Augustine aimed to communicate the truths of Scripture in a fashion that would change people's lives.

My wife Dori and I went to Asia as missionaries in 1975. After two years of Chinese language study and two years away on furlough, we returned to Taiwan, where I began teaching Greek and New Testament at China Evangelical Seminary, Taipei. Over the next seven years, I labored to help Chinese Christians understand and apply the Bible to their culture. My familiarity with the Bible also benefitted immensely from the five years I spent supervising the translation of Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich's *Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* into Chinese (and then, later, from five more years revising the work).

Since our permanent return to the United States in 1988, I have taught intensive courses on New Testament and Systematic Theology for various seminaries in Taiwan and North America, preached regularly, composed the volumes mentioned in the note on page ii, and continued my daily study of the Bible. I have also learned a great deal from Carl F. H. Henry. I made an abridgment of his six-volume *God, Revelation, and*

Authority for publication in Chinese, and I authored an introduction to his *magnum opus*.⁴ From him I was taught just how fundamental is the doctrine of revelation.

Sources

In addition to my own daily reading of the Bible over the past 54 years, other sources have contributed to *Truth and Life*. These are too many to list individually, but here are the main ones:

Systematic Theology

Augustine of Hippo. *Enchiridion; City of God; Confessions; and On Christian Doctrine (Teaching)*. Various editions.

John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960.

Jonathan Edwards. *Religious Affections; The End for Which God Created the World; Charity and its Fruits*; various sermons; and other works. Various editions.

Carl F. H. Henry. *God, Revelation, and Authority*. 6 vols. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1976–83.

Douglas F. Kelly. *Systematic Theology*. Vols. 1 and 2. Tain, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2008, 2014.

Matthew Levering. *The Theology of Augustine. An Introductory Guide to His Most Important Works*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest. *Integrative Theology: Historical, Biblical, Systematic, Apologetic, Practical*. 3 vols. in 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott. *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Biblical Theology

Several works of biblical theology have helped to shape my general outlook and interpretative stance:

Richard Bauckham. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

4. G. Wright Doyle, *Carl Henry: Theologian for All Seasons. An Introduction and Guide to Carl Henry's God, Revelation, and Authority* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010).

Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. *Interpreting Prophecy: An Essay in Biblical Perspectives*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976.

George Eldon Ladd. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

Leon Morris. *The Cross in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

Leon Morris. *New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Herman Ridderbos. *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1975.

Study Bibles

To supplement those mostly older studies, in the composition of this book I have relied heavily upon recently published study Bibles. These contain the results of the best evangelical scholarship. After writing my notes, I mined study Bibles for further information about background, parallel passages in the Scriptures, and generally accepted interpretations. In this way, I hope that I have avoided major errors of interpretation. I freely and gladly acknowledge my debt to the scholars who have contributed to these essential guides for understanding the Bible.

The most useful to me have been:

ESVSB: *ESV [English Standard Version] Study Bible*. Wayne Grudem, general editor. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008.

HCSB: *HCSB [Holman Christian Standard Bible] Study Bible*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010.

MSB: *MacArthur Study Bible*. John MacArthur, author and general editor. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Incorporated, 1997.

NIVSB: *NIV [New International Version] Study Bible*. Kenneth Barker, general editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985.

CBSB: *Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. Mark V. Chavalas, Craig S. Keener, Victor H. Matthews, John H. Walton. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017.

ZNIVSB: *Zondervan NIV Study Bible*. D. A. Carson, general editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015.

Commentaries

CNTUOT: G. K. Beale and D.A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

Over the years, I have read a number of commentaries on various parts of the Bible. It would be tedious to list all the volumes that have helped me understand the Scriptures, but I shall merely acknowledge my debt to the many able scholars who have enriched my understanding of the Scriptures.

The Purpose of *Truth and Life*

Despite all its limitations, this series of doctrinal and ethical notes on the Bible aims to help the ordinary reader discern in the Holy Scriptures what God has said about himself – his nature, will, and ways – and about how we should live in response to his Word.

I pray that God will use these notes to encourage you to read the Bible both *theologically* and *ethically*, with the goal of loving God and your neighbor by the power of the Holy Spirit.

To him be all the glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

G. Wright Doyle

Bastrop, Texas

MATTHEW

Matthew 1

Truth

God

His Triune nature: He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are inseparable, but act together, each fulfilling his proper role, in perfect concert with the others. They are one, 20, 21, 23.

His greatness: He is all powerful; he was able to perform the miracle of a virgin birth, and of the incarnation of the divine Son of God in the body of a real man, creating a unique Person with two natures which are inseparable and yet distinct, 18, 20, 23.

Christ

His person

- ♦ God is faithful to his promises. He told David that one of his descendants would inherit an eternal kingdom; Jesus is that descendant, as the rest of Matthew will demonstrate, 1, 20. *See Matthew 28:18.*
- ♦ God forgives sins and uses sinners to accomplish his purposes: This genealogy includes the names of sinners only, including people who committed adultery, but some of whom served him more or less faithfully and all of whom are the ancestors of Jesus the Savior, 1–17.
- ♦ He is man, born of Mary, and thus had a real human mother, whose egg was somehow fertilized by the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus is also God, conceived by the Holy Spirit, Immanuel – “God with us,” 18, 20, 23.

His work: He came to save his people from their sins, 21, not to save them from the sins of others, primarily. His name, Jesus, means “Yahweh is salvation.” As Savior, he is clearly fully divine, for only Yahweh was called Savior in the Old Testament in the fullest sense.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for giving us a Savior who was just like us, and man as we are, but without sin.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us a Savior who is fully divine, and thus able fully to save us from our sins and all that our sins entail—bondage, ignorance, folly, selfishness, alienation from others, illness, weakness, death, Satan’s power, alienation from God now, and God’s righteous wrath and eternal punishment after death.
- ♦ Worship and adore Jesus as our Lord and Savior.
- ♦ Trust God to do what seems impossible—like the Virgin Birth—to fulfill his will in our lives.
- ♦ Like Joseph, avoid causing others shame and dishonor, even if we think they deserve it.
- ♦ Unlike Joseph, do not presume to know the real reason behind others’ behavior or condition in life. More may be involved than we realize.
- ♦ Like Joseph, follow the directions of God through his messengers (though we should be careful to discern whether these words are truly from God).

Matthew 2

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ God spoke through the Old Testament prophets.
 - Micah, who foretold the coming of the Messiah, 5–6
 - Moses, who foretold that there would be a second Exodus (perhaps without knowing it), 15
 - Jeremiah, who foretold a terrible slaughter around Bethlehem, 18
 - The general tenors of the prophets, who said that the Savior would be despised (“Nazarene”), 23
- ♦ God spoke through dreams to guide Joseph and the Magi, 12–13, 22
- ♦ God even spoke to the Magi through the movement of a star, 2.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient. He knows the future; thus, he could prophesy through the prophets and through dreams. He knows the past and present, too, 13, 20, etc.
- ♦ He is sovereign and his plan will be fulfilled, despite human opposition of the worst kind, 13–19.
- ♦ He chose Israel to be his special people, 6.

His goodness: He promised to give them a shepherd–King like David, 6.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the promised Messiah (Christ, anointed one) 2, 4–6.
- ♦ He is also Savior of people from all nations, and rightful ruler and God of all nations. From the beginning, God intended all nations to be blessed through Abraham’s descendant, and the coming of the Magi from the East is an initial fulfillment of this intention in the life of Jesus.

- ♦ He represents Israel, the “son” of God, 15. His history to some degree recapitulates the history of Israel, only his obedience and success replace Israel’s sins and failure.
- ♦ Jesus is perfectly human, the son of Mary, 11; he is also God, the Son of God who deserves worship, 11, 15.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Rejecting God’s Messiah to maintain one’s own personal sovereignty, 3, 13
- ♦ Murdering of innocent people, 16–17

Note: Just as ancient inhabitants of the Rama area, including Bethlehem, were punished for their sins, the slaughter of little children in Bethlehem may have been partly the consequence of that town’s failure to welcome Joseph and Mary, or perhaps it is only a foretaste of the general destruction that would overtake Israel for rejecting the Messiah when Jesus was an adult.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Worship Jesus as our divine savior and King.
- ♦ Rejoice in the salvation he has brought and will bring.
- ♦ Obey instantly what God seems to be telling us.
- ♦ Expect the world, and especially those in authority, to resist the claims of Christ and to persecute his people.

Matthew 3

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ God has spoken in many ways to his people.
 - In the Old Testament through the prophets, like Isaiah, 3
 - Through John Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet (this chapter)
 - In his own audible voice on certain rare and significant occasions, 17
 - By using signs, such as the prophets' dress and lifestyles, 4
 - With the dove when the Spirit came upon Jesus, 16
- ♦ All these point to Christ's coming, person, work, and final victory, 2, 3, 11-12, 17.

God

His Triune nature: He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, 16-17.

His greatness

- ♦ He is King, ruler of his people and of the world, 2.
- ♦ He is holy, and will therefore punish sinners, 10, 12.

Christ

His greatness

- ♦ He is great, able to effect inner spiritual change through the Spirit, 11.
- ♦ He is infinitely good, holier even than John the Baptist, 11.
- ♦ He is God, and therefore able to give the Holy Spirit, 11, and to judge sinners, 10, 12.
- ♦ He is the unique and beloved, eternal Son of the Father, 17, in whom the Father is well pleased, 17.

His work: He is man, and thus needed to be baptized to represent all mankind, 13, 15.

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Fearless proclamation of the gospel of Christ, 1
- ♦ Repentance for our sins, 2
- ♦ Control of our bodily appetites for the sake of service to God, 4
- ♦ Humility before God, both for our finiteness and for our fallenness, 11
- ♦ Humility before Christ, 14
- ♦ Obedience to Christ, 15

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Hypocrisy, going through religious rites without an internal change of heart, 8
- ♦ Spiritual pride, thinking we are better than others and more likely than they to be saved, 9

Salvation

Its recipients: They must repent and bear fruits that indicate true repentance, 8.

Its substance

- ♦ It includes Jesus' full identification with sinners, so that he could later take their place as a propitiatory offering, 15.
- ♦ The person and work of Christ "fulfilled all righteousness" by his perfect obedience to God, including his self-offering as a propitiation, 15.

Its source: From the beginning, as Jesus' genealogy already showed, and the coming of the Magi, God has intended to save people of all nations, not just chosen Israelites. 9.

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes to us with the incarnation and ministry of Jesus Christ, the bringer of the Kingdom of God, 2.
- ♦ It includes his full identification with sinners, so that he could later take their place as a propitiatory offering, 15.
- ♦ To be saved, sinners must repent and bear fruits that indicate true repentance, 8.
- ♦ The person and work of Christ "fulfilled all righteousness" by his perfect obedience to God, including his self-offering as a propitiation, 15.

- ♦ From the beginning, as Jesus' genealogy already showed, and the coming of the Magi indicated, God has intended to save people of all nations, not just the chosen Israelites. 9

The Last Things

The final judgment: God will finally judge unrepentant sinners with unquenchable fire, 10, 12.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Daily repent of our sins, trusting in God to forgive us through Christ.
- ♦ Be baptized after we truly believe in Christ.
- ♦ Follow the example of John the Baptist as much as possible, though our situation and calling are different from his.
- ♦ Delight in Jesus, as the Father does.
- ♦ See ourselves as "in Christ," and therefore beloved by God and even delighted in by him.

Matthew 4

Note: This passage is unusually rich in doctrine and ethical instruction.

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ God reveals his ways and his will through the Old Testament Scriptures
 - The Books of Moses, quoted by Jesus against Satan, 4, 7, 10; *see Deuteronomy 6:16; 8:3.*
 - The Prophets
 - ♦ Isaiah, 15–16; *see Isaiah 9:1–2.*
 - ♦ Psalms, 6; *see Psalm 91:11–12, which, though quoted out of context and wrongly applied by Satan, are still the Word of God.*

God

His Triune nature: He is Triune, Father, Son, and Spirit, 1, 3, 4, etc.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the unique, fully divine Son of God, 3, 6.
- ♦ He is also fully human, and was thus hungry after fasting for 40 days, 2.

His work

- ♦ As Anointed one (Messiah), he had power over illness and evil spirits, 23–24, and authority to call men into full-time fellowship with him, 19, 21.
- ♦ He retains those powers now as risen Lord and Savior.

Spiritual Beings

Angels

Their work

- ♦ They are ministering spirits with great power.

- ♦ They are sent by God as messengers and as helpers to his people, especially to Jesus in times of trial, 6, 11.

Satan

His identity

- ♦ He is a spiritual being of great power malice, and guile, who is utterly opposed to God and to mankind.
- ♦ He is known as “the tempter,” and “the devil,” which means “slanderer.” “Satan” means “adversary.”

His works

- ♦ He works primarily through deception, as he did with Eve in the Garden of Eden, 3.
- ♦ Evil spirits are his servants, and they sometimes possess human beings, 24.

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Following the leading of the Spirit, even when he directs us into difficult places, 1
- ♦ Reading, meditating upon, memorizing, and quoting Scripture when under temptation, 4, 7, 10
- ♦ Seeking to live by trusting God and his promises alone, 4
- ♦ Not tempting God by presuming upon his promises taken out of context, 7
- ♦ Worshiping God and serving him alone, 10

Note: Roman Catholics wrongly distinguish between “worship” and “service,” the former given to God alone, the latter also to Mary, but this ignores the fact that in the Second Commandment and in this passage, they are synonyms.

- ♦ Repenting
- ♦ Following Jesus as Lord and Master, even when it entails forsaking family and work, 18–22
- ♦ Caring for sick people, 23

Sin

It includes: Not doing all the above

Salvation

Its recipients: God has always meant for salvation eventually to include Gentiles as well as Jews, 15, 24–25.

Its substance

- ♦ Calling us from bondage to this world into a life of following him, imitating him, and serving him, 19, 21
- ♦ Bringing light to those in darkness, 15–16

Its conveyance

- ♦ Jesus came to save us by his
 - Righteous life, 1–11
 - Teaching, 23
 - Healing and exorcism, 23–24

The Kingdom of God

Its stages: God's rule "came" in a new way with the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, 17, who is the King.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Daily read God's Word, meditate upon it, and seek to memorize some of it.
- ♦ Use God's Word against all the lies of Satan, promptings of our sinful flesh, and allurements of this world.
- ♦ Follow Jesus, no matter what it costs.

Note: Most will not be called to leave family and work as the first disciples were for a period of several years.

- ♦ Look to Jesus for help in temptation, knowing that he knows us and sympathizes with us. *See Hebrews 4:14–16.*
- ♦ Call upon Jesus to heal and to deliver from evil spirits.
- ♦ Preach the gospel of the kingdom, calling upon all to repent, believe in Jesus, and follow him as Lord and Savior.

Matthew 5:1–16

Truth

Revelation

Its source: God reveals himself

- ♦ Through the Old Testament prophets, 12
- ♦ Through the teaching of Jesus, chapters 5–7
- ♦ To the pure in heart in the coming age in a direct manner, 8

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent, for he rules over the kingdom of heaven, 3, 10, 12, and he possesses the earth, 5.
- ♦ He is fair, for he will reward people according to their works, 3–12, especially 12.
- ♦ He is pure, for he requires purity of heart from those who would see him, 8.
- ♦ He is righteous, for he rewards those who suffer for the sake of righteousness, 10.

His goodness

- ♦ He comforts his people and will allow himself to be seen by them someday, 4, 8.
- ♦ He is kind and merciful, for he comforts mourners and shows mercy to those who are themselves merciful, 4, 7.
- ♦ He values and makes peace, for he affirms people who are peacemakers, 9.
- ♦ He is Father to those who imitate him, 9.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus Christ is the new Moses
 - Who gave a new teaching (Law) from a mountain, chapters 5–7
 - Who, in some way, so identified with his people that those persecuted for his name will be greatly rewarded in heaven

- Whose name (by implication) is somehow of immense value and power, and strongly points toward his unique role as divine–human Messiah

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Acquiring a sense of spiritual poverty
- ♦ Mourning for sin and its effects in oneself and the world
- ♦ Practicing meekness (gentleness)
- ♦ Longing for personal (and perhaps social) righteousness
- ♦ Showing mercy to others
- ♦ Demonstrating purity of heart (perhaps meaning looking to God and longing for him above all)
- ♦ Seeking to bring peace
- ♦ Showing a commitment to righteousness that will endure suffering
- ♦ Showing a commitment to Christ that endures persecution

Sin

It includes

- ♦ False sense of spiritual wealth
- ♦ Lack of sorrow for sin and its effects
- ♦ Pride
- ♦ Arrogance
- ♦ Self-will
- ♦ Unwillingness to forgive
- ♦ Mixed or even wicked motives and affections
- ♦ Contentiousness
- ♦ Willingness to give way before unrighteousness
- ♦ Unwillingness to suffer for being a Christian

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ Entrance into, and partial enjoyment of the rule of God even now, and fully later
- ♦ Comfort for mourners
- ♦ Inheritance of the earth when Christ returns

- ♦ Full righteousness of character and conduct in the next life, and enjoyment of imputed righteousness now
- ♦ Mercy from God
- ♦ Privilege of seeing God
- ♦ Affirmation as sons of God
- ♦ Some great reward in heaven for losses suffered now

The Last Things

The final judgment: Professing believers should be aware that if their inner character and outer conduct do not to some degree mirror the Beatitudes, they will face not only uselessness in this life but also eternal fire, 13–15.

Their prediction

- ♦ When Christ returns, he will
 - Right all wrongs
 - Reward all godly acts and intentions
 - Comfort all the sorrowful
 - Fulfill all righteous desires, fully and visibly

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Live to the glory of God, by word and deed, with conduct that is so different it causes people to ask for the Source, and words so clear that others are pointed to God our Father, through Christ our Lord and Savior. We can only do this by the power of the Holy Spirit, for whose help we should pray daily.
- ♦ Seek to make an impact on people around us, and society in general, through character and conduct that preserves and “flavors” our social environment and shines like a light in a dark world. This involves word and deed at home, school, work, and everywhere we go and are present.
- ♦ Meditate on the Beatitudes often and ask God to form this character in our lives.
- ♦ Rejoice in the precious promises as we read the Beatitudes.

Matthew 5:17–48

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ Biblical revelation in the Old and New Testaments
 - The Old Testament revelation is permanently true and valid, though its various provisions were “fulfilled” in various ways and various times.
 - The revelation brought by Jesus supersedes, though it does not contradict, the Old Testament Law, 21, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44.
 - As Jesus began to “fulfill all righteousness” at his baptism, so he also “fulfilled” the requirements of the Old Testament Law in his person and work, thus annulling some of the statutes for his followers, such as all the ceremonial regulations.
 - We are now under a new law, the law of Christ. *See Romans 7:1–6; Hebrews 8:7–13.*
- ♦ God speaks
 - Through Moses and the Old Testament prophets, 17, 21, 27, 33, 38, 43
 - Finally, through Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, and true and final Prophet of God

God

His person

- ♦ He is King, with heaven as his throne and earth his footstool, 34, 35.
- ♦ He rules over a kingdom, 20.
- ♦ He is righteousness, and requires righteousness of mankind, 20.
- ♦ He is omnipotent, ruling the rain and the sun, 45.
- ♦ He is omniscient, seeing our hearts and motives, 22, 28.
- ♦ He is kind to all his creatures, 45, 48.

Christ

His divinity: He has unique, divine authority both to explain the Old Testament Law and to amend or clarify it, 21–48.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Murder and most anger, resentment, contemptuous speech, 21–22
- ♦ Adultery and lust, 27–30
- ♦ Divorce (except for “fornication,” which probably refers to post-engagement, pre-marital infidelity; see the example of Joseph and Mary) and remarriage after divorce, 31–32.
- ♦ Oaths and superfluous speech in making promises
- ♦ Misrepresenting God’s commands by watering them down or adding to them, as the Pharisees did, 21–44

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Fulfilling the commands in God’s Word (properly understood), 20
- ♦ Taking initiative to be reconciled to someone whom we have offended, 23–26
- ♦ Giving to those who make unreasonable demands upon us, 39–42
- ♦ Showing kindness and courtesy to all, even our enemies, whom we should love, bless, and pray for, 44–48

The Last Things

The final judgment: There will be an awful judgment for unrepentant sin, 29–30.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask God for grace to imitate his purity and love in all situations.
- ♦ Go first to those whom we have offended and seek their forgiveness; we shouldn’t wait for them to come to us and complain.
- ♦ Ponder God’s purity, holiness, truth, love, and kindness towards us, and seek to imitate him.

Matthew 6:1–18

Truth

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent, for he dwells in heaven, 1, 9.
- ♦ He is omniscient, seeing all, even the heart, 4, 6, 8, 14–15, 18.
- ♦ He is king, for he has a kingdom, 10, 13.
- ♦ He is almighty, working his will in heaven and on earth, 10, 13, and able to answer all our prayers, 4, 6, 11.
- ♦ He is infinitely glorious, 13.
- ♦ He is eternal, 13.

His goodness

- ♦ He is our loving Father, 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 15.
- ♦ He sees and knows our actions and our needs, 4, 6, 8.
- ♦ He is merciful, forgiving sins, 12.
- ♦ He is responsive to our prayers, giving us what we need, 4, 6.
- ♦ He is just, rewarding those who trust in him, 4, 6, 18 and granting or withholding forgiveness from those who do or do not forgive others, 14–15.

Christ

His person and work: As Son of God, he came to reveal the Father to us, *See all of chapter 6, and indeed most of his teachings.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Living for the praise of men rather than the praise of God, 1–6
- ♦ Hypocrisy, 5
- ♦ Not forgiving others as God had forgiven us, 15

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Doing good deeds, especially giving to the poor, 1–3
- ♦ Praying to God, 5–15
- ♦ Fasting, 16–18
- ♦ Seeking God’s glory, 9
- ♦ Longing for his kingdom to come on earth, 10
- ♦ Submission to, and longing for, the full realization of his will, 10
- ♦ Trusting God for daily bread, 11
- ♦ Humble request for forgiveness, 12
- ♦ Forgiving those who have offended us, 12
- ♦ Earnest desire to avoid sin, 13
- ♦ Praising God, 13

Prayer

We should pray

- ♦ In secret, 5–6
- ♦ Without endless repetition, 7
- ♦ According to God’s revealed will and for his glory as well as our good, 9–13
- ♦ Aware of our membership in the family of God and desirous of the welfare of all believers, as the plural pronoun “our” shows from the very beginning and throughout

Life

This whole section gives practical directions for daily Christian living relating to serving others by good deeds and worshiping God through prayer and fasting.

Key point: We should live before God, not men; trust God to reward us and give us all we need; and seek the welfare of others in our actions and prayers.

Matthew 6:19–34

Truth

Revelation

Its source: God reveals himself through

- ♦ Nature, properly understood by faith, 26, 28
- ♦ Reasoning and logic (as from the lesser to the greater), 26, 28–30
- ♦ Common sense and simple observation, 19, 24, 25, 27, 34
- ♦ The life and teaching of Jesus, supremely—the whole passage

God

His greatness

- ♦ He dwells in heaven, which symbolizes his power, wisdom, etc., 26.
- ♦ He rules over, and preserves, the created order, 26.
- ♦ He possesses surpassing beauty, reflected in the world he has made, 29.
- ♦ He is righteous, 33.
- ♦ He is King of heaven and earth, 33.
- ♦ He deserves and demands our sole allegiance and obedience, 24.

His goodness: He is Father to his children, 26, 32.

Christ

His person and work: He has extraordinary wisdom, observational power, reasoning ability, rhetorical eloquence, practical insight, humor, and teaching skills.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Placing all our attention, focus, hopes and investments in this world, while neglecting our future after death, 19–20, 22–23
- ♦ Serving Mammon = money and all it can buy, or this world's wealth, power, glory, 24
- ♦ Worrying about our physical welfare and not trusting God to care for us, 25–34

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Putting our hope in the next life in heaven with God, and doing all we can to “lay up treasures in heaven,” 20
- ♦ Inferring God’s goodness and greatness from the world he has made, 26, 28
- ♦ Seeking first God’s kingdom and his righteousness, 33
- ♦ Trusting God to give us all necessary material supplies, 33

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Focus on knowing, trusting, and serving God, rather than on physical survival and prosperity.
- ♦ Serve God alone.
- ♦ Live differently from “Gentiles,” that is, unbelievers.

Matthew 7:1–12

Truth

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is just and will judge according to a fair standard.
- ♦ He will judge us as we judge others, 2.
- ♦ He dwells in heaven, that is, he has all power and wisdom, 11.

His goodness: He is a generous Father to those who persistently ask him for good things, 11.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Self-righteous criticism of others, when we have the same flaw they do, or a similar one, 1–5
- ♦ Hypocrisy, which is to say, a life that is not consistent with the moral standards we profess to hold, 5
- ♦ Despising others, 6

Mankind

Our nature

- ♦ We are made in God's image, and thus will give good gifts to our children, 11.
- ♦ We are fundamentally fallen and prone to sin, and is therefore evil in God's eyes, 11.

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ An awareness of one's own sins and failings, 3–5
- ♦ Calling upon God in believing prayer, 7–12
- ♦ Doing for others what we would want them to do for/to us, 12

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Examine ourselves carefully whenever we feel critical towards others and ask God to show us our corresponding flaw.
- ♦ Ask God to enable us to deal with our own sin before we presume to criticize others.
- ♦ Ask God for wisdom to know how to help others recognize and overcome their flaws.
- ♦ Pray to God persistently, repeatedly, seeking his kingdom and his righteousness (6:33) in our lives and in others' lives, and also asking for all that we need, 7-11.
- ♦ Consider how we would want to be treated and treat others in that way.

Matthew 7:13–29

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ It comes from God through Christ and his teachings, not through signs and wonders performed by false prophets, 15, 24–25.
- ♦ It comes as the incarnate Word of God. *See John 1:14.* Jesus was, and is, “Immanuel,” God with us.
- ♦ It comes through Jesus, who spoke the words of God with authority, being fully God himself, 29.

God

His greatness: He is Father in heaven, 21.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ He is Lord, that is, fully divine, 21–22.
- ♦ He is “LORD,” the word used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament to render YAHWEH, God’s personal name. Jesus’ use of this name for himself shows that he considers himself to be Yahweh in the flesh.
- ♦ In general, the New Testament employs “Lord” to refer to Jesus Christ, and “God” to refer to God the Father. Jesus has authority to judge and to cast sinners into eternal hell, 23.
- ♦ He speaks with divine authority, 29.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Following the crowd through the wide gate and along the easy way, 13–14
- ♦ Being a false prophet, professing to speak God’s words but showing by conduct that the Word of God has not transformed the heart or the mind, 15–18
- ♦ Being a false professor of faith in Christ, that is professing to worship Jesus as Lord but not obeying his teachings on a regular basis, 21–23

- ♦ Hearing the words of Christ but not living by them, and instead building one's whole life on "sand," 26

Righteousness

It includes

- ♦ Following the few who enter by the narrow gate and travel on the difficult path to life, 14
- ♦ Bearing the fruit of good works, 18–20; that is, doing the will of the Father in heaven, 21
- ♦ Hearing the words of Christ and doing them, 24

Note: True prophets of God are known not by signs and wonders and miracles, but by speaking the truth and living according to God's Word, 15–20.

True believers, that is, those who really worship Jesus as Lord and who are "known" by Christ (in a close relationship with him), will be those who hear his words and do them, 21–23.

The Last Things

The final judgment

- ♦ Most people will
 - Go blindly into eternal destruction, 13
 - Be thrown into the fire of hell, 19
 - Be refused entry to the kingdom of heaven (= kingdom of God), 21
 - Be cast away from the presence of Christ and of God, 23
 - Experience destruction of all their works, 27

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Avoid following the crowd and going on the easy way; rather, we should follow the few who are really disciples of Jesus and travel the hard way to life.
- ♦ Beware of false prophets; we should evaluate them and their message by their deeds and the results of their teachings. Some false prophets today: Teachers who say that believing in Christ will bring prosperity, health, easy living and teachers who do not acknowledge the unique authority of Christ and his words.

- ♦ Listen carefully to the words of Christ and ask for help in following them.
- ♦ Avoid building our life on anything but the teachings of Christ, especially those in Matthew 5–7.

Matthew 8:1–22

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ As God incarnate, Jesus revealed not only truth through his teachings, but love and power through his works of cleansing, healing, and exorcism, 1–16.
- ♦ The Old Testament Scriptures, including the Mosaic Law and the prophets, are God’s written Word, though to be applied differently in different dispensations of God’s saving plan, 4, 11, 17.

God

His goodness: He has both power and pity, and is willing and able to heal and deliver, merely through his creative and redeeming word, 3, 13, 16.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is rightly called, “Lord,” and worthy of worship, 2.
- ♦ He speaks God’s powerful word, 3, 13, 16.
- ♦ He rightly demands and deserves full obedience and allegiance, over all other claims on our loyalty, 22.
- ♦ He is the incarnate Son of Man, fully possessed of deity, who was yet thoroughly humbled as a man and lived in conditions of extreme simplicity, 20.
- ♦ He is under the authority of the Father and commissioned by the Father to act as the Father’s plenipotentiary on earth, 9.

His work: He came to “save his people from their sins” (*see Matthew 1:21*) and the effects of sin, including sickness, 17.

Salvation

It includes

- ♦ Physical healing, partially now for some, and fully later when Christ returns to give us resurrected and glorified bodies, 16–17

- ♦ Deliverance from demons through faith in Christ, 16
- ♦ Accommodation for/Reconciliation for Jews and Gentiles alike, 11

Note: The quotation of Isaiah 53:4 indicates that this healing is purchased for us by the vicarious suffering of Christ for our iniquities; in that sense, it is “included in the Atonement.” On the other hand, other passages in the New Testament indicated that full healing for all believers must await the return of Christ. 1 Peter 2:24–25 clearly indicates that the “healing” gained by the wounds of Christ refers mainly to our wandering away like lost sheep into sin and Christ’s recovery of us as the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls.

The Last Things

The final judgment: At the end time, Gentiles will be included in the great messianic banquet in the full manifestation of the kingdom of God, while unbelieving Jews, though nominally “sons of the kingdom,” will be cast into outer darkness and everlasting misery, 11–12.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Take all our concerns, including health and oppression by demons, to Jesus, in faith that he can heal and deliver us.
- ♦ Forsake all to follow Christ, no matter how difficult the road or how dear are the ties of family and friendship that we must break.

Matthew 8:23–9:8

Truth

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ Jesus, being the divine Son of God, 8:29, and actually God in the flesh, has power and authority
 - To still the wind and the waves, 8:26–27
 - To drive out a whole army of demons and command them to be cast into the sea, 8:32
 - To heal, 9:7
 - To forgive sins, 9:2, 6, 8
- ♦ He is, therefore, rightly called, “Lord,” 8:25.

Spiritual Beings

Satan: He and his evil spirits seek in every way to harm God’s people, and especially the Messiah, 8:24, 28. He is actively wicked, and he is the real force behind all that threatens us.

Salvation

It includes

- ♦ Deliverance from physical danger, 8:26
- ♦ Deliverance from the power of demons, 8:31–32
- ♦ Deliverance from physical illness and debility, 9:7
- ♦ Most important – forgiveness of sins, 9:2, 6, 8
- ♦ Forgiveness
 - It comes now in this life to all who believe; other aspects of salvation, though often granted to us in this life, await the return of Christ for total realization.
 - Since our main plight arises from our sins against God and his righteous wrath against sinners, manifested now through natural forces, evil spirits, and illness, Jesus came primarily “to save his people from their sins.”
 - It leads to reconciliation with God, which then opens the door to all other blessings in this life and the life to come.

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes through Jesus, the Savior, to those who have faith in him. 8:26; 9:2, 7.
- ♦ It does not come as a result of our good deeds, or through any other Mediator between God and men.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not fear, for Christ is with us, even to the end of the age. *See Matthew 28:20.* “With him in our little boat, we don’t have to fear the storm,” as a Caribbean believer said.
- ♦ Cry out to Jesus to save us when we are in danger.
- ♦ Expect trouble in this life; we should not be surprised even when demons harass or possess people but can trust the power of Christ to deliver us from all evil.
- ♦ Understand that primarily we need to be restored daily to communion with the Father through the work of the Son as we, by the Spirit, ask for forgiveness of sins and trust his grace.
- ♦ Understand that those around us also primarily need reconciliation with God through Christ, and we should therefore do all we can not only to help them physically but also to communicate with them the saving message of forgiveness through faith in Christ.

Matthew 9:9–34

Truth

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is God: In all his words and deeds, Jesus made known the character and will of God the Father.
- ♦ He is the friend of sinners, 9–11, but the harsh critic of the self-righteous, 12–13.
- ♦ He is Yahweh in the flesh; like Yahweh in the Old Testament, Jesus is the Bridegroom of his people, who are his body, 15. *See John 3:29 and Ephesians 5:22–34.*

His work

- ♦ As Son of God and Son of David, 27 (and thus the promised Messiah), Jesus as Lord has authority to summon us to break decisively from our former life to follow him into an entirely new life, 9.
- ♦ As the creative Word of God, Jesus has power to restore sight to the blind, 30; give speech to the mute and drive out demons, 33–34; cure chronic diseases merely by contact, 22; and raise even the dead, 25.

Spiritual Beings

Satan: He works not only through demons, 32, but through religious leaders who are blinded by him, 11, 34.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Self-righteous scorn for obvious sinners, unwillingness to see them loved by God, and unawareness of one's own parlous spiritual condition, 11–13
- ♦ Willfully refusing to believe in the clear revelation of God's salvation and goodness, and attributing the work of the Messiah to the devil, 34

Note: This is probably the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the unpardonable sin, which can only be committed by those who have enough knowledge to believe and who yet totally spurn and despise God's mercy and goodness in Christ.

Salvation

Its recipients: It comes to those who fully trust in Christ Jesus and exercise their faith in him by coming to him and by following his command, 9, 18, 22, 28, 32.

Its substance: It includes physical healing, deliverance from demons, but especially forgiveness of sins.

Its conveyance: It comes through the effectual call of God through the word of, or about Christ, which creates saving faith in those whom he has chosen, 9.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Be willing to forsake all, including our means of livelihood, to follow Christ wherever he leads us.
- ♦ Tell our friends what Christ has done for us, and seek to introduce them to Christ, as Matthew did. In other words, we should be willing to associate with fellow sinners for evangelistic purposes (though not to continue in our old ways of sin).
- ♦ Take all our troubles to Jesus and trust him to deliver us, especially from sin.
- ♦ Not put the wine of the new dispensation brought by Christ into the old skins of the Old Testament religious system or of human religious tradition. Does this include meeting in buildings? Academic training of preachers? Easy divorce and remarriage? A one-man-centered religious organization?
- ♦ Beware of outward religious practices that do not reflect inward response to, and imitation of, God's mercy to us.

Note: Now that Jesus is bodily absent from us (though always present by his Spirit, Matthew 28:20), there are times when it is appropriate for Christians to fast, though not so as to be seen by men, Matthew 6:16-18.

Matthew 9:25–10:26

Truth

Revelation

Its source: God reveals truth

- ♦ In the life, works, and words of Jesus, uniquely
- ♦ Through the life, works, and written teachings of the twelve apostles (and a few others, including Paul, as well as prophets, including Mark, Luke, James, Jude, and the author of the letter to the Hebrews)
- ♦ Through the written Old Testament; other than this source, there is no other authoritative revelation today, 9:25–10:42

God

His greatness

- ♦ He Is King, with a kingdom, 10:7.
- ♦ He dwells in heaven, which indicates his transcendence, 10:7.
- ♦ He indwells followers of Christ through his Spirit, thus manifesting his immanence, 10:20.
- ♦ He exists as Father, Son, and Spirit, 10:20 (remember that the Son is speaking these words).

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the sender of messengers of the gospel, 10:5–42.
- ♦ He is Son of Man, both human and divine, 10:23. *See Daniel 7.*
- ♦ He is compassionate toward lost souls and suffering bodies, 9:35–36; 10:8.

Salvation

It includes

- ♦ Liberation by the truth of the gospel of the kingdom, 10:7
- ♦ Healing and deliverance from demons, partially in this life and fully in the life to come, 10:8

- ♦ The gift of the Holy Spirit, 10:20—this is the primary blessing of salvation now

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Disobedience to God's general revelation, as with Sodom and Gomorrah, who were guilty of sexual perversion and violence, 10:15
- ♦ Rejection of the gracious gospel of Jesus Christ, especially, 10:14
- ♦ Persecution of the followers of Jesus, 10:17–18, 21–23

The Church

Its offices: This passage adumbrates the offices of apostle and evangelist in the post-Pentecost church. The former office is no more, but the latter remains.

The Last Things

The final judgment: When the Son of Man (Jesus Christ) returns, 10:23, there will be a final judgment of all mankind, with punishments for sinners; in some way, those who have disobeyed the general revelation of God (*see Romans 1:18–32*) will receive a lighter punishment than those who have rejected the special revelation through the gospel of Jesus, 10:15.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Pray for God to thrust forth laborers into the harvest field; specifically, we should pray for God to raise up traveling evangelists to take the gospel to the lost. *See Matthew 9:38.*
- ♦ Commit ourselves (some of us) to itinerant evangelism, which entails simple living and persecution. Others should support them with prayer and finances, as the early church did Paul and his companions. *See Philippians 4:10–20.*
- ♦ Pray for God to heal the sick and to deliver people from oppression and possession by demons.
- ♦ Prepare for suffering and persecution, as the apostles and itinerant evangelists of all ages have.

Matthew 10:21–42

Truth

God

His Triune nature: God exists as Father and Son (as well as Holy Spirit, 20), 32–33.

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipotent and rules every single event in the universe, including the death of a sparrow or the loss of one hair from our heads, 29–30.
- ♦ He is also able to cast soul and body into hell, 28.
- ♦ He dwells in heaven, where (or whence) he will judge the living and the dead, and will reward and punish each person, 32–33.

His goodness

- ♦ He is fair and will judge according to our actions.
 - Those who confess or deny Christ before men will be affirmed or denied by Christ, 32–33.
 - Those who reject or receive his messengers will be rejected or rewarded, 40–42.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Rejecting God's salvation in Christ, and the resulting hatred towards the followers of Christ, 22, 23, 25, 34–36
- ♦ Denying Christ when we are persecuted, or threatened with persecution, 32–33
- ♦ Loving anyone more than Christ, so that to retain that person's favor we deny Christ and do not follow him to the Cross, 37–38
- ♦ Loving this life more than loving eternal life in Christ, 39

The Christian Life

It includes

- ♦ Being rejected, hated, persecuted, and even killed by all men and even by one's family for our allegiance to Christ, 21–22, 25, 34–36
- ♦ Putting our allegiance to Jesus before all earthly loves and ties, 37

- ♦ Taking up our cross and following Jesus in his path of suffering in obedience to God, 38

Salvation

Its recipients: It comes to the followers of Christ who persevere even unto death, 22.

It includes

- ♦ Affirmation by Christ before the Father at the last judgment, 32
- ♦ Rewards for all good deeds done to fellow Christians in this life, 40–42 (“little ones” are the least believers)

The Last Things

The final judgment

- ♦ There will be a judgment at the end of time, when Christ will either acquit us or condemn us before the Father, 32–33.
- ♦ Denial by Christ will result in eternal death for both soul and body in hell, 28.
- ♦ It will include full revelation of all that has been said and done in this life, 26.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect to be treated by others as Jesus was treated, and do not consider rejection and persecution to be strange, 24–25. *See 1 Peter 4:11–12.*
- ♦ Flee persecution when we can, 23.
- ♦ Do not fear men, who can only kill the body, but can’t kill the soul, 28.
- ♦ Trust God in all things, large and small, and rest in the knowledge that he governs every single event in our lives, 29–31.
- ♦ Confess our faith boldly in Christ before men, even in the face of death, 32.
- ♦ Treat other believers kindly, giving to them both our hospitality and all the things they need for life and comfort, as we are able, 40–42.

Matthew 11:1–24

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a progressive and cumulative whole, becoming clearer as the centuries pass and God reveals more of his plans and purposes.

- ♦ It began in the Old Testament with the Law (books of Moses).
- ♦ It continued through the prophets, both speaking and writing.
- ♦ Old Testament revelation came to a climax and culmination in the preaching and baptizing work of John the Baptist, 13.
- ♦ The New Testament revelation began with the preaching and healing ministry of Jesus, 4–24
- ♦ It continued with the written records of his life, death, resurrection, ascension, outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the acts of the apostles.
- ♦ It continued with the epistles of the apostles and prophets.
- ♦ It culminated with the Revelation to John the Apostle.
- ♦ From start to finish, God's revelation is about Jesus.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Wisdom personified, 19. *See Proverbs 8–9.*
- ♦ He is fully human, the man Jesus, who lived, taught, and worked miracles among the people, 1, 5, 19.
- ♦ He is also the Christ, the anointed Messiah, who came as prophesied to do mighty works that point towards his deity, 2, 10, 13.

Note: This is the first time "Christ" is used in Matthew after the first chapter. The context of the prophecy from Isaiah 40 quoted by Jesus (verse 10), also shows that the messenger (John) was preparing the way for the LORD = Yahweh (Jesus).

The Kingdom of God

Its stages

- ♦ In the Old Testament, the rule of God was seen in
 - Creation
 - Election, salvation, political organization, and prosperity of Israel
 - The rise and fall of nations
- ♦ In the Gospels, it is further manifested in the person of Jesus, seen through
 - His truthful word
 - His miracles
 - His victory over demons, 12

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not repenting at the preaching of righteousness, 16–18
- ♦ Not recognizing Jesus as a holy man and God's unique messenger, 6, 19
- ♦ Not repenting in the presence of miracles (which are meant to evoke not only belief but also repentance), 21

Its consequences: Greater guilt attaches to those with clearer revelation, 22, 24.

The Last Things

The final judgment: Disobedience to general revelation (Tyre, Sidon, Sodom), but even more, disobedience to special revelation about Jesus Christ, will be punished by eternal destruction in hell.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Strive to live a simple life if we are to have prophetic influence on others.
- ♦ Mix with ordinary people, who are our fellow sinners.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament as a book about Christ.
- ♦ Prepare the way for the imminent return of Christ by announcing the good news of salvation through faith in Christ and the very real threat of eternal punishment in hell for unbelief.

Matthew 11:25–12:21

Truth

Revelation

Its source: It comes

- ♦ From God, to his Son Jesus Christ, and through his Son to others, 11:25–27
- ♦ Not from human experience, wisdom, or intelligence, 11:25
- ♦ According to God's sovereign choice, not as a reward for human seeking, 11:25–27
- ♦ Through the Holy Scriptures, which are God's words written in the Old Testament, 12:3–5, 7; and interpreted to apply to Jesus by the New Testament apostles and prophets, 12:18–21
- ♦ With the inclusion of the sacrificial system and the kingly government, which was established by God in Israel, 12:3, 7
- ♦ Through human experience and through logic (for example, the argument from the lesser to the greater used by Jesus), when these are founded on the Word of God, 12:11–12

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father, Son, and Spirit, 12:18, dwelt (by his Spirit) among men in the Old Testament tabernacle and later the Temple, 12:4.

His greatness

- ♦ He is Lord of heaven and earth; that is, absolute ruler of the entire universe, with sole authority and power to do as he pleases, 11:25–26.
- ♦ He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 11:25.

His goodness: He is merciful, and desires us to be merciful, 12:7.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the promised Suffering Servant of Isaiah and the Old Testament Psalms, 12:18.
- ♦ He is divine and as the Messiah, he is greater than David and the priests (implied in 12:3–5), and the true dwelling place of God, greater than the Temple, 12:6.
- ♦ He is also greater than the Sabbath, but the revelation of the Sabbath commandment to Moses was given by him as God's Word and agent in revelation, 8.
- ♦ He is the unique and fully divine, but also human, son of God the Father and descendant of David the king, 11:25–27; 12:3.
- ♦ He received the Spirit at baptism for his special service as divine–human Messiah, 12:18.

His work

- ♦ He revealed God's truth and way of salvation through his actions (which reflected Old Testament truth and prophecies, 12:18–21) and his teaching, which he showed came both from his own personal relationship with the Father and through his superior knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, 11:27; 12:3–7.
- ♦ In his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as well as his current work as heavenly king and high priest and his future coming as Son of Man to judge the living and the dead, he fulfills all Old Testament prophecies, moral law, and sacrificial system, 12:6, 8, 18–21.
- ♦ He also fulfills the true meaning of the Sabbath, by giving rest to his followers, 11:28–30. He gives rest by freeing us
 - From bondage to the ceremonial aspects of the Old Testament Mosaic Law, 12:3–4
 - From the illegitimate interpretations of the Law and of God's requirements by religious leaders, 12:4–5, 11–13
 - From law-keeping to gain God's favor, when God is merciful to sinners (that is, all of us), 12:7, and therefore from our own wrong (and usually prideful) ideas of what we need to do to please God, 11:28–30

- From prideful reliance on our own strength rather than the Holy Spirit to fulfill God's mission for us, 12:18–20
- From striving with men rather than trusting in God to work his will and through us, 12:19
- From harshness and from a sense that God is being harsh with us, 12:20
- From fear lest God's name, fame, and reign will not come to this earth in God's own time through universal worship of Christ, 21

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Accept Jesus' invitation to enter into the rest which he himself enjoyed, knowing that he was God's elect Son and fully delighted in by the Father. We know that as God's children by adoption through faith in Christ, we are fully accepted by God and that he will command us to do only what he strengthens us to perform. *See Ephesians 4:32–5:2, 6:10, etc.* We do this by daily trusting in his pardon, presence, power, protection, provision, plan for our lives, providential rule of all the world, and promise to establish his kingdom when Christ returns.
- ♦ Trust God to do his work in us and in others, and not strive with them, but should, like Jesus, quietly follow God, communicate no more than God's Word when that is appropriate, withdraw from unnecessary conflict (12:14–15), speak quietly, persevere in doing good, and trust God for the outcome.
- ♦ Attempt only what we know Christ has given us to do, and only in his strength.
- ♦ Do not criticize other Christians who are doing no harm but who are doing things differently from what we think is right before God, and who may know and follow the Bible better than we do.

Matthew 12:22–50

Truth

Revelation

Its veracity

- ♦ Old Testament narratives, even those that seem “impossible” or “legendary,” like the stories of Jonah and the visit of the Queen of Sheba, must be taken as records of historical incidents, 39–42.
- ♦ Such people and incidents, along with institutions such as the Temple and the sacrificial system, must be taken as types of the coming Messiah, 41–42.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personalities and operations, but all completely united in one deity, 28.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is so united with the Holy Spirit, in his ministry, that calling his works, especially exorcism, evil and demonic is equivalent to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, 24, 31–32.
- ♦ He is greater than Satan in his sinless life, true words, binding of Satan’s power when he began his ministry, and in the expulsion of demons, 28–29.
- ♦ He is greater than Jonah in the effects of his words, his ministry to Gentiles through the church, and his resurrection unto eternal life, 41.
- ♦ He is greater than Solomon, in his wisdom, and in the wealth, power, glory, universal extent, and eternal duration of his kingdom, 42.
- ♦ He is the Son of Man, as prophesied in Daniel 7, 32, 40.

The Holy Spirit

His nature: The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to teach and to work miracles, including exorcisms, 28, 32.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Rejecting the Messiah, 39–42
- ♦ Attributing the good works of Jesus to demons, 32
- ♦ Speaking evil, or even worthless, words, 35–36
- ♦ Thinking evil thoughts, 35
- ♦ Committing adultery, 39

Note: ALL sins except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, can and will be forgiven!!! The unforgivable sin is only committed by those who know better and who have observed the works of God enough to be inexcusable if they then reject God's grace and call it evil. This sin is rarely committed; if you are worried about it, you are not guilty of it!

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ It includes deliverance from demonic oppression and possession, 22. But some deliverances are merely temporary, if the person's heart is not filled with the "good things" of Jesus and his gospel, 43–45.
- ♦ Mostly, it consists of forgiveness, 31.
- ♦ It includes membership in the new family of God, based on hearing, believing, and obeying the words of Jesus, and allegiance to him as Savior, 49–50.

The Last Things

The final judgment: People and nations will be judged

- ♦ By their words, 36–37
- ♦ By how they treated Jesus and his message, 41–42

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Be careful what we say; every word counts and will be weighed on the last day.
- ♦ Be even more careful what we think, for out of our heart/mind come our words.

- ♦ Be careful not to attribute genuine works of God, such as casting out demons in the name of Jesus, to Satan.
- ♦ Seek not only to hear Jesus' words, but to do them.
- ♦ See other true believers in Christ as our family members, with God as our Father and Jesus as older brother.

Matthew 13:1–23

Truth

Revelation

The Old Testament

- ♦ Prophecies spoken to Israel often had a fulfillment in that nation's history, as well as being predictions of what would come later, especially in the life and work of Christ and of his church and at the end of the age, 13–15.
- ♦ Revelation in the Old Testament, therefore, was partial; fullness of understanding had to wait until the coming of Christ and his explanation and fulfillment of Old Testament Scriptures, 16–18.

The New Testament: From the use of parables by Jesus, we see that God has so ordered the created world that, even in its fallen condition, virtually anything can be seen as a reflection of God and his ways with us, or our ways with each other.

Special Revelation

- ♦ We cannot properly interpret things and events, however, without the special revelation that God has given in the Scriptures.
- ♦ When God's truth is preached, it has life-giving power in those whom God has chosen, 11–12, 19, 23.

God

His greatness: He created the world, and he sustains it, even now in its fallen state he governs all the processes of "nature" and events of mankind, as these parables demonstrate. He is also utterly sovereign over the salvation of individuals, 11–17.

Christ

His person and work: Jesus is the master teacher, who weaves both Old Testament Scripture and the events of this world, often expressed through matchless parables, as well as his life and works, into a composite unfolding of God's truth, entire chapter.

Spiritual Beings

Satan: He is an evil personage who actively seeks to keep people from understanding God's truth, 19. His minions, evil spirits (demons) harass and even possess some people, as Jesus' ministry of exorcism illustrates.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes through the preaching of the message of the gospel.
- ♦ It is received by faith; it must be evidenced by "fruit", i.e., good works, 18–23.
- ♦ It comes to individuals, but also to large numbers of individuals, who thus compose not just a single plant, but a whole crop. There is some hint here that some people may actually be denied spiritual understanding, lest they be saved, 12–15.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Listen carefully to what Jesus and the rest of God's messengers say, lest we fail to bear fruit, 9, 23.
- ♦ Act on what we have heard and persevere until the end, 20–23.
- ♦ Expect to encounter troubles on account of our faith, as well as various temptations from this world, including the deceitfulness of wealth; we must watch against these and fight strenuously against the temptation to forsake the truth, 20–23.
- ♦ Share the gospel as often as we can since salvation comes through faith in the word of God; some should be set apart all full-time evangelists to bring the gospel to people near and far.

Matthew 13:24–52

Truth

Revelation

Its content [the “old” and the “new”]

- ♦ The old being, perhaps, both the Old Testament and also what can be gained from observing the course of this world by those who believe in God and know the Old Testament
- ♦ The new being the revelation brought by Jesus Christ, as well as fresh insights based on this new development in God’s progressive revelation, 52
- ♦ The “new” also includes new understanding
 - Of Old Testament passages in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus, 35
 - Of Old Testament concepts, such as the kingdom of God, which is now seen to come in stages
 - ♦ The Old Testament theocracy of Israel
 - ♦ The inauguration of the immanent kingdom that took place with the ministry of Jesus
 - ♦ The growth of the kingdom in the hearts of believers in Christ and then in the world through their influence, 24–33
 - ♦ The full manifestation of the kingdom when Christ returns, 37–43

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is King of the world, 43.
- ♦ He is Father to all believers, 43.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Sower of the message of God’s salvation for all believers, 37.

- ♦ He is the Sender of angels to reap the harvest of saved souls at the end time, as well as to throw the unsaved into eternal punishment, 41–42.
- ♦ He is therefore obviously equal with God, 41–42.

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ It is seen as the increase of God’s rule (kingdom), 31–33.
- ♦ It will come gradually and slowly in the hearts of individuals, 31–33.
- ♦ It will eventuate in their shining like stars in the kingdom of the Father, 43.

The Last Things

The final judgment: Jesus will come and bring a final separation of the good—that is, those who believe in Christ and follow him—and the wicked, who did not repent and believe.

- ♦ The former will enter the eternal glory of God’s kingdom.
- ♦ The latter will be thrown into everlasting torment in hell, 40–43, 47–50.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not be deceived by appearances. God is at work in the world, causing the gradual growth in the number and quality of believers, who will exercise influence on the world around them over a period of time; he will eventually destroy all forces of evil.
- ♦ Esteem entrance into the kingdom of God more precious than anything else—possessions, position, prestige, pleasure—and forsake all to know and follow Christ, 44–46.

Note: This does not mean that we break our family ties or our marriage vows; it only means that if something keeps us from following Christ—especially possessions, position, prestige, pleasure, and personal autonomy—we should give it up to gain Christ. See Philippians 3:7–11.

Matthew 13:53–14:12

Truth

Revelation

Its source: It comes through God's chosen prophets, including

- ♦ John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets
- ♦ Jesus, the divine Word of God who was also, humanly speaking, a prophet, 13:55–57
- ♦ The New Testament writers Mark, Luke, James and Jude, the brothers of Jesus, 13:55, and the writer of the letter to the Hebrews

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is fully human, with a mother, brothers, and sisters, 13:55–56.
- ♦ He is a prophet, 13:57, attested as such by his teachings and his miracles, 13:54, 58.

Mary

Her identity: She was not a perpetual virgin, as Roman Catholics claim, for she bore sons and daughters after Jesus. This is the natural meaning of “brothers” in 13:55. In interpreting the Bible, the first rule is that context determines meaning. The immediate context shows that “brother” means “son of the same mother,” as seen in 14:3. *See Matthew 4:18, 21.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Disregard of a messenger of God, and especially of the written revelation of God through Christ and the prophets and apostles, 13:56–57
- ♦ Unbelief in Jesus as Savior and Lord, 13:58
- ♦ Persecuting messengers of the truth, 14:3
- ♦ Taking another man's wife (or another woman's husband: Herod and Herodias had both been previously married or engaged), 14:3
- ♦ Hatred of messengers of truth, 14:3, 8, 11

- ♦ Provoking lust in others, looking at a woman to lust after her, 14:6
- ♦ Making rash oaths and then keeping them even though it involves sin, 14:7
- ♦ Wrongful obedience to authority even when it leads us to sin, 14:8, 11
- ♦ Doing wrong out of fear of others' opinion, 14:9
- ♦ Murder, 14:10

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask ourselves these questions:
 - In what ways have we not believed in Jesus as divine Son of God and Savior?
 - In what way(s) have we disregarded the teachings of Christ and the apostles, especially in the arena of "love" and marriage?
 - In what ways have we sinned because of fear of others' opinions?

Matthew 14:13–16

Truth

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ He fed his people in the wilderness, like God did, turning a few loaves and fish into a meal for a multitude (5,000 men plus women and children), 13–21.
- ♦ He walked on the water, 25.
- ♦ He identified himself with the words, “I AM,” as Yahweh did to Moses on Mt. Sinai, 27. *See Exodus 3:14.*
- ♦ He enabled Peter to walk on water, 29.
- ♦ He stilled the waves and the wind, 32.
- ♦ He accepted worship from the disciples as Son of God—a title no mere man or even angel would accept, 33.
- ♦ His personal power was such that those merely touching him were made well of their diseases, 36.
- ♦ He was moved with compassion for the needy crowd, 14.
- ♦ He prayed to God, 19, 23.
- ♦ He got into the boat with them, 32.
- ♦ He walked among the people, 34.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust Jesus to meet all our material needs. We just need to take our requests to him and offer the little we have to him to multiply.
- ♦ Expect Jesus to send us into difficult situations, 24, but we must not fear, for he is with us and will deliver us at the right time, 25, 31, 32.

Matthew 15:1–20

Truth

Revelation

Its source: It comes through the written Old Testament and New Testament, not through traditions of men, 3–6. This is the fundamental error of Roman Catholics, who place tradition and Scripture on an equal level, in effect putting more weight on church tradition.

God

His goodness

- ♦ He wants our hearts, not just outward actions of worship, 8.
- ♦ He “plants” some people and teachings, and not others; the ones who are not “planted” will be uprooted and destroyed, 13.

Christ

His work

- ♦ He showed himself to be fully aware of the religious climate of his time and was able to point out where it diverged from Scripture, 3–9.
- ♦ He had the courage to rebuke the religious leaders, knowing it would cost his life, 7, 14.

Mankind

Our nature: The mind and heart, that is, the thoughts and affections, produce actions.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Criticizing others, when we ourselves have committed more serious offenses, 2–7
- ♦ Committing hypocrisy, by pretending to worship God when really our hearts are elsewhere, 7–8
- ♦ Misleading people by turning them from Scripture to human tradition, as if tradition were more authoritative than Scripture, 6, 9

- ♦ Emphasizing outward religious acts rather than inward love for God and obedience to him from a renewed mind, 2, 11, 17–20
- ♦ Misleading others, and allowing oneself to be misled, 14
- ♦ Thinking evil thoughts of all sorts, which engender other sins, such as murder, adultery, fornication (by the way, the distinction here between the two, which Matthew always observes, shows that the “fornication” in 5:32 does not refer to marital infidelity, but to premarital sexual sin), stealing, lying, blasphemy, 19–20

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Beware of imposing on others the requirements that God, in Scripture, does not impose.
- ♦ Beware of inventing human traditions that, in effect, contravene Scripture. One of these traditions is to require people to make a “prayer to receive Christ” rather than to be born again by the Spirit of God.
- ♦ Watch over our thoughts and our hearts, meditating on Scripture, to worship God from our hearts and avoid sins which come from evil thoughts.

Matthew 15:21–39

Truth

God

His goodness

- ♦ He sent his Son Jesus to manifest his glory, first to the Jews, 24.
- ♦ He expressed his pity and his power in his Son Jesus, who healed the sick, 30–31.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Though equal to the Father, was somehow subordinate to him, for he was “sent” to seek and to save the lost, 24.
- ♦ He possessed the pity and power of God and thus healed people and fed those who had followed him, 29–38.
- ♦ He is Lord (though perhaps the Canaanite woman only meant, “Sir”), that is, God, 22, 25, 27.
- ♦ He is son of David, and thus the rightful heir to David’s throne and the promised Messiah, 22.

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ It consists of freedom from demons and disease in this life for many, 22, 28, 30.
- ♦ It also consists in the promise of provision for our daily essential needs, 36–38.

Its conveyance: It comes to all, both Jew and Gentile, who have faith in Jesus, 28.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Take even our most serious troubles to Jesus, for he can deliver us from them if he wills.
- ♦ Do not grow discouraged if he does not at first answer our prayers; we can continue praying until he does, or until he gives us a “NO,” as he did to Paul.

Note: If we follow Jesus into the wilderness to hear his teaching, we can trust that he will provide what we really need to live. See also Matthew 6:33.

Matthew 16:1–20

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ It comes in stages to us; if, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, we don't accept the initial revelation, God will not grant the next, 4, 10–11.
- ♦ It is revealed gradually in the Old Testament and even the New Testament, as God's plan unfolds, 20.
- ♦ It is centered upon person and work, especially the death and resurrection, of Jesus, as prefigured in Jonah and the rest of the Old Testament, 4, 16.
- ♦ It does not primarily consist in miracles of power, since these are often sought by people with evil motives and hearts that fundamentally stray from God and can be done by Satan and his demons, 4.
- ♦ It comes to those who have faith, 8, but comes first by the sovereign grace of God the Father, 17.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is a living God, 16.
- ♦ He is the only living God, 16.
- ♦ As the Father of Jesus, he has a Son, who shares the life, nature, deity, and attributes of the Father, 16, 17.
- ♦ He dwells in heaven, 17—that is, far “above” us in transcendence.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He was prefigured and foretold in the Old Testament, 4.
- ♦ He is Jesus the man, 20.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, 16, 20.
- ♦ He is divine Son of God the Father, 16–17.
- ♦ He is the builder of the church, consisting of those who, like Peter, believe in him as Savior and Lord, 18.

His work: He possesses the keys of the kingdom of God, that is, authority to decide who may enter, 19.

The Church

Its members: It consists of those who fully trust in Jesus Christ as Son of God and our Savior, 16, 18, 20. That is, it is built upon the foundation of the faith that Peter expressed.

Its substance

- ♦ It is like an army, marching forward like its Founder Jesus to assault the powers of Hell by preaching the word, expelling demons, and showing love to people of all sorts, 18.
- ♦ It is ruled over by Christ, as a coming kingdom, 19.
- ♦ It has authority to declare who, in principle, may or may not enter the coming kingdom of heaven, by preaching the gospel and exercising proper church discipline, 19. *See also Matthew 18:18 and context.*

Note: Peter is NOT the only one to whom was given the keys of the kingdom, 18:18. Here, he only speaks for, and represents, the disciples of Jesus, and then all who follow them in the same faith and obedience to Christ. The Pope, therefore, has no authority to claim that he, as supposed successor to Peter, has universal ecclesiastical authority, first, because the promise was not given to him, and second, because the bishop of Rome is not necessarily the successor to Peter the apostle.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not primarily seek miracles from God, but focus on the miracles Jesus did, especially his death and resurrection to deliver us from our sins.
- ♦ Ask God for all that we need, including a miracle if that is necessary, leaving the outcome of prayer to him, but trusting that he will provide our daily bread, 16:1-11.
- ♦ Fully believe, and boldly profess, our faith in Jesus as the only Savior from sin.

Matthew 16:21–17:13

Truth

Revelation

Its source: It comes

- ♦ Through the Old Testament writing and speaking prophets like Moses and Elijah, 17:3
- ♦ Through John the Baptist, 17:11–13
- ♦ From God the Father through Jesus, the Son of God, 16:21; 17:5
- ♦ Through chosen apostles like Peter and John in the New Testament, 17:1 (James was killed early.)

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity, with Father and Son sharing equal glory, 16:27.

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent, and glorious, dwelling in inapproachable light, 16:27, 17:5.
- ♦ He is immanent, speaking to men from the cloud (as he did at Sinai), 17:5, and coming as the God–Man Jesus, the divine–human Son of Man, 16:27; 17:5.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is human, a prophet and Son of Man like the prophet Ezekiel (the other person in the Bible called “son of man”), 16:27.
- ♦ He could suffer and die, 16:21.
- ♦ He is also divine, Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7, 16:27.
- ♦ He is the unique Son of God, 17.
- ♦ He is the future judge of mankind, 16:27.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ Works through deception, including through misled church leaders when they think like ordinary men without divine revelation, 16:23
- ♦ Opposes our salvation through the Cross of Jesus Christ, 16:21–23.

Note: The so-called “Prosperity Gospel” is such a satanic delusion, for it neither preaches the Cross of Christ as the only way of salvation from sin (since this message doesn’t see sin as our problem), nor discipleship as fundamentally involving suffering as Christ did.

The Christian Life

Its substance: It is basically a matter of following in the self-denying, self-sacrificial pattern of Jesus, 16:24–26.

The Last Things

The final judgment: Jesus will return in the glory of his father, with his angels, and reward each person according to what he has done, 16:27.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Avoid those who do not preach Christ crucified, and who do not call us to follow in his steps.
- ♦ Prepare to imitate Christ in his life of suffering. Remember that Peter heard Jesus’ words of rebuke and instruction. *See 1 Peter 4:1.*
- ♦ Take time to be alone with Jesus and some time to be apart with him with one or two others, to listen to the voice of God.
- ♦ Always focus on Jesus more than any human, including the greatest of the prophets and apostles and saints.
- ♦ Listen to Jesus more than to anyone else, including our family. He defines who we are and what we are to do.

Matthew 17:14–27

Truth

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ He is fully human and thus paid the “head tax” required of every Jewish man, 17:24, 27
- ♦ He was also vulnerable to betrayal, capture, and death, 17:22–23.
- ♦ He is also fully divine, for he was able to “produce” a coin from the mouth of the first fish that Peter “randomly” caught, 17:27.
- ♦ As both God and man, he was distressed by his disciples’ weak faith, 17:17.
- ♦ He had power over demons and disease, 17:18.
- ♦ He is Son of Man, 17:22.
- ♦ He knew his future as the one who came to “deliver his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21) by crucifixion and resurrection from the dead, 17:22–23.

Spiritual Beings

Satan and demons

- ♦ Can cause illness and disability, such as seizures, 17:15–18
- ♦ Can be overcome by the least faith of the simplest believer, 17:20 (Some manuscripts add, “However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”)

Salvation

Its substance: It includes deliverance from demons and—to some degree in this life and altogether in the next—disease, 17:18.

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes through the atoning and reconciling work of Jesus Christ on the Cross and at the Resurrection (and ascension to God’s right hand), 17:23.
- ♦ It must be received at all stages by faith, 17, 20.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Bring all our “mountains” to God in prayer, trusting in him to remove them in his time and manner.
- ♦ Bring our needy friends to Jesus, both in our own prayers and by telling them about the Lord.
- ♦ Pay our taxes and otherwise submit to human institutions and authority unless they command us to sin against God.

Matthew 18:1–20

Note: This whole section seems to deal with unity among believers.

Truth

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent and dwells in heaven, 18:10, 14.
- ♦ He is immanent; he cares about the least believer's welfare, 14.
- ♦ He hears the prayers of his people, 19.
- ♦ In Christ, through the Spirit, he dwells among even a small group of believers, 20.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ As the divine–human Son of Man, he came to this earth to seek and to save the lost, 11.
- ♦ He bears the divine name (Son of Man, Savior, Lord, Immanuel, Son of God).

The Last Things

The final judgment: Those who persist in unrepentant sin will finally be cast into a hell of unquenchable fire, 8, 9.

Life

Ethical imperatives

We should pursue unity with other followers of Christ, in the following ways

- ♦ Pursue humility ourselves, and honor “humble” believers, 3–5.
- ♦ Pursue holiness, both for ourselves and for those “little ones” whom we might lead into sin, 6–9.
- ♦ Pursue wandering sheep, that is, believers who have gone astray and left the flock of God, 10–14.

- ♦ Pursue reconciliation with brothers who offend us, 15–17.
- ♦ In all this, we should pursue God through prayer with other believers, 18–20.

We should avoid

- ♦ Pride and envy, 1–5
- ♦ Any sin, 6–9
- ♦ Slander and gossip, 15–16
- ♦ Brothers who persist in sin despite several warnings, 17

Matthew 19:1–22

Truth

Revelation

Its source: It comes

- ♦ Through Moses, author of the first five books of the Bible (Pentateuch), including
 - The first two chapters of Genesis, which are often considered to be “myths,” 19:4–6
 - The Ten Commandments, 19:18–19
 - Deuteronomy, 19:8–9
- ♦ Through Jesus, the incarnate Word and God’s spokesman, 19:8–9

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is Creator of the universe, including mankind, 19:4.
- ♦ Though he is one, he is also somehow plural, and represented as being-in-community by the creation of man as male and female in his image, 19:4.

His goodness: He is good—indeed, uniquely good, 19:17.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ He is both good and powerful, as seen in his healing of multitudes of sick people, 19:2.
- ♦ He is the authoritative interpreter of the Old Testament, including the law given through Moses, 19:8–9.
- ♦ As Lord, he demands and deserves total allegiance, 19:21.

Creation

Its nature

- ♦ It took place just as Moses described it, in six days, on the last of which—called “the beginning” by Jesus—man was created, 19:4.
- ♦ Adam and Eve were the first humans, and they were made at the beginning of created time; they had no pre-human ancestors. Evolution of mankind is a false idea.

Mankind

Our created nature

- ♦ We were created in the image of God; man is male and female, 19:4.
- ♦ We are thus able to communicate, commit, care for the other, and experience profound community, 19:5–6.

Our fallen state: Now, men and women are fallen, and therefore prone to marriage (and other) conflicts, infidelity, and even divorce, 19:7–9.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Premarital fornication, such as what Joseph thought Mary had committed, 19:9; *see Matthew 1:18–19.*
- ♦ Adultery, 19:18
- ♦ Murder, theft, lying, dishonoring parents, 19:18–19
- ♦ Divorce and remarriage after divorce (except when, after marriage or during betrothal, premarital fornication has been discovered), 19:9
- ♦ Disrespect for children, 19:13–14
- ♦ Excessive attachments to possessions, lack of care for the poor, and thus not following Jesus exclusively, 19:21–22

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes through Christ to those who are humble and trusting like children, 19:14.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Be willing to give up anything and everything—including marriage, sex, money, and possessions—for the sake of following Jesus, entering eternal life, and pursuing the Kingdom of God.
- ♦ Constantly rehearse and seek to obey the Ten Commandments and all that they imply.
- ♦ Abstain from sex before marriage.
- ♦ Remain faithful to our spouse. This includes sexual fidelity and lifelong commitment, with no divorce.
- ♦ Ask God to show us our moral blind spots, which could easily include hardness of heart towards our spouse, children, or the poor.

Matthew 20

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ♦ In the New Testament, the focus is on the person, teachings, and work of Jesus; this is especially true of the Gospels.
- ♦ A major theme of Jesus' teaching, and especially of his parables, is the kingdom of God (or, of heaven), 1, 21. *See Matthew 13:1–52.*

Its literary forms

- ♦ Much of Jesus' teaching is in the form of parables, which are short stories that usually have one main point, though some parables are a bit like allegories, 1–16. *See Matthew 13:1–43.*
- ♦ Biblical revelation contains many figures of speech, such as Jesus' use of the word “cup” and “baptism” to denote his suffering on the Cross, 22–23.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is king over all the universe, 1.
- ♦ He dwells in heaven, where he rules and reigns, 1.
- ♦ Like the landowner in the parable, he possesses absolute authority to dispense his grace to whomever he pleases, 15–16, 23.
- ♦ He knows all things, including the future, 18–19.
- ♦ He has unlimited power, as demonstrated by his raising Jesus from the dead, 19.
- ♦ He has already decided to whom he will give places of honor in his kingdom, 23.
- ♦ He has the power to heal, as demonstrated by the healing miracles wrought by Jesus, 34.

His goodness

- ♦ He always deals justly with us, 13.
- ♦ He gives grace to those who have not earned it, 12–16.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to die and rise for our salvation, 18–19.
- ♦ He is the Father of Jesus; though they are equal in essence and nature, there is an order between them, as also between them and the Holy Spirit, 23.
- ♦ He demonstrated his compassion in the merciful works of Jesus, 24. *See John 14:10–11.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Son of Man predicted by Daniel, the divine–human King, 18, 21, 23, 28. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He has the power to predict the future, 19, 23
- ♦ He is the promised descendant of David, 31. *See 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and Isaiah 11:1–10.*
- ♦ He is Lord, 31.
- ♦ He has the authority and power to heal, 34.
- ♦ He is compassionate, 34.

His work

- ♦ He offered himself as a substitutionary sacrifice—a ransom—for our sins, 18–19, 28. *See Mark 10:45; Romans 3:24–26; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:2; and 1 John 2:2.*
- ♦ He demonstrated humility and love by coming to serve rather than to be served, 25–28.
- ♦ While on earth, he demonstrated his love and power by healing people, 29–34.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ In our fallen state, those in authority tend to lord it over those under them, 25.
- ♦ We need someone to ransom us from our sins, 28.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Envyng others and complaining about our lot in life compared to theirs, 11.
- ♦ Seeking preferment over others for ourselves or our relatives, 21.
- ♦ Being angry with those who seek to gain advantage over us, 24.
- ♦ Lording it over those under our authority, 25.
- ♦ Trying to silence or suppress the cries of those who seek help from God, 31.

Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes to us from God entirely based on his free election and choice, 16. *See Romans 8:29–30; 9:6–33; 11:1–10; and Ephesians 1:3–5; 2:1–10.*

Its substance: Salvation comes to us based on the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins, 18–19, 28. *See Romans 3:21–28 and Ephesians 1:7; 2:11–22.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ See our work as done unto the Lord, 2, 5, 7. *See Colossians 3:22–4:1.*
- ♦ Expect to be rewarded for our work, 2, 4, 8. *See Ephesians 6:5–8.*
- ♦ Do not complain about how God deals with us in comparison to others, 11–16.
- ♦ Seek to serve others rather than to be served, 26–28. *See Romans 12:10, 13; Philippians 2:1–11; and 1 Peter 4:10.*
- ♦ Prepare to suffer as Christ did, 23. *See Matthew 16:24 and 1 Peter 4:1.*
- ♦ Cry out in faith to Jesus to heal and deliver us, even as we leave the outcome of our prayer to God, 30–34.
- ♦ Show our gratitude to Jesus for our salvation by following him faithfully, 34.

Matthew 21:1–17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time, 1–11. *See Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:28–40; and John 12:12–19.*
- ♦ “Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming,’” 5. *See Zechariah 9:9.*
- ♦ “Hosanna!” 9, 15; *see Psalm 118:26.*
- ♦ Son of David, 9; *see Matthew 1:1 and 2 Samuel 7:12–16.*
- ♦ “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!” 9; *see Psalm 118:26.*
- ♦ Jesus cleanses the Temple for the second time, 12–13; *see Mark 11:15–18 and Luke 19:45–48.*

Note: Jesus’ cleansing the Temple the first time is narrated in John 2:13–22. These are two separate events.

- ♦ “My house shall be called a house of prayer,” 13; *see Isaiah 56:7.*
- ♦ “But you have made it a den of thieves,” 13; *see Jeremiah 7:11.*
- ♦ “Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants,” 16; *see Psalm 8:2.*
- ♦ “The city of Bethany,” 17; *see John 11:1, 18; 12:1.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He deserves our praise and adoration, as indicated by the use of “Hosanna!” which used to be a prayer for God to save but later became a form of acclamation to the God who saves, 9.

Note: “Hosanna” means, ‘Save, LORD,’ and thus indicates that God has the power to save his people.

- ♦ He is Yahweh, the LORD, the unique and faithful covenant God of Israel, 9.
- ♦ He dwells in the highest place, far above heaven, 9.
- ♦ He deserves and desires our praise and worship, 16.

His goodness

- ♦ He promised to put one of David's descendants on a throne that would last forever, 9.
- ♦ He was the God who saved his people from danger many times, 9.
- ♦ He sent prophets to declare his will and his ways to his people, culminating in the coming of Jesus Christ, the greatest and final Prophet, 11.
- ♦ He condescended to dwell in the Temple among his people, 12, 13.
- ♦ He hears and answers prayer, 13.
- ♦ He welcomes the worship and prayers of people of all nations, 13.

Note: The part of the Temple used by moneychangers and sellers of sacrificial animals was originally meant to be used by Gentiles for prayer.

Christ

His person: His humanity and his divinity

- ♦ Though fully equal with God, he came to his people in great humility the first time, 5.
- ♦ He is the descendant of David, 9, 15.
- ♦ He is therefore the rightful king of Israel, 5.
- ♦ He was a carpenter from Nazareth with the name Jesus, 11.

Note: His divinity and humanity cannot really be distinguished from each other, for he was one person with two natures.

- ♦ He knows and determines what will happen, 2-3.
- ♦ He is the Lord, who owns everything, 3.
- ♦ He possessed divine authority to purify the Temple precincts, 12.
- ♦ He had divine power to heal all diseases (though some Old Testament prophets did, too), 14.

Man

Our nature

- ♦ We are born to praise God, and worship is our greatest happiness, 9, 16.
- ♦ We long for a righteous king to rule us with justice and love, 5, 9.
- ♦ We are afflicted with all sorts of illnesses and maladies, 14.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Using religion to make money off earnest believers, 12–13.
- ♦ Hindering others from prayer or worship, 12–13.
- ♦ Objecting to people worshiping Jesus with great energy and enthusiasm, 16.
- ♦ Hindering people from worshiping at all, 16.
- ♦ Hindering children from expressing praise to Christ, 16.

Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes entirely from God, through Jesus Christ, who was rightly hailed as King and Savior, 9.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Offer everything we have to God for his use, 3.
- ♦ Obey Jesus' instructions even if they seem a bit odd and risky, 2–3, 6.
- ♦ Praise Jesus Christ as our King and Savior with all the energy we possess, 8–9, 15.
- ♦ Tell people who ask about Jesus who he is, 11.
- ♦ Avoid all commercial activity, even for religious purposes, in places of worship if prayer would be hindered thereby, 12–13.
- ♦ Make prayer a priority when we gather to worship, 13.
- ♦ Bring people with needs to Jesus in prayer, 14.
- ♦ Encourage our children to praise God, even if they don't know the full meaning of what they are saying, 16.
- ♦ Teach our children the things of God at a very early age, 16.

Matthew 22:1–14

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Jesus' parables generally have one point, but often also have subsidiary points, which makes them a little like allegories sometimes. This parable has several elements which correspond to different truths.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is a great King, 22:2.
- ♦ He rules over a kingdom, 22:2.
- ♦ He is longing to include many people in his kingdom, 22:2.
- ♦ He chose the nation Israel as his special people, 22:1–8.
- ♦ He was patient with his people, though they were often rebellious (even killing his servants, the prophets, 22:1–8), until finally, when they rejected his Son Jesus, he not only destroyed Jerusalem but also invited Gentiles into his kingdom, 22:7–10.
- ♦ He has a Son—Jesus, the divine Son who became a man also, 22:2.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ He is the divine Son of God, 22:2.
- ♦ He has come to join himself in intimate communion with his people, becoming to them the heavenly Bridegroom, 22:2. *See Ephesians 5:22–33.*

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ It consists mostly in fellowship with God through union with his Son Christ, 22:1–8.
- ♦ It is offered as a general message for all who will repent and believe (the “called” in this passage) but reserved for the elect (“chosen”), who are relatively few, 22:14.

Note: "Called" here is different from Call, Calling, Called, in Paul's letters, where the call is effectual for salvation. This "called" entails submission to God's requirements, symbolized here by the wedding garment, which may refer to the righteousness of Christ given to those who believe in him, or to the good works which he gives his people to perform, by his strength, 22:11.

The Last Things

The final judgment: There will be a terrible dark place with indescribable suffering and torment for all who do not trust in Christ, 22:13.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Seek to develop a conscious fellowship with Jesus as our Bridegroom, the only one who can satisfy our longing for love.
- ♦ Beware of allowing other things—family, business—to keep us from fellowship with God.
- ♦ Go into all the world and invite people to come into fellowship with God through faith in Christ.
- ♦ Warn people that unrepentant unbelievers will be punished.

Matthew 22:15–46

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ The Pharisees and Herodians “plotted” against Jesus, 15; *see Mark 12:13–17 and Luke 20:20–26.*
- ♦ The Sadducees ask about the resurrection, 23–33; *see Mark 12:18–23 and Luke 20:27–38.*
- ♦ The scribes ask about the greatest commandment, 34–40; *see Mark 12:28–31 and Luke 10:25–37.*
- ♦ Jesus asks about Psalm 110:1; 41–46; *see Mark 12:35–37 and Luke 20:41–44.*
- ♦ Psalm 110:1, 43–44; *see Mark 16:19; Acts 2:34–35; Colossians 3:1; and Hebrews 1:13.*
- ♦ “Render therefore to Caesar,” 21; *see Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Peter 2:13–15.*
- ♦ Moses’ law for raising up an heir, 24; *see Deuteronomy 25:5.*
- ♦ “I am the God of Abraham,” 32; *see Genesis 17:7; 26:24; 28:21; and Exodus 3:6, 15.*
- ♦ “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart,” 37; *see Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; 30:6.*
- ♦ “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” 39; *see Matthew 19:19; Leviticus 19:18; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; and James 2:8.*
- ♦ “The Son of David,” 41; *see Matthew 1:1; 21:9.*

Its content: Biblical revelation includes the five books of Moses, 24, 32, 37; the Psalms, 44, the prophets, and the teachings of Jesus, 21, 29–30, 37–40.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He deserves our ultimate allegiance and service, 21.
- ♦ He is all-powerful, able even to raise the dead, 29–32.
- ♦ He lives and rules in heaven, 30.

- ♦ He is eternal, being the living God of all people from all time, 32.
- ♦ He deserves our total love, 37; he therefore must himself be lovable and loving. *See 1 John 4:7.*
- ♦ He has the authority to issue binding commands upon us, 37–40.
- ♦ He is Lord, even over kings, 43–45.

His goodness

- ♦ He is the faithful God of his people, 32.
- ♦ He revealed his will to his people, 37–39.
- ♦ He cares for our individual and corporate happiness, which is to love and be loved, 37–40.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is true, as even his foes admitted, 16.
- ♦ He taught the truth regardless of who was present, showing thus his courage and his love for God, 16.
- ♦ He is infinitely wise and intelligent, 17–22, 33, 36.
- ♦ He knew the future, 30.
- ♦ He understood the Scriptures as no other man ever has, 32–33, 37–40, 43–44.
- ♦ He is the Christ, 42.
- ♦ He is Lord, with universal sovereignty, 44–45. *See Ephesians 1:20–23.*

His work

- ♦ He taught the truth, 16.
- ♦ He obeyed all aspects of divine and human law, 21.

The Last Things

The end of time

- ♦ There will be a resurrection from the dead, 30–32.
- ♦ In that resurrection, we will be somehow like the angels, not engaging in sexual relations, 30.
- ♦ We will also be in the presence of God forever, 30.

Life

Ethical imperatives:

- ♦ Pay our taxes and obey human laws, unless they conflict with the clearly revealed will of God, 21. *See Acts 5:27–29; Romans 13:1–7; and 1 Peter 2:13–17.*
- ♦ Put our hope on the resurrection from the dead, 30. *See Romans 8:20–25 and 1 Peter 2:13.*
- ♦ Love God with all our being, 37.
- ♦ Love our neighbor as we love ourselves, 39.
- ♦ See the entire Bible as teaching the love of God and our fellow human beings.
- ♦ Proclaim Jesus as Christ and the hope of the resurrection.

Matthew 23

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ♦ It is explained to us by trained teachers, but many teachers add things or distort the meaning of the Bible, so we must beware of false teachers, however learned they are, 3, especially if their conduct does not match their teaching.
- ♦ It includes the historical sections of the Old Testament, from Genesis through Esther, even though there are some real difficulties in the text as we have it, such as Jesus' saying that Zechariah was the son of Berechiah in some texts, 35.
- ♦ Some commandments in the Old Testament are “weightier” than others, such as justice, mercy, and faithfulness, 23. The same is true in the New Testament, where, for example, women’s head coverings and details of church order are not as important as faith, hope, and love.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He knows everything, including our hearts and our evil motives and thoughts, 25, 28.
- ♦ He sits on his heavenly throne, as King, 22.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ predicted and foreseen in the Old Testament, including in Psalm 118, verse 39.
- ♦ He was full of mercy and pity for doomed Jerusalem and the Jews, 37–38.

His work: Like God—indeed, as God—Jesus sent messengers in Old Testament times, and does so in our time as well, 34.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Be humble and do not exalt ourselves; this applies especially to teachers of the Bible.
- ♦ Ask God to keep us from saying one thing and doing another, like the Pharisees and scribes.
- ♦ Avoid petty legalism and focus on the main things in the Bible—faith, hope and love towards God and Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures and not in human tradition.

Matthew 24:1–21

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: The Jerusalem Temple would be destroyed, 2. *See Mark 12:2 and Luke 19:44.*

Its roots in history and its veracity

- ♦ The events and troubles predicted by Jesus did come to pass in the long siege and final destruction of Jerusalem by Roman armies in 70 AD.
- ♦ At that time, we are told, Christians heeded the words of Christ and fled the city before it had been entirely encircled by the Romans, 15–20.

Its content

- ♦ Biblical revelation includes predictive prophecy, as in this entire chapter.
- ♦ Some passages are hard to understand, with godly interpreters differing in their understanding; this chapter has evoked a variety of competing interpretations.

Its literary forms

- ♦ This passage deals with two questions
 - When would the Temple in Jerusalem be destroyed?
 - When would the Son of Man – that is, Jesus Christ – return? 2–3.
- ♦ Our notes will assume that 4–21 deal with the destruction of the Temple with references also to the return of Christ, and 23–52 answer the question about the return of the Son of Man.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He determines and therefore knows the future and can give his servants, especially his Christ, the power to prophecy of future events – the whole chapter.
- ♦ He is the great King about whom Christ spoke, 14.

His goodness: He revealed the formerly hidden truths about his kingdom to his Son Jesus Christ, to tell others, 14–28.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah, God's chosen one, both divine and human, 5.
- ♦ He is the Son of Man, divine-human Messiah foretold by Daniel the prophet, 15, 27. *See Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; see also Daniel 7:13-14.*

His work

- ♦ He is God's unique prophet who foretold the future, 6-27.
- ♦ He is God's appointed Judge who will return at the end of time to settle accounts, 27.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ We are subject to wars, famines, plagues, earthquakes, and other disasters, 6-7.
- ♦ During these times, lawlessness will increase, 12.
- ♦ Because of that, the love of many will grow cold, 12.

The People of God

Their identity: They are

- ♦ Subject to wars and other disasters just like everybody else, 6-7
- ♦ Liable to suffer persecution for our faith in Jesus Christ and proclamation of his truth, 9
- ♦ Vulnerable to the wiles of false prophets, 11
- ♦ Tempted to let our love grow cold because of the increase in lawlessness in troubles times, 12
- ♦ Composed (now) of people from all nations who trust in Christ, 14; *see Matthew 28:18-20.*
- ♦ Obligated to preach the gospel to all nations, 14; *see Matthew 28:18-20 and Revelation 7:9.*

Salvation

Its recipients: Full and final salvation will come only to those who persevere in times of trouble and persecution, 13, 22.

The Last Things

The last days

- ◆ During this age, there will be wars and other disasters; these will increase in frequency and intensity, like the labor pains of a woman giving birth, until the final and climactic troubles of the last days, 8. *See Mark 13:8.*
- ◆ The fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in 70 AD after a horrible siege is a type of the troubles to come upon believers in the last days, 15. *See Matthew 24:28.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Beware of false prophets and false Messiahs who will try to deceive us, 4, 23–28.
- ◆ Expect to encounter many and severe trials and troubles in this age, 6–8.
- ◆ Expect to face fierce persecution, 9–10.
- ◆ Expect betrayal by nominal believers, 10.
- ◆ Ask God for the grace to remain faithful Christ to death, 13.
- ◆ Preach the gospel to every tribe and people on earth while we have time and opportunity, 14.
- ◆ Prepare for troubles by taking reasonable precautions, 16–18.

Matthew 24:22–31

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation comes in different forms, including

- ♦ Predictive prophecy, 22–31
- ♦ Figures of speech like metaphors and similes, 27
- ♦ Historical narratives, 37–39
- ♦ Parables, 32–35, 45

Its source: It comes through Jesus, as God’s unique Prophet, 25.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He wields absolute authority and dominion over all events and can intensify or lessen the trials that come upon the world, 22.
- ♦ He is God the Father of his Son, Jesus Christ, and therefore in some mysterious way greater than his son Jesus, 38.
- ♦ He knows all things, including everything about the future, 36.

Note: How God the Father could know something not known to his son is beyond our understanding. Some say that Jesus is speaking here only as a man, but it is hard, even impossible, to separate his deity and his humanity. This remains an impenetrable mystery to us.

His goodness: He has chosen some to be saved, “the elect,” and these he will most certainly save, by granting them perseverance and by shortening the days of extreme trial for them, 22.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed Savior sent by God into the world, 33.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 27, 30, 37, 39, 44.
See Daniel 7:13–14.

- ♦ He is the unique Prophet of God who can foretell the future and warn his people to prepare for what is to come, 22–51.
- ♦ He shares the power and glory of God the Father, 30. *See Revelation 22:3.*
- ♦ He commands the angels, as God the Father does, 31.
- ♦ He has his “elect,” just as God the Father does; these are the same group of people; they are the ones whom God the Father gave him, 31. *See John 17:6.*
- ♦ His words, like those of God the Father, will never become void or empty of truth and effect, 35. *See Isaiah 40:8.*
- ♦ He is eternal, 35.
- ♦ He is, somehow, subordinate to the Father and, somehow, ignorant of at least one thing which the Father knows, 36.
- ♦ He is the Master of the household of God, 45.

His work

- ♦ While on earth, he declared God’s will and ways to his chosen disciples, 25, 34.
- ♦ At the end of this age, he will come again to judge the living and the dead. *See below on The Last Things, 37–51.*

The People of God

The identity: From the beginning, the people of God have been those relatively few whom God has chosen – his elect, 22. *See Romans 9:6–33.*

The Last Things

Christ’s return

- ♦ Just before the return of Christ
 - Great trouble and suffering will afflict everyone on earth, even God’s people, 22, 29.
 - Many false Christs will come forth, performing great miracles, and false prophets will point people to them, 23, 26. *See 2 Thessalonians 2:9.*
- ♦ When Christ returns
 - He will appear with great glory to everyone on earth, 27.
 - There will be cosmic and heavenly phenomena signaling the end of the age, 29.

- The Son of Man, that is, the risen Christ Jesus, will appear in heaven with great power and glory for all to see, 30.
- All peoples and tribes on earth will mourn because they are complicit in the unlawful death of Christ, 30.
- A great trumpet will sound, 31. *See 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.*
- Christ will send forth his angels to gather his chosen people, now with transformed resurrected bodies, safely to himself from all over the universe, 31. *See 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust that God will give us the grace to endure trouble even to the end. *See John 10:27-29 and 1 Corinthians 1:7-9.*
- ♦ Beware of false prophets who promote false Messiahs, even when they perform great miracles.
- ♦ Wait for the glorious and manifest return of Christ.
- ♦ Share the gospel with everyone while we have time; *see Matthew 24:14.*

Matthew 24:32–51

Truth

Revelation

Its roots in history: The Bible both predicts and records historical events.

- ♦ The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem took place within forty years after Jesus predicted it would; that is what “this generation” means, 33–34, 4–21.
- ♦ The “days of Noah,” in which a worldwide flood took place, with only Noah and his family surviving, 37–38. *See Genesis 6–9; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:6.*

Its veracity: The words of Jesus, recorded in the Gospels, have eternal force and validity, 35. *See 2 Timothy 3:16.*

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 36; *see Matthew 28:20.*

His greatness

- ♦ He is eternal, outlasting heaven and earth, 38.
- ♦ He determines and knows all events, including future events, 36.
- ♦ He has the power to bring a universal flood, 39.

His goodness

- ♦ He graciously reveals his will and his ways through Scripture and supremely through the words and deeds of his Son Jesus, 35; *see this whole passage and the entire Gospel of Matthew.*
- ♦ He warns his people of impending judgment, 22–51.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is eternal, 35.
- ♦ His words are the words of God and are therefore of eternal validity, 35.

- ♦ He is the unique Son of God the Father, 36; *see Matthew 1:20–23; 3:17; 17:5; 28:20.*
- ♦ He is Lord, that is, God in human form, 42.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man predicted by Daniel, 44. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*

His work

- ♦ He revealed God’s will and ways to his chosen disciples, 35. *See this whole passage and all the teachings of Jesus in this Gospel.*
- ♦ He will come again to judge the living and the dead, 37–51.
- ♦ He gives his servants resources and time to serve him in this life, 45–49.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Going on with life as usual after hearings warnings of impending crisis or God’s judgment, 37–37, 48–51; *see 2 Peter 2:5; 3:3–6.*
- ♦ Taking advantage of the “delay” of the Lord’s return to indulge in sin, 48–49
- ♦ Harming others, especially the relatively weak, such as those under our authority, 49
- ♦ Self–indulgence in food, 49
- ♦ Drunkenness, 50
- ♦ Spending time at parties with drunkards, 49; *see 1 Peter 4:3–5.*

Its consequences

- ♦ Sudden destruction from God, 38–39, 43, 50–51
- ♦ Eternal sorrow and anguish, 52; *see Matthew 8:12; 25:30.*

Salvation

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who watch and wait for the Lord’s return, 42, 44
- ♦ Those who faithfully serve Christ by doing the duties given by him to them, 45–46; *see Luke 12:42–46.*

Its benefits

- Being “taken” to heaven by Christ, 40–41; *see 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17.*

- Being given even greater opportunities to serve God in the new age, 47

The Last Things

The end of the age

- ♦ There will be troubles so severe that even the elect would fail if God did not preserve them, 22.
- ♦ May false prophets will proclaim the coming of false Christs, 23–26.
- ♦ Christ will return in dazzling splendor and glory for all to see, 27, 29–20.

Note: There will be so secret return of Christ, as some claim.

- ♦ After the troubles, there will be celestial disturbances, 29.
- ♦ The “sign” of Christ’s coming is the coming of Christ himself. In other words, this is the “epexegetical,” or explanatory, genitive: “sign of Christ” = “sign, that is, Christ.” The New Testament has many examples of this grammatical usage.
- ♦ This “sign” will be the appearance of the Son of Man in heaven, 29–30.
- ♦ All the peoples of the earth that did not believe in Jesus will mourn, 30.
- ♦ Christ will send forth his angels to gather his elect from all around the world into his eternal kingdom, 31.
- ♦ The combination of these events will be the indication to believers of the return of Christ, 32–34.
- ♦ As said above, the “generation” that will not pass away until “all these things take place” is probably the generation that was living when Christ predicted the destruction of the Temple. Alternatively, the generation is those who are alive at the beginning of the last things before the return of Christ. The interpretation that “this generation” and “these things” refer to the founding of the state of Israel in 1949 and the events of the return of Christ lacks biblical warrant; there is no reference to the founding of a secular nation of Israel in this passage.
- ♦ The exact timing of the return of Christ is known only to God the Father; those who claim to predict his return with chronological accuracy have always been wrong, and always will be, 36.
- ♦ Despite disturbances that should warn people of impending judgment, most people will go on with daily living as nothing were about to happen, 37–43.
- ♦ Christ will return at a time that we do not expect, 44; in other words, his return is imminent.

- ♦ When he returns, there will be a great separation of all peoples into two groups, those who trusted in Christ and waited for him and those who did not, 40–43; *see Matthew 25:41–46.*
- ♦ When Christ returns, he will reward his faithful servants, 47; *see Matthew 25:31–40.*
- ♦ Those who did not trust and obey Christ will be terribly punished, 51; *see Matthew 25:46.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Believe all the words of Jesus.
- ♦ Believe in Jesus in all his roles and attributes.
- ♦ Be ready at all times for the Lord's return.
- ♦ Faithfully fulfill all the clear commands of Christ to us as revealed in Scripture.
- ♦ Faithfully carry out all the duties given to us by Christ, at home and at work. *See Ephesians 5:22–6:9.*

Matthew 25

Truth

Revelation

Its source: It comes through God's chosen messengers, including Jesus, as God's Son and prophet, 1–46.

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation includes many different genres, such as parables, like those in 1–30, and predictive prophecy, 31–46.

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 31, 34.

His greatness

- ♦ He is the heavenly King who rules over the entire universe, 1, 14.
- ♦ He is the great Judge who has committed all judgment to his Son Jesus, 29–30, 32–46. *See John 5:27, 30.*
- ♦ He is eternal, 34, 41, 46.
- ♦ He created the world and all in it, 34.

His goodness

- ♦ He blesses the faithful servants of his Son Jesus, 34.
- ♦ He rewards good deeds done to others, 35–45.
- ♦ He punishes those who fail to show practical love to others, 41–46.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the heavenly Bridegroom of his people, 10. *See John 3:29 and Ephesians 5:22–34.*
- ♦ He is Lord, 11, 37, 44. *See John 13:13 and Romans 1:7.*
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 13, 31. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He shares the glory of God the Father, 31.
- ♦ He shares universal rule with God the Father, 31.

- ♦ He shares the rule of the angels with God the Father, 31.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Judge of all mankind, 32. *See Psalm 96:10.*
- ♦ He is the shepherd of his people, as Yahweh was called the Shepherd of Israel, 32. *See Psalm 23; 95:7; 100:3; Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:30–31; and John 10:11–18.*
- ♦ He is the great King, as Yahweh was called King, 34. *See Psalm 95:3; 29:10; 103:19.*
- ♦ He is the unique eternal Son of God the Father, 34. *See John 1:14, 18.*
- ♦ He is the “brother” of all who follow him faithfully, 40. *See John 20:17.*

His work

- ♦ He has servants to whom he apportions tasks, 14–15.
- ♦ He rewards his faithful servants, 21, 23.
- ♦ He punishes his lazy and unfaithful servants, 26–30.
- ♦ He will judge all peoples, 31–32.

Mankind

Our created nature

- ♦ We are either male or female, naturally want to get married, and rejoice in weddings, 1–12. *See Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18–24. (Is this why we like love stories?)*
- ♦ We are divided into two groups
 - The “wise” who set their hearts on knowing God through Christ, and the “foolish” who are distracted by other things, 2–12
 - Profitable and unprofitable servants, 14–30
 - “Sheep” and “goats,” those who care for others and those who don’t, 32–46
 - Christ’s “brothers” (and sisters), and those who are not, 40.
- ♦ We are meant to work, using the resources God gives us, 14–30. *See Genesis 2:8–20 and Colossians 3:23.*
- ♦ We are set in an ordered society, with some in authority over others, 14–28.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not waiting in alert readiness for the coming of Christ, 5, 8–12
- ♦ Not using the resources God has given us, including our spiritual gifts, to advance the interests of God among mankind, 14–30
- ♦ Thinking ill of Christ, our good Master, 24
- ♦ Not using the resources Christ has given us, out of fear, 25
- ♦ Slothfulness and laziness, 4, 26
- ♦ Not caring for other people’s physical and emotional needs, and especially the needs of Christ’s “brothers,” that is, other believers, 41–45; *see Galatians 6:10 and 1 John 4:16–18.*

Its consequences

- ♦ Exclusion from the kingdom of God, 11
- ♦ Rejection by Christ, 12
- ♦ Loss of what resources God has given us, 28
- ♦ Being cast into outer darkness, where there is nothing but remorse and sorrow, 30
- ♦ Everlasting punishment in hell, 41, 46; *see Matthew 5:29–30.*

Salvation

Its source

- ♦ The grace of God, who gives us all things, 14
- ♦ The sovereign plan of God, who has prepared a kingdom for his people from all eternity, 34; *see Matthew 24:22, “the elect.”*

Its benefits

- ♦ Everlasting communion with Christ as our heavenly Bridegroom, 10; *see Revelation 19:9; 21:2–7.*
- ♦ The commendation of Christ, 21, 23
- ♦ Enjoyment of even greater responsibilities, 21, 23, 29
- ♦ Inheriting the eternal kingdom of God, 34
- ♦ Eternal life, 46

Its recipients

- ◆ Those who have prepared for the coming of Christ, 10
- ◆ Those who have faithfully followed and served Christ, 29
- ◆ Those who have cared for other believers, 46

The Last Things

Christ's return

- ◆ It could be sooner than we think, 13.
- ◆ It could be a long time away, 19.
- ◆ When Christ returns, he will
 - Welcome his people into his everlasting banquet of love, 10
 - Reward all his profitable, that is, faithful, servants, 21, 23, 29
 - Manifest his glory, 1
 - Judge the entire world, 32–46
 - Reward those who have shown love to people, and especially to his people, 34–40
 - Punish those who have not done good to others, especially his people, 41–46

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Be always alert and watchful and ready for the coming of Christ.
- ◆ Be faithful in using all the resources Christ has given us to advance his kingdom and benefit others.
- ◆ Do all we can to meet the physical and emotional needs of people around us, and especially God's people, our fellow Christians.
- ◆ Set our hope on eternal life.
- ◆ Do all we can to avoid eternal punishment.
- ◆ Preach the gospel to all nations! *See Matthew 28:18–20.*

Matthew 26:1–30

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Later passages of the Bible refer to and build upon earlier (or parallel) passages.

- ♦ The anointing at Bethany, 6–7; *see Mark 14:3–9; and John 12:1–3.*
Note: Another similar, but earlier anointing by a “sinful” woman is recorded at Luke 7:36–50.
- ♦ Judas agrees to betray Jesus, 14–16; *see Mark 14:10–11; and Luke 22–3–6.*
- ♦ Jesus celebrates the Passover with his disciples, 17–25; *see Mark 14:12–21; and Luke 22:7–13.*
- ♦ Jesus institutes the Lord’s Supper, 26–30; *see Mark 14:22–25; and Luke 14:22–34.*
- ♦ Jesus’ death is according to Old Testament Scripture, 24; *see 1 Corinthians 15:3.*
- ♦ The New Covenant, 28; *see Jeremiah 31:31–34.*
- ♦ Jesus’ blood is shed for the forgiveness of sins of many people, 28; *see Matthew 20:28; and Mark 10:45.*

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of equal persons: Father (often called God in the New Testament), Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit, 29.

His greatness

- ♦ He is almighty, as demonstrated in his acts of deliverance for his people in Egypt, 2. *See Exodus 12:1–51.*
- ♦ He is sovereign over all people and events, as the predictions of Jesus’ death in the Old Testament testify, 2, 18, 24. *See, for example, Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.*
- ♦ He is the king of the universe, 29.

His goodness: He instituted the Passover to commemorate his deliverance of his people from Egypt, 2. *See Exodus 12:1–51.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 2, 24. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is all–knowing and thus was able to predict his crucifixion, as well as the worldwide spread of the gospel and Judas’ betrayal, 2, 12–13, 21, 23.
- ♦ He is the supreme Teacher, 18.
- ♦ He is the unique, fully divine Son of God the Father, 29.

His work

- ♦ He willingly went to death to save us from our sins, 2, 12, 24, 28.
- ♦ He will come again in glory to usher in the kingdom of God, 29. *See Matthew 25:31.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Betraying a friend, 1, 14–16, 21–25
- ♦ Plotting to harm an innocent person, 3–5
- ♦ Criticizing someone for “extravagant” worship of Jesus, 8–9

Note: This passage was not meant to justify extravagant spending on church buildings, furnishings, or clothing for ministers.

Its consequences

- ♦ Even though God foreknows our sins and even includes them in his plan of salvation, that does not exonerate sinners, 24.
- ♦ The eternal consequences of sin are horrible to contemplate; it would be better not to have been born in the first place, 24.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ The benefits of salvation include participation in the benefits of the saving work of Christ on the cross for our redemption, including forgiveness of sins, 28. *See Jeremiah 31:34; Mark 10:45; and Ephesians 1:7.*
- ♦ Intimate communion with Christ through the Lord’s Supper, 26–28; *see 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.*

- ♦ Enjoyment of eternal bliss with Christ and his people in the coming kingdom of God, 29.

Its beneficiaries: Salvation comes to those who

- ♦ Trust in Christ and show their faith by their love, 6–13
- ♦ Those who participate in the life of the community of believers, who remember the death of Christ through the Lord’s Supper, 26–29

The People of God

Their identity: In the New Testament, the people of God are the church, who

- ♦ Receive the Old Testament, with its teachings, types, and prophecies of Christ, such as the Passover, 2, 18, 24.
- ♦ Believe that Jesus is the divine–human Son of Man who came to save us from our sins, 2, 28. *See Matthew 1:21; 20:28.*
- ♦ Trust in the saving work of Christ on the cross, 2, and at the resurrection and ascension implied in verse 29.
- ♦ Look for his return to establish his kingdom on earth, 29.
- ♦ Give to the poor, 11.
- ♦ Preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations (people groups) of the world, 13. *See Matthew 28:18–20.*
- ♦ Celebrate the Lord’s Supper, 26–28.
- ♦ Worship God with songs, including the Psalms, 30 (the song they sang was most likely Psalm 118, which was the appointed Psalm for that day).

The Lord’s Supper

Its meaning: The words, “This is my body” and the meaning of the Lord’s Supper have been taken four ways.

- ♦ Roman Catholics believe that the bread and the wine actually become the body and blood of Jesus when the priest says a prayer of consecration.
- ♦ Lutherans hold that the physical body and blood of Jesus are present “in, with, and under” the consecrated bread and wine.
- ♦ Zwingli, Anabaptists, and Baptists consider the Lord’s Supper to be only a memorial. In no sense is it a means of grace or of Christ’s presence to believers today.

- ♦ Calvin and the Anglican reformers, following Augustine, taught that Christ is spiritually and really present for those who received the Lord's Supper with sincere repentance and faith. In light of Matthew 18:20 and 20:28, as well as Revelation 3:20 and other passages, this interpretation seems the most likely.
- ♦ The bread can no more be literal bread than the cup was the literal covenant. Both are signs and symbols which point to realities: the bread to the body of Jesus, broken for us on the cross, and the cup to the blood of Jesus, shed for us on the cross, that inaugurated and sealed the new covenant.

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns

- ♦ He will establish the kingdom of God on earth, 29.
- ♦ In that kingdom, he will have intimate fellowship with his redeemed people, symbolized by a great feast, 29. *See Revelation 19:6-9.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect religious and political leaders to oppose the true gospel of Jesus, 3-5.
- ♦ Give our best to Jesus in acts of loving worship, 6-7.
- ♦ Give to the poor, especially poor Christians, 11. *See Galatians 6:10.*
- ♦ Preach the gospel to all the peoples of the world, 13.
- ♦ Expect that there will be traitors in our midst, 14-16, 21-25.
- ♦ Believe that God's sovereignty extends even to the most wicked acts, 24.
- ♦ Celebrate the Lord's Supper regularly, 26-30.
- ♦ Eagerly long for the return of Christ, 29.

Matthew 26:31–46

Truth

Revelation

Its nature: It is progressive, from the Old Testament to the New Testament, with the “cup” of God’s wrath mentioned in the Old Testament as destined for rebellious nations later applied to the wrath God would pour out on Jesus as our substitute, 26:39.

Its content: It comes

- ♦ Through Jesus, as a prophet, predicting Peter’s denial and the flight of all the other disciples, 26:31, 34, and his own impending capture and arrest, 26:45
- ♦ Through Old Testament prophets like Zechariah, who recorded God’s prediction that he would “strike the Shepherd,” who is identified as his “companion, 26:31; *see Zechariah 13:7.*

God

His greatness: He is the Father of Jesus, his unique Son, 26:39, 42.

Christ

His humanity and divinity

- ♦ He is the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep, 26:31. *See John 10.*
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of God, who, in his manhood, prayed to the father and was heard, 26:39, 42, 44.
- ♦ He is fully human, and as such, he felt intense, unimaginable sorrow and grief, to the point almost of mental distraction and death, at the impending sufferings and especially the coming wrath of God the Father upon him for our sins, 26:38, 39.
- ♦ He is the divine Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7, who as both man and God, could represent us on the Cross, 26:45.
- ♦ He fully and freely did the will of the Father, as man and as God, regardless of the cost, 26:39, 42, 44.

Mankind

Our fallen state: We seek to do good but are unable to carry out our good intentions, 26:33–35, 41.

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to us through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, 26:39.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Watch and pray lest we fall into temptation.
- ♦ Seek to do God's will, regardless of the cost.
- ♦ Expect betrayal from among apparent disciples, and denial of Christ from those who believe in Jesus but do not yet have the Holy Spirit—which may be many churchgoers.

Matthew 26:47–75

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: The Old Testament prophets and other books spoke of the coming sufferings of the Messiah and were fulfilled in the passion of Christ, 26:54, 64. *See Daniel 7:13.*

God

His greatness: He is sovereign over heaven and earth, and he works out his plan of salvation, which was ordained before the foundation of the world, even through the hands of wicked men, 26:54, 56.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ As the divine Son of God, he can command all the armies of angels, 26:53.
- ♦ As divine–human Son of Man, he sits now at God’s right hand, and will return in glory to judge the world, 26:64.
- ♦ As human, he could be betrayed, arrested, denied, falsely accused, condemned to death, brutally treated, 26:46–75.

Mankind

Our fallen state: We are capable of all the evil that Jesus suffered. We are like Judas, Peter, and the Jewish leaders.

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to us through the vicarious sufferings of Jesus for us; these include all the scorn and abuse from men that we deserve (if only they knew our thoughts!).

The Last Things

The final judgment: Christ will come to judge the world as divine Son of Man, 26:64.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect suffering if we follow Jesus.
- ♦ Do not resort to violence to defend ourselves from religious persecution.
- ♦ Be careful lest we fall into temptation and sin as Peter did.

Matthew 27:1–14

Truth

Revelation

Note: The use of the Old Testament in the New Testament is sometimes difficult to understand. Here, Matthew refers to Jeremiah (perhaps chapters 19 and 32), but also uses words from Zechariah 11:12–13.

Its source: The combination of words and ideas reveals

- ♦ Like Jeremiah and Zechariah, Jesus was rejected by the Jewish leaders.
- ♦ Money was paid.
- ♦ A field was bought.
- ♦ Judgment will come upon Israel, 27:9–10.
- ♦ His silence, 27:12, 14, fulfills Isaiah 53:7.
- ♦ Details are important: 27:7 hints that Jesus' death would bring salvation to non-Jews also.

God

His greatness: The use of prophecy shows that the evil actions of wicked men are part of the plan of God to bring salvation to sinners, 27:9–10.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ As man, he was innocent of any crime, 27:4.
- ♦ He did not answer his false accusers, as predicted in Isaiah 53:7.
- ♦ He is King of the Jews, 27:11.

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes not to those who merely have remorse for their sins, like Judas, 27:3, but to those who truly repent and trust in Christ.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not think that all those who are remorseful for their sins are truly repentant.
- ♦ Be willing, like Jesus, to suffer insults and to bear false accusations in silence, trusting in God to vindicate us at the right time. *See 1 Peter 2:23.*

Matthew 27:15–31

Truth

Revelation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It came through Jesus as prophet; he predicted his treatment by his enemies several times. *See Matthew 16:21; 17:22; 20:17–18.*
- ♦ It came through God's actions in the life, suffering, and death of Jesus, which demonstrate his love for us. *See Romans 5:7.*
- ♦ It came through narratives that have implicit meanings, such as the repeated, though mocking, assertions and actions affirming Jesus' status as royal Messiah, 27:17, 22, 28–29.
- ♦ It sometimes came through dreams, 27:19.

God

His goodness

- ♦ He is just and must punish evil somehow.
- ♦ He is loving, punishing our sin in Jesus, and thus showing his love for sinners. *See Romans 5:8.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament and king of the Jews, 27:17, 22.
- ♦ He was fully innocent of any crime, 27:23.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ We are wicked to the core, and capable of
 - Fickleness, as when the crowd that shouted “hosanna” a week before now cried, ‘Crucify Him!’ 27:23
 - Envy, as in the Jewish leaders' hatred of Jesus for his popularity, 27:18
 - Cowardly miscarriage of justice, 27:24

- ♦ We will seek political revolution rather than spiritual salvation, 27:21.
- ♦ We seek to deny our sin, 27:24.
- ♦ We inadvertently bring condemnation upon ourselves and our children, 27:25.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not expect people, including rulers, to be just and fair; we should, instead, expect cowardice and craven self-interest.
- ♦ Do what is right even when the crowd urges us to do wrong, and when doing right will cause us danger.
- ♦ Love Jesus for all he has done for us, and offer ourselves as living sacrifices, willing to do anything for him.

Matthew 28

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ♦ It is fundamentally historical, based on events that are accurately recorded, from Genesis through the New Testament, with interpretation within the narratives and within prophetic and apostolic books.
- ♦ Thus, the narrative of Jesus' resurrection is given with details that show it to be an historical happening: empty tomb, stone rolled away, seen, and touched by two women, seen by eleven disciples.

Note: Matthew, the other Gospels, Acts, and Paul's letters give more facts.

God

His Triune nature: He is Triune, existing as Father, Son, Holy Spirit, both distinct as three (different names) and one as God ("the" name – singular), 19

His greatness

- ♦ He is eternal, 20.
- ♦ He is almighty; He raised Jesus from the dead.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He was crucified, dead and buried, 1–5.
- ♦ He rose from the dead bodily, 6.
- ♦ He was invested with all authority, 18.
- ♦ He is one with the Father and Spirit, 19.
- ♦ He is eternal, 20.
- ♦ He was present with his disciples through the Spirit, 20.
- ♦ He is worthy of worship, 9, 17.
- ♦ He is "brother" to his disciples, 10.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ The Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, 19.
- ♦ The Holy Spirit is the one by and in whom Jesus is with his disciples now and forever, 20.

The Church

Its members

- ♦ We are members of one family, as “brothers” (and sisters) of Christ and of each other (with Jesus being unique and supreme, of course), 10.
- ♦ We are bound by one baptism into one “name” of Father, Son, and Spirit.
- ♦ We are under the authoritative teaching of the apostles (and Old Testament writers, since Jesus validated Old Testament teaching and history), 20.
- ♦ We are bound, as the church, to make disciples of all sorts of people from all nationalities, 19.
- ♦ We are energized and comforted by the constant presence of Christ among us, 20.

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to those

- ♦ Who believe in the name of Jesus, who was crucified in our place as sin-bearer and raised from the dead to eternal glory, 18–19
- ♦ Who, empowered by the indwelling Christ through his Spirit, teach, and observe all the instructions of Christ as recorded by the apostles, 20

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Firmly believe that Jesus died for our sins and rose for our justification and ultimate salvation from sin and all that it entailed. *See Matthew 1:21.*

- ♦ Be baptized when we believe, and we should teach and follow all that Christ commanded.
- ♦ Go into all the world and spread the good news about Jesus, baptizing and instructing people from all nations.
- ♦ Worship Christ with all our hearts.

MARK *(currently unavailable)*

LUKE

Luke 1:1–26

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ In particular, the New Testament assumes, and builds upon, the Old Testament.
- ♦ In this passage, Luke refers to many facets of Old Testament revelation, such as:
 - The Aaronic priesthood, 5, 8; for the division of Abijah, *see Nehemiah 12:12; 1 Chronicles 24:10.*
 - Mosaic legislation, 6
 - The Temple of God and the ceremonies carried out in it, as well as its furnishings, 9, 10–11
 - An angel, 13, 19
 - God's hearing of the prayers of an elderly childless woman and her husband, 7, 13; *see 1 Samuel 1:9–18.*
 - The strict vows of the Nazarites, 15; *see Numbers 6:1–4.*
 - The children of Israel, 16
 - Elijah, the prophet, 17
 - The prophecy of Malachi, 17; *see Malachi 4:5–6, 17.*
 - Above all, God, 6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 19, 25

Its content and source

- ♦ The content of Biblical revelation includes
 - The Old Testament, including the “commandments and ordinances” given by God to Israel through Moses, 6
 - The New Testament books, such as this one
- ♦ It was written by men chosen by God, who exercised extreme care to write only what was true and accurate, based on eyewitness testimony, 3.
- ♦ The Gospel of Luke was almost certainly written by Luke, the companion of Paul, who was also likely a physician. During Paul's two-year imprisonment in

Caesarea, he was able to interview eyewitnesses of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, including Mary, Jesus' mother, 2.

Its purpose: One of the purposes of the Bible, and the major purpose of Luke, is to enable us to be sure of the truth of Christian teaching, 4.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (God), Son, 17 (where "Him" probably refers to the Messiah, Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, and "Lord" refers to Jesus the Son), and the Holy Spirit, 15.

His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient, knowing all that we think, say, and do; thus, all our lives are "before God," 6.
- ♦ He has authority to give commands, 6.
- ♦ He is omnipotent, and the source of all life, and thus can cause an old couple to conceive a child (as with Abraham and Sarah), 13–18, 24.
- ♦ He is attended and served by angels, 19.

His goodness

- ♦ He is righteous, requires righteous conduct by humans, and rewards the righteous, 5.
- ♦ For his own reasons, he often allows "good" people to suffer pain and sorrow, 7.
- ♦ He is willing to dwell among men in his Temple and accepts worship offered according to his Word, 8–9.
- ♦ He hears the prayers of his faithful followers, 13.
- ♦ He desires our joy, 14.
- ♦ He gives himself, in the person of his Spirit, to his people, 15.
- ♦ He seeks the allegiance and love of his people, expressed here by the word "turn," 16.
- ♦ He seeks love and harmony in families, 17.
- ♦ He is wise and just, and grants wisdom to those who seek to be just, 17.
- ♦ He sends angels and human messengers to communicate to his people, 17, 19.
- ♦ He disciplines those who do not believe in him, to make them repent, 20.

Christ

His person: He is referred to as “Lord,” showing that he is equal in essence and glory to the Father and the Spirit, 17.

The Holy Spirit

His work

- ♦ The Spirit indwells those whom God chooses, 15.
- ♦ He gives power to his messengers to turn people to God, 16–17.

The People of God

Their identity: In the Old Testament, the people of God were Israel, descendants of Abraham, whom God chose, to whom he revealed his will, among whom he dwelt in the Tabernacle and then the Temple, and to whom he sent prophets, 5, 6, 9, 16, 17.

Spiritual Beings

Angels: They stand before God and serve him as his messengers, 19.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not loving parents or children, 17
- ♦ Ignoring or disobeying the wisdom that just people have handed down to us, 17
- ♦ Not believing in God’s Word, including his promises to do things that we think are impossible, 18–19

Its consequences: Sin brings consequences, even to the (relatively) righteous, 19–22.

Salvation

Its source

- ♦ It came to people in the Old Testament as
 - God’s dwelling among them
 - His communications with them (see notes above)
 - His frequent deliverance of them from earthly suffering, sorrow, and shame by answering their prayers, 13–14

- ♦ It also came as repentance for sin and (re-)turning to the Lord, 16.
- ♦ It comes to us now through repentance for sin and trusting in God's Messiah.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Immerse ourselves in the Old Testament, that we might understand the New Testament and the salvation we have in Christ.
- ♦ Know the commands of God and seek to follow them.
- ♦ Worship God as he has directed us.
- ♦ Pray to God when we are in trouble and no one can help us.
- ♦ Love our parents and our children from our hearts.
- ♦ Constantly return to God in repentance and faith and renewed resolve to follow his ways.
- ♦ Believe God's promises, even when they appear to be "impossible."

Luke 1:26–38

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ King David, to whom an everlasting dynasty had been promised, 27, 32; *see 2 Samuel 7:12–13*.
- ♦ The name, “Jesus,” for one who would lead his people to victory, like Joshua (the Old Testament form of this Greek New Testament name), 31
- ♦ The promise of a conception of a child by a virgin, 31–33; *see Isaiah 7:14*.
- ♦ The future rule of that unique Child, 32–33; *see Isaiah 9:6–7*.
- ♦ The “house of Jacob,” that is, the people of Israel, 33

Its content: Biblical revelation records many miracles, things which are impossible among men but not impossible with God; these are to be believed, not doubted, 36–37.

Its source: God sometimes revealed his will to people through angels, 26–38.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (usually referred to as “God” in the New Testament), the Son (usually referred to as “Lord” in the New Testament), and the Holy Spirit, 26, 28, 30, 31–32, 35.

His greatness

- ♦ He is served by mighty angels who do his will, 26.
- ♦ He is transcendent as “the Highest” (“Most High”), 32.
- ♦ He is Lord, that is absolute sovereign over all, 32.
- ♦ He is eternal and thus able to grant an eternal kingdom to his Son, 33.
- ♦ He is omnipotent, able to do anything he wants, 35–37.

His goodness

- ♦ He becomes immanent among his chosen people, 28.

- ♦ He grants favor to chosen individuals like Mary, 28, 30.
- ♦ He is faithful to his promises, including his promise to David, 32–33.
- ♦ He sent his only Son to be born of a virgin and to live among us, 31.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is truly man, having been conceived in the womb of Mary, a normal human woman, 31.
- ♦ He is a descendant through Mary of David, 32.
- ♦ He is also truly God, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, 35.
- ♦ He is therefore properly called the unique Son of God, sharing the divine nature equally with Father and Spirit, 35.
- ♦ Like the Father and the Spirit, he is utterly holy, 35.
- ♦ His name, Jesus (“Yahweh saves”), signifies his role as Savior as well as his identification with God.

His work: As the God–man, he rules over the people of God forever, 32–33.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He is fully God, with all power, 35.
- ♦ He is utterly holy, 35.

His work

- ♦ He is the author of life in all its forms, 35.
- ♦ He is sent by the Father to accomplish salvation in the world, working within human beings like Mary, 35.

Mary

Her person

- ♦ Mary set an example of someone who believed God’s Word to her through the angel and fully submitted to it, 38.

- ♦ Mary was a normal Jewish girl who was chosen by God for a unique part in the plan of salvation; she was highly favored (literally, “graced”) by God, that is, God gave her the unique role of bearing in her womb the Son of God, 28, 30.
- ♦ She is therefore called “blessed,” for God uniquely blessed her with a unique gift, 28. There is no indication that she “earned” this grace or blessing (grace cannot be earned!) through special virtue, much less through having been born without sin.

Note: The Latin Vulgate version of the Bible translates “favored” as gratia plena, “full of grace.” This is misleading and could give the false impression that Mary somehow possessed a storehouse of grace that she could dispense to others. The same word is used of all believers in Ephesians 1:6.

Salvation

Its source

- ♦ It comes to us through Jesus, the unique Son of God who is also son of Mary and descendant of David, as God had promised, 31–22.
- ♦ It comes to us solely by God’s grace, not our earning or effort, 28, 30.
- ♦ It comes as membership in a people who are ruled over by a righteous, almighty, and eternal King, 33–34
- ♦ It comes to those who believe God’s Word and submit to it, 38.

Its benefits: It brings joy, 28.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for sending us his unique Son to us as a baby and then a grown man who is our divine–human Savior.
- ♦ Marvel at God’s almighty power in creating a human life in the womb without the participation of a human father.
- ♦ Worship Jesus as Son of the Highest, son of David, and thus everlasting King of Israel, the Holy One of God.
- ♦ Believe that nothing is impossible with God.
- ♦ Believe all the words that God has revealed to us in Scripture.
- ♦ Humbly submit, like Mary, to God’s will for us, no matter what the cost may be.

Luke 1:39–58

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ This passage is especially rich in allusions to the Old Testament.
 - Mary’s song reflecting the similar song of Hannah, 46–55; *see 1 Samuel 2:1–10.*
 - God regarding the lowly and rejecting the proud; *see Psalm 138:6.*
 - Praising God for doing great things for us, 49; *see Psalm 126:2.*
 - God’s holy name, 49; *see Psalm 111:9.*
 - God’s strong arm doing great things, 51; *see Psalm 118:15 and Isaiah 40:10.*
 - God foiling the plans of the wicked, 51; *see Psalm 33:10.*
 - Showing special care for his servant Israel, 54; *see Isaiah 41:8.*
 - God remembering his lovingkindness, 54; *see Psalm 98:3.*
 - God’s promises to Abraham and his posterity, 55; *see Genesis 17:7, 19.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity: Father (God, though also called “Lord,” 46), Son (usually “Lord” in the New Testament), and Holy Spirit, 41, 43, 47–55.

His greatness

- ♦ He is sovereign Lord of all, 46, including the destinies of the rich and powerful, poor and powerless, 51–53.
- ♦ He is omniscient, seeing and knowing all, including the hearts of men, 48, 51.
- ♦ He is mighty and able to do “great things,” 49, 51.

His goodness

- ♦ He is Savior of his faithful people, 47.
- ♦ He cares for, and acts to relieve, the sufferings of his people, especially women, the poor, the lowly, and the hungry, 48, 53–54.

- ♦ He is merciful and gracious to those who fear (trust, revere, and love) him, 50, 54.
- ♦ He is faithful to his promises to Israel, from one generation to another, and now to all believers in Christ, 50, 54–55.
- ♦ He punishes proud and rich oppressors, 51–53.

Christ

His person: He is the Lord, that is Yahweh, in human flesh, 43; thus, he is the unique God–man, the only possible Mediator between God and mankind. *See John 1:14 and 1 Timothy 2:5.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: He is the Spirit of God and of Christ, 41.

His work: He sometimes “fills” people suddenly, giving them divine joy and moving them to utter praises, 41–45.

Note: The Greek word “filled” here is one of two used in the New Testament; this one appears Luke–Acts and always refers to a sudden, unexpected, and temporary work of the Spirit in the lives of believers, leading to joy and to proclamation of God’s truth and praise (see 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17) or to an overpowering negative emotion (see 4:28; 5:26; 6:11; Acts 3:10; 9:17; 13:9). It is to be distinguished from another word (in adjectival and verbal forms), which denotes an ongoing operation of the Spirit (see 4:1; John 1:14; Acts 6:3, 5, 8; 7:55; 9:36; 11:24; Ephesians 5:18).

Mary

Her person

- ♦ Mary sets us all a good example of humble submission, saturation in the Old Testament, gratitude, and praise.
- ♦ She is the “mother of [our] Lord,” 43, in that the child in her womb is the Messiah, the Son of God and of David, and our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ♦ She is not, properly speaking, “Mother of God.” Jesus is God, yes, but not all of God is Jesus. The original Greek term, *theotokos*, adopted by an ecumenical council in the early church, means, “God–bearer,” not “Mother of God.” It was meant to safeguard the truth of the full deity of Jesus, not to exalt Mary.

Note: Nor was Mary sinless, for she herself confesses that God is her Savior, 47; only sinners need a savior. This contradicts Roman Catholic doctrine on the so-called

Immaculate Conception and entire sinlessness of Mary. See Romans 3:9–20, 23, for proof that all human beings, Jesus only excepted, are sinners in need of salvation.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Pride of any kind, including pride in position or possessions, 51–53
- ♦ Abuse of power, 52
- ♦ Ill-gotten gains or failure to use wealth to relieve the poor and advance the kingdom of God, 53

Salvation

Its recipients

- ♦ It comes to those who believe God's words, 45.
- ♦ It comes to those who are humble and lowly in spirit, 48.
- ♦ It comes to those who fear God, 50.

Its source: It comes from God, through Jesus, as God's unmerited grace and favor ("blessedness"), 42, 48.

Its benefits

- ♦ Temporary happiness as a result of God's blessing, 42–43
- ♦ Exaltation at the proper time by God, 52
- ♦ Satisfaction of our material needs by God, 53
- ♦ Help from God against our spiritual enemies, 54
- ♦ Mercy, that is, the gracious dealing of God with his people, based on his love and forgiveness, 54

The Last Things

The end of the age: At the end of the age, all wrongs will be righted, those who trust God will be vindicated and rewarded, and those who arrogantly despise him and abuse others will be punished, 51–54.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask God to reveal to us by his Spirit the priceless treasure of Christ in our midst, formerly through the Incarnation, and now by his Spirit, as he did to Elizabeth.
- ♦ Saturate our minds, like Mary, with the Holy Scriptures, that we may pray and praise God in his own words.
- ♦ Praise and thank God for who he is and what he has done for us and for his people throughout all the ages.
- ♦ Renounce all pride, abuse of power, complacency in material abundance, and lack of care for the poor and powerless.

Luke 1:57–80

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ This passage refers to
 - The Mosaic law requiring circumcision on the eighth day, 59; *see Leviticus 12:3.*
 - The God of Israel, God's chosen people, 68; *see 1 Kings 1:48 and Psalm 106:48*
 - God's "visiting" his people, seeing and saving them; *see Exodus 3:16.*
 - Redemption of his people Israel by God, 68; *see Exodus 6:6; 15:13; and 1 Chronicles 17:21.*
 - God raising up a horn of salvation, meaning either God as the horn of salvation or David the king, 69; *see 2 Samuel 22:3 and Psalm 132:17.*
 - David as God's chosen servant, 69; *see 2 Samuel 7:8–16.*
 - God speaking through his prophets, 70; *see 2 Kings 17:13; 2 Chronicles 20:20; and Daniel 9:6.*
 - God's promises and covenant with the patriarchs, 72–73; *see Genesis 12:3; 22:16–18.*

Its source: Biblical revelation came through the prophets of God and through others who were temporarily filled with the Holy Spirit, 67. *See note at Luke 1:39–58 on the filling with the Spirit.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He can enable the barren to conceive, 57–58.
- ◆ He is sovereign Lord, 68.
- ◆ He is the Highest, 76.

His goodness

- ◆ He showed great mercy to Elizabeth by granting her a child in her old age, 58.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the God of Israel, 68.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his people, 68.

- ♦ Many times he “visited and redeemed his people,” and especially in the events surrounding the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, 68.
- ♦ He remained faithful to his promise to give David an everlasting kingdom, 69.
- ♦ He spoke often to his people through prophets who comforted and warned them, 70.
- ♦ He remained faithful to his promises to Abraham and to his posterity, 72–73.
- ♦ He frequently delivered his people from their enemies, and still does, 74.
- ♦ He is holy and righteous and enables his people gradually to become holy and righteous, 75.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to save his people, 76–77.
- ♦ He shows mercy, 78.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus Christ is the Lord, before whose coming John the Baptist was sent, 76.
- ♦ He is the Dayspring from on high, giving light, 78–79.

Salvation

Its source: It comes to us from God, from his mercy, through Jesus Christ, his anointed Son, who brings redemption, 68.

Its benefits

- ♦ Deliverance from the power of sin and Satan, and freedom to serve God in holiness and righteousness, 74–75
- ♦ Knowledge of salvation, which is forgiveness of sins, 77
- ♦ Light to guide us into the way of peace, 79

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Read the Old Testament, so that we may understand the New Testament.
- ♦ Praise God constantly for his faithfulness to his promises.
- ♦ Trust the promises that God has given in the Bible.
- ♦ Praise God for sending salvation to us through Jesus Christ, the God–man.
- ♦ Seek to serve God in holiness and righteousness all our days.

Luke 2:1–14

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ The shepherds recall Old Testament references to God as the shepherd who cares for his people. *See Genesis 48:15; 49:24; Psalm 23:1; and Jeremiah 31:10.*
- ♦ The shepherds recall Old Testament references to David the king and shepherd of his people. *See 2 Samuel 5:2; 7:7; and 1 Chronicles 11:2.*
- ♦ Parallels to Isaiah 9:2–7 include
 - Light and darkness, 8–9; *see Isaiah 9:2.*
 - Joy, 10; *see Isaiah 9:3.*
 - The birth of a child, 11; *see Isaiah 9:6.*
 - Jesus' kingdom is "forever"; *see Isaiah 9:7.*
 - Reference to Jesus as "firstborn," 7; *see Psalm 89:27.*

Note: Notes in this paragraph are taken from the NIV Zondervan Study Bible.

Its roots in history

- ♦ Biblical revelation is set within human history.
- ♦ The birth of Christ took place during the reign of Caesar Augustus, emperor of the Roman Empire from 29 B.C. to 14 A.D., and the military governorship of Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, who later also served as civilian governor of Syria
- ♦ The date of Jesus' birth is uncertain, but it took place sometime between 6 B.C. and 4 B.C., probably the latter date.
- ♦ Recent scholarship has shown that Jesus was, in fact, probably born on the night of December 24th – December 25th. Shepherds taking care of the sheep used for Temple sacrifice would have been out in the fields even during winter.

His greatness

- ♦ He rules all human history as absolute sovereign, using even the decrees of great human rulers to accomplish his purposes, in this case, having the Messiah be born in Bethlehem, as Micah had prophesied. *See Micah 5:2.*
- ♦ He is uniquely glorious, resplendent with all beauty and majesty, 9, 32. *See also Luke 9:26, 32; 24:26; and Acts 7, 55; 22:11. (NIVZSB)*
- ♦ He is served by armies of mighty angels who do his will, communicate his messages to men, and worship him constantly, 9–14.
- ♦ He dwells in heaven on high, 13–14.

His goodness

- ♦ He condescended to come among us as the baby of an obscure Hebrew girl and to be born in a stable and placed in an animal's feeding trough, 6–7.
- ♦ He revealed the news of salvation to lowly shepherds, who were not highly respected in Jewish society and used them as the first evangelists of the coming of Christ, 8–20.
- ♦ He grants his unmerited favor to chosen men and women, 14.

Christ

His person

- ♦ In his divine nature, he is Savior, a title given only to God in the Old Testament, 11. *See Isaiah 43:11.*
- ♦ He is also rightly called “Lord,” the Greek translation of the divine name Yahweh in the Old Testament, 11.
- ♦ In his human nature, he is the natural son of Mary, born like all other people into this world, and he is the legally adopted son of Joseph. Therefore, through both Mary and Joseph, the descendant of King David, 4–7.
- ♦ As the God–man, he is Christ, God's anointed Savior of mankind, 11.
- ♦ Kings, priests, and prophets were anointed in the Old Testament, but “Christ” refers here primarily to his descent from David, God's uniquely anointed king. *See Psalm 2:2; 2 Samuel 2:4; and Psalm 18:50; 23:5; 89:20.*

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God consist of all those whom he has chosen to know, trust, worship, and serve him, like Mary and the angels, though most of them are not socially prominent.

Salvation

Its source: It comes to us from God through Jesus Christ, as we hear and believe the message of the gospel, and it leads us to great joy, 10-11.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust that God is in control of all earthly rulers, even the most despotic of them.
- ◆ Trust in Jesus Christ as our only Lord and Savior.
- ◆ Give glory to God, like the angels and the shepherds, for the salvation he has brought to us.
- ◆ Tell others the good news of the coming of Christ to save us, like the angels and the shepherds did.
- ◆ Lay up God's words in our heart, like Mary, and constantly mediate upon them.

Luke 2:21–39

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ The rites performed soon after Jesus' birth are based upon Exodus 13:2, 12, 15; 1; and Leviticus 12:8.
- ♦ Anna belongs to the tribe of Asher, one of the twelve sons of Israel, 36. *See Genesis 30:13; Joshua 19:24.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (22, 26, 28, 29, 37, 38), Son (21, 26), and Holy Spirit (25–26).

His greatness: He is sovereign Lord, 23–24, 26, 29.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent his Son to be born of a woman and to take upon human nature in Jesus, 21.
- ♦ He revealed himself and his will to chosen servants, 21, 26, 22 (Moses, through whom he revealed his Law, 23–24).
- ♦ He sent his salvation to us, 30.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the son of Mary by the Holy Spirit, 21, 27.
- ♦ He was born of a woman, he was born under the Laws of Moses, and from his birth kept the Law in its entirety, thereby fulfilling it and redeeming those who were under the law 23–24. *See Matthew 3:15; 5:17; and Galatians 4:4.*
- ♦ He is the promised Consolation of Israel, 25.
- ♦ He is the Christ of God, 26.
- ♦ He is the embodiment of God's salvation, 30.
- ♦ He is bringing revelation and light to all nations, 31.
- ♦ He is the glory of his people Israel, 32.

- ♦ He is the occasion for the rising and falling of many, 34.
- ♦ He is the object of opposition and vocal rejection, 34.
- ♦ He is a cause of great pain to Mary, 35.
- ♦ He is the cause of the unveiling of the hearts of many, 35.
- ♦ He is the bringer of redemption to his people, 38.

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, who came upon Old Testament saints and communicated to them God's will, including prophecies of the future, 25.

His work: He sometimes moved the Old Testament saints to action, 27.

The People of God

Their identity

- ♦ The people of God are those who
 - Obey his laws in all things (for Jews, the Old Testament Mosaic Law, for Christians, all the commands of Christ and the apostles, 22–24, 39; *see Matthew 28:19.*)
 - Live just and devout lives, 25
 - Eagerly await the return of Christ, 25–26, 38; *see 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:11–12.*
 - Experience the presence and transforming power of the Holy Spirit, 25–27 (though in this context it is the revealing work of the Spirit, not his saving work, that is in view; still, see Romans 8:14).
 - Daily bless God for the salvation that has come to them in Christ, 28–32
 - Observe sexual purity, 36–37
 - Fast, pray, and worship God, 37
 - Share the good news of Jesus Christ with everyone whom they meet, 38

Salvation

Its source: It comes to us from God's mercy, through Jesus Christ, as consolation for all our sorrows, 25.

Its benefits

- ♦ The presence and work of the Holy Spirit, 26
- ♦ Inner peace, 29
- ♦ The light of revelation that leads to life, 31–32
- ♦ Glory and honor to his people, 32
- ♦ Redemption from the wrath of God, slavery to sin, and bondage to Satan, 38;
see Romans 3:24; 8:23; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Timothy 2:14; Hebrews 9:12; and 1 Peter 1:18.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Seek to observe all that Jesus has commanded us through the Apostles.
- ♦ Set our hopes on the salvation that will be brought to us when Christ is revealed. *See 1 Peter 1:13.*
- ♦ Praise God daily for sending Jesus as our Savior.
- ♦ Take the good news of salvation through Christ to all the nations.
- ♦ Expect that our faith in Jesus will bring piercing sorrow, as it did to Mary, 35.

Luke 2:40–52

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation does not contain all the information that we might want to know. For example, the early life of Jesus, before he entered into his public ministry, is almost completely left in silence, except for this passage. Extra-biblical stories about the young Jesus are not to be believed. God has told us all that we need to know.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here, Jesus uniquely calls God his Father, 49.

His greatness: He is infinitely wise and intelligent, the source of all human wisdom, 40.

His goodness

- ♦ He gives his wisdom to his people, and he gives it supremely to Jesus, 40, 47.
- ♦ He is gracious, granting favor to his chosen people, and uniquely so to Jesus, the God-man, 40.
- ♦ He condescends to dwell among his people, in the Old Testament tabernacle and later the Temple, in the New Testament, uniquely and fully in Jesus. *See John 1:14.*
- ♦ He also condescends to dwell among his believers, who are the living temple of God. *See Ephesians 2:21–22.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the divine Son of the Father, 49.
- ♦ He is also the human son of Joseph (by legal adoption) and Mary (by conception and birth), 41, 43, 48.
- ♦ As a man, he grew up normally through various stages, physically and spiritually, 40, 52.
- ♦ He was uniquely endowed with God's grace and favor, 40.
- ♦ He was wise enough to listen and to ask questions of the teachers of the Law, 46.

- ♦ He possessed unusual intelligence in matters of the Law of God, 47.
- ♦ He was obedient to his parents, fulfilling the Fifth Commandment, 51.
- ♦ His wisdom and conduct brought unusual favor from both God and from people who knew him, 52.

Mankind

Our created nature: Humans have a body, a mind, and a spirit, all of which need to be cultivated so that we may come to maturity, 40, 47, 51.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not watching out closely for our children, especially in public places, 43–44
- ♦ Blaming others when we are wrong, 48
- ♦ Not understanding our children, 49

Notes regarding Mary:

- *Mary was not sinless, as claimed by Roman Catholics, for she and her husband failed to watch over Jesus carefully enough, leaving that to their friends and companions, 43.*
- *She also cast blame upon Jesus for remaining in the Temple without her knowledge, thus showing her lack of carefulness and her lack of understanding of who he was, 48–49.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for giving us Jesus as a normal human being who grew up just as we all do.
- ♦ Praise Jesus for his unique wisdom.
- ♦ See God as our Father, and we should be constantly “about [our] Father’s business,” that is, learning his Word, discussing it with others, being with believers (the temple of God), and sharing God’s Word with others, as Jesus did even when he was a boy.
- ♦ Teach our children, especially teenagers (Jesus obeyed throughout his teenage years), to honor, respect, and obey their parents.

- ◆ Get to know our children well, so that we understand their abilities and their unique callings in life.
- ◆ Ponder all the words of Jesus in our hearts, like Mary did.

Luke 3:1–22

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ This passage has many echoes of the Old Testament.
 - “The Word of the Lord came . . .,” 2; *see Isaiah 1:1; Jeremiah 1:1–3; Hosea 1:1; and Amos 1:1.*
 - The desert, which recalls Israel’s wanderings in the desert for forty years, 2
 - The promises to Abraham and his descendants, 8
 - Vipers, 7; *see Isaiah 59:5.*
 - God’s people referred to as a fig tree or vine, 9; *see Isaiah 5:1–7.*
- ♦ The New Testament also refers to itself.
 - Abraham’s children, 8; *see John 8:31–41; Romans 4:12–27; and Galatians 3:6–9.*
 - “Repentance” in Luke 3:8; 5:32; 15:7; 24:47
 - “Repents” or “repented” in Luke 10:13; 11:32; 13:3; 15:7, 10; 16:30; 17:3–4; *see Ezekiel 18:21.*
 - Baptism with water and fire, 16; *see Matthew 3:11; Mark 12:8; Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:25–27; and Joel 2:28–29.*
 - Jesus’ vision, 22; *see Ezekiel 1:1.*
 - “You are my Son,” 22; *see Luke 1:32; Matthew 17:5; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 41:1.*

Its roots in history

- ♦ Biblical revelation is set within human history.
- ♦ To date the opening of the ministry of John the Baptist, Luke identifies secular rulers
 - The Romans Tiberias Caesar and Pontius Pilate
 - Local kings, including Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, and his half-brother Philip, as well as Lysanius
 - Jewish religious leaders, the high priest Annas and his son Caiaphas.
- ♦ This dates John’s preaching to A.D. 28–29, most likely.

Its content

- ♦ The basic meaning of any biblical passage is its literal sense; the mountains, valleys, etc., in Isaiah 40 originally referred to physical obstacles to the return of the Jews from Babylon.
- ♦ Secondary meanings may also be present: here, high and low places, crooked and rough ways, refer to human sin, which must be replaced by repentance and faith in God for forgiveness, followed by amended conduct, 7–18.

Its fulfillment of prophecy

- ♦ A particular form of cumulative revelation is the fulfillment of prophecy, especially in the New Testament.
- ♦ John says that his ministry is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3–5.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament), Son (usually called “Lord” in the New Testament), and Holy Spirit, 4

- ♦ Where “Lord” refers to Jesus, 5
- ♦ Where “God” refers to the Father, or to the entire Trinity, 16
- ♦ Where the Son, here called the Christ, baptizes with the Holy Spirit, 22
- ♦ Where Jesus, the Son, sees the Holy Spirit descending as if in the form of a dove and hears the Father’s voice

His greatness

- ♦ He is almighty; he can remove all obstacles, physical and spiritual, to the coming of his salvation, 4–6.
- ♦ He is eternal; he can punish wickedness with everlasting fire, 17.

His goodness

- ♦ He is just and holy; he demands repentance and works showing repentance, of those who would be saved, 3, 8, 11–14; that is why his Spirit is called Holy, 16, 22.

- ♦ He communicates both warning and promise to his people, that they may be saved from the coming wrath, 3, 7–9.
- ♦ He chose Abraham and his descendants to be his special people, 8.
- ♦ He is holy; he must judge sin and sinners with everlasting torment, 9, 17.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the God–man Jesus, who lived in history, 21.
- ♦ He is the long–awaited Messiah, Anointed One of God, Christ, who would save his people, 15.
- ♦ He is almighty, and thus able to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (see below), 16.
- ♦ He is incomparably worthy because of his position and his moral perfection, 16.
- ♦ He is the coming Judge, who will save his people and punish unrepentant wicked people with eternal torment, 17.
- ♦ He is the recipient of the Holy Spirit in all his fullness, 22. *See John 3:34.*

Note: This passage refers only to Jesus, not to believers in Christ, who receive of the Spirit according to God's gift. See 1 Corinthians 4:2–11.

- ♦ He is the unique, and uniquely beloved, Son of God the Father, 22.

His work: He identified with sinful mankind by submitting to the baptism of John, not as a sinner himself, but as the one who would, in our place, bear the penalty for our sin, 21. *See 2 Corinthians 5:21 and 1 Peter 3:18.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Hypocrisy, that is, claiming to repent but not living a changed life, 7–8
- ♦ Resting upon one's spiritual heritage for salvation, 8
- ♦ Living selfishly and not sharing our possessions with those in greater need, 11
- ♦ Abusing our position to exploit others, or stealing what is not ours, 12–13
- ♦ Accusing others falsely, 14
- ♦ Discontent with our income, 14
- ♦ Marrying someone whose spouse is still alive, 19

- ♦ Marrying someone forbidden by the Mosaic law, 19
- ♦ Hurting those who criticize us, 19–20
- ♦ Persecuting the faithful people of God, 19–20

Salvation

Its substance: It consists in

- ♦ Trusting in Christ for forgiveness, 3
- ♦ Receiving baptism as a sign of our repentance and faith, 3
- ♦ Turning from our former evil ways, 8
- ♦ Receiving the Holy Spirit, 16

Its source: It comes to us from God through Jesus Christ, as repentance from sins, 3.

Its benefits: It brings acceptance by God the Father as his beloved son, because we are, by faith and the Holy Spirit, incorporated into Christ and are thus “in Him.” *See Romans 8:1, 15–17; Galatians 4:4–7; and Ephesians 1:1:5; 5:1.*

Note: the baptism with the Holy Spirit is an aspect of salvation, and it comes to those who have fully repented and trusted in Christ. It happens at the time of regeneration (see John 3:3, 5; Titus 3:5–7), and is manifested by a transformed life. Speaking with tongues may be a sign of the filling with the Spirit but is not a sign of the baptism with the Spirit.

The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, he will “harvest” the field of the world, gathering in his faithful followers and casting unrepentant wicked people into everlasting torment in a fiery hell, 17. *See Matthew 13:37–43.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Daily repent of our sins, renounce our former disobedient and selfish ways, and turn to God afresh.
- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from the guilt of sin and from its power, by his indwelling Holy Spirit.

- ♦ Seek daily to turn away from our former selfish ways and to live lives that are marked by generosity, fairness, justice.
- ♦ Imitate John the Baptist in his zeal for Christ and his kingdom, his simplicity of life, his humility before Christ, his courageous proclamation of the truth, his willingness to suffer for righteousness.
- ♦ Thank God for making us his beloved children through the work of Jesus and the baptism with the Spirit.
- ♦ Boldly warn people of the wrath to come and urge them to repent and trust in Christ.
- ♦ Expect to suffer for righteousness and for our faith in Christ.

Luke 3:23–38

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ♦ Biblical revelation includes genealogies.
 - These show that revelation, and the people described in the Bible, are set in history.
 - These genealogies are usually incomplete; some generations are skipped over to achieve editorial purposes.
 - Genealogies of Jesus in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 differ. Luke's takes Jesus' ancestry back to Adam, while Matthew's only goes back to Abraham. Luke wants to show that Jesus is the Savior of all mankind, whereas Matthew wants to emphasize Jesus' descent from Abraham and David and his rightful title to be King of the Jews.
 - There are other differences, some of them seeming contradictions, between the lists of names in Luke and in Matthew. Some believe that Matthew traces Jesus back from Joseph, his legal father, and Luke gives Jesus' ancestry on Mary's side.
 - Recent scholarship posits a different solution: That Luke also traces Jesus' ancestry through his legal father Joseph as verse 23 says. The difference then becomes the way in which Matthew and Luke use the genealogies for different purposes. In any case, the discrepancies can be explained and resolved; there are no real conflicts.

God

His greatness

- ♦ Many of these names evoke great events of God's saving power in the past, such as
 - The creation of Adam out of nothing, 38
 - The nearly miraculous birth of Isaac, 34
 - The return of Israel from Babylon, 27

His goodness

- ♦ God is faithful, keeping his promises to Abraham to make his descendants a numerous people and to give them a land and his promise to David to make one of his descendants king, 3.
- ♦ He is gracious, giving both Abraham and David posterity, despite their sins, 23–34.
- ♦ He provides for widows, like Ruth, whom Boaz married, 32.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus Christ was and is a real human being with human ancestry; he is one of us.
- ♦ He is the rightful heir of David's throne.
- ♦ He is the "seed" or descendant promised to Abraham through whom all nations will be blessed.
- ♦ He is the second Adam, who will completely undo the terrible damage that Adam's sin brought upon mankind.
- ♦ As unique Son of God (22), he is also son of Adam, and therefore qualified to suffer in the place of all mankind, 38.
- ♦ He is Savior of both Jews and Gentiles, as the name of Boaz, who married Ruth the Moabitess reminds us, 32.
- ♦ As a legal descendant of David, he is the King promised to David; as descendant of Abraham, he is Savior of people from all nations.

His work: As the designated Messiah, he began a public ministry at the age of thirty, which is when priests were allowed to begin serving in the Temple; he is thus our true High Priest, 23. *See Hebrews 7–8.*

Mankind

Our ancestors: We are all linked to Adam through a long line of people, some of whose names are recorded here.

Our purpose: God allows us to marry and have children, to multiply and fill the earth as he commanded Adam had Eve.

Our fallen state: As fallen creatures, we all die, like all those listed here.

The People of God

Their identity

- ♦ God's people include the descendants of Abraham, as recorded in this genealogy, and all those who have trusted God's Word since Adam.
- ♦ Jesus, as a Jew, was a member of God's people, but he alone fully trusted and obeyed God. He stands at the head of a new people, composed of all who trust in Christ alone for salvation.
- ♦ From Adam onwards, God's people have been sinners from birth; this is still the case, though true followers of Christ are now accepted in him as their federal head, and by the power of the Spirit they able to obey more than the saints of the Old Testament were.

Sin

It includes: The names in this list recall the sins of mankind, including

- ♦ Waiting for God to fulfill his promises, but running ahead of him, as Abraham did by having a child through Sarai's maidservant
- ♦ Sacrificing others, even one's spouse, to save oneself, as Abraham did
- ♦ Adultery, lying, murder like David
- ♦ Disobeying a clear command of God, as Adam did

Salvation

Its source: It comes to us from God, through Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, 22-23.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for being faithful to his promises to his people throughout the ages, despite their manifold sins and failures to believe and obey.

- ♦ Thank God for sending his unique Son to become the God–man, Jesus, who fulfills all the promises God made to his people, starting with Adam, of one who would one day save them from sin, Satan, death, and the righteous wrath of God.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament, so that we can understand the full history of God's dealings with his people as he advanced his design of redemption, and so that we can understand the background of Jesus our Savior.

Luke 4:1–13

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a progressive and cumulative whole, given as God gradually unfolded his truth more clearly through the ages.

- ♦ Jesus' temptation in the wilderness recalls the failure of Adam and Eve to resist Satan's temptations in the Garden of Eve.
- ♦ The threefold nature of Eve's thoughts may be reflected in the threefold nature of the temptations of Christ.
- ♦ Jesus' experiences also recall the failure of Israel, who God called "my son," during their forty years in the wilderness in the wilderness. *See Numbers 14:34; 32:13; Psalm 106:14, 19, 33, along with Exodus 16:1–3; 17:1–7; 32:1–15; and Numbers 11:1–6; 20:1–13.*
- ♦ Jesus' experiences may also anticipate his threefold temptation to have the cup of God's wrath pass from him in the Garden of Gethsemane along with his disciples' threefold failure to watch and pray. *See Matthew 26:31–45.*
- ♦ Peter's threefold failure to resist the temptation to deny Christ, and perhaps also the threefold list of evil desires in 1 John 2:16.

Its content: The Old Testament, including the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), is the Word of God in the very words of God, as seen by Jesus' quotation of Deuteronomy, 4, 8, 12.

Its supreme value: The words of the Bible, including the Old Testament, have life-giving power, 4. *See John 6:63.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 1, 3.
- ♦ He is uniquely worthy of worship and service, the only true God, 8.

His goodness

- ♦ God speaks to his people. In the Old Testament, he spoke through the words of the prophets, including Moses, who wrote down what God revealed to him, 4.
- ♦ His words give spiritual life and even, sometimes, physical refreshment, 4.
- ♦ He protects those who trust in him from falling into temptation.

Christ

His person: He was – and is – the unique Son of God, 3, 9. Satan’s statement, “If you are the Son of God,” should be translated, “Since you are the Son of God.” He is therefore almighty, and able to turn stones into bread (as he later turned a few loaves and fish into a feast for 5,000 men and their families).

His work

- ♦ He was filled by the Spirit from the time of his baptism for a life of ministry to God, 1.
- ♦ He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, so that he might be tempted and might overcome all Satan’s temptations, thus suffering as we do, except without sin, 3–13.
- ♦ In other words, he knows what we are going through and he can sympathize with us. *See Hebrews 4:15.*
- ♦ As the new Adam and federal head of his people, he reversed the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden by resisting Satan’s temptations; as the head of the people of God, he reversed the sins of the people of Israel, who tempted God in the wilderness and who many times failed to obey his word.

The Holy Spirit

His person and work: The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, equal to Father and Son in eternity, power, deity, and glory. He enabled the man Jesus to fulfill God’s mission, which included overcoming temptation in the wilderness, 1; likewise, he leads God’s people to do good works. *See Romans 8:14.*

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ He is the eminently evil one, a spiritual being who can use creatures, as he did the serpent in the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 3) and who somehow was able to communicate with Jesus in the wilderness.
- ♦ He mostly works by tempting people to disobey God by telling them lies, often very subtly and indirectly, as he did here with Jesus. *See Ephesians 6:10.*
- ♦ He can also misquote Scripture, taking verses out of context to lead people astray, 10–11.
- ♦ Here, he ignores the context of Psalm 91, which promises protection to the one who trusts and loves God, not the one who presumes upon God's power and rashly courts danger. *See Psalm 91:1–16, which actually does speak of Jesus.*

Sin

Its nature

- ♦ Temptation, in itself, is not sin. Jesus was tempted, without sin. *See Hebrews 4:15.*
- ♦ Sin is any disobedience of, or lack of conformity to, the revealed will of God. Jesus knew that God wanted him to suffer and then to receive glory; Satan tempted him to bypass the cross and long for glory and power now.

It includes

- ♦ Seeking physical satisfaction, or even survival, ahead of doing the will of God, and rather than trusting God to provide, 3–4
- ♦ Seeking power and dominion, and worshiping anything or anyone in this world rather than God, to achieve our goals, rather than worshiping and serving God alone 5–6
- ♦ Seeking fame and reputation by drawing attention to ourselves, but not trusting God, 9–12

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to us from God through Jesus Christ, as participation in his vicarious and representative victory over Satan, 1–13. *See Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14; and 1 John 3:8; 4:4.*

Its benefits: Those who receive salvation have the ability now by the power of Christ's Spirit to resist and overcome Satan's temptations. *See Ephesians 6:10-19; James 4:7; and 1 Peter 5:8-9.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to overcome Satan on our behalf.
- ◆ Be alert to Satan's wiles.
- ◆ Read the Bible, including the Old Testament, and memorize as much of it as possible, so that we can recognize and resist Satan's deceptive lies.
- ◆ Use the words of the Bible to counter specific temptations.
- ◆ Beware of the temptations of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.
- ◆ Resist any temptation that would keep us from doing God's will.
- ◆ Resist temptations to avoid the way of the cross.

Luke 4:14–30

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones, as God's plan of redemption unfolds.

- ♦ This passage refers to
 - Isaiah 49:8, 9; 61:1–2
 - Elijah and the widow, 25–26; *see 1 Kings 17:9.*
 - Elisha and the healing of Naaman, 27; *see 2 Kings 5:1–14.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 14, 18.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus is the human son of Mary and adopted son of Joseph; he was brought up like any other boy in Nazareth, so that his townsmen were amazed at the way in which he spoke and at his claim that the Scriptures were being fulfilled in him, 21–22.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the Anointed One of God, predicted in the Old Testament as one who would come to save his people, 14, 18–19, 21.
- ♦ As prophesied in Isaiah 53:3, and as typified by many Old Testament prophets, Jesus was rejected by his own people, 24, 28–30.

His work: As the God–man, he was able simply to walk unharmed through a crowd of people intent on killing him, 28–30.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Rejecting Christ's unique status as Savior and seeking to harm him or his people, 28–29

- ♦ Rejecting God's plan to save people of all nations, 24–29

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ These promises include overall good news, healing of broken hearts, liberty to the captives (both spiritual and physical), recovery of sight, freedom for the oppressed (by Satan or by men), and God's favor, 18–19.
- ♦ Jesus' ministry fulfilled some of these promises, such as preaching good news to the poor, healing, freedom for the demon–possessed, recovery of sight, and acceptance by God; full realization of these promises will only come when he returns.

Its conveyance: It comes to us from God, through Jesus Christ, who was anointed by the Holy Spirit to fulfill all God's promises of salvation made in the Old Testament, 18–21.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Look to Jesus for all comfort, hope, healing, freedom, insight, and favor with God.
- ♦ Be careful lest we imagine that Jesus came to deliver political freedom, economic prosperity, and physical healing in this age; that was not his primary mission but will come only when he returns.
- ♦ Do all we can to promote political freedom and justice, economic prosperity, physical healing, and inclusion of aliens, knowing that results will be limited, though perhaps substantial.
- ♦ Expect to be rejected, even by our own family and friends, if we identify with Jesus.
- ♦ Reach out to the poor, sorrowing, prisoners, physically and spiritually blind, physically and spiritually oppressed, and “other” ethnic people, as Jesus did.

Luke 4:31–44

Truth

Revelation

Its source: Through the teaching ministry and personal life and works of Jesus, God spoke to mankind in a way that was uniquely, fully, and finally authoritative, 32, 36. *See Hebrews 1:1–2.*

God

His greatness: God has all authority over all creatures, including spirits who have become evil, 32, 36.

His goodness

- ♦ He brings deliverance for those oppressed by demons, 35, 41.
- ♦ He brings healing for the sick, 39–40.
- ♦ He brings truth to those who are spiritually ignorant, 31–32, 43–44.
- ♦ He is completely holy, 34. *See Isaiah 6:3.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Holy One of God, possessing God's own unique and total moral purity and consecration to God, 34.
- ♦ He is the finally authoritative revealer of God's word and ways, 32, 36.
- ♦ He is the promised Messiah, the Christ, who brought deliverance and healing to people oppressed by demons and disease, 35, 39, 40–41. *See Isaiah 35:5–6; 61:1–2.*
- ♦ He is the unique and fully divine Son of God, 41.

His work: In his first coming, he was sent primarily to preach, until his last day on earth, 43.

Spiritual Beings

Satan and his demons

- ♦ Evil spirits can possess people and to oppress them with physical disease and harm, 33, 35.
- ♦ They can speak through people whom they have possessed, 33–34, 41.
- ♦ They somehow recognized Christ, but without loving him, 34, 41.
- ♦ They are impotent against the authoritative expelling command of Christ and likewise to the words of Christ's disciples, 35, 41. *See Luke 10:17.*

The Last Things

The Kingdom of God

- ♦ The kingdom of God was the main theme of Jesus' message as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke).
- ♦ In one sense, God's kingdom is eternal and universal, for he has always ruled over the world. *See Psalm 103:19.*
- ♦ In another, it came to earth in a new way when Jesus appeared, preaching the gospel and demonstrating the authority and goodness of God the King by healing people and casting out demons.
- ♦ More importantly, the message of the kingdom was that Jesus, the King, had come, and that all people must repent and believe in him.
- ♦ His kingdom advanced to another stage when Christ rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, sat down at God's right hand, and began to exercise spiritual rule from heaven. *See Ephesians 1:19–23.*
- ♦ It will come in its fullness when Christ returns. *See 1 Corinthians 15:24–28.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God daily for sending Jesus to save us from Satan and all his works.
- ♦ Pray for sick people, expecting that some will be healed in this life, and all believers will be healed at the resurrection of the dead.

- ♦ Cast out demons by invoking the name of Jesus whenever we encounter someone who is possessed by an evil spirit. One of the ways possession is manifested is when the demon speaks through that person's mouth.
- ♦ Make preaching the gospel our first priority.
- ♦ Spend time alone with God in prayer, as Jesus did, to discern his priorities for our life.

Luke 5:1–11

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ♦ Biblical revelation came through the preaching of Jesus, which was received as the Word of God, 1.
- ♦ Biblical revelation came through his miracles, 5–9, which were recorded by eyewitnesses or their students and are preserved for us in the four Gospels.

God

His greatness: He commands even the fish of the sea to go where he wills to accomplish his purposes, 4–9.

His goodness

- ♦ He communicated his will and his ways to people through the preaching and miracles of Jesus, 1–11.
- ♦ He met the physical needs of the disciples, 6.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus Christ is both human, as seen in his name, Jesus, 8, and divine, as seen in his power to work miracles, 6
- ♦ He is also the Holy One of Israel, 8. *See Isaiah 6:1–5.*
- ♦ He is Lord, 8.
- ♦ He has absolute authority to command us to give him our entire lives, 10. *See Matthew 4:18–22.*

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are those who

- ♦ Listen to his Word, 1
- ♦ Obey his commands, even in little things, 4–6

- ♦ Recognize their sins, 8
- ♦ Acknowledge Jesus as Lord, 8
- ♦ Forsake all and follow him, 11 (even if this does not mean selling all we have to engage in itinerant preaching)

Salvation

Its source: It came to the people as the revelation of the Word of God, 1, 3.

Its conveyance: It came to Peter and the other three as provision for their physical needs, 6–7.

It includes (for Peter and the other three)

- ♦ Awareness of their sins, 8
- ♦ Gracious acceptance by Jesus, 10
- ♦ Enlistment into the work of bringing people into the kingdom of God, 10–11

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do all we can to hear the Word of God, first by searching the Scriptures and then by hearing the Bible taught by people chosen by God.
- ♦ Trust even our work and how we do it to God, waiting upon him for guidance about how to succeed.
- ♦ Do not trust in our own experience, knowledge, or skill, to earn our daily bread, though of course we should work diligently.
- ♦ Daily acknowledge our sins in the presence of a holy God.
- ♦ Trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.
- ♦ Be willing to give up all we have and follow Jesus.

Luke 5:12–26

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ The disease of leprosy, the ritual uncleanness which it brings, and the designated process of declaring that a person had been cleansed from it, 12–14, all refer to Leviticus 13:1–3; 14:2–32.
- ♦ The concept of sin assumes the Ten Commandments and other laws in the Old Testament; *see Exodus 20–22*.
- ♦ God as the only one who forgives sins, 21; *see Isaiah 43:25*.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit, as seen in Jesus' habit of prayer to God, 16.

His greatness: He has power to heal all kinds of diseases, including chronic disabilities, 17, 25–26.

His goodness

- ♦ He established ways for people to become ritually clean in the Old Testament, 14.
- ♦ He forgives sin, 21.
- ♦ In Christ, he demonstrated his pity and love for people by healing them, 12–15, 17, 24–25.

Christ

His person

- ♦ As man, he lived under the Law of Moses, 14.
- ♦ He sensed the need to pray to God his father, 16.
- ♦ As the God–man, he had power to heal illnesses of all sorts, 13–15, 17, 20–26.

His work

- ♦ He had the power to read the minds of people, 22.
- ♦ He had the power to forgive sins, 24.
- ♦ Possessing the divine nature in its fullness, he was filled with pity and compassion for the sick and sinful, and he demonstrated that by healing them and declaring that their sins were forgiven, 13–14; 20–25.

Sin

It includes: Refusing to believe that Jesus has authority to forgive sins, even after hearing his teachings, seeing his sinless life, and witnessing the miracles he worked, 21–22; *see John 15:22, 24.*

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes through faith in Jesus Christ, entirely without our own personal virtue or merit, 20, 12–13, 24–25.
- ♦ It comes to us as cleansing from the ritual defilement of sin, enabling us to draw near to God, 13. *See 1 John 1:9.*

It includes

- ♦ Forgiveness of sins, 20, 24
- ♦ Sometimes, healing from illnesses, 13, 24–25

Note: Jesus first pronounced forgiveness of sins to show what is our greatest need, 20. He healed the man to demonstrate his authority to forgive sins. It would have been easier just to pronounce forgiveness; the harder thing was to demonstrate his authority by making the man whole, 23–24.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust that Jesus can cleanse us from the moral pollution of our sins and forgive their guilt.
- ♦ Do all we can to bring our friends into the presence of Jesus.
- ♦ Trust that Jesus can heal illnesses if he chooses to do so, 12.

- ◆ Do not expect all people to believe in Jesus.
- ◆ Praise and love Jesus daily for his pity and his power.

Luke 5:27–39

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ The ideas of sin as sickness and of God as healer, 31–32, reflect Jesus' earlier reference to the proverbs, "Physician, heal yourself." *See Luke 4:23.*
- ♦ The previous narratives of his healing sick people, as well as Old Testament passages; *see Psalm 41:4; Isaiah 1:5; 53:5; Jeremiah 3:33; 8:22; 20:12; and Hosea 6:1.*
- ♦ The image of God as the Husband of his people, 34–35, alludes to Old Testament passages. *See Isaiah 62:5 and the book of Hosea.*
- ♦ This image points forward to New Testament passages. *See Matthew 9:15; 25:1, 6; John 3:29; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22–34; and Revelation 21:2; 19:7; 22:17.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus Christ has divine authority to call men to forsake all and follow him, 27–28 and to heal the spiritually and morally sick, 31–32. *See 1 Peter 2:24.*
- ♦ As Bridegroom of his people, he identifies himself with Yahweh in the Old Testament (*see references above*); he brings something radically new into the world, 36–39.

Salvation

Its recipients: It comes to those who repent of their sins, forsake their old way of life (though not necessarily their employment like Levi), and follow Jesus, 28, 32.

It includes

- ♦ Fellowship with Christ, 30
- ♦ Restored relationships with other sinners, 29–30
- ♦ Spiritual healing, 31–32

- ♦ Intimacy with Christ as our Bridegroom, 34–35
- ♦ Freedom from traditionally legalistic customs, 33–39

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Repent of our sins and show our repentance by forsaking our former sinful way of life.
- ♦ Follow Jesus wherever he leads, even if others criticize us.
- ♦ Gladly have fellowship with other sinners, though of course without engaging in their sinful activities.
- ♦ Identify ourselves with outcasts, the marginalized, and those whom society despises.
- ♦ See Jesus as our most intimate friend.
- ♦ Reconsider traditional practices: perhaps they are “old wineskins” that cannot hold the “new wine” of Jesus’ radical ways of doing things. Examples might include building-based, pastor-centered, program-oriented churches; legalistic religiosity; academic seminaries; etc.

Luke 6:1–11

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones.

- ♦ This section recalls the Old Testament legislation allowing picking grain with the hands when walking through a field, 1. *See Deuteronomy 23:25.*
- ♦ The commandment not to work on the Sabbath, 2, 9; *see Exodus 20:10.*
- ♦ David's allowing his men to eat food from the Tabernacle, 3–4; *see 1 Samuel 21:1–6.*
- ♦ Parallel passages in the Synoptic Gospels are Matthew 12:1–8 and Mark 3:1–6.

Its content: God's goodness and greatness are reflected in Jesus; see below.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus is the "son" – that is, descendant – of David, and therefore heir to the promises made to him, as well as the fulfillment of all that the ideal King of Israel was to embody. *See 2 Samuel 7:1–17; Psalm 86:19–37; and Luke 1:32–33, 68–79; 2:11; 3:22, 29–32.*
- ♦ Jesus is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel and thus "Lord of the Sabbath," 5. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*

His work

- ♦ His care for his men demonstrates God's tender care for his people. *See Psalm 23.*
- ♦ His healing of the man with the withered hand demonstrates God's pity and his power, 10. *See Psalm 103:3.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Imposing religious and moral duties upon people that go beyond what is written in Scripture, as the Pharisees did, 2–4
- ♦ Religious observance that withholds necessary sustenance and healing from people in need, 4, 9
- ♦ Refusing to recognize Jesus as God's chosen Messiah, 11

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes to those who follow Jesus, in the form of provision for daily needs to serve him, 1–4.
- ♦ Sometimes it comes in the form of the healing of physical disability, 10.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not make demands on others that go beyond what Scripture clearly mandates.
- ♦ Take care of those who follow Jesus.
- ♦ Care for those who are under our authority and leadership.
- ♦ Seek to do good whenever possible, even on the Lord's Day.
- ♦ Trust God to provide our daily needs.
- ♦ Believe that God can work miracles to demonstrate his glory.
- ♦ Expect people to hate both Jesus and his followers when their own traditions or social standing are threatened.
- ♦ Courageously do what is right, like Jesus, even when we know it will involve great risk.

Luke 6:12–36

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring or alluding to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus' teaching in this passage, including the blessings and woes, 20–36, place him at the summit of a long line of Old Testament prophets, including John the Baptist. *See Isaiah 5:8–25; 31:1; Jeremiah 13:27; Amos 6:1; and Habakkuk 2:12–17.*
- ♦ Blessings and woes are also used here to describe God's people. *See Deuteronomy 28, Psalm 1, the book of Proverbs, and Isaiah 65:13 [ZNIVSB].*

Its interpretation

- ♦ The Old Testament helps interpret the New Testament.
 - The “poor,” 20, are not only materially but also physically and socially resourceless. *See Isaiah 61:1, quoted in Luke 4:18–19.*
 - The hungry will be filled at the Messianic banquet, 21. *See Isaiah 25:6.*
 - Prophets were often persecuted in the Old Testament, 23. *See 1 Kings 18:4, 13; 22:27; 2 Chronicles 16:10; 24:20–21; Nehemiah 9:26; and Jeremiah 2:30; 11:18–22; 37:15–16 [ZNIVSB].*
- ♦ Parallel passages should be used to interpret each other. “Be merciful,” 36, interprets “Be perfect” in Matthew 5:48 (which is already clear from its own context).
- ♦ Parallel passages can also cause difficulties of interpretation. The “Sermon on the Plain” in Luke is very similar to the “Sermon on the Mount” in Matthew 5–7, but there are also differences. Scholars seek to resolve this problem in various ways.
 - Luke has abridged Matthew's version of Jesus' sermon.
 - The two versions reflect different translations into Greek of an original Aramaic sermon (but Jesus might have spoken Greek to communicate with people from different places).

- These are two different sermons, one given on a mountain (Matthew), the other on a level place up in mountainous terrain (Luke). This last seems the most likely to me.

Its source

- ♦ Biblical revelation comes to us through God's chosen messengers, including Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles and prophets. Three of the apostles mentioned here wrote books of the New Testament: Peter, Matthew, and John, 14–15. They bear the authority of Jesus himself.
- ♦ Jesus is the primary agent of God's revelation, as the eternal Word and as the one whose life, works, death and resurrection manifested God's greatness and goodness, and whose teaching revealed God's will and his ways, 17–36.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (God), 12, 36; Son (Jesus) – this whole passage; and Holy Spirit, by whose power Jesus healed people, 19. *See Luke 4:14.*

His greatness

- ♦ He has power to heal all kinds of diseases and to deliver them from demons, 17–18.
- ♦ He rules as King over the entire created order, 20.
- ♦ He is Most High, 35.

His goodness

- ♦ In Jesus he demonstrated his pity and kindness by healing people and delivering them from demons, 18–19.
- ♦ He bestows the gift of participation in his kingdom upon his faithful people, 20.
- ♦ He rewards those who suffer for following Christ, 23.
- ♦ He sent prophets to the people constantly over the centuries to warn them of coming judgment, 23.
- ♦ He will punish those who have lived only for this world, 24–26.
- ♦ He is Father to those who follow and imitate Christ, 36.

- ♦ He bestows the status of adopted sonship on those who follow Christ and reflect his character, 35.
- ♦ He is merciful to the unworthy, 35–36.

Christ

His person and work

- ♦ In his life, words, and works, he reflects the greatness and goodness of God (see above).
- ♦ He maintained constant communion with God the Father in prayer, 12.
- ♦ He has authority to make a total claim on people's lives and to give spiritual authority to whom he chooses, 13–16.
- ♦ He was filled with the power of God to heal, 19.
- ♦ He possessed unique divine authority to pronounce blessings and woes and to give binding moral instruction, 20–36.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7, 22.

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, those who have followed him and suffered will be rewarded, and those who have lived only for this world will be punished, 21–26, 35.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Read, believe, and obey the writings of the Apostles in the New Testament.
- ♦ Meditate upon, believe, and obey the words of Jesus.
- ♦ Expect some who hold high positions in the church to turn out to be traitors.
- ♦ Deny ourselves in this life to follow Jesus and reflect his character of living for others.
- ♦ Set our hopes for fulfillment, joy, vindication upon the return of Christ and his bringing a new heaven and new earth.
- ♦ Love others, including family members and especially our spouse, unconditionally, regardless of their response to us.
- ♦ Think often upon God's mercy to us, so that we may reflect that mercy to others who, like us, don't deserve it.

Luke 6:37–49

Truth

Revelation

Its content: We need to be aware of the way biblical writers communicate. For example, the passive voice “you shall not be judged,” “it will be given to you,” “it will be measured back to you,” often assume God as the subject: “He will not judge,” “he will give,” “he will measure.”

God

His greatness

- ♦ He has the authority to judge and to condemn, 37.
- ♦ He owns everything and has the resources to give us all we need, and more, 38.

His goodness

- ♦ He forgives those who forgive others, 37.
- ♦ He gives to those who are generous, 38.
- ♦ He rewards all according to justice and fairness, 38.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Lord, with all authority
 - To command, 46
 - To mete out reward and punishment according to how people respond to his teachings, 48–49

Mankind

Our nature

- ♦ All words and actions spring from the “heart,” which in the Bible refers to the mind and the will (including emotions that flow from mental concepts, ideas, assumptions, etc., and from decisions that form habits), 45.
- ♦ There are only two kinds of people.

- Those who have, by repentance, faith, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, been given a new heart, and are thus able to say and do good things
- Those who remain in their unregenerate state, and thus unable to say or do good things from the heart, 43–45

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Condemning others as morally inferior to ourselves, while being blind to our own corresponding faults and sins, 17
- ♦ Not forgiving those who have offended us, 37
- ♦ Lack of generosity in both relational and material matters, 38
- ♦ Imagining that we can help others improve before we have attended to our own faults, 41–42
- ♦ Calling Jesus “Lord,” without obeying him, 46
- ♦ “Hearing” Jesus’ teachings without putting them into practice, 49

Its consequences

- ♦ Condemnation by God, 37
- ♦ Falling into a ditch as we proudly try to guide others, 39
- ♦ Lack of ethical perception and clarity, 42
- ♦ Eventual destruction, 49

The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, he will judge all people, rewarding those who have trusted and obeyed him, and punishing all those who have not truly believed in him and have thus violated his will in thought, word, and deed, 37–38, 48–49.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Forgive all who have hurt or offended us, as God has forgiven us.

- ♦ Give generously to others, as God has been generous with us, both spiritually and materially.
- ♦ Do not attempt to reform others until we have examined our own life to see in what ways we share their faults (though possibly in a different form. E.g., we may not be obese, but we may in other ways have failed to be good stewards of our health; we may not lose our temper and say hurtful things, but we may fail to “speak the truth in love,” or to speak only what builds others up; etc.)
- ♦ Seek first to set a good example to others, and then to disciple them.
- ♦ Daily examine our words and deeds to see in what ways they are still ruled by worldly or selfish thoughts and motives, and we should ask God to reform us from the inside out.
- ♦ Read the Bible and listen to biblical teaching with the intent not just of learning but of doing.
- ♦ Ask God to give us grace to follow the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles.
- ♦ Encourage sincere followers of Christ to persist in doing good, for they will be rewarded.
- ♦ Warn evildoers, including professing Christians whose lives do not match their profession of faith, that the judgment is coming.

Luke 7:1–17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring or alluding to earlier ones.

- ♦ The raising of the widow's son and Jesus' presenting the young man to his mother, 14–15, recall the actions of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. *See 1 Kings 17:17–24; and 2 Kings 4:32–37.*
- ♦ These events also evoke the cry of the people that “A great prophet has risen up among us,” 16.
- ♦ The raising of the son of the widow points forward to the resurrection of all God's people at the end of the age.

Its interpretation: Parallel passages in the Gospels provide help in interpretation, but also pose problems when the accounts differ, as Luke's narrative of the healing of the centurion's son does from Matthew's telling. It is clear that Matthew abridged the story for his purposes, as he usually does. *See Matthew 8:5–13.*

Its source: Different authors were used by God to present different perspectives on the truth. Luke's writings show God's care for non-Jews, the poor, women, and all who were on the margins of society.

God

His greatness: He can heal from afar and even to raise the dead, 1–16.

His goodness

- ♦ He cares for Gentiles and for women, especially widows, who without a man to care for them were destitute, 1, 12.
- ♦ He cared for his people Israel and often “visited” them to save them from trouble, 16.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Lord, the Greek Old Testament name for Yahweh, 6, (though here it may be equivalent to, “Sir”) 13.
- ♦ He is also Jesus, the truly human son of Mary, 9.
- ♦ Christ was the greatest of all God’s prophets, 16.
- ♦ Being under the authority of God, he possessed divine authority to carry out God’s will, 8. This indicates that he is and was, to some degree and in some manner, subordinate to God the Father, while remaining fully equal to him in deity, power, and all perfections.

His work

- ♦ Like the prophets, he combined teaching with acts of healing and power, 1, 10, 14–15.
- ♦ Christ came to save not only Jews but also Gentiles, 1.
- ♦ He had the power of God to heal and even to raise the dead with only a word, 10, 14–15.

Salvation

Its source and conveyance

- ♦ It comes from Jesus Christ, through faith in his goodness and his greatness, to all who seek him with a humble heart that is full of awareness of our unworthiness, 9.
- ♦ Jesus brought God’s salvation in the form of healing and restoration of life; these acts showed both the power of God and the pity of God. They also pointed towards the restoration of all things at the end of time.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Bring our problems, no matter how serious and seemingly beyond hope, to God, through faith in Christ, trusting that he is able to save us.
- ♦ Care for the foreigners in our midst and do all we can to introduce them to Christ.
- ♦ Pray to God in all humility, with a frank confession of our moral unworthiness of his mercy.
- ♦ Care for widows and orphans.
- ♦ Trust that God can save us from our troubles if that is his will for us at any particular time.

Luke 7:18–35

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus quotes Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 to show that he is the long-awaited Messiah, 27.
- ♦ He also refers to his own sermon in Nazareth, Luke 4:17–19, which opened with a quotation from Isaiah 49:8, 9; 61:1–2.
- ♦ His self-chosen title, Son of Man, 34, comes from Daniel 7:13–14.
- ♦ His reference to Wisdom, 35, recalls the early chapters of Proverbs, especially chapter 8.
- ♦ Revelation also sometimes incorporated sayings from the current culture, 32.

Its source

- ♦ It came to God's people through speaking prophets like John the Baptist, 26 (who recalled the ministries of Elijah and Elisha).
- ♦ It came through writing prophets like Isaiah and Malachi, 27.
- ♦ It came finally and fully through Jesus Christ, who is God's Wisdom incarnate, 35.

God

His greatness: He has the power to give sight to the blind, make the lame walk, cleanse lepers, give hearing to the deaf, and raise the dead, 22.

His goodness

- ♦ In Jesus, he revealed his kindness and mercy toward those who are all, afflicted, and poor, 22–23.
- ♦ He revealed his will and his ways through prophets like John the Baptist and finally through Jesus, 26.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Coming One, the final Prophet of God to his people, who was prophesied by Moses, 19. *See Deuteronomy 18:15.*
- ♦ He is the Messiah and Savior prophesied in the Old Testament, whose authority was authenticated by the multitude and magnitude of his miracles, 22, 27.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 34.
- ♦ He is an ordinary man who enjoyed the simple pleasures of life, 34.
- ♦ He is the friend of those who were open and notorious sinners but who repented, 34.
- ♦ He is the Wisdom of God incarnate, 35.

Sin

It includes: Sin includes rejecting God’s messengers, 30, 32–34

Salvation

Its source: It comes through the revelation of God’s will and ways through his chosen messengers, like John the Baptist, the Old Testament prophets, and Jesus.

Its benefits

- ♦ Healing
- ♦ Deliverance from evil spirits, 21–22
- ♦ Hearing the gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ, 21–22
- ♦ Entrance into the kingdom of God through rebirth by the Spirit, 2; *see John 3:3, 5.*

Life

Ethical Imperatives

- ♦ Hear and heed God’s Word written in the Old Testament and New Testament.
- ♦ Repent of our sins and receive baptism.

- ♦ Faithfully and courageously proclaim the Word of God, like John and Jesus, focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who fulfilled all Old Testament promises, types, and commandments, and who alone can bring healing and forgiveness.
- ♦ Live simply like John and Jesus, though not necessarily ascetically like John.
- ♦ Reject all claims of later religious leaders (other than the apostles and prophets of the New Testament) to be authorized spokesmen of God. This includes Mohammed, the Pope, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, and any other self-proclaimed prophets and Messiahs.

Luke 7:36–50

Truth

Revelation

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history and culture. The sinful woman showed Jesus all the courtesy that a host should extend to a guest – and much more.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is equal with God the Father in deity and dignity, and has power to forgive sins, 48.
- ♦ He was willing to eat with anyone, even with a representative of his constant critics and deadly enemies, 36.
- ♦ Though he was morally spotless, he was happy to associate with sinners who know their condition before God and were repentant, 37–39.
- ♦ He is worthy of all our worship, adoration, and self-offering, 37–38.

Sin

It includes: Sin includes self-righteousness, which focuses more on the sins of others rather than on our own sins and which manifests itself as spiritual complacency and a lack of fervent love for Christ our Savior, 39–47.

Salvation

Its substance

- ♦ Salvation as forgiveness will be reflected in a wholehearted love for Jesus, complete abasement before him, gratitude, worship, and love, 37–38, 44–47.
- ♦ The more one is aware of the heinousness and multitude of our sins, the more we shall love Jesus, who has brought us forgiveness and freedom, 40–47.
- ♦ Love does not save us; love is the sign that God has saved us through our faith, 47, 50.

Its conveyance: It comes to those who repent and truly believe in Christ as forgiveness of sins and freedom to worship him, 38, 48, 50.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Be willing to associate with sinners like ourselves.
- ♦ Ask God to show us the depth and depravity of our sins, that we might ask for and receive forgiveness and be filled with an overpowering love for Christ.
- ♦ Pronounce forgiveness of sins to all who believe in Christ and show their faith by a sacrificial love for Jesus.
- ♦ Show our gratitude for salvation by giving ourselves and all we possess to the worship and service of Christ and his kingdom.

Luke 8:1–21

Truth

Revelation

Special revelation

- ◆ Special revelation, which is contained in Scriptures, includes the spoken words of Jesus which were later written down, 1, 11, 21.
- ◆ It communicates clearly what were once hidden truths (“mysteries”) but are now revealed to God’s chosen people, 10. *See also Daniel 2:18–19, 27–30.*
- ◆ When faithfully explained by God’s messengers, this message is also the Word of God. *See Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20.*

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9–10 to connect the rejection of his message by most of the people who heard him with the ancient Israelites, whose worship of idols had made them incapable of hearing God’s Word.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is the universal and cosmic King who rules over the entire created order, 1, 10.
- ◆ He is entirely sovereign over who will be given understanding, faith, and grace to hear the Word of God, receive it with faith, and bear fruit in their lives, 10.
- ◆ His Word exposes the inner character of people as they respond to it in different ways, 11–17.

His goodness

- ◆ He reveals his will and his ways, especially his salvation of sinners, through the life, ministry, and miracles of Jesus, 1–2.
- ◆ He demonstrated his pity by healing people and delivering them from demons through Jesus, 2.

- ♦ He revealed the way of salvation through the preached (and later written down) Word of God through Jesus and then his chosen messengers, 1, 10, 15.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the unique herald of God's saving news and power, 1–2, 4.
- ♦ He possessed divine power to heal and cast out demons, 2.
- ♦ In his humanity, he was the son of Mary and older half-brother of several brothers and sisters, 19–20. *See Mark 6:3.*
- ♦ He identifies with those who hear and do his words as his family, 21.

The People of God

Their identity: The true people of God are those who

- ♦ Follow Jesus, 2
- ♦ Love each other and show this love by practical assistance, 3
- ♦ Hear the Word of God with a good heart, 15
- ♦ Believe and obey the Word, 15, 21
- ♦ See other believers as brothers and sisters in Christ, 21

Note: There are many who profess to be Christians, but are not; in time, their lack of true faith will show up in apostasy during times of trial or simply lives that do not reflect the presence of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, 13–14.

Creation

Its nature: Since God created the world, the entire universe, in all its parts and in all its systems of growth, reflect his character and his ways of doing things. Thus, Jesus can use agricultural parables to illustrate the truths of the Kingdom of God, 11–15.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Falling away from Christ in times of trial and temptation, 13
- ♦ Allowing oneself to be so preoccupied with the “cares, riches, and worries of life” that one becomes unfruitful as a professing Christian, 14

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation comes through faith, 12.

Its benefits

- ♦ It may bring healing, and it will allow deliverance from demons, 2.
- ♦ It incorporates us into the universal family of God, 21.
- ♦ It will be manifested by a life of “hearing” the Word of God and heeding it, as shown by “fruits” of Christian character, including giving for the spread of the gospel, 3, and perseverance, 15.

The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, all will be made manifest, including the hidden secrets of the heart, 17.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Preach the Word of God widely, since it is the only means by which people can be saved.
- ♦ Expect different kinds of reception to the message of the gospel; it seems that most people will either not accept it or will only seem to have received it.
- ♦ Support the work of those who proclaim the Word of God.
- ♦ Pray for people who are ill or oppressed by demons.
- ♦ Be careful how we hear the Word, lest we be either inattentive or distracted by other things.
- ♦ Do not imagine that all who seem to believe in Jesus are really born again but should wait to see moral transformation as the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- ♦ See other believers in Christ as our spiritual family.

Luke 8:22–39

Truth

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament), 28; Son, 28; and the Holy Spirit.

His greatness

- ♦ As Creator, he rules every aspect of his creation, including the winds and the waves, 24–25.
- ♦ He is Most High God, 28.
- ♦ As King, he rules even the rebellious evil spirits, 32–33.

His goodness

- ♦ He protects his faithful servants from dangers at sea, 22–24. *See also Psalm 107:23–32; and Jonah 1:10–15.*
- ♦ He delivers people from possession by evil spirits, 39.

Christ

His person

- ♦ As man, he is Jesus, son of Mary, who could get tired and fall asleep amid a storm, 23, 28.
- ♦ As God, he is the divine Son of God Most High, equal with God in power and deity, 2.

His work

- ♦ He is thus able to do the works of God, such as stilling the storm and commanding demons, 25, 39.
- ♦ As the divine–human Messiah, he came to destroy the works of the devil and of all the devil’s evil servants, 28. *See Mark 1:24 and 1 John 3:8.*

Spiritual Beings

Satan and evil spirits

- ♦ Evil spirits, who are perhaps fallen angels, oppress and even possess people, doing them harm and resisting all that is good, especially the saving work of Jesus, 26–29.
- ♦ They recognize Jesus as God’s Son, but they do not worship him with love and holy reverence, but with craven fear, 28.
- ♦ When demons possess a person, they can speak through him and give him supernatural strength, 29.
- ♦ They can also cause great damage to animals which they possess, 32–33.

Sin

It includes: Sin includes valuing property more than people, like the Gadarene men, 38.

Salvation

Its purpose: Salvation is intended also to propel us into the world to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, 39.

Its conveyance: It may come to us through deliverance from danger, 24.

Its benefits

- ♦ Deliverance from demons, 35.
- ♦ Restoration of physical and mental health, 35.
- ♦ A desire to be with Jesus, 38.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect to encounter troubles and even danger as we follow Jesus, 22–23.
- ♦ Do not be afraid when troubles and danger come, for Jesus is with us and will protect us from harm if he wants us to remain alive to serve him, 25. *See Matthew 28:20.* As a saintly Bahamian woman said, “With him in the boat, we do not fear the storm.”

- ♦ Expel a demon in the name of Jesus when we encounter a demon–possessed person. Some believe we should first learn the demon’s name, so as to have power over him. But there is no precedent for engaging in a long dialogue with a demon.
- ♦ Tell our family, friends, and neighbors about what God has done for us through Jesus Christ. *See Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46–48; John 20:21; and Acts 1:8.*

Luke 8:40–56

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms

- ♦ Biblical revelation, reflecting the symmetry and beauty of God’s redemptive acts, uses literary structure to convey God’s Word to us.
- ♦ Here, the parallels between the woman healed and the girl restored to life point to the variety and consistency of Jesus’ ministry as Savior.
 - The woman’s illness had lasted twelve years; the girl died at the age of twelve.
 - For both, the situation seemed hopeless.
 - Touch was involved in each case.
 - The woman came to Jesus; Jesus went to the little girl, but only after her father went to Jesus and begged for help.
 - Both stories show the special interest that Luke – and the Jesus whom he portrays – had in demonstrating God’s love for women.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He has power to heal incurable illnesses, 43–44.
- ♦ He has the power to raise the dead to life, 53–55.

His goodness: In Jesus, he displayed his special care for women and children, regardless of class or status.

Christ

His work

- ♦ As God’s Son, he carried God’s power to heal and to give new life, 45–46, 54–55.
- ♦ He took time in the middle of an urgent mission to identify and speak peace to the person whose touch had opened the flow of healing power from him, 41–48.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes from Christ, through faith in him, 48.
- ♦ It can come as healing or even resurrection from the dead, both of which point to the final healing of our bodies when Christ returns. *See Philippians 3:21.*
- ♦ It also comes as a word of peace and blessing from God through Jesus, 48.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Pray to God to heal us through faith in Christ, though we should also use medical means when necessary.
- ♦ Take even the most apparently hopeless situation to God, trusting that he is able to bring “life” from “death,” physically, mentally, relationally, and spiritually.
- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to reveal his power and his pity to us.
- ♦ Preach this beautiful message of hope for the hopeless.

Luke 9:1–17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages alluding to or referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Here, the people's reference to Elijah echoes the expectation that "Elijah" would come as a messenger of the Messianic era, 8. *See from Malachi 3:1.*
- ◆ Jesus' feeding of five thousand men and their families, 12–17, recalls the miraculous feeding of God's people in the wilderness and Elisha's feeding of one hundred men. *See Exodus 16–18 and 2 Kings 4:42–44.*

Its content: The message of the kingdom of God is also a "gospel," that is, good news, for those who know they are sinners in need of salvation, 6.

Its source

- ◆ The twelve Apostles (excluding Judas, who was replaced by Matthias, and including Paul), possess unique authority as bearers of revelation.
 - They were chosen by Jesus, 6:13, and given authority to preach, to heal, and to cast out demons, 1–2.
 - They heard his teaching, saw his miracles, witnessed his sinless life, innocent death, resurrection, and ascension, and they replicated his works of power as authenticating signs of their authority, 6. *See also 2 Corinthians 11:12 and Hebrews 2:3–4.*
 - Their spoken words, like those of Jesus, carried divine authority, 1–2, as do their written record of Jesus in the Gospels and their interpretation of Christ's person and work in the epistles.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to enable his messengers to heal illnesses and to cast out demons, 1, 6.
- ◆ He rules as King over the world, 2, 11.

- ♦ He has the power to create something out of nothing, or to multiply a little into a lot, 13–17.

His goodness

- ♦ He heals the sick, delivers those possessed by demons, and announces the good news of salvation through Christ, 2, 6, 11.
- ♦ He provides for his people even in desperate circumstances, 12–17.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He has divine authority to commission his apostles to replicate his ministries of preaching, healing, and casting out demons, 1–2, 6.
- ♦ He is greater than the greatest of the prophets, including Elijah and John the Baptist, 7–9.

His work: He demonstrated his own pity and divine power by preaching to the crowds, healing them, and then feeding them, 11–17.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are those who

- ♦ Obey his summons to carry the gospel
- ♦ Rely on God's power to bring healing and deliverance to believers
- ♦ Hunger for his Word
- ♦ Minister to the needs of followers of Christ

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Persecuting God's messengers, 9
- ♦ Not believing that Jesus is good and great enough to provide for his people, 12

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation can come as healing, deliverance from evil spirits, and provision of our daily needs; these are all, however, subordinate to, and only signs of, the good news of the gospel, by which we enter the kingdom of God, 2, 7, 11.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Hear and heed the words of the Apostles, for they carry the authority of Christ himself.
- ♦ Take the message of the gospel to the whole world. *See Matthew 28:18-20.*
- ♦ Trust God to heal, to deliver from demons, and to provide for us, even in a “wilderness.”
- ♦ Do all we can to meet the practical needs of those who come to hear the Word of God.

Luke 9:18–36

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones. This passage alludes to

- ♦ John the Baptist, 19
- ♦ Moses, Elijah, and the other Old Testament prophets, 19, 30
- ♦ The idea of an Anointed One, 20; *see Psalm 2:2 and Daniel 9:26.*
- ♦ The Son of Man, 26
- ♦ The Exodus from Egypt, here translated as “departure,” 31
- ♦ The Feast of Tabernacles, 33; *see Leviticus 23:34–42.*
- ♦ The cloud of God’s presence, 34; *see Exodus 14:19–20; 19:16; 24:15–18.*
- ♦ God’s words to a beloved son, 35; *see Luke 3:22; Psalm 2:7; and Isaiah 42:1.*

Its content

- ♦ Biblical revelation includes passages that are hard to understand, and about which godly interpreters differ.
- ♦ Jesus’ statement in 9:27 has been taken to refer to (a) his transfiguration on the mountain immediately following in Luke, with the promise that some standing there would see this event and its references to “glory,” 31–32; (b) his second coming in glory to judge the world. The first is more likely.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 26, 27, 35.

His greatness

- ♦ He rules as King over the universe, 27.
- ♦ He possesses divine glory, symbolized in the cloud which enveloped Jesus and the three disciples, 34–35. *See Exodus 13:21; 19:16.*

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus to be his Christ, his anointed one, to save us from our sins, 20.
- ♦ He gives salvation to those who follow Christ, 24.

- ♦ He revealed himself to chosen messengers, 20, 35.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ of God, 20.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied in Daniel, 22. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is the Suffering Servant prophesied in Isaiah, 22. *See Isaiah 53:1–12.*
- ♦ He is the coming Judge who shares the glory of the Father, 26.
- ♦ He is the God–man who constantly communed with his Father in prayer, 28–29.
- ♦ He is the glorious Son of God whose deity was temporarily veiled while he was on earth, except for this splendid transfiguration, 29, 32.
- ♦ He is the true Prophet and Savior, following upon and superseding Moses and Elijah, bringing both a new Exodus from bondage to sin, a new covenant, and new and final revelation, 30–31.
- ♦ He is God’s beloved Son and bearer of God’s own words, 35. *See Deuteronomy 18:15.*

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God include the saints of the Old Testament who believed God’s Word and followed him in obedience, 30.

The Last Things

Christ’s return

- ♦ Jesus will one day come in his glory, which is the glory of the Father and of the angels.
- ♦ He will then judge all men, rewarding faithful followers and sending faithless people to eternal death, 26.

Our future

- ♦ After we die, go to be with God, possessing a new kind of life, 30.
- ♦ It is unclear whether at that time we also receive new bodies, or whether this appearance of Moses and Elijah is a unique exception to the general reality that only our souls come to life. Elijah was taken directly to heaven by God, but Moses died and was buried. *See 2 Kings 2:11 and Deuteronomy 34:6.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Confess that Jesus is the Christ, the unique Son of God, to be saved, 24.
- ♦ Do not be swayed by what most people think about Jesus.
- ♦ Deny ourselves and follow Jesus, to death if necessary, 23.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament to understand the New Testament and God's plan of salvation centered on Jesus Christ.
- ♦ Worship Christ, not any human figure, no matter how great or holy.
- ♦ Listen to Jesus, God's unique messenger of truth; "hearing" also includes "heeding," that is, obedience.

Luke 9:37–45

Truth

Revelation

Its source: Revelation comes from God's chosen messengers, among whom Jesus Christ is supreme, but it is understood and received only by those whose eyes God opens, 45.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He can deliver people who are possessed by demons, 42.
- ♦ He possesses intrinsic majesty that is displayed in works of power and of pity, 43.

His goodness

- ♦ He delivers people from the power of evil spirits, 42.
- ♦ He sent his only Son to be delivered into the hands of sinful men and killed as a sacrifice so that we might be delivered from our sins, 44. *See Romans 5:8; 8:32.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He bears the majestic power of God that enables him to cast out demons, 42–43.
- ♦ He felt normal human frustration, and perhaps divine displeasure, at the unbelief of those who had been with him and seen his miracles, 41.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man, 44. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is also the prophesied Suffering Servant, 44. *See Isaiah 53.*
- ♦ As God, he could perceive the thoughts of men's hearts, 47.
- ♦ He identifies himself with the lowest disciples and with his chosen messengers, 48.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ In our fallen state, we are slow to believe God's power and his pity as revealed in Christ, 40–41.
- ♦ Unless God opens the eyes of our hearts, we are slower to understand why the divine Son of God should have to suffer for us, 45.
- ♦ We tend to compete for power and prestige, 46.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust in the power of Christ to deliver people demons if we call upon his name.
- ♦ Ask God to open the eyes of our hearts to behold the greatness of his sacrifice for us in Christ and the love that this displays. *See Ephesians 3:14–21.*
- ♦ Do not strive for power or position or prestige but seek to imitate the humility and lowliness of Christ. *See Philippians 2:1–11.*
- ♦ Imitate the humility and teachability of little children in our attitude towards Jesus.
- ♦ See Christ in the humblest of believers and in his faithful ministers; we should also receive children with gentleness and love, as Jesus did.

Luke 9:49–62

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages alluding to or referring to earlier ones. Here, the disciples' suggestion that they call down fire on those who do not receive Jesus recalls the action of Elijah. *See 2 Kings 1:10–12.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He can destroy his enemies with consuming fire, 54.
- ♦ He rules over the universe as King, 60, 62.

His goodness

- ♦ He exercises patience towards those who do not receive his messengers, including Jesus (Elijah's action was a manifestation of God's holy anger against those who sought to destroy the prophet of God), 53–55.
- ♦ He sent his Son as the divine–human Son of Man to save sinners, 56.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man predicted by Daniel. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He lived humbly, simply, and in a self–sacrificial manner among us, to preach the kingdom of God widely, 58, 60. *See Luke 4:43–44.*
- ♦ He has the power to cast out demons merely through faith in his name, 49.
- ♦ He demands complete and total allegiance and loyalty from his followers, 59–62.

His work: He came to offer himself as a sacrifice in Jerusalem, 51, 53. *See Luke 9:22, 44.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Sectarianism, that is, not recognizing that those outside of our group may also be true disciples of Christ, 49–50
- ♦ Rejection of Jesus as Suffering Servant, 53
- ♦ Hostility and even violence against those who reject Christ, 54–55
- ♦ Allowing anything, even family ties, to keep us from following Christ, 57–62
Note: This does not mean we should abandon our responsibilities to our parents, spouse, and children, but that following Christ should come first in our priorities. See Ephesians 5:22–6:4.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Recognize as brothers and sisters all who trust in Christ alone and who do good works in his name. This does not mean that we overlook heresy or acknowledge false teachers as true messengers of God. *See Galatians 1:6–10 and 2 John 9–11.*
- ♦ We should never act in a hostile way towards those who do not accept Christ as Lord and Savior.
- ♦ We should try to live simple lives, devoting all our resources to the proclamation of the kingdom of God.
- ♦ We should put following Christ at the top of our priorities, and not allow anything or anyone to keep us from following him completely.
- ♦ We should ask God to give us perseverance in following Christ.

Luke 10:1–20

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones. Here, reference is made to

- ♦ The kingdom of God, a pervasive theme in the Old Testament, 9; *see Psalm 95:3; 96:10; 97:1; 98:9; 99:1; 103:19.*
- ♦ The destruction of Sodom for its wickedness, 12; *see Genesis 19:24–29.*
- ♦ The destruction of Tyre and Sidon, 13; *see Isaiah 23:1–18; Jeremiah 25:22; 47:4; Ezekiel 26:1–28:3; Joel 3:4–8; and Amos 1:9.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is Lord of the harvest, that is, the one who rules over the actions and results of preaching the gospel, 2.
- ♦ He is King over all the universe, 9, 11.
- ♦ He is Judge of the world, 13–15.
- ♦ He has power over demons, 17, 19.
- ♦ He rules from heaven, 20.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus, his only Son, to bring the kingdom of God, 1, 11, 16.
- ♦ He warns sinners of impending judgment, 11–16.
- ♦ He gives power to his servants to cast out demons in the name of Jesus, 17, 19.
- ♦ He grants eternal life to those who trust him and follow Jesus, 20.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He personally embodies the kingdom – that is, the reign – of God, 1, 11.
- ♦ He identifies with his faithful servants and messengers, so that to receive them is to receive him, 1, 16.

He has authority to pronounce judgment on places and people that reject him and his messengers, 13–16.

His work

- ♦ He sends his messengers before him to announce his coming kingdom, both in history past and in the future, 2, 9.
- ♦ He has power over demons, having decisively defeated Satan when he began his earthly ministry, 18. *See John 12:31 and Revelation 12:9–12.*
- ♦ He grants authority over demons and Satan to his messengers, 19.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ He and his demons seek to obstruct the advance of the kingdom of God and to harm God's people, especially his messengers, 19.
- ♦ However, he has been defeated by Christ already, 18.
- ♦ He does not power over those who resist him in faith in the name of Jesus, 18–20. *See also James 4:7.*

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes through faith in Christ and includes power over demons and Satan, 19, but especially includes membership in the kingdom of heaven, 20.

The Last Things

The last days

- ♦ The last times began when Jesus inaugurated his earthly ministry; it was then that the kingdom of God began to manifest itself with power on earth in a new way, and when Satan was thrown out of heaven and down to earth. *See notes above.*
- ♦ At the end of time, Jesus will return to judge the world, and will punish all who have rejected him, his messengers, and his gospel, 13–16.
- ♦ They will be cast into hell forever, 15.
- ♦ The faithful followers of Christ will enter into eternal life in the kingdom, 20.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Send out messengers of the gospel to every place and support them with our prayers and financial gifts. *See Luke 8:2–3.* They should follow Jesus' instructions for itinerant evangelists.
- ♦ Pray for God to send out gospel preachers into all the world.
- ♦ Be open to God's leading in our life to be sent to preach the gospel elsewhere.
- ♦ Seek to be messengers of Christ wherever we are.
- ♦ Live simply, as Jesus and his messengers did.
- ♦ See ourselves as pilgrims on the earth, sent by Jesus to proclaim the good news of the coming kingdom.
- ♦ Warn people who reject the gospel that there will be a coming judgment.
- ♦ Firmly resist Satan and his demons, and even cast out demons when necessary.
- ♦ Rejoice more in our salvation from wrath and death than in our ability to serve God.
- ♦ Set our hope entirely upon the coming kingdom of Christ.

Luke 10:21–42

Truth

Revelation

General revelation: General revelation cannot bring us to know God the Father or God the Son, for not even Israel's prophets and kings could know God this way, 21–24.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ The prophets and kings of the Old Testament, 24
- ♦ The Law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments and the summary and expansion of them in Deuteronomy 6 and Leviticus 19.
- ♦ The priests and the Levites established in the Mosaic covenant, 31–32; *see Exodus 6:9, 25; 28:41; 29:1; 38:21; 19:22, 24; Leviticus 1:1–11.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history and the culture of the time. Jews did not have dealings with Samaritans, for they considered them to be apostate. *See John 4:9.*

Its source: Biblical revelation comes from God, through Jesus, to those whom God has chosen, 21–24.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father, 21; Son, 22; and Holy Spirit, 21.

His greatness

- ♦ He is Lord of heaven and earth, 21.
- ♦ He holds full and total authority and sovereignty over the choice of who will receive saving revelation, 21–24.
- ♦ He possesses all things in heaven and earth, 22.
- ♦ He lives forever, 25.
- ♦ He is the source of all life, 25.
- ♦ He is our God, 27.

His goodness

- ♦ He has revealed himself as Father, first of Jesus, his eternal Son, and then to the followers of Jesus, 21–22.
- ♦ He has also revealed himself as Son, the God–man Jesus Christ, 22.
- ♦ He grants eternal life to those who obey him, 25 (which is to say, to Jesus alone, as the only obedient man; but he gives the status of righteousness to all who are in Christ).
- ♦ He is love, and deserves and demands our love, 27.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the eternal Son of God, to whom God has given “all things,” 22.
- ♦ Thus, he is in some sense subordinate to the Father, though fully equal in deity, power, glory, and all divine attributes, 22.
- ♦ He is the one with authority to reveal himself to those whom he wills, 22.
- ♦ He is Jesus, the truly human God–man, 39.
- ♦ He is the one who deserves all our love and affection, 41–42.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Self–justification, 29
- ♦ Neglecting to care for those whom we encounter, 31–32
- ♦ Being so busy with service to Jesus and others that we become distracted and irritable, 40–41
- ♦ Losing a single–minded focus on Jesus, 40–42
- ♦ Self–pity, 40
- ♦ Judging and complaining about others, 40

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes from God, through Jesus Christ, in the form of personal knowledge of God as Father and Jesus as his only Son, our Savior, 21–22.

Its benefits

- ♦ Intimate communion with Jesus through hearing his words, 39, 42
- ♦ Vindication from Jesus, 42

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for revealing himself to us in Jesus Christ.
- ♦ Know the Old Testament law, as well as the New Testament summary and interpretation of it.
- ♦ Ask God to enable us to love him with all our being and our neighbor as ourselves.
- ♦ Meet the practical needs of those whom we encounter as well as we can.
- ♦ Serve the Lord and his people but not to the point where we become distracted, concerned with too many things, judgmental of others, and neglectful of waiting silently upon the Lord to hear his Word.
- ♦ Take time each day to sit before the Lord, reading and hearing the Bible and meditating upon what it says.

Luke 11:1–13

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is an integrated whole.

- ♦ Each passage of the Bible can and should be interpreted according to its context.
- ♦ Parallel passages are part of the large context, especially the three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) with each other.
- ♦ The “good things” which Jesus tells us to ask for from the Father in Matthew 7:11 are best understood in the light of Jesus’ promise that God the Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who persevere in asking, seeking, and knocking in prayer for him, 13.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, 2, 13; Son (Jesus, the “Lord”), 1; and Holy Spirit, 13.

His greatness

- ♦ He dwells in heaven, where he rules as King over the entire universe, 2, 13.
- ♦ He possesses all things and can give what he wants to those who ask him in faith, 3–4, 9–13.
- ♦ He has the power to effect his will, which includes deliverance of his people from sin, Satan, and all evil, 4.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus to save us from our sins, to give us access to God the Father, and to teach us how to pray, 1–4.
- ♦ He reveals himself as a generous Father, 12–13.
- ♦ He is holy, 2.
- ♦ He forgives the sins of those who repent and believe in Jesus, 4.
- ♦ He protects his people from sin and evil, 4.

Christ

His person: He is Jesus, the Lord, the God-man, 1.

His work

- ♦ He maintained the closest possible intimacy with God the Father through constant prayer, 1 (a favorite theme of Luke's).
- ♦ He revealed the Father and his gracious will to us, 2-13.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ In our fallen state, we are evil to the core, 13.
- ♦ And yet, still bearing the image of God, we are able to reflect some of God's goodness to others, 5-13.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes from God the Father, through Jesus his Son, to those who believe his Word.
- ♦ It comes as the privilege of knowing God as Father, 2, 13.

Its benefits

- ♦ Access to him by prayer, 2-13
- ♦ A renewed heart that seeks above all to see God's name glorified, his kingdom (rule) come, and his will be done on earth, 2-4
- ♦ Daily provision of our material needs, 3
- ♦ Forgiveness of sins, 4
- ♦ The power and desire to forgive those who have offended us (indeed, this is an essential mark of those who have been saved), 4
- ♦ Deliverance from overpowering temptation, the power of Satan ("the evil one"), and evil itself, 4
- ♦ The supreme gift - the Holy Spirit, who is God himself, 13

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, he will usher in the kingdom of God on earth, where the will of God - that is, righteousness - will be fully done, 2. *See 2 Peter 3:13.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Pray daily to God the Father, in the name of Jesus his Son (see John 16:23–24); there is no biblical warrant for praying to the Holy Spirit.
- ♦ Pray according to the Lord's Prayer, that is, not only using its words but incorporating its categories in all our prayers.
- ♦ Ask first for God's glory, kingdom, and will to be manifest on earth.
- ♦ Depend on him to give us our daily provisions.
- ♦ Pray to be delivered from overpowering temptation and from Satan's power.
- ♦ Persist and persevere in prayer, not giving up when God does not answer.
- ♦ Ask, above all, for the Holy Spirit – his fullness; fruit; illumination of the heart to know God, his power, and especially his love; his power to be witnesses of Christ; his guidance and empowerment in prayer; his strength; his communion (with the Father and the Son); his gifts for service; etc.

Luke 11:14–36

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones. Here, Jesus (through Luke) refers to the prophet Jonah and to King Solomon and the Queen of the South who came to see him, 29–32.

Its content and source

- ♦ Biblical revelation came to individual authors whom God inspired to highlight various aspects of God’s truth. Luke here shows his interest in salvation for non-Jews, 31–32.
- ♦ Biblical revelation came through
 - Jesus and his preaching, 28
 - The prophets like Jonah, 29–30, 32
 - The wisdom of Solomon (written in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes), 31
- ♦ Biblical revelation gives light to the eyes of the heart and brings light to the whole body, 33–36.
- ♦ Those without God’s revelation are in total darkness, 34–36.

Its veracity: Biblical revelation, including the Old Testament, is true and historically reliable, as Jesus’ reference to the preaching of Jonah and the journey of the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon testify, 29–32.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He rules as King over all the universe, 20.
- ♦ His power (here, “finger”) overcomes all opposition from Stan and his demons, 20.

His goodness

- ♦ In Jesus, he brings deliverance from demons and from Satan, 17–23.
- ♦ He revealed his Word through Jesus, 28.
- ♦ He sends prophets to warn of coming judgment, 29, 32.
- ♦ He sends men like Solomon to teach us wisdom from God, 31.

- ♦ He is light, reveals his light through Jesus, and gives light to the spiritually blind, 33–36. *See 1 John 1:5 and John 1:4–5.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He knew the thoughts of people’s hearts, 17.
- ♦ He is the divine –human Son of Man spoken of by Daniel, 30. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ As a prophet of God, he warned sinners to flee God’s judgment, 29–30, 32.
- ♦ As God’s Wisdom incarnate, he spoke words of wisdom, like Solomon, 31. *See 1 Kings 1:1–9; 2 Chronicles 9:1–8; and Colossians 2:3.*
- ♦ As the King of Kings, he is greater than King Solomon, 31.
- ♦ As the last Prophet, he is greater than Jonah and all the prophets, 32.

His work

- ♦ He cast out demons by the power of God, 20.
- ♦ He has “bound” the strong man, Satan, 22.
- ♦ He spoke the Word of God, 28.

The People of God

Their identity: Since Jesus’ coming, the people of God are not all Jews, but all those who hear the Word of God and, through faith, obey it, 28.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ Satan is strong, but Jesus is stronger, and at his coming, he defeated Satan.
- ♦ He “bound” Satan so that he can no longer rule unopposed on earth.
- ♦ The simplest disciple can now resist Satan and can even expel demons, 21–23. *See James 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:8–9.*
- ♦ There is, therefore, not need or warrant to “bind” Satan or demons with prayers in this life; he is already bound.

The Last Things

The Kingdom of God

- ◆ When Jesus began his public ministry, he inaugurated the kingdom of God on earth, bringing the power of God to defeat Satan and his demons, 20.
- ◆ Satan was then “bound” and stripped of his power to control God’s people or to keep the Gentiles in bondage to error and evil spirits, 22. *See Revelation 20:1–3.*
- ◆ Christ will return later and bring the kingdom of God in all its fullness, establishing a new heaven and a new earth. *See 2 Peter 3:13.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not fear the power of Satan or of demons, but rely on the power of God through faith in Christ to resist Satan’s temptations and to cast out demons.
- ◆ Be aware of Satan’s strength, however, and be alert to his devices. *See 1 Peter 5:7–9.*
- ◆ Use logic when necessary to show the error of those who attack the gospel.
- ◆ When a demon is cast out, we should do all we can to lead a person to trust in Christ, so that he may remain free.
- ◆ Wage spiritual warfare only as the Bible directs, not using human traditions of methods such as “binding” a demon or demons in a place or person.
- ◆ Hear the Word of God and keep it.
- ◆ Allow the light of God’s revelation in Christ to permeate our entire being and govern all our thoughts and actions.

Luke 11:37–54

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Luke (and Jesus) refer to tithing, commanded in the Old Testament but to the extent mandated by the Pharisees, 42; *see Leviticus 27:30–32*.
- ♦ The slayings of Abel and of Zechariah, 50; *see Genesis 4:8 and 2 Chronicles 24:20*.
- ♦ The altar in the Temple, 51

Its roots in history

- ♦ Biblical revelation is set within the history, culture, and customs of the time.
 - In Jesus' day, the Pharisees were a strict sect among the Jews who sought to expand the Law of Moses in extremely detailed ways and to require others to do so.
 - The Scribes were teachers of the Mosaic Law and of the vast body of tradition that had accumulated through the centuries.
 - These two groups imposed legal burdens on people, such as various washings and tithing of even minute herbs.
- ♦ Biblical revelation is accurate as history.
 - Jesus' words show that Abel was, indeed, one of the first two sons of Adam and Eve at "the foundation of the world," and that humanity is not therefore very old and descended from apes, 50.
 - Zechariah's murder was recorded in 2 Chronicles, the last book in the Hebrew canon of Jesus' day.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is almighty Creator, who made all things, including both the things "outside" a cup and those "inside" it, 40.
- ♦ He sees the heart, not just the outward actions, 39–40.

- ♦ He is a powerful judge, able to use pagan nations like the Romans to punish his enemies, 51.

His goodness

- ♦ He is loving and just, and requires that of all mankind, 42.
- ♦ He is patient, sending one messenger after another to his people, even though many of them were killed, 49.
- ♦ He is just, for he will surely punish those who reject and harm his messengers, 50 (referring probably to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D.).

Christ

His person

- ♦ He accepted dinner invitations from Pharisees, even though he knew that they were his enemies, 37.
- ♦ He is the incarnate Wisdom of God, who sent prophets in the Old Testament and apostles in the New Testament to reveal the truth of God, 49. *See Proverbs 1:20.*

His work

- ♦ He did not always conform to the extra-biblical regulations of the Pharisees, 38.
- ♦ He was bold in rebuking prominent people when they sinned, 39–52.
- ♦ He was and can read the thoughts and intentions of men's hearts, 39, 43.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Requiring people to keep laws that go beyond what the Bible commands, 39–49
- ♦ Greed and wickedness, 39
- ♦ Focusing on outward actions but neglecting the main things, which are justice and the love of God (love for God and reflecting God's love to others), 39, 40; *see Micah 6:7–8.*
- ♦ Loving public honor, 43
- ♦ Hypocrisy, not living according to the standards one preaches to others, 46
- ♦ Giving honor to God's prophets after they are dead but not receiving God's messengers when they are alive, 47–48

- ♦ Teaching the Bible in such a way that others can't enter God's kingdom, even while you are also kept outside of it by your wrong interpretation, 52
- ♦ Refusing to accept rebuked from Christ, 53–54
- ♦ Conspiring to silence God's messengers, 53–54 (this happens in churches today!)

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Beware of accepting all that religious leaders teach; instead, we should examine everything by the Scriptures to see what God requires of us.
- ♦ Focus on inward holiness without neglecting outward purity.
- ♦ Give alms to the needy, 41.
- ♦ Seek justice and God's love more than minute observance of religious rules.
- ♦ Strive to be what we seem to be and to be consistent in our inward and outward life.
- ♦ Do not lay religious or moral burdens on others beyond what God does in the Scriptures, especially the New Testament.
- ♦ Boldly rebuke religious leaders who falsify God's Word and lay unnecessary burdens on God's people.

Luke 12:1–12

Truth

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father (“God”), 5, 8–9; Son (“Son of Man” here), 10; and Holy Spirit, 10–12.

His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient, knowing everything, including the thoughts of the heart and deeds done in darkness, 1–3.
- ♦ He has power to cast soul and body into hell, 5.
- ♦ He rules the entire universe with particular providence, governing even the fall of a sparrow from the sky and numbering even the hairs of our head, 6–7.
- ♦ He is surrounded and worshiped by a multitude of angels, 8–9.

His goodness

- ♦ He is just and righteous and will expose all that is evil, 1–3.
- ♦ He will punish unrepentant evildoers in hell, 5.
- ♦ He cares for each of his people and watches over all that happens to them, 6–7.
- ♦ He will reward those who bravely testify to their faith in Jesus Christ, 8.
- ♦ He will forgive those who speak against the Son 10.
- ♦ He will not deny himself but will hold guilty those who call his saving work in Christ evil, which is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, 10.
- ♦ He will teach his people what to say when they are brought before magistrates for their faith in Christ, 11–12.

Christ

His person: He is the divine–human Son of Man who revealed God’s will to us and who will testify before God and his angels on behalf of all those who have faithfully borne witness to him, 8–10.

Holy Spirit

His work: He resides within born-again believers in Christ and teaches them what to say when they are persecuted, 12.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Hypocrisy, 1-3
- ♦ Fearing men more than God, 4-5
- ♦ Fearing the death of the body more than the eternal torment of body and soul in hell, 4-5
- ♦ Not believing in God's care for each of us and all that happens to us, 6-7
- ♦ Denying Christ before men out of fear of death, 9
- ♦ Blaspheming the Holy Spirit by calling the good works of God in Christ evil, 10

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to us from God through Christ as deliverance from hell, 5.

Its benefits

- ♦ Knowing God's fatherly care all our days, 6-7
- ♦ Final vindication before God and the angels when Christ returns, 8
- ♦ Forgiveness of sins, 10
- ♦ The inner teaching of the Spirit when we are brought to trial for our faith in Christ, 12

The Last Things

Christ's return

- ♦ When Christ returns, all that has been thought, said, and done will be revealed, 1-3.
- ♦ When Christ returns, the faithful followers of Christ will enter into eternal life with God and the angels, 8.
- ♦ When Christ returns, the unrepentant wicked will be cast into eternal hell, 5.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask God to give us integrity of life, so that what we think, say, and do in secret will be consistent with what we say in public.
- ♦ Do not fear death or suffering for the sake of Christ; rather, we should fear God.
- ♦ Expect to suffer persecution for our faith in Christ.
- ♦ Trust God to care for us in every way all the days of our lives.
- ♦ Trust that the Spirit will give us words to say when we are called to give an account for our faith in Christ.

Luke 12:13–34

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus refers to the wealth and glory of King Solomon, 27. *See 1 Kings 10:4–7.*

Its content: Biblical revelation includes many instances of logical argument. Here, Jesus argues “from the lesser to the greater” several times, 22–28.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient, knowing the thoughts of our heart, 19–20.
- ♦ He knows all that we need for our daily life, 30.
- ♦ He is generous and requires that we be generous to others also, 20–21.
- ♦ He has authority to cast a soul into hell at any time, that is, he has authority over life and death, 20.
- ♦ As Creator, he sustains the entire world order, 24, 27.
- ♦ He rules as King over the entire creation, 31.
- ♦ He is transcendent, living in heaven, far above this world, and indeed another sort of realm altogether, 33.

His goodness

- ♦ He punishes with eternal death all those who live only for themselves and for this world, 20–21.
- ♦ He takes care of all his creatures, even the smallest, and the most apparently transitory and worthless, 24.
- ♦ He is beautiful and manifests his beauty in all the earth, 27.
- ♦ He will take care of his people’s physical needs, 28–31.
- ♦ He reveals himself as loving Father to those who trust in Christ, 32.
- ♦ He gives his entire kingdom to the faithful followers of Jesus, 32.

- ♦ He will reward all those who have lived for him and his kingdom and not for this world, 33.

Christ

His person: As a teacher, Jesus was unsurpassed in his use of parables, similes, metaphors, and logic.

His work: He also lived according to his own doctrine, for he forsook not only heaven's glory but also earthly physical comfort and security to preach the kingdom of God.

Mankind

Our created nature: We are a union of body and soul. At death, the body is buried or otherwise destroyed, but the soul goes either to Paradise or to Hades, 20. *See Luke 12:4–5.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Living only for oneself and for material gain, comfort, and pleasure, 19
- ♦ Living only for this world and not for the next life, 20–21
- ♦ Worry about food, clothing, and other necessities of life, 22
- ♦ Seeking only after physical security and sustenance, 29
- ♦ Not seeking first the kingdom of God, 31
- ♦ Being fearful about the future, 32
- ♦ Setting our hearts on the things of this world rather than on heaven, 34

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not seek to amass more and more wealth.
- ♦ Do not seek to live for pleasure and comfort.
- ♦ Be generous with our possessions.
- ♦ Try to be “rich toward God” by giving to those in need.
- ♦ Trust that God will take care of all our material needs.
- ♦ Seek first God's kingdom.

- ♦ Be willing to get rid of all we must help the poor and to proclaim the gospel of God's kingdom.

Note: None of this implies that we should not do work for our daily bread; this is everywhere assumed and even taught in the Bible.

Luke 12:35–59

Truth

God

His greatness: He is Judge over all mankind, 58.

His goodness: He will acquit those who make peace with him by believing in Christ but punish those who do not, 58–59.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is our Master, 36, 42.
- ♦ He is the Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7:13–14, 40.
- ♦ He is our “adversary,” in that we must make peace with him now, while we can, lest he turn us over to God, the Judge, 57–59.

His work

- ♦ He will come again to reward his faithful servants and punish the unfaithful, 37–40, 48.
- ♦ He came to bring division on the earth between those who follow him and those who reject him, 49, 51–53.
- ♦ He came to be “baptized” with the fire of God’s wrath poured out upon him on the cross, 50. *See John 12:27.*
- ♦ He came willingly to suffer for us, 50.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not being ready for the sudden return of Christ, 39
- ♦ Not being faithful stewards of what Christ has given us, 45
- ♦ Abusing authority to harm others, 45
- ♦ Self-indulgence, 45
- ♦ Not doing the will of our Master, 47–48

- ♦ Not discerning the times, by not realizing that now is the time to trust in Christ and follow him, 54–56
- ♦ Failing to make peace with God through Christ now, while we can, 58–59

The Last Things

Christ's return: Jesus Christ will return suddenly and without warning; he will reward those who have been faithful stewards of all he has given them and punish those who have lived for themselves and for the moment.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Live every moment and every day as if it were our last, for (1) Christ may return at any time, and (2) we may die at any time and face the judgment of God.
- ♦ Carefully manage all that God has given us – time, health, material possessions, spiritual gifts, and the gospel itself – so that we may receive a reward when Christ returns.
- ♦ Expect even family members to reject us because of our faith in Christ and allegiance to him.
- ♦ Preach the gospel widely as much as possible, so people can have the opportunity to repent and trust in Christ.
- ♦ Warn people that Christ will return at a time they do not expect.

Luke 13:1–17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ “Daughter of Abraham” alludes to Israel as descended from Abraham, to whom God gave precious promises, 16. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation uses literary structure to convey meaning. Here, verses 1–9 illustrate the truths Jesus was teaching in the previous chapter: God’s judgment will come upon all of us suddenly and without warning, bringing disaster to those who have not repented. *See Luke 12:25–59.*

God

His greatness: He rules sovereignly over all events, including the actions of wicked rulers like Herod, 1, and the collapse of a tower, 4.

His goodness

- ♦ He warns people to repent in time to escape impending judgment, 1–9.
- ♦ He bears patiently with people who do not repent and bear the fruit of good works, 8–9. *See 2 Peter 3:9.*
- ♦ He delivers people from the effects of Satan’s evil work, 12–13, 16.

Christ

His person: As a prophet of God, he taught that all have sinned and deserve to die, 1–5.

His work: He manifested God’s goodness and power by delivering a woman who had suffered eighteen years of being crippled by an evil spirit, 10–13.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ He and his wicked demons inflict many types of suffering upon people, including debilitating illness and infirmity, 11, 16.
- ♦ He and his demons can be resisted and overcome by the power of Christ, 12–13, 16.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ In our fallen state, we are all sinners who deserve both temporal and eternal punishment, 1–9.
- ♦ We are subject to all sorts of ills, physical and spiritually, some of them the direct result of Satan's attacks, 11, 16.

Sin

Its nature: Though all are sinners, 1–5, not all particular calamities that befall us are due to particular sins; rather, they are common to all mankind, 1–5.

It includes

- ♦ A judging spirit that attributes others' sufferings to their sins, 1–5
- ♦ Not "bearing fruit," that is, not living morally productive lives, 6–8
- ♦ Caring more for human religious tradition than for the needs of people, 14
- ♦ Caring more for animals than people, 15
- ♦ Rejecting Jesus and his works because they threaten the religious establishment or our own ideas of truth, 17

Salvation

It includes

- ♦ Deliverance from demons and the physical conditions they can cause, 16
- ♦ Deliverance from the dominion of Satan and transference into the kingdom of Christ; *see Colossians 1:13*.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not think that troubles or even death come to us as a consequence of particular sins; they are part of existence in this fallen world.
- ♦ Use troubles that happen to others as warnings that we should repent of our sins while we still have time.
- ♦ Do not test God's patience by failing to live according to his revealed will, for judgment will come sooner than we expect. *See 2 Corinthians 5:10.*
- ♦ Do all we can to help those who are sick or otherwise afflicted. Help should include prayer as well as all other possible means, such as medicine.
- ♦ Do not allow our extra-biblical religious traditions to stand in the way of doing good to people.
- ♦ When God does something especially good to us or others, such as healing, we should glorify him with praise and thanksgiving.

Luke 13:18–35

Truth

Revelation

General revelation

- ♦ God's world reflects his ways, so the growth of a seed, 18–19, the influence of leaven in a loaf of bread, 20–21, and social interactions, 24–27, can all be used as illustrations of the coming of the kingdom of God and of the consequences of failing to respond to Jesus.
- ♦ This is sometimes called “general revelation,” but we must remember that the created order, though it points to God, cannot provide us with a saving knowledge of him through faith in Christ.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus here refers to the Old Testament patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) and prophets, 28.
- ♦ God's promise to gather his people from the ends of the earth, 29; *see Jeremiah 31:8.*
- ♦ God's tender care for his people, 34; *see Deuteronomy 32:11; Ruth 2:12; and Psalm 17:8; 36:7.*
- ♦ The desolation of the Temple wrought by God in judgment, 35; *see Jeremiah 12:7; 22:5; and Psalm 118:26, 35.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He rules as sovereign over a kingdom, 18, 20, 28–29.
- ♦ No wicked ruler can frustrate his plans, 32–33.

His goodness

- ♦ He is faithful, remembering his promises to Abraham and his descendants forever, 2.

- ♦ He is just, rewarding his faithful messengers with eternal fellowship with him at the Messianic banquet, 28–29.
- ♦ He is generous, inviting people of all nations into intimate fellowship with himself and his people, 29.
- ♦ He is patient, bearing with the Jews and with Jerusalem, the focal point of Jewish religious and political life, for centuries, even as they rejected his messengers, 34.
- ♦ He tenderly cares for his people, 34.
- ♦ He will eventually judge and punish those who have rejected and harmed his messengers, 35.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Lord who will judge and punish all evildoers on the last day, 27.
- ♦ He is a prophet of God, 33.
- ♦ He is God himself, pictured as a mother hen, 34.

The People of God

Their identity

- ♦ The people of God includes Jews who trusted in God and, in the New Testament, trusted in Jesus as the Messiah, 28, as well as believing Gentiles, 29.
- ♦ Unbelieving Jews do not now belong to the people of God, nor do those who merely hear Christ's teaching or associate with him (by associating with his people); these people will eventually be cast out of God's presence, 23–30.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not seeking to enter the kingdom of God by the narrow door, which is faith in Christ, 24
- ♦ Seeking to deflect God's messengers from their mission, 32
- ♦ Rejecting God's repeated calls to repentance, 34–35

The Last Things

The Kingdom of God

- ♦ It came in the coming and ministry of Jesus Christ.
- ♦ It will grow in influence as the gospel is spread throughout the world.
- ♦ It will finally come in manifest glory to this earth when Christ returns, 18–21; 24, 29, 35.
- ♦ For now, it remains “hidden,” because those who believe in Christ are relatively few and powerless, 18–21, 24.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not think that the kingdom of God can be built on earth by men; it is entirely a work of God.
- ♦ Do not seek to be powerful in this world but rely on God to influence all of society through the quiet, patient acts and words of his people.
- ♦ Strive to enter the kingdom through the narrow door, faith in Jesus.
- ♦ Do not think that mere association with Christians indicates that a person belongs to God’s people.
- ♦ Expect to be rejected and persecuted by this world, as were the prophets and Jesus.
- ♦ Eagerly await the coming of Jesus Christ.

Luke 14:1–24

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ The humbling of the proud and the exaltation of the humble, 11, recalls Proverbs, Chapter 24, 25:6–7, Ezekiel 21:26, and Luke 1:51; 3:54.
- ♦ It is repeated in Matthew 18:4, Luke 18:14, James 4:10 and 1 Peter 5:5–7. It is a major theme of Luke.
- ♦ The future messianic banquet, 21, is also a major theme in Luke, referring back to Isaiah 25:6–8 and Matthew 8:11; 25:1–10; 26:29, and which is referred to in Revelation 19:9.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He has power to heal incurable illnesses, 4.
- ♦ He has power to bring even the highest person or country down, 11. *See Isaiah 5:15 and Ezekiel 21:26.*
- ♦ He rules as Sovereign over his kingdom, 15.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus to heal the sick, 4.
- ♦ He raises up the humble, 11.
- ♦ He rewards the generous, 14.
- ♦ He invites the poor and helpless to his heavenly banquet, 21.
- ♦ He himself is humble. Though he dwells on high, he condescends to dwell also with the lowly and humble who repent of their sins. *See Isaiah 57:15.*
- ♦ In the person of Jesus, the divine Son of God, he humbled himself to be born of a woman and to live among men, and finally to go to the cross for our salvation. *See Philippians 2:3–9.*

Christ

His work

- ♦ He demonstrated the pity and the power of God by healing the sick, 4.
- ♦ He showed courage in the face of murderous opposition, 1–6.
- ♦ He exemplified the humility and the generosity towards the poor that he taught, 7–14.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Caring more for animals than for people, 5–6 (like some animal rights advocates today)
- ♦ Seeking honor for oneself, 7–8
- ♦ Befriending only those who can benefit us, 12
- ♦ Refusing God's invitations to fellowship with him through faith in Jesus Christ, 15–23

The Last Things

Christ's return

- ♦ On the last day, when Christ returns, he will
 - Exalt all those who humbled themselves, 11
 - Reward all those who have been generous to the poor, 14
 - Hold a messianic banquet for all those who trusted and followed, 15
 - Eternally expel from his presence all those who rejected Christ, 24

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Seek to do good to those who are sick and who are poor.
- ♦ Do not seek honor or social position for ourselves but seek to be humble instead.
- ♦ Make friends with, and give help to, those who have no resources and can not repay us.
- ♦ Invite all and sundry to the messianic banquet of Christ by preaching the gospel all over the world and especially to the poor and those on the margins of society.

Luke 14:25–35

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms

- ♦ Biblical revelation uses repetition, both within a particular book and through parallel passages in other books (especially the Synoptic Gospels), to emphasize certain points.
- ♦ Here, Luke records Jesus' repeated demand that his followers must fully commit to him, forsaking all, even family commitments, if necessary, to follow him, 26–27, 33. *See Luke 5:11, 28; 6:20–21; 9:23–24; 12:33; 18:22; Matthew 10:38; and Mark 8:34.*
- ♦ Biblical revelation sometimes uses absolute contrasts, such as love and hate and light and darkness, to make a dramatic point. Here, “hate” means “loves less than,” 26. *See Genesis 29:30; Deuteronomy 21:15–17; and Matthew 10:37.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus is the lamb of God who came to take away our sins by dying on a cross in our place and for our redemption, 27. *See Luke 9:22–23.*
- ♦ As divine Son of God, our only Savior, and our Lord, Jesus deserves absolute obedience and total allegiance, more than any other allegiance, 25–27, 33.

The People of God

Their identity

- ♦ The true people of God are not the crowds who associate with him, 25, but those who renounce all other relationships and “rights” to follow in his steps of self-denial and even self-sacrifice, 26–27, 33–35.
- ♦ Many appear to be Christians, but their lives do not possess the true “flavor” of a disciple of Christ, 34–35. *See Matthew 5:13.*
- ♦ They will be rejected on the Last Day, 35.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Be willing to lose precious relationships, possessions, and even our own life to be faithful followers of Christ.
- ♦ Practice self-denial daily.
- ♦ Be ready to die for being Christians, shamefully and painfully, as Jesus did on the cross.
- ♦ Tell seekers to “count the cost” before committing themselves to Christ; otherwise, they will fall away when they encounter difficulty.
- ♦ Do not assume that all who appear to be Christians as “salt” are really so, but only those whose lives have the particular “flavor” of Christians; that is, only those who forsake all to follow Jesus in a life of service and self-denial.

Luke 15

Truth

God

His greatness: He dwells in heaven, surrounded by a multitude of worshiping angels, 7, 10.

His goodness

- ♦ Through Jesus, he came to seek and to save the lost, 4, 8.
- ♦ As a rich Father, he generously gives us all things, 12.
- ♦ As loving Father, he waits for us to return to him, 20.
- ♦ As forgiving Father, he welcomes repentant sinners back into his house with great joy and honor, 20–32.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the one who came to seek and to save those who were lost, 4–5, 8. *See Luke 19:10 and Matthew 18:11.*
- ♦ As the beloved Son of God, he provides access to the Father for all those who trust in him, 20–32. *See Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:18; and 1 Peter 3:18.*
- ♦ He is the friend of sinners who, while on earth, gladly associated with all those who acknowledge their sins and turned to him with listening ears, 1–2. *See Luke 8:15.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Seeking material goods more than human relationships, 12
- ♦ Disrespect towards parents, 12
- ♦ Leaving the household of God; 13
- ♦ Wasting time and money on dissolute living, 13, 30
- ♦ Wasting our parents' money, 1
- ♦ Self-righteousness, 29
- ♦ Resentment, 29–30
- ♦ Not welcoming repentant sinners back into God's family, 28–30

Its consequences

- ♦ The loss of one's patrimony, 14
- ♦ Poverty (which is not always a consequence of sin, but often is), 14–15
- ♦ Bondage to another (including Satan), 15
- ♦ Loss of dignity, 16
- ♦ Remorse, 17
- ♦ Temporary exclusion from God's family (until we repent), 17

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes from God the Father through Jesus the Son to all those who repent of their sins and turn to him in humble contrition, 21.
- ♦ It comes as a welcome, forgiveness, restoration of fellowship, joy, and community with others in the Father's household, 22–32.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Honor our parents and use their resources well.
- ♦ Do not wander away from God's people.
- ♦ Do not waste our time, money, resources, and health on frivolous or sinful activities.
- ♦ Repent and return to God as soon as we realize what we have done wrong.
- ♦ Believe that God the Father will welcome us back into fellowship with great joy.
- ♦ Rejoice over the return of a sinner, rather than continuing to judge him for his wrongdoing.
- ♦ Do not imagine that we are better than others.
- ♦ Preach the gospel of the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ to the whole world!

Luke 16:1–13

Truth

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is the Owner and Master of the entire universe, including us and all we possess, 1–2.
- ♦ He is the unique God who demands and deserves our entire allegiance, 13.

His goodness

- He gives us material possession to manage for him, 1.
- He holds us accountable for our management of all we have, 2.
- He offers heavenly dwellings to those who are faithful, 11.
- He rewards good management of little things, 9–12.

Sin

It includes

- Wasteful management of others' property, 1
- Lying about accounts, 5–7 (It is not clear whether this steward was reducing people's debt or correcting the amount to the original figure.)
- Using material wealth without regard to eternal consequences, 9
- Unrighteous use of material wealth, 10
- Not being faithful in little things, 12
- Serving material wealth (Mammon) more than God, 13

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, he will judge everyone, both living and dead. All will have to give an account for what they have done in the body. *See 2 Corinthians 5:10.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- We should be honest in all our dealings with others' money and possessions.
- Use material possessions to help others, so that God may reward us with eternal blessings.
- Be faithful even in little things.
- Guard all temptations to put money and possessions before God.

Luke 16:14–31

Truth

Revelation

Its progressive stages

- ♦ The Old Testament (the “Law and the prophets”) held authority until John the Baptist announced the coming of the kingdom of God in the person of Jesus, but now, the gospel of Jesus Christ, written in the New Testament, has greater authority over our lives, 16.
- ♦ The Old Testament is still the inspired revelation of God, and all its parts reveal God’s will and his ways (though some are no longer binding on us, such as dietary laws), 17.
- ♦ In particular, the Old Testament moral law, including laws about marriage, divorce, and adultery, are still binding upon us, 18. *See Exodus 20:14 and Leviticus 20:10.*
- ♦ The Old Testament, including the books of Moses, is still necessary background for faith in Jesus Christ, 31.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient, seeing and knowing the thoughts of the heart, 15.
- ♦ He is Sovereign Lord and King over all the universe, 16, 19–31.
- ♦ He has power over life and death, paradise, and Hades.

His goodness

- ♦ He detests the vain values of sinners, especially self-righteousness and greed, and the honor they give each other, 15.
- ♦ He reveals his will in the Old Testament and then in the preaching of John, 16.
- ♦ He brought his kingdom near in the person of Jesus Christ, 16.
- ♦ He rewards those who in this life relied on him and punishes unrepentant sinners, 19–31.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Loving money more than God, 14
- ♦ Scoffing at the teaching of the values of the kingdom of God, 16
- ♦ Seeking to justify ourselves in the eyes of others, 15
- ♦ Honoring other sinners and their values, 15
- ♦ Divorce, 18; *see Matthew 5:32; 19:9; and Mark 10:11–12.*
- ♦ Remarriage after adultery, 18 (for any cause other than post-engagement, premarital fornication); *see Scriptures cited above, also Matthew 1:19; Romans 7:2–3; and 1 Corinthians 7:39.*
- ♦ Living in self-indulgent luxury, 19
- ♦ Not caring for the needs of the poor at our doorstep, 20–21
- ♦ Not heeding the words of the Old Testament, 31
- ♦ Not believing the testimony of Jesus, who rose from the dead, 31

The Last Things

Our future

- ♦ After death, our spirits go either to Hades, the place of torment, or to Paradise, the place of God's faithful people, 19–31.
- ♦ These are unchangeable states. There is no Purgatory, no passage from one place to another, 26.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Do not love money more than God.
- ♦ Do not seek to justify ourselves.
- ♦ Do not divorce or remarry after divorce.
- ♦ Refrain from luxury and self-indulgence.
- ♦ Care for the needs of the poor.
- ♦ Preach the reality of hell to all, so that they might repent.
- ♦ When we preach, we should start with the Old Testament, which prepares the way to understand the New Testament.

Luke 17:1–19

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones, as God's plan of salvation gradually unfolds.

- ◆ Here, Jesus' instructions dealing with how to respond to someone who offends you, 3, refers to Leviticus 19:17.
- ◆ His command to the lepers reflects Levitical laws concerning cleansing from leprosy, 15. *See Leviticus 13:2–14:32.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He deserves our utmost obedience and full service, 7–14.
- ◆ He can heal incurable diseases, 15.

His goodness

- ◆ He will punish all those who cause others to sin, 2.
- ◆ He is merciful and gracious, abounding in steadfast love, pointing out our sins but also forgiving our offenses, as Jesus told us to forgive others, 4. *See Psalm 103:1, 8–13; and Ephesians 4:32.*
- ◆ He responds to our faith, 6, 19.
- ◆ He enlists us in his service, 7.
- ◆ He heals those who cry out to him (though sometimes not until we receive a resurrected body after Christ returns), 14.

Christ

His person

- ◆ He is the Lamb of God who took away our sins, so that God may forgive us repeatedly, and thus he has authority to command us to forgive others, 3–4. *See Matthew 1:21 and John 1:29.*
- ◆ He is the Lord, that is, Yahweh in the flesh.
- ◆ He can answer prayers offered in faith, 14, 19.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ It comes to us as
 - Forgiveness, 3–4
 - Transformation of character through faith, 4–6
 - Answers to prayers, 6
 - Healing (sometimes), 14
- ◆ Salvation in all forms comes to those who believe in Jesus; it is not based on our performance, 19.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- Beware of causing others, especially new believers, to sin because of us.
- Rebuke those who offend us (not telling others!).
- Forgive those who apologize and ask our forgiveness.
- Trust God to do the apparently impossible.
- Serve God with all our hearts, not as if we were doing more than our duty.
- Cry out to God, in the name of Jesus, for mercy and healing.
- Praise and thank God when he has answered our prayers.

Luke 17:20–37

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus refers to the world-wide Flood in the days of Noah and the destruction of the evil cities Sodom and Gomorrah in the days of Abraham and Lot. *See Genesis 6–9, 19.*

Its content

- ♦ Biblical revelation contains some passages that are hard to understand, about the meaning of which godly interpreters differ.
- ♦ Jesus' teaching here about the coming of the kingdom of God, like the parallel passages Matthew 24–25 and Mark 13.
- ♦ The main points are clear, however. *See below, The Last Things.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is King over the entire universe, 20, 21.
- ♦ He can destroy cities and entire civilizations with “natural” disasters, 26–29.

His goodness

- ♦ He condescends to dwell among men, primarily in the person of Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, 21 (where “within you” probably means, “among you,” that is, present in the person of Christ).
- ♦ He destroyed the wicked generation of Noah with the Flood and the depraved cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from heaven, 26–30.
- ♦ He will bring in his righteous kingdom when Christ, the Son of Man, returns, 20–21.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to suffer and die for us, 25.
- ♦ He warns us to be ready for the coming of Christ, 22–37.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 22, 24, 26, 30. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He lived among the people of his day, 21.

His work

- ♦ He suffered and died to deliver us from our sins, 25.
- ♦ He will return with great power and glory to judge the world, 24–35.

The Last Things

Christ's return

- ♦ Christ will return, visibly and with power and glory, to judge the world, 24.
- ♦ He will come suddenly, without warning, while people go about their ordinary routine, 27–28.
- ♦ He will destroy unrepentant sinners, 27–28.
- ♦ At that time, he will be “revealed” as the Son of Man coming in glory, as prophesied by Daniel. *See Daniel 7:14.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Always be ready for the return of Christ.
- ♦ Do not get so caught up in daily affairs that we forget that this world is temporary and will come to a sudden and fiery end.
- ♦ Expect that wickedness will increase, as it did in the days of Noah and of Lot, until the return of Christ; we should not expect that the world will get better and better.
- ♦ Do not expect that all will be saved; some will be destroyed in the final judgment of God.
- ♦ Do not be deceived by false claims that the kingdom of God has come already. When it does, the whole world will see the glorified Christ coming in judgment and glory.

Luke 18:1–17

Truth

God

His greatness

- ♦ As sovereign Lord, he deserves reverent fear, 2, 4.
- ♦ As Judge of the world, he has power to punish evil, 7–8.
- ♦ As God, he has the authority to choose whom he will for salvation, 7.
- ♦ He is omniscient, knowing the secrets of men’s hearts and their words spoken in private, 9–14.
- ♦ He rules over a kingdom, 17.

His goodness

- ♦ He hears prayers, 1, 7.
- ♦ As righteous Judge, he gives justice on earth in his time and in his way, 7–9.
- ♦ As the only righteous being in the universe, he despises sinners who are self-righteous, 9–14.
- ♦ He is merciful and gracious, forgiving repentant sinners who ask for mercy, 13–14.
- ♦ He welcomes the meek and humble into his kingdom, 16–17.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied in Daniel, 8. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is the propitiation for our sins (implied in the word, “have mercy,” 13, which is also used in 1 John 2:1).

His work

- ♦ He will return from heaven to judge the world, 8.
- ♦ He set us an example of one who humbled himself, even unto death on the cross as one presumed to be a sinner, and was later exalted, 14. *See Philippians 2:5–11.*
- ♦ He welcomed little children and blessed them, 15–16.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Lack of faith, 8
- ♦ Self-righteousness and looking down on others as morally inferior, 9–12
- ♦ Rejecting little children, 15

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It can come now as answered prayer, 7.
- ♦ It will come later as full vindication for those who have suffered injustice and oppression, 7.

Its benefits

- ♦ Forgiveness of sins and justification before God to those who repent of their sins and ask for mercy, 13–14
- ♦ Reception into the kingdom of God, 16–17

The Last Things

Christ's return

- ♦ When Christ returns, he will judge all mankind, punishing unrepentant sinners, including unjust magistrates, and vindicating all innocent sufferers, 7–8.
- ♦ He will abase into hell all the self-righteous, and exalt into heaven all who humbly trusted in his mercy, 14.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Keep on praying and not give up, even if God takes a long time to answer.
- ♦ Pray “day and night” for justice to be done on earth.
- ♦ Use our authority with fear towards God and care for those under us, especially the weak and helpless (like widows and little children, including our own).
- ♦ Shun all pride, self-righteousness, and sense of superiority over others.

- ♦ Humble ourselves before God and others, humbly admitting our sins and faults and asking for mercy.
- ♦ Welcome little children into our midst.
- ♦ Seek to imitate the simplicity, trust, humility, and utter dependence of little children in our approach to God.

Luke 18:18–43

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus refers to the Ten Commandments, 20. *See Exodus 20:12–16 and Deuteronomy 5:16–20; see also Mark 10:19 and Romans 13:9.*
- ♦ The “things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man,” 31; *see Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.*
- ♦ The blind man calls Jesus “Son of David,” 39, referring to the messianic promises to David in 2 Samuel 7:8–17.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He possesses eternal life and bestows it upon whom he will, 18.
- ♦ He deserves and demands total allegiance, 22.
- ♦ He lives in heaven, 2.
- ♦ He rules over a universal kingdom, 24–25.
- ♦ He can do anything consistent with his character, 27.
- ♦ He rules over time and eternity, 3.
- ♦ He decrees, and therefore knows and can reveal, all events of history, including the details of his plan of redemption, 31–33.
- ♦ He can raise people from the dead, 33.
- ♦ He has total authority over who will be given spiritual understanding, and when, 34.
- ♦ He can heal any illness or infirmity, 42.

His goodness

- ♦ He is uniquely good, 19.
- ♦ He revealed his ways and his moral will to the Jews, and through them, to all mankind, in the Old Testament and then in Jesus, 20–22.
- ♦ He rewards those who follow Jesus, 22.

- ♦ He gives entrance to the kingdom of God, which is eternal life, 29–30.
- ♦ He sent his Son Jesus to die for our place as a sacrifice for our sins, 32–33.
- ♦ He raised Jesus from the dead, 33.
- ♦ He fulfilled his promises to David by sending Jesus as his divine–human successor, 38.
- ♦ He brought healing through Jesus, 42.

Christ

His person

- ♦ As man, he is Jesus of Nazareth, 37.
- ♦ He is the physical descendant of King David, 38. *See Luke 4:23–38.*
- ♦ As the divine–human Messiah, he can demand total allegiance, 22, 29.
- ♦ He can promise rewards to his faithful followers, 29–30.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7:13–14, 31.
- ♦ He suffered and died according to Old Testament promises concerning the coming Messiah, 31–3.

His work

- ♦ He rose again on the third day and now reigns from heaven, 33.
- ♦ He has power to heal any infirmity, 42.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Self-righteousness, 21
- ♦ Attachment to riches or to anything else that will keep us from following Jesus fully, 22–25

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ♦ It comes to us a deliverance from idols and bondage to this world, 24–29.
- ♦ It comes to those who believe in Jesus and follow in his steps, 42–43.

Its benefits

- ♦ Ultimate rewards from any “sacrifice” we make for Jesus, 22, 30
- ♦ Eternal life in heaven with God, 30
- ♦ Mercy, 38
- ♦ Healing, 42
- ♦ Liberation of the heart to praise God, 43

The Last Things

Christ’s return

- ♦ When Christ returns, he will reward all those who have forsaken all to follow him, 22, 30.
- ♦ Those who have forsaken all to follow him will enter the kingdom of God and receive eternal life, 29–30.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask God to deliver us from bondage to the things of this world, including material possessions and family, if they are hindering us from following Christ.
Note: This does not mean we should abandon our family, and it especially does not allow divorcing an unbelieving spouse. It only means that we must surrender our hearts and all we have to God and be willing to lose anything to gain the kingdom of God.
- ♦ Be generous with our goods and share some with the poor.
- ♦ Thank God daily for sending Jesus to die and rise for our salvation.
- ♦ Call on Jesus in faith to save us from illness, infirmity, and any moral weaknesses.
- ♦ Believe that God can change the human heart.

Luke 19:1–27

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative.

- ♦ Jesus refers to Abraham, the patriarch of the Jews, 9. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*
- ♦ Jesus refers to the Son of Man, prophesied by Daniel, 10. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ The image of the shepherd who seeks the lost sheep, 10, recalls Ezekiel 34.

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set with culture and history. Tax collectors were hated in Jesus' day because they worked for the Romans or for Herod, or both, and because they usually extorted more money than was due to the government.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is a king, with authority to bestow kingdom rule on his son, Jesus, 12.
- ♦ He possesses all things and can give or to withdraw resources as he wills, 13, 24–26.

His goodness

- ♦ He chose Abraham and his descendants to be his special people, 9. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*
- ♦ He receives and forgives repentant sinners, 5–10.
- ♦ He rewards those who prove to be good managers of what he has given them, 17, 19.
- ♦ He punishes those who reject his kingship or who squander his gifts out of fear, 24–27.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Lord, that is, God, 8.
- ♦ He is the prophesied Son of Man, the promised Savior of God's people, 10. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*

- ♦ He is the Good Shepherd, who came to seek and to save lost “sheep,” that is, the people of God, 10. *See John 10:11, 28; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 5:4.*
- ♦ He is the Son of God, to whom kingdom authority has been given, and who will receive manifest authority to rule on earth when he returns, 12.

His work: He welcomes repentant sinners who trust in him, 5.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are not those who are physically descended from Abraham, but those who trust in Christ as Messiah and show their faith by good works, 8–9.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Self-righteous criticism of others and rejection of God’s mercy to repentant sinners, 7
- ♦ All forms of extortion and theft, 8
- ♦ Rejection against the kingship of God in Christ, 14
- ♦ Misuse of the resources, material and spiritual, that God has given us, 23

The Last Things

Christ’s return: Christ has “gone away” to heaven for a while, but he will return and establish his kingdom on earth; at that time, he will reward his faithful followers and punish those who have rejected his authority as well as those who have squandered his gifts, 12, 17, 19, 24–27.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Rejoice when sinners repent and turn to Christ.
- ♦ Receive repentant sinners into our fellowship.
- ♦ Demonstrate our repentance and faith by doing good works.
- ♦ Wait expectantly and eagerly for the return of Christ.
- ♦ Use well what he has given us, as good managers and stewards.

Luke 19:28–48

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ The welcoming shout of the people, 38, echoes Psalm 118:26.
- ♦ The figure of the stones crying out, 40, reflects Habakkuk 2:11.
- ♦ The prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, 43, draws upon Jeremiah 6:3, 6.
- ♦ The prophecy about the destruction of the Temple recalls God's revelation to Solomon in 1 Kings 9:7.
- ♦ Jesus' reference to the Temple as a house of prayer, 46, draws upon Isaiah 56:7; and calling it a den of thieves, 46, quotes Jeremiah 7:11.

Its roots in history

- ♦ The larger context is the history of Israel, in which, despite repeated warnings from God, the people continued to reject the prophets, worship idols, and renounce God's lordship.
- ♦ As a result, the city of Jerusalem was totally destroyed, and its people carried off into exile to Babylon.
- ♦ Jesus is predicting the same fate for the city in his day because they rejected him as God's Messiah.
- ♦ Revelation is set within history and culture.
 - The outer area of the Temple was known as the Court of the Gentiles; there they were allowed to come and pray but were being prevented by the presence of the rowdy market of crooked moneychangers and sellers of sacrifices, 45–46.

God

His greatness

- Omnipotent, he did mighty works through Jesus, 37.
- The source of all kingship and authority, he sent Jesus as King to this world, 38.

- He dwells in heaven in resplendent glory, enjoying eternal peace, 38.

His goodness

- He sent Jesus to his people to be their Savior and King, 38.
- He judges unrepentant wicked people, 43–44.
- He dwelt among his people in the Temple at Jerusalem, 46.
- He answers prayer, 46.

Christ

His person

- He is the Lord, owner of all things, with the right to use them as he wills, 31.
- He is the King whom God sent to his people, 38.
- As God's prophet, he pronounced judgment upon sinful Israel, 42–44, and upon the wrongful use of the Temple area, 45–46.

His work

- He knew what would happen to him and what would happen to rebellious Israel, 30, 43–44.
- He taught the truth of God daily to people in the Temple.

Sin

It includes

- Preventing people from worshipping God, 39
- Failure to hear and to heed God's warnings of coming judgment, 42–44
- Turning places of worship in markets where money is made, 46

Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to those who trust in Jesus as enjoyment of his presence in our midst, 3.

Its benefits

- Liberation of the heart to worship him, 37–38
- Receiving the teaching of God, 47

Note: None of these, of course, avails those who only hear the word of God but do not fully believe and follow it.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Allow God to use any and all of our possessions, 33–34.
- ◆ Praise God constantly for all the mighty works he has done in bringing salvation to us through Jesus.
- ◆ Hear and heed God’s warning of impending judgment and prepare for the return of Christ.
- ◆ Gather with others to pray to God.
- ◆ Refrain from all use of religious buildings to make money.
- ◆ Listen daily to the teaching of Christ.

Luke 20:1–26

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus' parable of the vineyard owner, 9–16, refers to the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1–7; in each case, judgment is pronounced upon those responsible for caring for God's vineyard, which is Israel, for they have rejected God as their master and owner.
- ♦ "The stone which the builders rejected," 17, comes from Psalm 118:22; this psalm had already been quoted by the people, 19:38. The rulers reject Jesus as God's anointed King, but he will become the "chief cornerstone" in God's new house. The image of a stone which brings destruction, 18, comes from Isaiah 8:14–15.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is sometimes called "heaven" in the Bible, 4–5.
- ♦ He possesses all authority, which he bestows upon his appointed servants and messengers, like John the Baptist, 4–5.
- ♦ He owns all things, including his people Israel, 9.
- ♦ He overrules the actions of even wicked people to fulfill his plan to establish his kingdom on earth, 17.
- ♦ He deserves ultimate loyalty, even more than earthly kings like Caesar, 25.
- ♦ He delegates authority to rule the earth to human kings and emperors, 25.

His goodness

- ♦ He repeatedly sent prophets, including John the Baptist, to warn people of coming judgment and urge them to repent and trust in him, 4–6, 10–12.
- ♦ He chose Israel as his special people and "planted" them in the land of Israel, 9–16.
- ♦ He sent his beloved Son, Jesus to receive his rightful honor over his people, 13–14.

- ♦ He allowed Jesus to die on our behalf, 15.
- ♦ He will destroy all who actively and without repentance oppose him, 16, 18.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the beloved Son of God who was sent into the world as a man to save us, 13.
- ♦ Risen from the dead, is now the “chief cornerstone” of God’s new building, the church, 17. *See Ephesians 2:20.*

His work

- ♦ He teaches with authority from God, 2–8.
- ♦ He suffered for us to redeem us from our sins, 15.
- ♦ He submitted to earthly authority while on earth, and commands his disciples to do the same now, 25. *See Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Peter 2:13–17.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Heed the words of God’s messengers as recorded in the Bible, for they come from God himself and bear divine authority.
- ♦ Remember that Christ will return and demand an accounting of how we have lived on earth.
- ♦ Honor those in authority and pay taxes, even if (or, though), these rulers are unjust tyrants or foreign oppressors, like the Roman emperors who ruled Palestine in Jesus’ day.
- ♦ Do not worry lest the purposes of God fail just because people, including ruling authorities, reject Christ; he will someday bring justice and judgment.

Luke 20:27–47

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones. This passage refers to or quotes

- ♦ The law calling for a man to take his deceased brother's wife and beget a son for her, 28–31; *see Deuteronomy 25:5–6 and Genesis 38:8*
- ♦ The story of Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush, 37; *see Exodus 3:1–4:17, where God refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs of Israel whose stories are narrated in Genesis 12–50.*
- ♦ A psalm written by King David, 42–43; *see Psalm 110:1; see also Matthew 22:41–46; Mark 12:35–37; Acts 2:34–35; and Hebrews 1:13.*
- ♦ The Messiah as “son of David,” 41; *see 2 Samuel 7:1–29; Psalm 89:19–37; Isaiah 9:6–9; 11:1–10; Jeremiah 23:5–8; and Ezekiel 34:23–24.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is eternal, living forever, 37.
- ♦ He has the power to give resurrection life to people, 35–38.
- ♦ He is the Lord of earthly rulers, 42–44.

His goodness

- ♦ He is faithful to his promises to the patriarchs, 37.
- ♦ He gives eternal life to those who trust and obey him, 35–38.
- ♦ He calls them his “sons” or “children,” indicating that he has become their Father, 36.
- ♦ He appeared to his chosen messenger Moses and sent him to lead his people out of slavery in Egypt, 37.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the authoritative interpreter of the Word of God, 34–38, 42–44.
- ♦ He is the Son or descendant of King David, 41–44.
- ♦ He is the Lord of David, and thus God, 42–44.
- ♦ He is the prophet of God, who denounced his people for their sins, 46–47.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not believing all the Old Testament Scriptures (the Sadducees only accepted the Books of Moses), 27
- ♦ Not believing in the resurrection from the dead, 27
- ♦ Seeking honor for oneself, 46
- ♦ Exploiting the poor and powerless, 47
- ♦ Making a show of religious piety, 47

The Last Things

Our future: When believers die, they go immediately into the presence of God, 37–38.

Christ's return

- ♦ When Christ returns, he will raise all people from the dead and give those who trusted and followed him eternal life with God in heaven, 35–36.
- ♦ Wicked hypocrites will be punished forever, 47.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Read and believe all of the Bible, including the Old Testament and the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament).
- ♦ Seek to be “worthy” of the age to come by trusting and following Jesus.
- ♦ Acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and Messiah (Savior).
- ♦ Avoid the sins of the religious leaders of Jesus' day.

Luke 21:1–24

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation contains passages that are hard to understand, about the meaning of which sincere Christians differ. Jesus' response to the disciples' question about the timing of the Temple's destruction, 7–36, has been understood in at least three different ways.

- ♦ All Jesus' predictions were fulfilled in the terrible siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
- ♦ Some of these events took place in 70 A.D., but others will take place long before Christ returns for the last time – this will be the so-called “Great Tribulation,” after which Christ will return and reign for 1,000 years on earth from Jerusalem, and then the end will come, when Christ makes his final appearance.
- ♦ The passage talks about the destruction of Jerusalem and the events at the very end of the age, when Christ returns for the first and only time. This has been the historical interpretation and seems to me to pose the fewest difficulties.

Its source

- ♦ Biblical revelation was written by men at the direction of God, and so all the prophecies in the Old Testament and New Testament will be fulfilled, 22.
- ♦ The words of Christ are also revelation from God, and they likewise will come to pass, 32.
- ♦ The words of Christ, like Christ himself, are eternal, 33.

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation uses literary structure to convey meaning and emphasis. The story of the widow's sacrificial gift to the Temple, 1–4, is sandwiched between Jesus' denunciation of scribes for “devouring widows' houses” (see 20:47) and his prediction that the Temple would be destroyed, 5–6, to highlight contrast between her godly use of money and the leaders' utter corruption.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He rules the affairs of men and nations and thus can predict what will happen, 10, 24.
- ♦ He governs the created order and can make it fulfill his purposes, 11, 25–26.
- ♦ He rules as King over the universe, 31.

His goodness

- ♦ He fulfilled his warnings to destroy unrepentant Jerusalem, including the Temple, 6, 20–24.
- ♦ He will give his people wisdom and words to answer their persecutors, 15.
- ♦ He will protect his people when they are persecuted, 18.
- ♦ He will reward faithful witnesses of Christ with the salvation of their souls, 19.
- ♦ He warned Christians to flee when the Roman armies encircled Jerusalem in 70 A.D.; historians say that they did and were preserved.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He knows all things, including the financial condition of those who give, 3–4.
- ♦ As God's prophet, he predicted what would happen in history, 8–25.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man predicted in Daniel 7:13–14, 27

His work

- ♦ He will give his people the ability to bear witness to him, 14–15.
- ♦ He will return in power and great glory, 27.
- ♦ He spoke words that are eternally true, 33.
- ♦ He will someday sit as judge of all men, 36.

The Last Things

The last days

- ♦ Many false prophets will arise and claim to be the Messiah, 8.
- ♦ There will be human and natural disasters, 9–11.
- ♦ Believers will be persecuted, but God will give them the ability to endure and to bear witness to him, 12–19.

- ♦ God would soon destroy Jerusalem including the Temple, 20–24.
- ♦ Conditions on earth and even the heavens will be catastrophic, 25–26.
- ♦ Jesus will return with power and great glory, 27–28.
- ♦ There will be signs which believers must observe, 29–31.
- ♦ “This generation” – variously interpreted as, for example, the generation alive when Jesus spoke, or the generation alive when the final heavenly signs begins to appear, or “race” of mankind – will not pass away until “all things take place,” 32.
- ♦ Heaven and earth will pass away, but the words of Christ will remain, 33.
- ♦ Christians must always be on the alert for these events, for they will happen suddenly and without warning.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Give sacrificially to support the spread of the gospel and to provide for the needy, like widows and orphans.
- ♦ Beware of false prophets and false claimants to be the Messiah.
- ♦ Be calm when the whole world seems to be falling apart, knowing that God has everything under control.
- ♦ Expect to be hated and persecuted, even by our own family, for the sake of Christ.
- ♦ Trust God to give us words to say when we need to answer for our faith.
- ♦ Trust God to protect us in times of terrible trouble.
- ♦ Persevere, even unto death if necessary, in order to gain the salvation of our souls.
- ♦ Eagerly wait for the return of Christ.
- ♦ Beware lest our hearts be besotted with over-indulged of food or drink or weighed down by earthly cares.
- ♦ Watch and pray constantly, asking God to make us worthy to stand before the Son of Man.

Luke 22:1–13

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of the Passover were originally separate, but Jews of Jesus' day combined them, 1. *See Exodus 12:3–15 and Numbers 9:1–14.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within the culture of the time. Usually, women carried water pots; seeing a man carrying a pot would be unusual and therefore noteworthy, 10.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He was a prophet who several times predicted that he would be rejected and killed by the Jewish leaders, in league with Gentiles, 2–6. *See Luke 9:22; 18:31–33.*
- ♦ He was known as a Teacher with his disciples, 11.
- ♦ He is the Passover Lamb who was slain to take away the sins of the world, 8. *See John 1:29 and 1 Corinthians 5:7.*

His work

- ♦ He planned to be killed during the Passover feast and prepared accordingly, 11–12.
- ♦ This planning indicated courage, submission to the will of God the Father, fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (such as Isaiah 53), foresight, and love for those whom he came to save.

Spiritual Beings

Satan: He is an evil being who is able to influence people to do what is wrong, 3.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust that God has everything under control, even terrible things like the betrayal of Jesus by Judas.
- ♦ Worship Jesus as our Savior who bravely and lovingly offered himself as the Passover Lamb to deliver us from Satan, sin, death, and God's wrath.

Luke 22:14–30

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ The Passover meal, 15, looks back to the Passover, when Israel was delivered from slavery in Egypt; when killing the first-born in Egypt, God “passed over” every Israelite household, where blood had been sprinkled over the door and on the sides, and while the Jews ate the first Passover meal, which included a lamb. *See Exodus 12.*
- ♦ The “New Covenant,” 20, was prophesied by Jeremiah. *See Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 16:20; and 1 Corinthians 11:25.*
- ♦ “In My blood,” 20, refers to the shedding of the blood of animals when covenants were inaugurated in the Old Testament, especially the shedding of the blood of the Passover lamb. *See Exodus 12:3–40; 24:8; Leviticus 17:11; and Hebrews 8:16–22.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history and culture. In Jesus’ day, the Jews drank four “cups” during the Passover meal, of which Luke here refers to two, 17, 20.

God

His greatness: He ordains and determines all that happens, even the sinful actions of evil men, but without himself becoming the author of evil (this is a mystery which no one can fathom), 21–22.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus to institute a new covenant that would deal with sin once and for all, 20. *See Hebrews 8:7–13; 10:1–18.*
- ♦ He rewards those who faithfully follow Jesus with an eternal kingdom and intimate fellowship with himself as well as regal authority, 28–30.
- ♦ He punishes those who do evil without repentance, thus upholding his justice, 22.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He loved his disciples and longed to share his final meal with them, 15.
- ♦ He knew ahead of time that he would suffer, 15.
- ♦ He knew he would rise again and come into his kingdom, 16.
- ♦ He was the divine–human Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7:13–14, 22.

His work

- ♦ He shed his blood, of which the wine in the cup was a symbol, for our sins, 17.
- ♦ He offered up his body to be broken on the cross as an atonement for our sins, 19. *See Mark 10:45; John 1:29; 11:50; 1 Corinthians 5:7, 14; Ephesians 5:2; 1 Timothy 2:5–6; and 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18.*
- ♦ He established the New Covenant, which brings us forgiveness of sins and access to God’s grace, 20.
- ♦ He patiently bore with Judas, whom he knew would betray him, 21.
- ♦ He served as an example of humble service of others, despite his divine status, 25–27. *See Mark 10:45 and Philippians 2:1–11.*
- ♦ He had received a kingdom from his Father, 29.
- ♦ He will bestow his kingdom on his faithful followers, 29–30.
- ♦ He will give them royal authority as well as eternal fellowship with himself, 30.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are those who

- ♦ Believe in Jesus as their Savior from sin through his vicarious suffering on the cross as the Lamb of God, and who celebrate and remember this event through regular participation in the Lord’s Supper, 17, 19; *see 1 Corinthians 11:7–34.*
- ♦ Serve one another with humility, 25–27; *see Romans 12: 3–11 and Ephesians 4:1–2.*
- ♦ Remain faithful to Jesus even during times of trial and persecution, 28; *see Luke 12:8–12; 14:26–33; 21:12–19.*

The Lord's Supper

Its meaning: The words, "This is my body" and the meaning of the Lord's Supper have been taken four ways.

- ♦ Roman Catholics believe that the bread and the wine actually become the body and blood of Jesus when the priest says a prayer of consecration.
- ♦ Lutherans hold that the physical body and blood of Jesus are present "in, with, and under" the consecrated bread and wine.
- ♦ Zwingli, Anabaptists, and Baptists consider the Lord's Supper to be only a memorial. In no sense is it a means of grace or of Christ's presence to believers today.
- ♦ Calvin and the Anglican reformers, following Augustine, taught that Christ is spiritually and really present for those who received the Lord's Supper with sincere repentance and faith. In light of Matthew 18:20 and 20:28, as well as Revelation 3:20 and other passages, this interpretation seems the most likely.

The Last Things

Christ's return

- ♦ He will establish his kingdom on earth and give authority to judge to his twelve apostles, as well as to other believers, 30. *See Revelation 3:21.*
- ♦ He will host a messianic banquet, at which he will sit with all his faithful followers, 16, 30.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus as our Passover Lamb to save us from our sins.
- ♦ Celebrate the Lord's Supper often.
- ♦ Serve one another humbly.
- ♦ Persevere under trials.
- ♦ Expect that some people who appear to be Christians are really hypocrites.
- ♦ Eagerly await his second coming.

Luke 22:31–46

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Satan asking God for authority to test people, 21; *see Job 1–2.*
- ♦ Jesus praying for his people, 32; *see John 17; Romans 8:34; and Hebrews 7:25; 9:24.*
- ♦ Peter’s denial, 34; *see Luke 54–62.*
- ♦ Peter’s return and restoration, 32; *see 61–62; John 21:15–19; and 1 Peter.*
- ♦ Jesus’ previous sending of his disciples to preach, 34; *see Matthew 10:9 and Luke 9:3; 19:4.*
- ♦ Prophecies of Jesus’ death, 37; *see Isaiah 53:12.*
- ♦ Jesus’ command for us to pray against temptation, 40; *see Luke 11:4 and Matthew 6:13.*
- ♦ The cup of God’s wrath, 4; *see Matthew 20:22–23; Mark 10:38–39; Isaiah 51:17, 22; Jeremiah 25:15, 17, 28; Lamentations 4:21; Ezekiel 23:31–33; Habakkuk 2:16; and Zechariah 12:2.*

Its content: Biblical revelation includes passages that are hard to understand and about which godly interpreters differ. The conversation between Jesus and his disciples about taking swords has been variously understood.

- ♦ Taking the Word of God to resist temptation; *see Ephesians 6:10–17.*
- ♦ Taking precautions against robbers
- ♦ In any case, Jesus prohibits the use of force to defend themselves against persecutors or to advance the kingdom of God. *See 49–51; Matthew 26:51–52; and John 18:19–11.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 32, 42.

His greatness

- ♦ He is greater than Satan and can protect his people from the evil one, 32.
- ♦ He rules over all men and events and foreordains what will happen, including the betrayal by Peter and the death of the Messiah for our salvation, 34, 37.

His goodness

- ♦ He planned from all eternity to send his Son to save us from our sins, 37.
- ♦ He revealed his will to his chosen servants the prophets, 37.
- ♦ He sent his own Son suffer his wrath upon the cross for our sins, 42.

Christ

His person: As God, he is fully equal with the Father in deity, power, and glory, but as Son, he is somehow subordinate to the Father, though entirely willingly so, 37, 42.

His work

- ♦ As man, he suffered great temptations for us, shrinking in horror from the agonies of the cross and the even greater agony of being treated like a criminal by men and a sinner by God, 42, 44.
- ♦ As our sinless Savior, he overcame in a garden, as Adam had fallen in a garden, 42. *See Genesis 3:1–19.*
- ♦ As our new Head, he won by obedience what Adam lost by disobedience, 42. *See Romans 5:12–21.*
- ♦ As our sympathetic Savior, he prays for his tempted and erring followers, 32. *See Romans 8:34; and Hebrews 4:14–15; 7:35.*

Spiritual Beings

Satan: He seeks always to tempt God's people to disobey the Lord's revealed will, 31. *See Job 1–2 and 1 Peter 5:8.*

Angels: As ministers of God, they served Jesus in the wilderness and again in the Garden of Gethsemane, 43. *See Matthew 4:11.*

It includes

- ♦ Overconfidence in our spiritual strength, 33
- ♦ Rank denial of the clear words of God, 33
- ♦ Failure to pray against temptation, 40, 45–46
- ♦ Sleeping when we should be praying, 46; *see Ephesians 6:18*.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Always watch and pray against temptation.
- ♦ Take reasonable precautions against danger and want.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament so that we may understand the New Testament.
- ♦ Watch and pray in times of special temptation and trial.
- ♦ Praise and thank God and worship Jesus, for the wondrous love that led to our Lord's willing submission to the Father's will, so that we may be saved from sin.

Luke 22:47–62

Truth

Christ

His person: He is Lord, that is, God, 49, 61.

His work

- ♦ He allowed wicked men to arrest him and refused the defense attempted by his disciples, 50–52.
- ♦ He recognized, and submitted to, the plan of God that allowed moral evil – darkness – to prevail for a while, 53.
- ♦ He dealt gently with Peter when Peter denied him as Jesus had predicted he would, 61.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Using violence to defend ourselves from persecution, or using violence to protect the church or to advance the kingdom of God, 49–51
- ♦ Denial of our faith in Christ, 56–60

It flows from

- ♦ Being over-confident, not watching and not praying against temptation, 45, 54–61
- ♦ Following Jesus “at a distance,” and then “sitting among” sinners, we shall fall into temptation, 54–55. *See Psalm 1.*

Its consequences: Sin brings bitter remorse and sorrow, 62.

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation comes as

- ♦ Forgiveness by Jesus after we truly repent, 61–62; *see John 21.*

- ♦ The strength to bear witness to Christ in the face of danger, as Peter and the others did after they received the Spirit at Pentecost. *See Acts 2–11*. Though he stumbled at Antioch (*see Galatians 2*), Peter never again denied his Lord.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Take seriously the bad example of Peter, who trusted in his own faith.
- ♦ Expect the enemies of God to persecute his people.
- ♦ Follow closely after Christ, not at a distance; we should not avail ourselves of the comforts of this world and associate too closely with unbelievers, lest we fall into temptation.
- ♦ Turn to Christ in sincere repentance and renewed faith when we sin, in order to receive forgiveness and restoration.

Luke 22:63–23:12

Truth

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 22:69–70.

His greatness

- ♦ He rules from heaven as “the Power of God,” that is, the all-powerful God, 22:69.
- ♦ He rules over the events of history, even the timing of the visits of rulers to certain places: Herod and Pilate were both in Jerusalem during Passover; otherwise, they would not have had any contact with Jesus or each other, 23:1–12.
- ♦ He rules over the actions of all in authority; these Jewish leaders and Herod and Pilate were all carrying out God’s will. *See Acts 2:23.*

His goodness: He raised Jesus from the dead and raised him up to his right hand, thus vindicating his claim to be the Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, 22:69.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah of Israel, 22:67.
- ♦ He is the Son of Man prophesied in Daniel 7:13–14, 22:69.
- ♦ He is the one who shares the authority of God, sitting at his right hand in heaven, 22:69.
- ♦ He is the Son of God, 22:70.
- ♦ He is the King of the Jews, as a descendant of David, 23:3. *See Luke 1:27.*
- ♦ He is the Suffering Servant prophesied in Isaiah 53, 23:11.

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we abuse authority, reject God’s authority and his Son, slander righteous people, and treat the innocent with mockery and violence.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be persecuted, as Jesus' disciples.
- ◆ Answer honestly when we are questioned about our faith in Christ.
- ◆ Assume that both religious and secular rulers will mistreat us.
- ◆ Expect to be slandered falsely.
- ◆ Keep quiet unless God tells us to speak.
- ◆ Imitate the harmless meekness of Christ when we are persecuted. *See 1 Peter 2:13-25.*

Luke 23:13–31

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones. In verse 30, Jesus' quotes Hosea 10:8, which, in context, recalls God's judgment of idolatrous Israel.

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history and culture.

- ♦ At that time, the Jews did not have the power of capital punishment, unless someone violated the sanctity of the Temple.
- ♦ Furthermore, they executed people by stoning, not crucifixion.
- ♦ But Christ had to die on a cross in order to fulfill the statement of Deuteronomy 21:23, "cursed is anyone who hangs on a tree." Jesus could only become cursed by being executed on a "tree," that is, the cross, which could only be carried out by Romans.

God

His greatness: He rules sovereignly over all events, even the death of Jesus by crucifixion, as seen above.

His goodness: He so arranged the events of Jesus' death that

- ♦ It fulfilled the requirement that he be hung on a cross.
- ♦ All nations should be implicated in his wrongful death, not just the Jews. Thus, he could die for the sins of "the whole world" (*see 1 John 2:2*), that is, for peoples of the whole world.

Christ

His person: He was completely innocent, as stated three times by Pilate, 2, 14, 15, 22.

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we prefer political, earthly "salvation" to spiritual salvation; that is why the people demanded that Barabbas, a revolutionary, be set free and Jesus crucified. Jesus had disappointed their hopes that the Messiah would liberate them from the Romans.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Evasion of responsibility (sending Jesus to Herod), 7
- ♦ A desire to see miracles rather than to hear the truth, 8
- ♦ Falsely accusing an innocent person, 10
- ♦ Treating someone with contempt, 11
- ♦ Punishing an innocent person, 16
- ♦ Participating in mob hysteria, 18, 21, 23
- ♦ Inciting others to wrongful action, 23
- ♦ Giving in to the majority even when you know they are wrong, 24
- ♦ Violent revolution, 25

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Never allow ourselves to be swayed by a crowd to do wrong.
- ♦ Never falsely accuse another or participate in group accusations.
- ♦ Never participate in violent revolution.
- ♦ Worship Jesus for having allowed himself to suffer, though he was completely innocent.

Luke 23:32–43

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus' was "numbered with the transgressors" by being crucified between two criminals, 32, 39–41. *See Isaiah 53:9, 12.*
- ♦ Jesus' statement, "They do not know what they do," 34, is repeated by the Apostles in their preaching. *See Acts 3:17; 13:27; 14:16; 17:30; 26:9.*
- ♦ His plea that the Father forgive them, 34, is echoed by Stephen. *See Acts 7:60.*
- ♦ Casting lots of his clothing, 34, fulfills Psalm 22:18, a psalm which depicts the suffering of God's innocent servant.
- ♦ The mockery of the people, the rulers, and the soldiers, 35–37, recalls Psalm 22:7–8.
- ♦ The offer of wine vinegar, 36, fulfills Psalm 69:21; this psalm also portrays the suffering of God's sinless servant.

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 34, 35.

His greatness

- ♦ He knows all and predicts the future in written prophecy. *See notes above.*
- ♦ He sovereignly directs all events, even the actions of sinful men.
- ♦ He has the power to judge and condemn, and should therefore be feared, 40.
- ♦ He rules over a kingdom, 42.

His goodness

- ♦ He planned to send his Son to die for our sins and revealed this plan in the Old Testament. *See notes above.*
- ♦ He gave power to Jesus to remain on the cross even when others dared him to come down, 39. *See Luke 23:42.*
- ♦ He forgives those who trust in Christ, 42–43.
- ♦ He gives eternal life with himself in Paradise to followers of Christ, 43.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ, the chosen Messiah and Savior sent by God, 35.
- ♦ He is the King of the Jews, 37–38.
- ♦ He is Lord, 42.
- ♦ He rules over God's kingdom as vice-regent, 42.
- ♦ He forgave the repentant thief on the cross, 43.
- ♦ He went immediately to the presence of God in Paradise after his physical death, 43.

His work

- ♦ He fulfilled prophecy by suffering as God's innocent Servant as an offering for sin, 33, 41.
- ♦ He graciously prayed for God to forgive those who crucified and mocked him, 34.
- ♦ He chose to remain on the cross and not to save himself, so that he could save us, 37.
- ♦ He rules over God's kingdom as vice-regent, 42.
- ♦ He forgave the repentant thief on the cross, 43.
- ♦ He went immediately to the presence of God in Paradise after his physical death, 43.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Read the Old Testament so we can understand the New Testament.
- ♦ Forgive those who hurt us.
- ♦ Thank Jesus for remaining on the cross so that we might be saved.
- ♦ Worship and serving him as our King.
- ♦ Realize that we, too, deserve to suffer God's wrath for our sins. *See Ephesians 2:2–3.*
- ♦ Ask Jesus to forgive us for our sins.
- ♦ Eagerly anticipate entrance into Paradise after we die.

Luke 23:44–56

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus' prayer of commitment to the Father, 46, is a quotation from Psalm 31:5.
- ♦ The tearing of the Temple curtain, 45, reflects the construction of the sanctuary as recorded in Exodus 26:33 and Leviticus 21:23; 24:3. *See also Exodus 26:36–37; 38:18; and Numbers 3:26.*
- ♦ The Sabbath, 54, was established by God at Mt. Sinai. *See Exodus 20:8–11.*

Its content: Biblical revelation should be understood in context. Parallel passages shed light on each other. The other four Gospels also record the death and burial of Jesus. *See Matthew 27:45–66; Mark 15:33–47; and John 19:25–42.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. 46.

His greatness

- ♦ He controls the events of the created order, including light and darkness, 44–45.
- ♦ He holds the spirits of all people in his hands, 46.
- ♦ He rules as sovereign over his kingdom, 51.

His goodness

- ♦ He showed his hatred of sin by bringing darkness, a sign of his wrath, as Jesus died; this indicates that Jesus was considered a sinner by God and was punished for our sins, 44–45. *See Jeremiah 13:16; Joel 2:10; and Amos 8:9.*
- ♦ He deigned to dwell in the Temple among his people, 45.
- ♦ He opened the way for us to have direct access to himself when Jesus died, as signified by the tearing of the veil between the Holy of Holies and the sanctuary, 45. *See Romans 5:1 and Hebrews 9:1–28; 10:19.*
- ♦ He is righteous, 47.

Christ

His work

- ♦ For three hours, he suffered the darkness of alienation from God the Father as the Lamb of God bearing our sins, during which at some point he cried out, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46).
- ♦ He also said, “It is finished!” (John 19:30), meaning that he had completely satisfied God’s righteous justice by fully obeying his will and also by taking God’s wrath against our sins in his body on the cross. *See 1 Peter 2:24.*
- ♦ He then committed his spirit into the hands of the Father, 46.
- ♦ He gave up his breath, 46. That is, he willingly died, at the time of his choosing.
- ♦ The manner of his death struck the Roman centurion so powerfully that he testified that Jesus was a righteous man and glorified God, 47.
- ♦ He was buried in a tomb owned by one of his secret disciples, who, it seems, was a rich man, fulfilling Isaiah 53:9.
- ♦ He was buried in a place which the women who followed Jesus saw, 53, 55.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank Jesus for suffering in our place.
- ♦ Trust that he fully paid the penalty for our sins.
- ♦ Care for the Body of Christ on earth, namely, the church, the fellowship of all believers. We don’t have Jesus with us anymore, but, like Joseph and the women, we can show our devotion to him by caring for the needs of fellow Christians.

Luke 24:1–12

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation includes parallel passages which both support each other and sometimes differ from one another in various details. Almost always, these divergences can be easily reconciled. The narratives of the resurrection of Christ in Matthew 28, Mark 16, and John 20 do not contradict Luke's account, but add other details that fill out the story.

God

His greatness: He has the power to raise the dead, as he demonstrated by raising Jesus from the dead, 1–12. *See Romans 6:4 and Ephesians 1:19–21.*

His goodness: He vindicated Jesus as his Son, as a true prophet who predicted his death and resurrection, and as the Lamb of God whose self-offering paid the penalty for our sins by raising him from the dead, 1–12. *See Romans 1:4 and Acts 13:30–33.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 7. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ As a true prophet, he predicted his betrayal, crucifixion, and resurrection, 9. *See Luke 9:44; 11:29–30; 18:31–33.*
- ♦ He truly died, and he was truly raised from the dead, bodily, as proven by the absence of his corpse from the empty tomb, 3–12.
- ♦ The reality of his resurrection is demonstrated by various facts, such as the empty tomb (all theories that try to explain this without the resurrection of Christ fall to the ground) and the variety of eyewitness experiences and accounts, 1–12. *See 1 Corinthians 15:3–8.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust the biblical accounts of the resurrection of Jesus Christ
- ♦ Like the women, tell others this joyous news, 9–11, even though many will make fun of us.
- ♦ Like Peter, investigate the evidence for this event until we are sure that it's true.
- ♦ Believe that God will give “resurrection” power against sin and temptation to all who continue to trust in him. *See Romans 6:4–14 and Ephesians 1:19–2:7; 6:10.*
- ♦ Believe that God will also raise us from the dead. *See John 5:28–29; 6:44; Romans 8:11, 18–23; and 1 Corinthians 15:20–28, 48–57.*
- ♦ Rejoice in our hope of resurrection unto eternal life. *See 1 Peter 1:5–9.*

Luke 24:13–35

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones. Jesus said that all the prophets, indeed, all the Old Testament, had spoken about him, 25–27. That would include

- ♦ The historical narratives
- ♦ The laws, the sacrificial and priestly system
- ♦ The institution of the monarchy and promises to David
- ♦ Psalms and Wisdom Literature
- ♦ All the prophecies in the written prophets
- ♦ Some of the more specific prophecies in the Old Testament would be: Genesis 3:15; 12:3; 22:18; Numbers 21:9; 24:17; 2 Samuel 7:12–16; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 52:13–53:12; Jeremiah 23:5–6; Daniel 7:13–14; Micah 5:2; and Zechariah 9:9; 12:10.

Its content: Biblical revelation includes some parallel or related passages that help interpret each other. The resurrection of Jesus is described or reported in Matthew 28:1–20; Mark 16:1–14; John 20–21; Acts 1:1–8; 1 Corinthians 15.

Christ

His person

- ♦ Jesus was from Nazareth, 19.
- ♦ He was a prophet like Moses, “mighty in word and deed,” 19.
- ♦ He was also the Christ, whose sufferings, death, and entrance into glory had been prophesied in all the Old Testament, 26.
- ♦ He rose bodily from the dead and was seen by various witnesses, 13–35.
- ♦ His resurrection body was recognizable, but not completely like ours, since he could appear or disappear at will, and was not recognized except as he opened the eyes of the disciples, 16, 31.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for raising Jesus from the dead.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament so that we might understand the New Testament.
- ♦ Read all the Old Testament in the light of Jesus, for it all speaks of him.
- ♦ Tell everyone about the resurrection of Jesus and what it means.

Luke 24:36–53

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ♦ The Hebrew Old Testament includes the Law (Pentateuch), Prophets (including historical books), and Writings (Psalms poetical books, Wisdom Literary), that is, the thirty-nine books of the Protestant Bible, 44. The Apocrypha, a collection of books written after the Hebrew canon, is not part of the Holy Scriptures.
- ♦ The Old Testament in all its parts speaks of Christ, 44. *See Psalm 2:6–9; passages listed below.*
- ♦ The Old Testament predicted that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead, and that the gospel would be preached from Jerusalem to all nations, 46–47. *See Genesis 12:3; Psalm 16:9–11; 22:1–18, 27; 34:20; 42:9; 69:1–9, 30, 21, 26; 110:7; 118:22–26; Isaiah 2:3; 49:6; 53:10–11; Hosea 2:23; and Malachi 1:11.*
- ♦ The Old Testament promised that God would pour out his Spirit upon his people, 49. *See Joel 2:28.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 49 (the “Promise of the Father” is the Holy Spirit).

His greatness

- ♦ He has the power to raise people from the dead, beginning with Jesus, 36–43. *See Ephesians 1:19–21.*
- ♦ He knows the future and determines its events, so that he can give his servants the prophets power to predict the future, 44, 46.
- ♦ He has power to enable his disciples to proclaim the gospel to all the world, 49. *See Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ He dwells in heaven, 51.
- ♦ He has the power to cause Jesus to ascend bodily to heaven, 51.

His goodness

- ♦ He vindicated Jesus as the chosen Messiah and Son of God by raising him from the dead, 36–43, 46. *See Romans 1:4.*
- ♦ He revealed himself, his will and his ways, through chosen messengers to his people in the Old Testament period, 44–47.
- ♦ He opens our minds and hearts to understand the Bible, 45.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to die for our sins and rise for our justification, 46. *See Romans 4:25.*
- ♦ He gives forgiveness of sins to all who repent and believe in Jesus, 47.
- ♦ He commissioned the Apostles as witnesses to take this good news to the whole world, 48.
- ♦ He sends his Spirit upon all who repent and trust in Jesus, 49.
- ♦ He gives great joy to those who trust in Jesus, 52.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He has a body that is like ours, in that it has flesh and bones and can eat, but is unlike ours, in that he could go through closed doors, 36.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the anointed Messiah of God, sent to save his people from their sins, 46.
- ♦ He is now, bodily, in heaven at the right hand of God, 51. *See Ephesians 1:20–21.*

His work

- ♦ He rose bodily from the dead and presented himself alive to his disciples, 36–43.
- ♦ As the divine Son of God, he sends the Holy Spirit from the Father to those who trust in him, 49.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He was promised by God in the Old Testament, 49.
- ♦ He proceeds from the Father and the Son, 49.

- ♦ As the Spirit of God and of Christ, he is equal to the Father and the Son in all deity, power, and glory. *See Romans 8:9–11 and 2 Corinthians 13:14.*

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation comes to us from God through Christ

- ♦ To all who repent of their sins and trust in Christ (“in His name”), 47
- ♦ As forgiveness (remission) of sins, 47
- ♦ As the possession of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God and of Christ, giving the power to be witnesses of Christ, 49; *see Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ As knowing God as heavenly Father, 49
- ♦ With great joy, 52
- ♦ As freedom to worship God with other believers, 53

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Believe that God has raised Jesus from the dead.
- ♦ Study the Old Testament to understand the New Testament and the salvation we have in Christ.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament in the light of Christ and his saving work.
- ♦ Preach the gospel of repentance and forgiveness of sins to all the world.
- ♦ Be witnesses of Christ in all we do and say.
- ♦ Ask for the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ♦ Worship God regularly with other believers.

JOHN

John 1:1–18

Truth

Revelation

Its nature and characteristics

- ♦ All revelation proceeds from the eternal Word, the Logos, the second Person of the Trinity, who became man in Jesus Christ, 1, 14, 18.
- ♦ Revelation is verbal and rational (not rationalistic), being fundamentally the expression of the Logos, the mind and speech of God, 1.

Note: The Old Testament background of this are the concepts of the inner thoughts of God and the spoken and/or written Word of God. Greek philosophical notions of the logos are only secondary, reflected in the choice of this word by John.

- ♦ Revelation is also essentially personal, being the communication of the Logos who has eternally been with God in a personal relationship, 1.
- ♦ Revelation, when received by faith, brings light – illumination, insight, moral purity, etc., 4–5, 7–8. *See 1 John 1:5 and Genesis 1:3–5.*
- ♦ Revelation, when received by faith, also brings life – union with the Triune God who is Life, 4, 12–13. *See John 17:3, among many related Scriptures.*
- ♦ The giving of revelation to men is an act of God’s free grace; it is not the product of human reason, intuition, or experience, 12–13, 16–17. *See John 6:44–45; 12:39–40.*

Its messengers

- ♦ Revelation has come to us first and primarily through the Incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ, 4–5, 18.
- ♦ John the Baptist, like the Old Testament prophets, also bore witness to the Light, the Logos, the revelation of God in Christ, 8, 15.
- ♦ Moses, the greatest Old Testament prophet, revealed the Law of God in preparation for the coming of the Incarnate Son of God, 17; in the Law = Torah, teaching, Moses also bore witness to Christ in many ways, 5:45–46.

Its recipients

- ♦ As light, the revelation of God in Christ shines upon every person, not as inner illumination, but as exposure, revealing who they are in God’s sight, 9–13.

Note: The other way of translating verse 9 states that, in some sense, the Logos of God gives some sort of inner knowledge to every person, especially in bestowing upon them the faculties of reason and conscience. This does not seem to be John's meaning here, however, and is an idea not otherwise found in John's Gospel, where people in general are said to be in mental and moral darkness, as also in John 3:19; 12:46; Romans 1:21; Ephesians 4:18; 5:8; Colossians 1:13; and 1 Peter 2:9.

- ♦ The light of revelation comes to those who “receive” God’s revelation in Christ by ongoing faith (“believe” is in the present tense), 12.
- ♦ These people believe in Christ because they are born again by the will of God, 12–13.

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament), Son (here called “Word” but usually called “Lord” in the New Testament), and the Holy Spirit, 1–2, 12–14, 18.

His nature and work

- ♦ He is eternal, 1–2; the imperfect tense of the Greek word translated “was” in 1–2, and the reference to creation in verse 3, points to his ongoing existence before time began.
- ♦ Thus, the “begetting” of the Word/Son mentioned in 18 is an eternal begetting, not temporal like the begetting action of human fathers; that is, from all eternity, he stands in a Father–Son relationship to the Word, who later became a man in Jesus Christ.
- ♦ He is personal and relational, as seen in the Greek proposition “pros,” here translated “with,” in verse 1; and “in the bosom of the Father,” 18; this seems to indicate that the Word and God have always been in a “face to face” dynamic relationship with each other. This personal relationship, shared with the Spirit, is the source of all personality and all relationships among humans.
- ♦ He is the Creator and source of all things, 3.
- ♦ He graciously sent messengers to reveal his will, 6.
- ♦ He graciously grants new spiritual life to sinners, that they might become his children by regeneration, and thus share his moral nature, 12–13.
- ♦ He is absolutely sovereign in his saving work toward individuals, 1–13.

- ♦ He is gracious and true, as seen in the incarnate Son of God, 14. *See Exodus 34:6-7; and Psalm 103:8-14.*
- ♦ He is infinitely glorious – transcendent, resplendent, beautiful – in all respects, but supremely, it would seem, in his moral kindness towards sinners, 14. *See Exodus 34:34-37, where God's "glory" is revealed to Moses.*
- ♦ In his essence as God, who is a Spirit, he has never been seen directly, 18. *See Exodus 33:20; and John 4:24.*

Note: References to people having seen God in the Old Testament probably refer to theophanies of the pre-incarnate Christ, which pointed toward his later permanent incarnation as a man; these appearances often are called encounters with the Angel of the Lord, who is almost certainly to be identified with the pre-incarnate Christ. See, among many examples, Judges 13:3.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is eternal, with God the Father (and the Spirit), 1-3, 15.
- ♦ He is God's Word – his mind, his thought, his self-revelation, 1, 14, 18.
- ♦ He is the source of all life, 4.
- ♦ He is light, which includes all aspects of light, both physical and moral, 4-5.
- ♦ He came into the world as both eternal Word and, since his incarnation, true man, made of flesh and blood like us, 10-11, 14.
- ♦ He is the only-begotten Son of the Father; that is, he stands in an eternal relationship of divine Son to divine Father, 14, 18.
- ♦ He is full of glory, the glory of God; this glory, at least as it is revealed to us, consists largely in his being "full of grace and truth," 14, 17.
- ♦ He holds the highest rank among men, greater even than John the Baptist, 15.
- ♦ He abides in the closest possible intimate relationship with the Father, in his "bosom," 18; he retained this presence with the Father even after his incarnation and during his stay on earth.

His work

- ♦ He was the agent of God the Father in creation, 3, 10. *See Colossians 1:16; and Hebrews 1:2-3.*

- ♦ More specifically, as the Word of God, he is both the inner thought or design of the Creator, and the omnipotent spoken creative utterance of God, 3. *See Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26; and Psalm 34:6.*
- ♦ He came into this world as the embodied Son – Word of God, 10–11, 14–15.
- ♦ He suffered rejection from his own people, the Jews (especially the leaders in Jerusalem), 11.
- ♦ He gives grace and truth to all his followers out of his fullness, 16.
- ♦ He “declared,” revealed, “expounded” God; the Father in his incarnation, life, teachings, miracles, death, and resurrection, 18; this is what the rest of the Gospel of John will explicate and demonstrate.

Mankind

Our “illumination” or “enlightenment”

- ♦ In some sense, we are all illuminated by Christ, either by having our true nature exposed by his life and teaching (which is more likely), or by having some inner enlightenment by Christ.
- ♦ In either case, we all partake of the image of God, which reflects the mind = Logos of God, which means that we are equipped rationally to receive revelation from God, 4–5, 9.

Our division into two types

- ♦ By birth, we are all in mental and moral darkness, not knowing God, 5, 10, 18.
- ♦ All mankind are divided into two types: those who are born again and have become children of God by believing in Christ, and those who remain in the darkness into which we are all originally born, 5, 7, 12–13.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not receiving Jesus Christ as God’s revelation of himself and his salvation to us, 11
- ♦ That is, not believing in Christ, 11–12

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Becoming a child of God by regeneration, 12–13
- ♦ “Seeing,” that is, experiencing, the grace and truth of God in Christ, 14–18
- ♦ Receiving from the fullness of Christ, 14–17

Note: “Grace for grace” probably means that the grace of the gift of the Law through Moses is augmented and immeasurably surpassed by receiving grace and truth through faith in Christ and regeneration by God, 16–18.

Its origin: Grace comes to us entirely on the sovereign initiative of God, not from any effort of any kind by humans, 13. *See John 6:37.*

Its recipients

- ♦ Grace comes to all who “receive” Jesus Christ as God’s Son and our Savior through continuing faith, 12.

Note: “Believe” here is in the present tense in Greek, indicating a faith that continues, not just a momentary profession of belief, 12.

Note: “Believe in His name” should be translated “believe into,” or “upon” His name, indicating not just intellectual assent but also full reliance upon the “name” – that is, the person and work – of Jesus Christ, 12.

Note: “Believe” is our required action; being born again is God’s sovereign action; from the rest of John, we know that our faith is itself a gift and work of God. See John 6:29, 37, 44, 46, 65.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Worship Jesus as the eternal Word of God, through whom all things were made, 1–3, 10.
- ♦ Seek “life” – satisfaction, joy, love, meaning, purpose, peace, intimacy with God the Father, etc. – in him alone, and not in any person, possession, position, power, or performance of our own, 4.

- ♦ Seek “light” – insight into the origin and purpose of the world, knowledge of God, guidance, etc. – in Christ alone, and not in human reason, experience, intuition, science, philosophy, etc., 4.
- ♦ Thank God for the ongoing and assured ultimate victory of light over darkness in this world, 5.
- ♦ Do not esteem any messenger of Christ, no matter how great he is, as equal to Christ, 6–8.
- ♦ See John the Baptist as our example; that is, seek to bear witness to the light that is found in Christ alone, 8; *See John 15:27 and Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ Ask God for the grace to receive Christ ongoingly through faith, 12–13.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us the authority to become children of the Father through regeneration, 12–13.
- ♦ Honor God’s sovereignty in our evangelism, by proclaiming the gospel freely but trusting in God alone to give new birth to those whom he chooses; eschew any manipulative methods of conversion, 13.
- ♦ Gaze upon the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus by reading and meditating upon the Gospels that record his words, deeds, death, and resurrection, the Epistles that explain the significance of the Christ event, and the Old Testament and New Testament as all speaking of Christ, 14. *See John 5:36; 15:7; and 2 Corinthians 3:18; etc.*
- ♦ Honor the revelation given to Moses, but live under grace through faith in Jesus Christ, 17. *See Galatians 3:1–9.*

John 1:19–34

Truth

Revelation

Its messengers: Biblical revelation came through prophets like Elijah, 21, 25, and Isaiah, 23. *See 1 Kings 17–19; 21:17–29; 2 Kings 2:1–11; Isaiah 40:3 and the entire book of Isaiah.*

Its source

- ♦ God's revelation came through signs, like the descent of a Dove upon Jesus, 32–33.
- ♦ Revelation came also through significant actions, like baptism, 25–26, 33.

Its core message: The central message of all the Scriptures is Jesus Christ, 31.

Its recipients: Revelation came primarily to God's people Israel and later to the church, 31.

Its origin: Biblical revelation is not the product of human reasoning, experience, or intuition, but of God sovereign communication of himself to his chosen messengers, 31, 33.

Its historical nature: Biblical revelation took place in history and is rooted in history; it is largely the record of historical events and their inspired interpretation, 19–34.

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit 29–30, 32–34.

His greatness: He is transcendent, living in heaven, 32.

His goodness

- ♦ He is Yahweh (LORD), the covenant God of Israel, who brought his people back from exile in Babylon, and who is now coming to save his people from their sins, 23. *See Isaiah 40:3; John 1:29; and Matthew 1:21.*
- ♦ He instituted the sacrificial system, including the sin offering to enable his people to be forgiven of their sins in the Old Testament, and who has now sent

Jesus as a sacrificial lamb to take away our sins, 29. *See Exodus 12:1–13; and Leviticus 16:1–34.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ, the anointed Savior (“Messiah” means anointed one), 20, 25, 32. *See Isaiah 61:1–3; priests were anointed, Exodus 28:41; kings were anointed, 1 Samuel 10:1; 16:1; and Matthew 3:11.*
- ♦ He is the Prophet foretold by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18.
- ♦ He is the LORD, Yahweh come in the flesh, 23. *See Isaiah 40:3.*
- ♦ He possesses higher rank than any human, including John the Baptist, 27.
- ♦ Being eternal as the Son of God, he was temporally “before” John, though six months younger, 27.
- ♦ He possesses infinite worth based on his exalted station and his holiness, 27.
- ♦ He is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of his people, 29. *See Revelation 5:6–14; and 1 Peter 2:24.*
- ♦ He is one with the Father, and thus able to baptize with the Spirit, that is, to give the Holy Spirit to his people, 33. *See John 7:37–39; 20:22; and Acts 2:33.*
- ♦ He is the unique, eternally begotten Son of God, 34. *See John 11:27.*

His work

- ♦ He came to offer himself as a sacrifice to make atonement for our sins, 29. *See 10:11, 17–18; Isaiah 53:1–12; Mark 10:45.*
- ♦ He came to bestow upon his people the gift of the Holy Spirit 33.

Note: His work of salvation, therefore, consists of two actions: To die for our sins to reconcile us to God, and to give us the Holy Spirit so that we might have new life in God. See John 1:13; 3:3–5.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He is the fully divine Spirit of God, as indicated by his descent from above, the place where God the Father dwells, 32–33.
- ♦ He proceeds from the Father through (or, “and”) the Son, coming to his people, 32–33. *See John 14:16, 26; 16:7; and Acts 2:33.*

Note: This is why the Western (Latin) church added the words “and the Son” (in Latin, “filioque”) to the article about the Holy Spirit in the Nicene Creed. The Eastern churches object to this, since they want to maintain the doctrine of the priority of the Father within the Godhead. See John 14:16, where the Father gives the Spirit, but note that he does so through the prayers of the Son.

- ♦ He is the Spirit of peace, as symbolized by the dove, 32.

His work: He came upon, and remained within, the man Jesus at his baptism, equipping him for his public work as the divine–human Messiah, 32–33.

Mankind

Our fallen condition: We are part of the world of people who are in bondage to sin, so enwrapped in it that we are said to be “in” sin, 29. *See John 8:24, 34.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Having our sins “taken away” by the offering of the Lamb of God, who paid the penalty for our sin and thus releases us from the guilt of it, making it possible for us to become children of God, 29. *See John 1:36; 10:15; and 1 John 2:2.*
- ♦ Being baptized in, or with, or by, the Holy Spirit by Jesus, 33. *See Acts 1:8.*

Note: Contrary to Pentecostal teaching, the baptism with the Spirit is the common experience of all who have truly repented, trusted in Christ, and been born again by the Spirit. See John 3:3, 5; 7:37; and 1 Corinthians 12:13. We can see this from many Scriptures, but here and in Acts 1:4–5, the contrast is clear between what could be done for us under the Old Testament – eternal cleansing by water and sacrifices – and the great blessing that comes to us in the New Covenant, which is receiving the Spirit of God, being born again by the Spirit, “drinking,” of the Spirit, having the Spirit poured out upon us, etc. All these terms point to the same reality, that of receiving God’s Spirit and becoming his children by regeneration and adoption. See also Romans 8:9–17; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3:3; 4:6; and Ephesians 1:13 (where “having believed” reflects a concurrent aorist, that is, the participle refers to an action simultaneous with the associated verb: they were sealed with the Spirit when they believed in Christ).

Its origin and source: Salvation comes to us through the person and work of Jesus Christ, 29, 31.

The Last Things

Its stages: In the New Testament, we are told that, in some sense, the “last days” have already begun, in that God has spoken to us through the long-hidden Christ (26) who has now been revealed to us by his incarnation and earthly ministry, 31. *See Hebrews 1:2.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Imitate John the Baptist, and not imagine that we are in any way equal to Christ, either in importance or in power.

Note: This applies also to our ideas of what we can or should do in the lives of others, including our children. We cannot “save” or even inwardly change, anyone.

- ♦ Ask God to show us our role in his divine economy, as he showed John the Baptist.
- ♦ See ourselves as utterly unworthy compared to Christ.
- ♦ Thank God for baptizing us with the Spirit through faith in Christ.
- ♦ Ask God to give us regeneration through the baptism with the Spirit.
- ♦ Imitate John the Baptist in his constant and consistent witness to Jesus as the unique Son of God, 34. *See John 15:27 and Acts 1:8.*

John 1:35–51

Truth

Revelation

Its historical nature: Biblical revelation is set within, and accurately records, the events of human history, as we can see in the references to time, 35, 39, 43; specific, identified individuals, 35, 37, 40–45; and places, 43–44, 46, 48, 50.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ John and his disciples, 35; *see John 3:25; 4:1.*
- ♦ “Behold the Lamb of God,” 36; *see John 1:29, and other passages referenced there.*
- ♦ The Messiah, i.e., the Christ, 41; *see John 1:20 and passages referenced there.*
- ♦ Simon’s name changed to Cephas (Peter), 42; *see Matthew 16:18.*
- ♦ Moses and the prophets wrote of Christ, 45; *see John 5:39, 46–47; and Luke 16:31; 24:27.*
- ♦ “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” 46; *see John 7:41, 42, 52 (where the Jewish leaders are wrong, for Jonah came from Gath-hepher, near Nazareth in the area that later came to be known as Galilee (2 Kings 14:25.); see also Matthew 2:23.*
- ♦ “An Israelite in whom is no guile,” 47; *Jacob (Israel) was noted for his deceitful conduct, as in Genesis 27:35; see also Psalm 32:2.*
- ♦ “Under the fig tree,” 48, 50; *see Micah 4:4; and Zechariah 3:10.*
- ♦ “Heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending,” 51; *see Genesis 28:12.*
- ♦ Seeing the heavens opened, 51; *see Ezekiel 1:1 and Revelation 4:1.*
- ♦ Son of Man, 51; *Jesus’ favorite self-designation, referring to Daniel’s vision in 7:13–14.*

God

His Triune nature: God exists in an eternal Trinity of Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament), Son, and Holy Spirit, 49. *See John 1:33.*

His greatness: He is transcendent, dwelling far above us in “heaven,” with myriads of angels serving and worshiping him, 51. *See Revelation 5:11–12.*

His goodness

- ♦ He kindly instituted a sacrificial system, with offerings for sin, including a lamb, so that his people could draw near to him in worship despite their sins, 36. He showed his love by sending his only Son as a sacrifice for our sins, 36. *See John 1:29; Matthew 1:21; and John 3:16.*
- ♦ He kindly revealed his will and his ways, especially the way to have life with himself, through his chosen messengers, including Moses and the prophets, 45. *See Hebrews 1:1.*
- ♦ He graciously provided a way, both in the Old Covenant and then supremely in the New, for men to have fellowship with him, 51.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the man Jesus from Nazareth, the (adopted) son of Joseph, who lived among men and women as a man, 36–38, 43, 45.
- ♦ He was a “Rabbi,” that is, teacher of God’s truth, among Jews, though he had not received formal education under a recognized teacher, 38. *See John 3:2.*
- ♦ He is the heaven-sent Lamb of God, 36. *See John 1:29.*
- ♦ He is thus holy, harmless, and innocent, 36. *See Hebrews 7:26 and 1 Peter 2:22–23.*
- ♦ He is the Messiah, the Christ, God’s anointed Savior sent to deliver us, 41.
- ♦ He is fully divine, possessing omniscience and cognitive omnipresence, 47–48.
- ♦ He is the unique, only-begotten Son of God, 49. *See John 1:18.*
- ♦ He is the long-awaited King of Israel, 49. *See John 18:33, 36–37, 39; 19:3, 12, 15, 19, 21.*
- ♦ He is the divine-human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 51. *See John 3:13–14; and Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is the Way of communication, revelation, reconciliation, and transformation between God and mankind, 51. *See John 14:6.*

His work

- ♦ As the Lamb of God, he carried the weight of the guilt of the sins of the world throughout his career and finally up to the Cross, as a sin offering in our place, 36. *See John 1:29; 11:50–52.*
- ♦ As a rabbi, he taught the people God's truth, 38.
- ♦ He redefined and transformed his followers, beginning with Peter's name, 42.
- ♦ He called disciples to follow him, be with him, learn from him, participate in his ministry, and then be sent into the world as he had been sent, 43.

Salvation

Its benefits: The chief benefit of the saving work of Christ is the forgiveness of sins through his propitiatory sacrifice of himself for us, which enables us to become children of God, 36.

The Last Things

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Bear witness to Christ, like John the Baptist, pointing people especially to him as our Savior from sin, 35. *See Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ "Follow" Jesus by reading the Bible, praying to him, and walking in his ways, with other believers, 37, 40, 43. *See Matthew 4:19.*
- ♦ Seek constantly to know Jesus more and more intimately, 38–39.
- ♦ Tell others about Jesus, especially our family members, 41, 45.
- ♦ Let Christ decide, define, and determine our destiny, including our "career" and "work," 42. (I owe this thought to Dr. Greg Thompson, former pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville.)
- ♦ Read the Old Testament, so we can understand who Jesus is and what he came to do, 45.
- ♦ Ask God to give us a heart without deceit before him, 47. *See Psalm 32:1.*
- ♦ Worship Jesus as our teacher, Son of God, and King, 49.

John 2:1–25

Truth

Revelation

Its historical nature: Biblical revelation is set within history, and much of it purports to be history, as the references to time, 1, 12–13, 23, and place, 1, 11–13, indicate.

Its historical setting: Biblical revelation reflects contemporary cultural conditions.

- ♦ Running out of wine at a wedding was not only terribly embarrassing but it also laid one open to legal proceedings, 3.
- ♦ Water jars for cleansing reflect the Jewish customs of ritual cleaning, 6. *See Mark 7:3.*
- ♦ Jews were required to go to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, 13, 33.
- ♦ Oxen, sheep, and doves, 14; *these animals were used in sacrifices; see Leviticus 1:5, 10; 4:3; 5:7; 22:19.*
- ♦ Worshipers had to use the Temple coinage to buy animals for sale; thus, the money changers and vendors transacted business in Temple precincts, specifically the Court of the Gentiles, 16. *See Matthew 21:12–13.*

Note: This incidence of driving out people doing business was different from the one that took place at the end of Jesus' ministry.

- ♦ “Zeal for Your house has eaten me up [consumed me],” 17; *see Psalm 69:9, often considered a Messianic psalm.*
- ♦ Herod's temple was a massive building project, 20.

Note: “Forty-six years” implies a date of A.D. 27 for this event.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ Ritual purity, 6; *see John 3:26; 11:55.*
- ♦ Water in John's Gospel, 6; *see John 1:33; 3:5; 4:10–14; 5:7; 7:37–39; 9:7; 11:35; 19:34.*
- ♦ “Beginning of signs,” 11; John records eight “signs” pointing to Jesus' unique person and work as God's Son sent to save his people from their sins; *see John 4:43–54; 5:1–15; 6:1–15; 6:16–24 [2 signs]; 9:1–12; 11:38–44.*

- ♦ The Passover feast, 23; *see John 6:4; 13:1; and Deuteronomy 16:1.*

Its focus on Christ: The entire Bible, including the Old Testament, points to Christ, 22. *See Luke 24:44–47.*

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (usually called God in the New Testament), Son, and Holy Spirit, 16–17.

His greatness: He has the power, working through Jesus, to work miracles of all kinds, 8–9, 20.

His goodness

- ♦ He instituted marriage for the good of mankind, 1–2. *See Genesis 2:20–25.*
- ♦ He created grapes that could be made into wine, to gladden the hearts of men and women, 3–10. *See Psalm 104:15.*

Note: In biblical times, wine was diluted to from one-tenth to one-fourth wine to water. Drunkenness was forbidden.

- ♦ He brought his people out of bondage in Egypt and instituted the Passover feast as a perpetual memorial of that liberation, 13. *See Deuteronomy 16:1.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the fully human son of Mary, 1, 3. *See John 1:14.*
- ♦ He was a teacher with disciples, a rabbi, 2. *See John 1:38–43; 3:2.*
- ♦ He was uniquely sent and commissioned by God the Father and worked according to the timetable given to him from God, 4.
- ♦ He was the fully divine Son of God, the Messiah, with divine powers, 6–11, 16.
- ♦ He is the heavenly Bridegroom prefigured and prophesied in the Old Testament, as hinted at in this event, 1–11. *See John 3:29; Psalm 45; Matthew 22:1–14; Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22–33; and Revelation 19:6–9.*
- ♦ He is the true and final Passover Lamb, who gave himself for us to save us from our sins and thereby made the old sacrificial system obsolete, 13–16. *See John 13:1; 1 Corinthians 5:7; and Hebrews 10:1–10.*
- ♦ He is the dwelling-place of God, the temple of God on earth, 21. *See John 1:14, where “dwelt” is literally “tabernacled”; 14:10; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*

- ♦ He was fully divine and therefore omniscient, 24–25.

His work

- ♦ He taught a group of disciples, preparing them to continue his ministry after he rose from the dead, 2, 12. *See John 20:21.*
- ♦ He demonstrated radical allegiance to his heavenly Father, even at the cost of disappointing his mother, 4.
- ♦ As the heavenly Bridegroom, he “left” his mother to join himself to his bride, the incipient church, 4. *See John 3:29 and Ephesians 5:22–33.*

Note: His legal father Joseph was probably dead by this time, for he is not mentioned in any accounts of the adult career of Jesus.

- ♦ He demonstrated God’s love by providing wine for the wedding, thus affirming marriage but also manifesting his unique glory as God’s unbegotten Son, 7–11. *See John 1:14, 18.*
- ♦ He acted as a prophet by driving out those who engaged in the business of buying and selling animals for the temple sacrifices, 14–18.

Note: This action appears not only to be directed against noisy trading in the Court of the Gentiles, but also a prophetic warning that the sacrificial system itself, along with the temple, was being replaced by his own life as the one in whom God was dwelling, as well as his coming death, resurrection, ascension, and outpouring of the Spirit to dwell among his people, 19–21.

Note: The temple in Jerusalem was the “house” of God until the death, resurrection, ascension, and giving of the Holy Spirit by Jesus. Since then, no building should be called “the house of God,” for the followers of Jesus, individually and collectively, are now God’s dwelling place. See 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 4:15; Ephesians 2:19–22; and 1 Peter 2:4–5.

- ♦ He did many “signs,” that is miracles, from the beginning of his ministry. These miracles pointed to his unique identity and to his work as our redeemer from sin and all its effects, 23.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ John has no narrative account of the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, though he includes Jesus’ teaching that the Spirit will come after he has

ascended to heaven and his prophetic sign/action of breathing on the disciples in anticipation of Pentecost, 20:22. It is possible that the miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana points toward the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, which is everywhere contrasted with the external cleansing brought by the baptism of John the Baptist, and which so affected the disciples that onlookers thought they were drunk with wine. *See Acts 1:5; 2:13.*

- ♦ If this is so, then perhaps the Spirit is the “good” – that is, better – “wine” that God in Christ saved “saved until last,” that is, until these last days, when the new covenant brings the great blessing of the gift of the Holy Spirit, 10. *See Ezekiel 36:25–27; and Hebrews 8:6–12.*

His work: If the above interpretation is correct, then the Holy Spirit is represented here as the one who brings joy, enhances communion, and effects an inner transformation of believers, who all share in the wedding feast of the Lamb. *See Galatians 5:22–23.*

Sin

It includes: Mixing business with religion, that is, making money from those who have come to worship, 16; *see Acts 5:1–11; 8:9–24.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ New life in Christ, bringing inner transformation, as symbolized by the wine and contrasted to the water of Jewish ordinances, 6–10; *see Romans 7:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; and Ephesians 2:10; 4:23–24.*
- ♦ The joy produced by the indwelling Holy Spirit, 10; *see Galatians 5:22.*
- ♦ Union with Christ as our heavenly Bridegroom, 1–11; *see John 3:29; Romans 7:1–4; 2 Corinthians 11:2; and Ephesians 5:22–34.*
- ♦ Membership in the Body of Christ, the dwelling place of God, 21; *see Ephesians 1:23; 4:15–16; and 1 Peter 2:4–5.*

The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, he will join with us in an endless Messianic banquet, at which we will enjoy everlasting fellowship with him as our heavenly husband. *See Isaiah 25:6; Jeremiah 31:12–14; Hosea 14:7; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13–14; Luke 22:17–18; and Revelation 19:6–9.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Honor marriage, as instituted by God and adorned by Christ's presence and first miracle at Cana. *See Hebrews 13:4.*

Note: In the Bible, marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman. See Genesis 1:24.

- ♦ Love Jesus as our true heavenly husband and giver of all joy and satisfaction.
- ♦ Refuse to do any sort of business in connection with the worship of God with his people.
- ♦ Ask God to give us an all-consuming zeal for him, his kingdom, and the purity of his church.
- ♦ Ask God to give us the courage to rebuke those who contaminate the worship of God or the church of God.
- ♦ Thank God for the promise of resurrection from the dead in Christ.
- ♦ Eagerly await the return of our heavenly bridegroom and the consummation of the kingdom of God on earth at his coming.

John 3:1–21

Truth

Revelation

Its origin

- ♦ By definition, revelation comes from God, as revealed to his chosen messengers, supremely through Jesus Christ, the incarnate Logos, 11.
- ♦ Biblical revelation is a testimony, or witness, to Christ as the Son of God and our Savior, 11. *See John 3:2; 5:31–39.*

Its literary structure

- ♦ Interpreters differ about where Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus ends; most believe that verses 16–21 are John's interpretive comment.
- ♦ Parallel or synonymous terms: "see" and "enter" have basically the same meaning.
- ♦ "You must" refers to all people, for the pronoun "you" is plural, 7.
- ♦ Contrasting pairs, 12; "earthly" things refers to the new birth; "heavenly" things relate to "God's glorious kingdom, which one can enter only by the new birth" (ZNIVSB).

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Nicodemus; *see John 7:45–52; 19:38–42.*
- ♦ "Night," symbolizing spiritual darkness, 2; *see John 9:4; 11:10; 13:30.*
- ♦ Ascending to heaven and descending from heaven, 13; *see Proverbs 30:4a; and Ephesians 4:9.*
- ♦ "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," 14; *see Numbers 21:9.*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (often called "God" in the New Testament, Son (who often called himself the Son of Man), and Holy Spirit, 2, 5–6, 8, 13–14, 16, 18, 21.

- ♦ Within the Trinity, there is an eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father, as seen by the verbs, the Father gave the Son, he sent the Son, 16–17. This is only a functional, not an ontological or essential subordination.

His greatness

- ♦ He is all-powerful and can enable his chosen ones to do miracles, 2.
- ♦ He is the King of the world, 3, 5.
- ♦ He is (a) Spirit, 5–6, 8. *See John 4:24.*
- ♦ He is transcendent, dwelling in heaven, far above us in every way, 12–13.
- ♦ He is eternal, possessing in himself everlasting life, and thus able to bestow such life on others, 15–16. *See John 5:26.*
- ♦ He is the universal Judge, 17–19.

His goodness

- ♦ He gives his people new birth and entrance into his kingdom, 3, 5.
- ♦ He is full of love, manifesting this love supremely in sending his only Son Jesus to live, die, and rise for our salvation, 16–17.
- ♦ He is light, in every sense of the word, 19–21. *See Genesis 1:3; and 1 John 1:5.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is fully human, as seen in his recognition as a teacher, 2, and his liability to death, 14 (“Lifted up” includes being lifted up on the cross), 16 (“gave” includes the meaning of “gave him up as a sacrifice”).
- ♦ He was a teacher of God’s truth, 2.
- ♦ He had unique knowledge of God and his truth, 11–12.
- ♦ He was originally with God the Father in heaven, but “came down” to be incarnate as the God-man, 13.
- ♦ He is the divine-human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 13–14. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is the unique (only begotten) Son of God; there is no other like him, as John indicates by using the Greek word “son” to refer to Jesus, and “children” to refer to those who are born again, 16, 18. *See John 1:12.*
- ♦ He is also the only-begotten Son in his relationship to the Father. As begotten, he shares the life and being of the Father, 16, 18. *See John 1:1–3.*

Note: This “begetting” is not in time; it is an eternal generation, one beyond our capacity to understand. In other words, there was never a time when the Son was not (as Arius falsely claimed). See John 1:1–3.

- ♦ He is the light of the world, 19–21. *See John 1:4–5.*

His work

- ♦ He taught his disciples and the crowds, 2, 11.
- ♦ He worked miracles, which John calls “signs,” that testified to his unique origin and being, 2.
- ♦ He came down to this earth to become a man like us, without losing his divine and heavenly nature, 13.
- ♦ He died for us on the cross for our salvation from sin, 14, 16–17.

Note: “Lifted up,” as said before, indicates his being lifted up on the cross, as well as his glorious exaltation to heaven, 14. See John 8:28; 12:32, 34.

- ♦ He fulfilled Old Testament types and prophecies, 14. *See Numbers 21:9.*
- ♦ He was sent by God the Father, and given by God the Father, for our salvation; he willingly submitted to this sending and giving by actively coming, 13, 16–17.

Note: In other words, the Incarnation of the Son, as well as his life, ministry, and death were all joint actions of the Father and the Son, with the Spirit working in the entire process.

- ♦ He came as light – that is, the full revelation of God’s person, character, and saving love, as well as judgment – into this dark world, 19–20. *See John 1:5.*

Mankind

The only two “races”

- ♦ All of mankind is divided into those who
 - Have been born again
 - Have seen and entered the kingdom of God
 - Are characterized as “spirit,” having the Spirit of God
 - Consistently believe in Jesus Christ for salvation
 - Have received eternal life
 - Have been saved from perishing
 - Do the truth

- Perform good works by the power of God
- ♦ And those who do not or have not, 3, 5–7, 15–21.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not receiving the testimony about Christ, 11
- ♦ Not believing in Jesus Christ for salvation, 18
- ♦ Loving darkness, 19
- ♦ Being unwilling to come to the light of revelation in Jesus Christ, 20
- ♦ Practicing evil continuously and habitually, 20

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Seeing and entering the kingdom of God in this life, 3, 5
- ♦ Being born again, 3, 5; *see John 1:12–13; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3, 23; and 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.*
- ♦ Being born of water and the Spirit, 5; the most probable meaning is that this refers to the “purifying and transforming new birth” (ZNIVSB); *see Ezekiel 36:25–27.*

Note: Purification refers to our standing before God, now considered to be clean and pure (see John 13:10 and 1 Peter 2:2); transforming refers to our receiving a new life, the life of God within us that leads to good works.
- ♦ Entering the kingdom of in a preliminary fashion even now, 3, 5; *see Colossians 1:13.*
- ♦ Not perishing, that is not being subject to eternal death because of God’s wrath, 15–18; *see John 3:36.*
- ♦ In other words, not being condemned, 17–19; *see Psalm 34:21–22; and Romans 8:1.*
- ♦ Receiving eternal life, which is “the resurrection life of the age to come that believers experience in some measure now” (ZNIVSB); *see John 17:3.*
- ♦ The ability to “do the truth” by coming to the light of Christ, that is, by seeing one’s sins and coming to Christ for salvation, 21
- ♦ The ability to do good, 21; *see John 5:29, where Jesus refers to the habitual performance and good works by the power of the Spirit.*

Its origin

- ♦ Salvation comes “from above,” that is, from God, 3, 7. “Above” and “again” are both possible translations of the underlying Greek word.
- ♦ Salvation comes entirely by the sovereign work of God’s Spirit, 8. *See Ezekiel 37:1–14.*

Its recipients

- ♦ Those in whom God’s spirit has sovereignly worked to effect regeneration, 5–8; *see John 1:12–13.*
- ♦ Those who have consistent, persevering faith in Christ as Savior, 15–16; *see John 5:24.*

Note: “Believes” is in the present tense in Greek, used consistently in John’s writing for habitual, persistent action.

- ♦ People from all over the world, of every nation, tribe, people, and language (Revelation 7:9). This is the meaning of “world” in 3:16. “World” does not always mean “everyone” in John’s gospel and epistles; *see John 12:19.* Jesus here announces that all who believe in him will be saved, and not just the Jews. In other words, all whom God has chosen to be saved; *see John 15:16.*

The Last Things

Christ’s return: He will complete the work done by the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers now, and usher them into an eternal kingdom where they will enjoy a blessed life – eternal life, the life of God – forever, 5, 15–16. *See Revelation 21:3–7; 22:1–5, 14.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Search our hearts to see whether we have been truly born again by the Spirit of God.
- ♦ If we think we have, then we should thank him with all our being every day.
- ♦ Tell others, including churchgoers and religious people like Nicodemus, that they must be born again.
- ♦ Entrust the regeneration of others to the work of God’s Holy Spirit, done in his time and in his way, 8.

- ♦ Worship Jesus as the only who has come down to heaven and ascended thither again, 13. *See Ephesians 4:9.*
- ♦ Thank God for giving us Jesus as our Savior from sin and death, 14–17.
- ♦ Keep trusting in Jesus as our only Savior all the days of our life.
- ♦ Preach the good news of salvation through Jesus to all whom we encounter, as God gives open doors.
- ♦ Warn people of the judgment that will surely come upon those who persist in rejecting God's offer of salvation in Christ, 18–20.
- ♦ Keep coming to the moral light of Jesus, as revealed in the Bible, to see our sins and God's grace and to be transformed by him into those who practice good deeds, 21.

John 3:22–36

Truth

Revelation

Its origin

- ♦ Biblical revelation comes from above, from God, 31–32, 34.
- ♦ Biblical revelation consists of words that are from God, that is, the very words – not just the concepts – are from God himself, 34.
- ♦ During the earthly ministry of Jesus, revelation came directly through Jesus Christ from the Father by the Spirit, 34.

Note: In the Old Testament, and the rest of the New Testament, revelation also came from God through Christ by the Spirit, who revealed words from God about Christ through the Spirit to chosen messengers. See 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:1; 2 Peter 1:16–21; and Revelation 1:1–3.

Its literary form: Just as “world” in John’s gospel does not always refer to everyone born into the world, so “all,” 26, and “no one” do not always mean everyone born into the world, but “many,” or “some of all sorts,” etc.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists in an eternal Trinity of three equal Persons, the Father (often called “God” in the New Testament), Son (Word), and Holy Spirit, 34–35, where “He whom God has sent” refers to Jesus Christ.
- ♦ This Trinity is a society of eternal love, 35.

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent, dwelling in “heaven,” far above us in every way, 27, 31.
- ♦ He has the authority to give what he wills to whom he wills, 27, 34–35.
- ♦ He possesses an inexhaustible spiritual being, existence, and resources, 34–35.
- ♦ He has eternal life in himself, 36. *See John 5:26.*

His goodness

- ♦ He instituted rituals of purification for his people, the Jews, so that they could draw near to him in worship, 25. *See John 2:6.*

- ♦ He kindly sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Christ, 28.
- ♦ He sent his only Son to become the incarnate Christ, Jesus, 31.
- ♦ He graciously revealed his will and his ways through the words of Jesus, 32–34.
- ♦ He is true, faithful, reliable, 33.
- ♦ He grants eternal life to those who trust in Christ, 36.
- ♦ He pours out his wrath upon those who persistently reject Christ, 36. *See John 3:18–19; 5:29; and Romans 1:18–32; 2:8–9.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the man Jesus, the all-human son of Mary, 22.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the long-promised Messiah, who would deliver his people from their sins, 28.
- ♦ He is the heavenly Bridegroom of his people, 29. *See Isaiah 55:4–5; Hosea 2:14–20; Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22–33; and Revelation 21:2.*
- ♦ He is from above – heaven – the dwelling place of God, 31. *See John 3:13 and 1 Corinthians 15:47.*
- ♦ He is above all creatures, 31. *See Ephesians 1:20–21; 4:9–10; and Colossians 1:15, 17.*
- ♦ He has/had unique and direct access to God the Father, 32. *See John 1:18; 3:11; 15:15.*
- ♦ He is the only-begotten Son of God, 35. *See John 1:18; 3:17–18; Romans 8:32; and Hebrews 1:2.*
- ♦ He is the dearly beloved Son of the Father, 35. *See John 19:17; 17:23–24; Luke 3:22; and Colossians 1:13.*
- ♦ He has all authority, life, power, glory, wisdom – all of God’s attributes, 35.

His work

- ♦ He called, lived with, and trained disciples, 22. *See John 1:39–51; and Matthew 4:19.*
- ♦ He, through his disciples, baptized people, 22, 26. *See John 4:2.*
- ♦ He taught people what he had “seen” and “heard” from God the Father, 32.
- ♦ He spoke the very words of God the Father, 34.
- ♦ He received the Spirit without measure for his earthly work, 34. *See John 1:33; Matthew 3:16–17; and Luke 4:1, 14.*

Mankind

The only two “races”: Those who continually believe in the Son of God, Jesus, and those who do not, 36

Sin

It includes: Not believing that Jesus is the Son of God sent to save us, 36

Salvation

Its benefits: Receiving eternal life, 36

Its recipients: Those who continually trust in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, 36

The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns

- ♦ Those who have trusted in Christ will enter eternal life, 36.
- ♦ Those who do not trust in Christ will face eternal wrath from God, 36.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Recognize that any spiritual gift we have comes from God, 27. *See 1 Corinthians 3:5,6; 4:7.*
- ♦ Recognize that we are not the Christ, that is, we cannot save anyone, including our spouse and children, nor do we have all spiritual gifts, as Jesus did, 28. *See Romans 12:3.*
- ♦ Recognize that we have been sent before Christ to bear witness to him, 28. *See John 20:21 and Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ Rejoice at the thought that Jesus is the Bridegroom of his people and will come to take them to be with himself, 29.
- ♦ Seek emotional satisfaction, especially the satisfaction of loving and being loved, in Christ alone, as our heavenly Bridegroom, 29.
- ♦ Love Jesus and cling to him above all other and above all else, 29.
- ♦ Consciously seek to “decrease” in our own self-estimation and in the estimation of others, that Christ may increase in importance to us and to others, 30.

- ♦ Receive, believe, and obey the testimony that Jesus bore to the truth, 32–34.
- ♦ Trust in Christ at all times, 36.

Note: The word “believe” is in the present tense in Greek, signifying continuous action.

- ♦ Thank God for giving us eternal life through faith in Jesus his Son, 36.
- ♦ Preach the gospel, so that others may believe and not perish.

John 4:1–24

Truth

Revelation

Its origin

- ♦ Revelation comes from God, through Christ; we do not know God or his truth on our own, 22. *See Psalm 76:1; 147:19–20.*
- ♦ To be more specific: Special, saving revelation came to and through the Jews, exclusively (with the possible exception of Job, whose ethnicity we don't know), 22.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ Jesus' baptism (rather, his disciples' baptizing), 1–2; *see John 3:22–24.*
- ♦ The Samaritans, 4–5, 7, 9; Jews' contempt for them, 9, 27; *see John 8:48 and Luke 10:33.* They were a mixed race of residents of the Northern Kingdom and foreigners brought in by Assyria after they capture the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in 722 B.C. *See 2 Kings 1:24–31.*
- ♦ Jacob's well, 5–6; *see Genesis 33:18–20, for possible background.*
- ♦ Water symbolism, 7–15; *see John 2:6; 3:5; 7:38; and Jeremiah 2:13.*
- ♦ The Samaritans had their own version of the Pentateuch and rejected the rest of the Old Testament, 9, 20.
- ♦ "Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain," (Mt. Gerazim), 20; *see Genesis 12:6–7; 33:19–20. See also Deuteronomy 11:29; 27:12–13; and Joshua 8:33.*
- ♦ "Hour," the time when Jesus dies and is then raised up from the dead by God, 21; *see John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1.*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (often called "God" in the New Testament, Son (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Word, son of Man), and Holy Spirit, 10, 14, 23–24, 26.

Note: In Scripture, these Three are everywhere described as being equal in eternity, deity, power, glory, omniscience, omnipresence, wisdom, and all other uniquely divine attributes.

- ♦ Within this Trinity of ontological equals, there is a kind of functional subordination, so that the God can give the Spirit through the Son, 10, 14.

His greatness

- ♦ He possesses within himself everlasting life, 14. *See John 5:26.*
- ♦ He demands and deserves our worship, 23.
- ♦ He is pure Spirit, 24.

His goodness

- ♦ He gives the gift of the Spirit – that is, of himself – to his people, through Jesus Christ, 10.
- ♦ He is the eternal Father of his eternal, only-begotten Son (*see John 1:14, 18; 17:5*), and he also graciously reveals himself as Father to his children, those who have been born again through the Holy Spirit and faith in Jesus Christ, 21, 23. *See John 1:12–13.*
- ♦ He graciously revealed his saving will and ways to his people the Jews, 22.
- ♦ He saved his people, the Jews, from Egypt and all sorts of bondage, and now saves his people – those who trust in Christ – from his wrath and eternal damnation, 22. *See John 3:15–19, 36.*
- ♦ He seeks worshipers, that is, he is seeking people who will have intimate communion with him, 23.

Note: “In spirit and truth,” 23–24, may also be translated “in the Spirit and the Truth,” that is, in and through the work of the Holy Spirit and the truth, who is Jesus. See John 14:6; 16:13.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Lord, Yahweh in the flesh, truly God and truly man, 1.
- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 1–2.
- ♦ He was, somehow, subordinate to the Father, and thus under divine necessity to go through Samaria (“needed” or “must” translates the Greek *dei*, indicating necessity), 4.

- ◆ Being fully human, he could suffer weariness and thirst, 6–7.
- ◆ As the Son of God, he can give the Spirit of God to his people, 10, 14. *See John 16:7 and Acts 2:33.*
- ◆ He possesses, and can therefore bestow, eternal life, 14.
- ◆ He was a Jew, 22.
- ◆ He is the truth, 24, assuming that “in spirit and truth” refers to the Holy Spirit and to Jesus. *See John 14:6.*
- ◆ He is the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed Savior sent by God into the world to deliver us from our sins, 25–26. *See John 1:32–33.*

His work

- ◆ He lived among us as a weak and yet morally pure man, 6–7.
- ◆ He gives the Holy Spirit, and thus eternal life, to his people, 10, 14.
- ◆ He was a prophet, with divinely given insight into people’s hearts and lives, 16–19.
- ◆ He thus exposed people’s sins and their need for salvation, 16.
- ◆ He communicated “all things,” that is, all things necessary to know and serve God, and to be saved, to his hearers, 25.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ◆ He is the gift of God, 10.
- ◆ That means that he is somehow distinct from God the Father and God the Son, though he is the Spirit of God, 10, 24.
- ◆ He is alive, and his life is eternal, 10, 14.
- ◆ He is the fundamental essence or nature of God, 24.

His work

- ◆ He acts like water in that he satisfies, revives, and refreshes the soul, 10, 13–14.
- ◆ He operates within believers as an ever-ceasing flow of new life, 14. *See Proverbs 10:11.*

Mankind

The only two “races”

- ◆ We are divided into various races and ethnic groups by history, 5–9.
- ◆ But we can be united and animated by one Spirit, who enables us to know the truth of God and to worship him as Father, 24–25.
- ◆ Thus, there are only two “races”, not Jews and Samaritans, or Jews and Gentiles, but believers in Christ and non-believers. *See Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Sexual relations with anyone who is not our spouse in a lifelong marriage of one man and one woman, 17–18; all other sexual relations are wrong before God; including divorce and remarriage, living with someone of the other sex to whom we are not married, and homosexual relationships. *See Genesis 3:24; Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27–32; Romans 1:26–29; 7:1–3; and Ephesians 5:1–7, 22–33.*
- ◆ Worshiping God in any way other than how he has revealed to us in his truth, which for us is the Scriptures, 23–24. *See John 17:17.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ The gift of the Holy Spirit, 10, 14; *see Ephesians 1:13–14.*
- ◆ Eternal and everlasting life, 14; *see John 3:15–16; 17:3.*
- ◆ The privilege of worshiping God as our Father, 23–24

Its origin: Salvation comes to us from God the Father through Jesus Christ his Son, 10, 14.

Its recipients: Those who ask in faith, 10

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns

- ♦ He will usher in a new heaven and new earth, where he will lead us to fountains of living water and where the river of the water of life will flow freely for us to enjoy forever, 10, 14. *See Revelation 7:17; 21:6; 22:1.*
- ♦ We will worship God freely with all the saints and the angels forever, 23–24. *See Revelation 5:8–14; 7:9–17.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to live among us as a man and experience all our weaknesses and temptations. *See Hebrews 4:15.*
- ♦ Thank Jesus for coming down here to live among us and suffer for us to save us from our sins.
- ♦ Not try to satisfy our longing for love by looking to romantic love or sex; only God can satisfy us.
- ♦ Ask God to give us the grace to remain faithful to our marriage partner.
- ♦ Humble ourselves to ask for help when we need it, as Jesus did.
- ♦ Cross cultural, class, and religious boundaries to show God's love to others.
- ♦ Constantly ask Jesus to give us the refreshing "water" of the Holy Spirit. *See Ephesians 5:18.*
- ♦ Call people to repentance when they seek benefits from God, 16.
- ♦ Ask God to give us the grace to long to worship him and to worship him by the power of the Spirit and in the truth revealed in Jesus.
- ♦ Worship Jesus as our heaven-sent Messiah and Savior, 26.

John 4:25–54

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms: Jesus' words that the fields are white for harvest may reflect the sea of white robes of Samaritans coming out to see him, 30, 35.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ “Others have labored,” 38; *see Jeremiah 44:41*; John the Baptist was the last of the prophets who labored without seeing a harvest, or perhaps this saying refers to the “labor” of Jesus in speaking to the woman.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is some sort of relational and functional hierarchy: The Father “sent” the Son, who delights to do the Father’s will, 34.

His goodness: He sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, 34, 42.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He was a human rabbi, a teacher with disciples, 27, 31.
- ♦ He carried out the will of the Father and completed the saving work for which he had been sent, 34. *See John 17:4; 19:30.*
- ♦ He was a prophet who did miracles and spoke God’s Word, 44.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the Savior of the world, sent by the Father, 29, 34, 42.

Note: Since Yahweh alone calls himself the Savior, this title demonstrates that Jesus is Yahweh in the flesh, contrary to the claims of Jehovah’s Witnesses. See Isaiah 43:11.

His work

- ♦ He gathered, taught, and lived with disciples, 27, 33.
- ♦ He demonstrated divine knowledge of people, 39.

- ♦ He preached the Word of God to people, 41–42.
- ♦ He worked miracles as a prophet of God, 44–45.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Rejecting a prophet of God just because we think we know him well, 44
- ♦ Basing our faith in Christ upon miracles that we have seen, 45

Salvation

Its origin: Salvation comes from God, through his Son Jesus, 34, 42.

Its means: Salvation comes through the preaching of God’s Word, 39, 41.

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who believe the words about Christ, 42

Note: Faith based on miracles is not, in the Gospel of John, considered true faith, 43. See John 2:23–25.

- ♦ People of all races, nations, and cultures, 42; *see John 3:16.*

Note: In context, “Savior of the world” here refers to Christ being the Savior not only of Jews but of Samaritans, who represent all those who are not Jews but who believe in Christ. See note on 3:16.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Tell our family, friends, and all whom we meet about Jesus and his saving work in our lives, 28–29, 39.
- ♦ Seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness, even more than the necessities of life, including food, 34. *See Matthew 6:33.*
- ♦ Recognize that some “sow” the seed of the gospel and others reap; be willing to accept our part in God’s plan, and not to force someone to make a profession of faith before he is ready, 37–38.
- ♦ Preach the gospel to the whole world, 35–38, 42. *See Mark 16:15.*

John 5:1–23

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Healing on the Sabbath arouses the ire of the Pharisees, 9; *see John 8:37; Matthew 12:9–14; and Mark 3:1–6.*
- ♦ “Rise, take up your bed, and walk,” 8, 11–12; *see Luke 5:24.*

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 17, 19–23.

His greatness

- ♦ He has all power, including to heal, which he can delegate to angels or to his chosen servants, and which he demonstrated supremely in Jesus, 8–9, 17.
- ♦ He even has the power to raise people to eternal life, 21.
- ♦ He possesses, and is sovereign over, “all things,” including the power of life and death, 20–21.
- ♦ He has the authority to judge all mankind, but delegates this authority to his Son, 22.
- ♦ He deserves all honor, glory, and praise, 23.

His goodness

- ♦ He wills to bring healing to people, sometimes in this life and for all believers completely in the next life, 17–21. *See Psalm 103:1–5; and Philipians 3:21.*
- ♦ He is full of love, so that his love eternally overflows to his unique Son, 20.
- ♦ He sent his only Son to save us from our sins, 23. *See John 3:16.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 1, 6, 10, 13–14, 16–17.
- ♦ He is the unique, only-begotten Son of the Father, 17, 19–23. *See John 1:18.*
- ♦ He is so united to the Father that his works are the Father’s works, 17.

- ♦ He is somehow subordinate to the Father, so that he does nothing from himself, but only as he “sees” the Father doing, 19.
- ♦ He somehow “sees” the Father; that is, he has the most intimate relationship and knowledge of God the Father, surpassing that of all men, who cannot see God the Father in his essence, 19–20. *See John 1:18.*
- ♦ As the divine Son, sharing the very nature of God, he is equal to God the Father, 18.
- ♦ He has the same infinite power as the Father does and can do the very things that the Father does, 19.

Note: Jesus did not do works like those of the Father; as Son of God, he did the very works of God the Father, works that he had “seen” the Father “doing” in heaven, which he, the Son, then does on earth, 19.

Note: The Son could do the works of the Father because he did not possess a nature or being like that of the Father (homoiousios), as the Arians claimed, but possessed the same being or essence as God the Father (homoousios).

- ♦ He is the uniquely beloved Son of the Father, 20. *See John 1:18.*
- ♦ He shares the Father’s power and authority over life and death, now and forever, 21.
- ♦ He has authority, delegated to him by the Father, to judge all men, 22.
- ♦ He deserves the same honor that God the Father does, 23.

His work

- ♦ He obeyed all the Old Testament laws, including those requiring attendance at certain feasts, 1. *See Deuteronomy 16:16 and Galatians 4:4.*
- ♦ He noticed the sufferings of the sick, demon–possessed, poor, and downtrodden, 6.
- ♦ He healed the sick with his divine power, 8–9.

Note: He did this merely by speaking a word of command.

- ♦ He admonished people to repent and turn from their sins, 14. *See John 8:11 and Matthew 4:17.*
- ♦ He did the works of God the Father, 17, 19.
- ♦ He gives new life to those whom he will, 21.

- ♦ He “judged” people by his presence and his teaching, and will someday judge the entire world, 22. *See John 3:19.*

The Holy Spirit

The bond of love between Father and Son?

- ♦ Beginning with Augustine, and especially in Jonathan Edwards, some theologians have held that the Holy Spirit is the personal bond of love between the Father and the Son. If that is true, then “The Father loves the Son” would include the entire Trinity, since “loves” would be understood as the action of the Spirit, 20.

Mankind

Our nature: In our current condition, we are afflicted with all sorts of physical ailments, 3.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not helping those who are in need, but putting our own interests first, 7
- ♦ Self-pity, 7
- ♦ All sorts of mental attitudes that are wrong; sin is not limited to what healthy, active people can do, 14
- ♦ Ingratitude, as expressed here by (1) not even asking the name of the one who had healed him, and (2) betraying Jesus to the authorities, 13, 15
- ♦ Putting our understanding of moral principles ahead of common compassion, 16
- ♦ Seeking to “kill” Jesus (or his followers), simply because our traditions have been challenged, 16
- ♦ Rejecting Jesus’ claim to be the unique Son of the Father, 18
- ♦ Not honoring Jesus as we honor God the Father, 22

Salvation

Its benefits: “Life” in all its dimensions, 21, including eternal life now and later; *see John 3:16; 10:10; 17:3.*

Its origin: Salvation comes to us from the Father through Jesus Christ his Son, 17, 19–22.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Notice, and try to help, those among us who are afflicted in any way.
- ♦ Ask people, “Do you want to be well,” for sometimes there is a “payoff” to nurturing an illness or disability, 6.
- ♦ Avoid self-pity, 7.
- ♦ Believe that Jesus can heal us, whether suddenly or gradually, or when we enter his eternal kingdom.
- ♦ Receive God’s blessings to us as a reminder to turn daily to him in repentance and faith, 14.
- ♦ Thank God for revealing himself through the person, the words, and the works of Jesus Christ on earth, 19–20. *See John 14:7–11.*
- ♦ Trust Jesus to give us “life” in all its aspects, 21.
- ♦ Leave judgment as to the final destiny of others with Jesus, 22.
- ♦ Honor Jesus just as we honor God the Father, 23.

John 5:24–47

Truth

Revelation

Its origin

- ♦ Special revelation comes from God through Christ, and particularly through his spoken words and mighty works as recorded in the Gospels, 24, 36.
- ♦ Revelation also came through the prophets who pointed to Christ, including John the Baptist, 32–33, 35, and Moses, 45–47.
- ♦ Biblical revelation is the Word of God, 38.

Its purpose

- ♦ Revelation was given to evoke saving faith, 24.
- ♦ Revelation was given to bring salvation, that is, eternal life to those who accepted it, 24, 34.

Its nature and character

- ♦ Biblical revelation is altogether true, 32–33.
- ♦ Biblical revelation points to Christ as our Savior, 36, 39.
- ♦ Revelation includes the Old Testament Scriptures, 39, including the Pentateuch written by Moses, 45.
- ♦ Biblical revelation is a unified whole with many parts, each essential to the total message; that is why not believing in the record given by Moses makes faith in Christ impossible, 46–47.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal equal Trinity of Father (called “God” often in the New Testament), Son (Jesus Christ, Word), and the Holy Spirit. This doctrine arose in response to the New Testament, which clearly teaches that the Son of God is equal to the Father but is not a second God. Thus, any mention of “Father” and “Son” points to the Trinity, 24–26, 30, 36–37, 43, 45.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is an eternal functional (not ontological) subordination of the Son to the Father, 24, 26–27, 30, 36–37, 43.

His greatness

- ♦ He possesses eternal life in himself and can thus bestow it on others, 24, 26, 29.
- ♦ As Universal King, he has the authority to judge all men, as well as to delegate this authority to others, pre-eminently his Son Jesus, 27, 30. *See Genesis 18:25; Matthew 25:31–33; and Acts 10:42; 17:31.*
- ♦ He has all power, and can enable others, pre-eminently his Son Jesus, to manifest this power in miracles, or “works,” or “signs” (such as healing the man who had been lame for thirty-eight years), 36.
- ♦ He is hidden from our eyes and understanding until he reveals himself to us, 37.
- ♦ He is unique, the only true God, 44. *See John 17:3.*

His goodness

- ♦ He gives eternal life, that is, freedom from judgment and eternal wrath, to those who trust in his son Jesus, 24. *See John 3:16.*
- ♦ He graciously sent his Son Jesus into this world to be our Savior from sin and eternal death, 24, 30, 43.
- ♦ He will raise from the dead those who trust in Christ, 25–29.
- ♦ He testified to his Son Jesus in many ways, including John’s testimony, the Father’s voice at Jesus’ baptism, and Jesus’ many miracles, called “signs,” 32–37.
- ♦ He worked mighty miracles of love through his Son Jesus, 36. *See John 2:1–11; 5:1–15; 6:1–14, 15–21; 9:1–34; 11:1–44.*
- ♦ He put his stamp of authentication upon Jesus and his divine mission, 37.
- ♦ He kindly revealed his will and his ways, including his promises to send a Savior, through the Old Testament Scriptures, 39–47.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the one sent by God to save us from our sins, 24, 30, 36.
- ♦ He is the unique and eternal Son of God, 25.
- ♦ He has life in himself, as does God the Father, 26.
- ♦ He is the divine-human Son of Man, God’s appointed King, prophesied by Daniel, 27. *See John 1:51; Daniel 7:13–14; and Acts 17:31.*

Note: "Son of Man" was Jesus' preferred self-designation, often used in the Synoptic Gospels.

- ♦ He is the Messiah about whom all the Old Testament prophets, including Moses, wrote, 39, 46. *See Matthew 5:17-18 (where "Law and prophets" refers to the entire Old Testament, and "fulfill" means to obey all the law and bring to fruition and completion all the types, signs, and prophecies about him); Luke 24:25-27, 45; and Hebrews 1:1-2.*

His work

- ♦ He spoke God's Words of eternal life, 24.
- ♦ He came to this earth in obedience to the Father who sent him, 24, 30, 43.
- ♦ He did nothing of himself; he judges only as he hears from the Father; he seeks only the will of the Father and does only the works that the Father gives him to do, 30, 36.
- ♦ He performed "works" – signs, miracles – of love and power that testified to his unique person and mission, 36.
- ♦ He gives eternal life to those who come to him in faith, 40.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Any evil action, 29; this would include any violation of God's revealed will, including the Great Commandments; *see Mark 12:29-13.*
- ♦ Not believing in Jesus as God's sent One, 38
- ♦ Not being willing to come to Jesus by faith, 40
- ♦ Seeking honor from men rather than from God, 44
- ♦ Not believing what Moses wrote in the Pentateuch, 45-47

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Eternal life now; that is, the life of God himself, which will never die, 2, 40
- ♦ Deliverance from God's judgment, 24
- ♦ Deliverance from eternal death, which consist of alienation from God and then eternally after physical death, 24
- ♦ Resurrection from the dead and eternal life in the new heaven and new earth, 25, 29

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who hear the words of – and about – Jesus, 24
- ♦ Those who not only hear but believe in God as the one who sent Jesus as our Savior, 24; *see John 1:12–13; 3:16.*
- ♦ Those who “come” to Jesus by faith, 40; *see John 6:37.*

Note: Both “believes” and “come” in these verses are in the present tense in Greek, indicating ongoing, continuous action, not a one-time profession of faith.

The Last Things

Christ’s return

- ♦ He will shout with a loud voice and raise from the dead all people, 28–29.
- ♦ Those who have “done good,” that is, who have continuously trusted in him and followed him in a life of love – will enter into eternal life, 29.
- ♦ Those who have “done evil,” that is, those who have consistently refused to trust in Christ and bear the fruits of love, will be judged, condemned, and consigned to eternal death, 24, 29. *See Matthew 25:46; Romans 2:6–10; 2 Thessalonians 1:7–10; and Revelation 21:8; 22:12–15.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Preach the gospel of Christ, that people may hear, believe, and be saved, 24.
- ♦ Believe in Christ as God’s heaven-sent Savior, 24.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us eternal life in Christ, 24–25, 29.
- ♦ Warn people of the eternal consequences of refusing to trust and follow Christ, 29.
- ♦ Like Jesus, seek always and only to do the Father’s will, especially as it is now revealed to us in Scripture, 30. *See 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:18.*
- ♦ Constantly search the Scriptures, including the Pentateuch, to see what they have to say about Christ and how to know him, 39, 45–47.
- ♦ Avoid trying to seek honor and approval and glory from men; seek, rather to receive only God’s approval, 44.

John 6:1–21

Truth

Revelation

Its literary structure: The four Gospels are divided into two groups: The first three, called the Synoptic Gospels, and the Fourth Gospel by John. These two groups of biographies of Jesus greatly differ, but this story of the feeding of the five thousand is included in all of them, thus indicating its great importance.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ Multitudes follow Jesus because of his miracles, 2; *see John 2:23–25.*
- ♦ Passover, 4; *see Deuteronomy 16:1; John 13:1; the Passover recalls the slaying of a sacrificial lamb; see John 1:29, 36.*
- ♦ The leader of God’s people provides food for them in the wilderness, 5–14; *see Exodus 16; Numbers 11.*
- ♦ “When He had given thanks,” that is, when he had “blessed” God for the food; he did not “bless” the food, 11; *see Matthew 26:26–27; and 1 Corinthians 11:24.*
Note: Although some aspects of this incident cause us to recall the Last Supper, this passage is not primarily about the Lord’s Supper, as most interpreters incorrectly say.
- ♦ “The Prophet who is to come into the world,” 14; *see Deuteronomy 18:15, 18.*
- ♦ After going up to the mountain to pray, Jesus walks on water, 19; *see Matthew 22:14–33.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, who lived, walked, talked among men as a man, 3–21.
- ♦ He is also fully God, and thus omnipotent, and able to make a feast for perhaps as many as 10,000 –20,000 (5,000 men plus their families), walk on water, and cause a boat immediately to arrive at its destination, 10–21.
- ♦ He is the Good Shepherd, who makes his people lie down in green pastures and feeds them, 10–13. *See John 10:11 and Psalm 23.*

- ♦ He is the Prophet whom Moses said would come with divine authority, 14. *See John 4:19 and Deuteronomy 18:15-19.*

His work

- ♦ He fed those who had followed him into a wilderness, 4-14; he rescued his disciples from a storm, 17-18; he took them to their destination as soon as he had entered the boat, 21. *See Psalm 107:30; 105:40.*
- ♦ He refused to take political power, 14-15.
- ♦ He prayed, presumably both for himself and for those whom he came to save, 15.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Take care of the material needs of those who leave all to follow Jesus.

Note: This passage does not support the idea that Christians must - or could - feed all the hungry people in the world.

- ♦ Trust Jesus to meet all our material needs.
- ♦ Thank God for whatever we have, no matter how limited it is.
- ♦ Exercise economy in all things, 12.
- ♦ Avoid seeking political power for religious ends.

Note: Christians may and should seek to influence society, even by politics, as long as they don't think that they can thereby usher in the kingdom of God.

- ♦ Trust that Jesus knows our difficult situation, even when we can't see him, 17-19.
- ♦ Trust Jesus to come and deliver us from danger when he still has work for us to do, 19-21.
- ♦ Trust Jesus to enable us to reach our appointed destination - if it is his will - even miraculously and suddenly if he chooses.

John 6:22–40

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ Bread from heaven, 31, 32; *see Exodus 16:1–36; Nehemiah 9:15; and Psalm 78:24.*
- ♦ “I am” sayings in John, 35; *see John 6:51; 8:12; 10:7, 9; 10:11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5.*

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal equal Trinity of Father (called “God” often in the New Testament), Son (Jesus Christ, Word), and the Holy Spirit. This doctrine arose in response to the New Testament, which clearly teaches that the Son of God is equal to the Father but is not a second God. Thus, any mention of “Father” and “Son” points to the Trinity, 27, 29, 32–33, 37–40.

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipotent, and thus able to work miracles, like Jesus’ walking on the water, implied in 22–25, and his feeding the 5,000, the “sign” referred to in 26.
- ♦ He possesses all power and all resources, and thus was able to feed the Israelites in the wilderness with “bread from heaven” for forty years, 31.
- ♦ He is transcendent, dwelling in “heaven,” far “above” this world, 32–33, 38.
- ♦ He is eternal and can thus give eternal life to people who trust in Christ, 33, 39–40.
- ♦ He is all-powerful, and can therefore raise dead people up from death, 39–40.
- ♦ He has life in himself and is thus the source of all life and of all that gives life, both material and spiritual, 40.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent his Son into this world to save us, 29, 38, 40. *See John 3:16.*
- ♦ He kindly provided for his complaining people in the wilderness, 31–32.
- ♦ He sent Moses to lead his people out of bondage in Egypt, 32.
- ♦ He offers “true” bread, food that satisfied, to those who trust Christ, 33.

- ♦ He “gives” some people to Christ to be saved, 37.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 22, 24, 26, etc.
- ♦ He is the Lord, Yahweh come in the flesh, fully God and fully man, 23, 34.
- ♦ He was a Jewish rabbi, 25.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 27. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is the unique Son of God the Father, 27, 32, 37, 39–40.
- ♦ He is the one sent by God to be our Savior, 29, 38.
- ♦ He is the bread of God, the bread, that is, given by God, 32–33, 35.

Note: This “bread” is eternal life, both now and later, that fully satisfies our souls and will led to the full restoration of our bodies in heaven.

His work

- ♦ He demonstrated his deity by many signs, including, as implied in this verse, walking on the water and then causing the disciples’ boat to arrive at the other shore, 22. *See John 6:19–21.*
- ♦ He gathered and taught disciples like a Jewish rabbi, 22.
- ♦ He fed 5,000 men and their families with only five loaves and two fish, 23, 26. *See John 6:1–14.*
- ♦ He gives and will give the bread of life, the bread that bestows eternal life, 27.
- ♦ He came down from heaven to become a man and live among us, 33, 38. *See John 1:14.*
- ♦ He welcomes, receives, and accepts forever those who keep coming to him in faith, 37, 38.

Note: “Comes” in this verse is a present tense in Greek, indicating continuous, habitual action.

- ♦ He did only his Father’s will, not his own will, 38–40.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Seeking Christ only for material benefit, 26

- ♦ Making earthly survival, sufficiency, and success our main goal in life, 27
- ♦ Seeking additional signs from God than those he has already given, 30–31
- ♦ Refusing to believe in Jesus even after we have “seen” him, that is, after we have been given sufficient evidence of his person and saving work, 36

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Eternal life, both now and later, 27, 33, 35, 40
- ♦ True satisfaction of all our deepest desires, 35
- ♦ Eternal acceptance by God through faith in Christ, 37, 39
- ♦ Resurrection of our bodies from the dead into everlasting life with God, 39, 40

Its origin: Salvation comes from God alone.

- ♦ It is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, 27, 32, 37, 39.
- ♦ It is the work of God within us, according to some interpretations of verse 29.

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who ongoingly put their trust in Jesus Christ, 29
- ♦ Those who continue to “come” to Jesus by faith, 35, 37
- ♦ Those who have been given to the Son by the Father, 37, 39

Note: This means that true salvation, including saving faith, is the result of God’s sovereign will. See also John 1:12–13; 6:44–45, 65.

- ♦ Those who “see” and “believe” in Jesus Christ; that is, those who expose themselves to the gospel and fully trust in Jesus as Savior, 40.

Note: There is a mystery here. On the one hand, only those whom the Father gives to his Son and draws to Christ will be saved; on the other, we are to come to Jesus and believe in him. In other words, God’s sovereignty and our responsibility are both taught in Scripture.

The Last Things

Christ’s return: He will raise from the dead all those whom the Father has given to him and who therefore ongoingly come to Christ by faith, 39–40.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Seek Jesus for spiritual, not material benefits.
- ♦ Preach a gospel of salvation that focuses on spiritual, not material benefits.
- ♦ Acknowledge that our salvation is entirely a gift of God to us.
- ♦ Continue to come to Christ in faith and urge others to do likewise.
- ♦ Seek satisfaction of soul in Jesus alone.
- ♦ Rest assured that if we trust in Christ, he will never reject us, 37.
- ♦ Imitate Jesus by seeking to do only God's will, not ours, 38. *See Matthew 26:39, 42.*

John 6:41–71

Truth

Revelation

Its origin: Biblical, that is, special, revelation came from God through his chosen messengers, supremely Jesus Christ, 45, 63.

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ “The people complained” [lit., grumbled], as did Israel in the wilderness, both before and after God gave them daily manna from heaven, 41, 43, 61; *see Exodus 15:24; 16:2, 8–9; and Numbers 11:4–6.*
- ♦ “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?” 42; *see Mark 6:3; Luke 4:22.*
- ♦ “They shall all be taught by God,” 45; *see Isaiah 54:13.*
- ♦ No one has seen the father but his Son, Jesus, 46; *see John 1:18; 3:13; 14:7–9.*
- ♦ “Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and are dead,” 49, 58; that is, even those Jews who were given manna, bread from heaven, eventually died.
- ♦ “I am the bread of life,” 48; *see other “I AM” statements cited at 6:35.*
- ♦ “My flesh,” 51; *see John 1:14.*
- ♦ “Drinks My blood,” 54; *see Leviticus 19:26.*
- ♦ “Abides [remains] in Me, and I in him,” 56; *see John 15:1–10.*
- ♦ “Simon Peter answered . . . you are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” 68–69; *see Matthew 16:16.*

Its nature and effect

- ♦ The words of Scripture and of Christ are “spirit” and “life,” in that they are given by the Holy Spirit and create new and eternal spiritual life in those who believe, 45, 63, 68.
- ♦ The words of Christ, therefore, convey true knowledge of Christ and of God, 69.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal equal Trinity of Father (called “God” often in the New Testament), Son (Jesus Christ, Word), and the Holy Spirit. This doctrine arose in response to the New Testament, which clearly teaches that the Son of God is equal to the Father but is not a second God. Thus, any mention of “Father” and “Son” points to the Trinity, 44-46, 57, 63, 69.
- ♦ There is within this Trinity of equals an eternal functional (not ontological) subordination of the Son to the Father, who sent the Son, and from whom the Son somehow derives his own eternal life, 44-46, 57.

His greatness

- ♦ He – with the Son and the Spirit – dwells in heaven, far above us in every way, 41-42.
- ♦ He possesses the sovereign right to save those whom he will, by drawing them to believe in the Son, 44.
- ♦ He is invisible, 46.
- ♦ He has, and therefore can bestow, unending life, 47, 57, 69.

His goodness

- ♦ He graciously impels people to come to Christ in faith, 44.
Note: The word “draw” is used in John’s Gospel for drawing a sword from a sheath and dragging a net full of fish onto the shore (18:10; 21:6, 11, and thus denotes the effective action of an agent on the subject – or object – of that action).
- ♦ He teaches people so that they learn from him and come to Christ, 45.
- ♦ He gave bread to the Israelites in the wilderness, 49, 58.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to be the true and living “bread” that gives eternal life, 50-51.
- ♦ He graciously sent his Son Jesus into this world to bestow eternal life, 57.
- ♦ He grants to some people the gift of coming to Christ by faith, 65.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the living bread from heaven, 41, and the bread of life, 48, 50-51, 58.
- ♦ He is the one sent by the Father, 44, 57.
- ♦ He is from God, 46.

- ♦ He has seen the Father as no one else can or has, 46.
- ♦ He was a true man, with flesh and blood, 53, 55–56; whether he now has the same kind of flesh and blood, I don't know.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 53, 62; see Daniel 7:13–14.
- ♦ He was in heaven with God, and he returned to God in heaven after his resurrection, 62.
- ♦ He was divinely gifted with knowledge of the future, 64.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the anointed Messiah and Savior sent by God, 69.
- ♦ He is the Son of the living God, 69.

His work

- ♦ He left his eternal place in heaven and came down to earth, 41–42, 46, 50–51, 58. *See John 1:1–3, 14.*
- ♦ He gives his followers the bread of life, 51.
- ♦ That “bread” is the result of his dying on the cross for our redemption, that is, giving himself totally, flesh and blood, to save us, 51, 53–58.
- ♦ He is the Lord, the only source of true revelation from God, 68.
- ♦ He spoke words of eternal life, that is, words which, if believed, bestowed eternal life, 68.

The Holy Spirit

His work

- ♦ He draws people to Christ through teaching them inwardly, 45.
- ♦ He inspired Jesus to speak the very words of God, words that give life to those who believe, 63.
- ♦ He thus gives life to those who trust in Christ, 63.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Refusing to believe in Jesus as the Incarnate son of God, 60–61
- ♦ Following Jesus without full faith in him, 64
- ♦ Betraying Christ or his followers, 64

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ The hope of being raised from the dead, 44, 54
- ♦ Eternal life, that is, the life of God, both now and forever, 47, 50–51, 53–54
- ♦ Intimate fellowship with Christ, termed “abiding” in him, 56; *see John 15:1–9*. This intimate relationship is both objective, the status of what Paul calls being “in Christ,” and subjective, the awareness of personal intimacy and communion with Christ. *See John 15:7*. This “life” stands in stark contrast to spiritual death, which consists essentially of being alienated from God, the source of life.

Note: “The world” in verse 51, as in John 3:16, refers to some people from all ethnic groups of the world, not to everyone ever born into the world. See note on John 3:16; 4:42; and Revelation 5:9.

Its origin

- ♦ Salvation comes from the sovereign choice and effectual calling of God the Father, 44. *See John 6:37, 39*.
- ♦ Negatively put, no one can come to Christ unless the Father effectually “draws” him, 44, 65.

Its means: In drawing people to Christ, the Father uses means and methods:

- ♦ The Scriptures, including the Old Testament, 45
- ♦ The “hearing” (or reading) the preaching and reading of the Word of the gospel, 45
- ♦ “Learning,” or being taught, inwardly by God through the Holy Spirit, 45

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who have been sovereignly drawn to Christ by God, 44
- ♦ Those who “come” to Christ in faith, 45
- ♦ Those who believe in Christ, 47
- ♦ Those who eat the “bread,” “eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ,” by coming to him, being taught by God, meditating upon his death for our salvation, and trusting in him, 51, 53–54, 56–58

Note: “Eats,” “feeds,” “believes,” “comes,” and all other such verbs in this passage are in the present tense in Greek, signifying ongoing, continual, habitual action.

The People of God

Its members

- ◆ Objectively, those whom God the Father has drawn to Christ, taught inwardly about Christ
- ◆ Subjectively, all those who “come to,” “believe in,” “eat,” “drink,” and feed upon Christ by faith

Their ordinances (sometimes called sacraments)

- ◆ Some believe that verses 53–54 refer to the Lord’s Supper, but “(1) The setting of this passage is during Jesus’ ministry before he instituted the Lord’s Supper. (2) During the first two centuries, whenever Christians clearly speak of the Lord’s Supper, they speak of the “body” and “blood” of the Lord, not (as here) the “flesh” and “blood” of the Lord. On the other hand, by the time John’s gospel was circulating, the church had existed for several decades, and the Lord’s Supper was celebrated everywhere; therefore, informed Christians who pondered these verses probably could not avoid reflecting on how the elements of the Lord’s Supper point back to the historic death of Jesus, calling us again and again to belief in him” (ZNIVSB).
- ◆ In addition, 6:53 says that those who do not eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man have no life; if referring to the Lord’s Supper, this would mean that those who do not partake of the Lord’s Supper cannot have eternal life. This cannot be true, for various reasons.
- ◆ Further, 6:35 shows that “coming” and “believing” in Jesus are the ways in which we “eat” his flesh and “drink” his blood.

The Last Things

Christ’s return: He will raise from the dead and unto eternal life all who have truly believed in and followed him, 44, 54, 57.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Rely on God alone to save those whom we love; we can pray for them, love them, and share the gospel with them, but only God can bring them to Christ, 44–45, 65.

- ♦ Trust in the promises of Christ that if we keep coming to him in faith, we will not be rejected but will receive eternal life, 37, 47, 51, 54.
- ♦ Meditate on Jesus as he is described in the Gospels and in Revelation, predicated and foreshadowed in the Old Testament, and explained in the rest of the Epistles, to know what God the Father is like, 44-45, 53. *See John 14:7, 9.*
- ♦ Meditate often on Christ – his words, his works, and especially his death for us – and seek true satisfaction and “life” from him alone, 51, 54, 55–57.
- ♦ Ask God to open our eyes and hearts to Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit, 63.
- ♦ Keep coming to Jesus as the only one who has the words of eternal life, 68.
- ♦ Expect that some professing Christians will turn away from Christ and perhaps even betray him, 66, 71.

John 7:1–24

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a coherent whole, with later passages referring to, building on, fulfilling, and otherwise integrated with earlier ones.

- ♦ Feast of Tabernacles, 2; *see Leviticus 23:33–44.*
- ♦ “His brothers,” 3; the sons of Joseph and Mary; *see Mark 3:31–32.*
- ♦ “His brothers did not believe in Him,” 5; *see Mark 3:21.*
- ♦ “My time has not yet fully come,” 8; *see John 2:4; 8:20.*
- ♦ “There was much complaining [grumbling, murmuring] among the people concerning Him,” 12; *see John 6:41.*
- ♦ “The Jews marveled, saying, ‘How does this Man know letters, having never studied?’” 15; *see Matthew 13:54 and Acts 4:13.*
- ♦ “My doctrine [teaching] is not Mine, but His who sent me,” 15; *see John 3:11.*
- ♦ “If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning . . .,” 17; *see John 3:21; 8:43.*
- ♦ Moses gave the law, that is, the Pentateuch, 19; *see Exodus 20:1–Deuteronomy 34:12.*
- ♦ “None of you keeps the law,” 19; *see Romans 3:9–20.*
- ♦ “You have a demon,” 30; *see John 8:48; Matthew 10:25; 12:24; Mark 3:22; and Luke 11:15ff.*
- ♦ The giving of the command to circumcise to Abraham, recorded in the books written by Moses, 22; *see Genesis 17:9–13; and Leviticus 12:3.*

Its authority

- Jesus said that Moses recorded the history of the patriarchs (fathers), thus indicating the historical veracity of the Pentateuch, 22–23.

Note: Some claim that Jesus “knew” better, that he realized the Moses did not write the book of Genesis and that the command to circumcise did not come to and through the patriarchs, but that he “accommodated” his speech to the prevailing beliefs of his day. This is manifestly wrong. Jesus challenged and corrected ideas of his time on many occasions. He could have avoided such a direct affirmation of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch but chose not to.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God's Triune nature is implied in all the statements by Jesus about his being the Son of the Father who sent him and speaks to and through him, 16.
- ♦ The functional subordination of the Son to the Father is seen in the Father's sending of the Son and his teaching the Son what to say, as well as the Son's seeking only the glory of the Father, 16–18.

His greatness: He is all-glorious and deserving of all our honor and praise, 18.

His goodness: He sent Jesus, his Son, to be our Savior, 16.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Savior who was sent by God, 16.
- ♦ He possesses unique and authoritative knowledge of God and of his will and ways, 17.
- ♦ He is totally true, 18. *See John 14:6.*
- ♦ He is completely righteous, 18.

His work

- ♦ He constantly suffered danger from the Jewish leaders, 1. *See John 5:18; 7:19, 25; 8:37, 40.*
- ♦ He “tabernacled” among us, 2. *See John 1:14.*
- ♦ He obeyed the Mosaic law by observing the stated feasts, 10.
- ♦ He rebuked the sins of the people of this world, 7.
- ♦ He provoked controversy among his hearers as to his character and conduct, 12.
- ♦ He taught the people God's Word, 14.
- ♦ He amazed people by the depth and breadth of his teaching, despite not having been trained by a rabbi, 15.
- ♦ He taught “doctrine” that was directly revealed to him by God the Father, 16–17.
- ♦ He sought only the glory of God the Father, 18.
- ♦ He worked miracles of healing by the power of God, 21, 23. *See John 5:8–9, 16.*

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ♦ We usually want to promote ourselves, 4.
- ♦ We belong to the “world,” in the sense of the people and systems that oppose God, 7.
- ♦ We cannot understand the ways of the Lord unless we have come to him by faith, 5.
- ♦ We cannot understand God’s ways and word because of a problem of the will, not of the intellect, 17.
- ♦ We are always “in step” with the ways of this world, but not with God, 6. *See Ephesians 2:1–3.*
- ♦ We will resist those who tell us that we are wrong, 7.
- ♦ We deny the hard truth about our sin, 20.
- ♦ We judge others by outward appearance rather than inward reality, 24.

Sin

It includes: All the attitudes and actions listed above:

- ♦ Promoting ourselves
- ♦ Not desiring to do God’s will
- ♦ Following the world rather than God
- ♦ Resisting the truth about ourselves
- ♦ Judging others only by outward appearances

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Resist the temptation to seek our own name and fame.
- ♦ Seek to know and do God’s will, including his timing for our actions.
- ♦ Avoid unnecessary persecution, as Jesus did.
- ♦ Expect Jesus and his gospel to provoke conflicting responses.
- ♦ Ask God to change our wills to desire his will alone.
- ♦ Ask God to cause us to seek his glory alone.
- ♦ Read the Old Testament so we can understand the New Testament.
- ♦ Seek to assess people as God would.

John 7:25–52

Truth

Revelation

Its authority: “No man ever spoke like this Man!” 46.

Its literary forms

- ♦ It is a written document with such internal unity that it is called by the singular, “Scripture,” 42.
- ♦ Predictive prophecy
 - The birth and ancestry of the Messiah, 42; *see Micah 5:2*.
- ♦ Irony – when the reader knows more than the characters in the narrative.
 - “We know where this Man is from,” 26; actually, they didn’t know; *see Luke 4:22*.
 - “Will He go . . . and teach the Greeks?” 35; John’s readers know that Greeks would come to Jesus in his own lifetime, (*see John 12:20–21*), and that after his ascension to heaven, through his followers, Jesus would “teach the Gentiles” all over the world; *see Matthew 28:18–20; and Mark 16:15, 20*.
 - “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the Town of Bethlehem?” 42; John’s readers know that, in fact, Jesus fulfilled both these prophecies; *see Matthew 2:1–12; and Luke 2:1–20*.
 - “No prophet has arisen out of Galilee,” 52; but Jonah came from Galilee; *see 2 Kings 14:25; and Jonah 1:1*.
- ♦ Sarcasm
 - “You both know Me, and you know where I am from,” 28; actually, he knew that they knew neither of these things.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God is an eternal Trinity of three persons: Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament); the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, 38–39.
- ♦ God’s Triune nature is implied in all the statements by Jesus about his being the Son of the Father who sent him and speaks to and through him, 28, 33.

- ♦ The functional subordination of the Son to the Father is seen in the Father's sending of the Son, and in the Son's being "from" him, 28–29, 33.

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent, living in another place, or realm, where Jesus will go after his death and resurrection, 33–34, 36.
- ♦ He cannot be known by us, except as he reveals himself, especially in Jesus Christ, 28–29.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus to save us from our sins, 28–29, 33.
- ♦ He is true, 28.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Christ, the anointed Savior sent by God, 26, 31, 41–42.
- ♦ He is uniquely "from" God the Father, 29.
- ♦ He is the uniquely authoritative Prophet foretold by Moses, 40. *See Deuteronomy 18:15.*
- ♦ He is equal with the Father, sharing the same life and Spirit, and thus he can bestow the Holy Spirit, 38–39.

Note: The Western Church added the phrase "and the Son" (in Latin, filioque) to the third article of the Nicene Creed, affirming that the Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as the Father. The Eastern Churches, seeking to affirm the monarchy of the father within the Trinity, strongly object to this addition. The Western Church believes in the monarchy of the Father, but also believes that the Scriptures teach that the Spirit comes from the Father through the Son and that the Spirit, therefore, in some sense "proceeds" from both the Father and the Son.

His work

- ♦ He came into this world from the Father's presence in eternal glory, 28.
- ♦ He consented to be sent by the Father into this world, 28, and the other verses cited above.
- ♦ He stayed in this world for about 33–34 years, and then he went back to the Father in heaven, 33–34.

Note: As the God-man, united as two natures in one Person, he lived physically on this earth, John 1:14; as the eternal Son of God, he remained at the Father's side even while he was physically on earth; see John 1:18. This, like the entire truth about the Trinity, is an unfathomable mystery to us.

- ♦ He worked many “signs,” that is, miracles, that demonstrated who he was and why he had come, 31. *See John 2:1-11; 5:1-14; 6:1-14, 19-21; 9:1-12; 11:1-44.*
- ♦ After his death and resurrection, he ascended into heaven, returning to the Father who had sent him, 33-34, 36. *See Acts 1:9-11.*
- ♦ He now gives the Holy Spirit to all who continue to trust in him, 37-39.

Note: “Believes” and “believing” are in the present tense in Greek, indicating continual action.

- Through his death, resurrection, and ascension, he was “glorified” with the glory he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, 39. *See John 17:22, 24.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, 39. *See Romans 8:9.*

His work

- ♦ Like rivers of life-giving water, he refreshes those who trust in Christ, 37-38. *See John 4:14 and Isaiah 41:17-18.*
- ♦ He also becomes a river of living water within believers, so that they too might speak life-giving words, 38. *See John 15:26-27; Acts 1:8; 2:4, 14-36; 4:31; and Proverbs 10:11; 18:4.*
- ♦ He is God's gift to his people who trust in Jesus, 39. *See Acts 10:44-45, 47; and Galatians 3:2.*

Note: The gift of the Holy Spirit to believers is part of the same cluster of events that happen at true regeneration and conversion. See John 3:3,5; Acts 10 and 11; and Romans 5:5; 8:9-11, 15-16.

Note: This gift of the Spirit did not take place until Jesus had been fully glorified by his ascension to the Father's right hand. See Acts 2:33. The action in John 20:22 was a prophetic pointer to what would shortly come.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Assuming that we know more than we really do, 27, 49–52
- ◆ Rejecting Jesus and even seeking to restrain or kill him, 30, 32
- ◆ Judging someone before we have heard his side of the story, 51

Salvation

Its benefits: The primary benefit of salvation is receiving the gift of the life-giving and life-renewing Holy Spirit, 31–39.

Its origin: The Spirit comes from the Father through the Son, 37–39. *See John 4:10; 14:16–18; 16:7; and Acts 2:33.*

Its recipients: They are those who continually come by faith to Jesus Christ for salvation and renewal, 37–39.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the New Testament, the people of God are those who
 - Continually believe in Jesus for salvation and renewal, 38–39
 - Receive the Holy Spirit, 39

Note: If a person has not received the Holy Spirit, he does not belong to Christ. See Romans 8:9.

The Last Things

Signs of the last times: In the New Testament with the coming of Christ, the “last days” have begun, for he is the promised Messiah (Christ) 26, and the one who gives the Holy Spirit to his followers, 37–39. *See Joel 2:28–29; and Acts 2:14–33.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Believe in Jesus, even if only because of the signs and wonders he performed, 31 .
See John 5:36.
- ♦ Recognize our spiritual thirst and come constantly to Jesus by faith to “drink” of his refreshing Spirit, 37–39.
- ♦ Expect religious leaders to reject the Christian message and even seek to suppress it violently, 32, 45–52.

John 7:53–8:30

Truth

Revelation

Its reliability

- ♦ The New Testament was written in Greek. More than 5,000 full or partial manuscripts have come down to us, vastly more than for any other document of that time. Among them are many small differences, and textual critics try to determine which “reading” is the original one. John 7:53–8:11 are not in some old manuscripts, and so are bracketed by many translations as not being original to John. These verses are found in over 900 manuscripts of John, however, and many interpreters, including me, believe that they were written by John. In any case, almost all textual critics affirm that this passage relates a true event and the words of Jesus at the time, regardless of whether they were penned by John.

Its origin: Biblical revelation came from God through his chosen messengers, including Moses, the author of the Pentateuch (“Law” or Torah), 8:5.

Its literary nature

- ♦ Biblical revelation, by definition, was written down, that it might be preserved for later generations and known by all who can read, 8:17.
- ♦ Irony, “We know where this Man is from,” 8:26, but the reader knows that they didn’t know.

Its cumulative fullness: “We know where this Man is from,” 8:26; actually, they didn’t know. *See Luke 4:22.*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ All mentions of the Father and the Son imply the doctrine of the Trinity, that God exists as an eternal equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 8:16, 18, 28–29.

- ♦ Among the equal Persons of this Trinity, there is an eternal functional (not ontological) subordination of the Son to the Father who sent him, 8:16, 18, 26, and who taught him what to say, 8:28.
- ♦ This relationship is of the utmost intimacy; the Father is always “with” the Son, 8:16, 29.

His greatness: He is transcendent, living in a realm “above” and apart from mankind, whence Jesus came and whither he returned at his ascension, 8:14, 21, 23.

His goodness

- ♦ He is merciful to repentant sinners, as his action through Jesus demonstrates, 8:1–11.
- ♦ He sent his son into the world to be the light of the world and our Savior, 8:12, 16, etc.
- ♦ He is true, 8:17–18, 26.
- ♦ He revealed his saving truth and himself to mankind through his Son Jesus, 8:26, 28.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 8:1.
- ♦ He is Lord, Yahweh in the flesh, 8:11 (even though the woman may have meant only “Sir,” this passage shows Jesus’ divine authority to forgive sins.)
- ♦ He is therefore able to forgive repentant sinners, 8:11. *See Matthew 9:1–6.*
- ♦ He is the unique light of the world, 8:12. *See 1 John 1:5.*
- ♦ He is the exact moral image of the Father, such that to know him is to know the Father, 8:19. *See John 1:1–3, 18; 14:7; Colossians 1:15; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ♦ He is from above, where the Father dwells, 8:23.
- ♦ He is not of this world system, 8:23.
- ♦ He is Yahweh, I AM (as the Greek indicates) come in the flesh, 8:24, 28, 58. *See Exodus 3:14; and the other “I AM” statements in John.*
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 8:28. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He uniquely enjoyed the unbroken fellowship of God the Father with him, 8:29.

His work

- ♦ He taught the people God’s truth, 8:2.
- ♦ He regularly rebuked and shamed self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, 8:1–9. *See Matthew 23:1–36.*
- ♦ He affirmed the validity of the Law of Moses, 8:5–7, 17. *See Leviticus 20:10.*
Note: The Law called for both partners in adultery to be stoned, but the Jewish leaders brought only the woman. Jesus’ words implicitly rebuked their own transgression of the legal procedure.
- ♦ He brought not condemnation, but forgiveness, to repentant and believing sinners, 8:11. *See John 3:17.*
- ♦ He called people to a life of holiness and righteousness, 8:11. *See Matthew 5:17–48.*
- ♦ He testified to his own unique status and work, 8:12, 14, 18.
- ♦ He came down from heaven to dwell among us for a while, 8:14, 21. *See John 1:14.*
- ♦ He returned to heaven and the Father’s right hand after his death and resurrection, 8:14. *See John 14:2.*
- ♦ He “judged” people, in that he made authoritative moral assessments of them, 8:16, 19, 21, 23–24, 26.
- ♦ He spoke what he had “heard” from the Father, 8:26–28.
- ♦ He did only what the Father told him to do, and only by the Father’s authority and power, 8:28.
- ♦ He was “lifted up” on the Cross for our salvation, and then “lifted up” to heaven through his resurrection and ascension, 8:28. *See John 12:32.*
- ♦ He was sent into this world by the Father, 8:29.
- ♦ He always did what pleased God the Father, 8:29.

Note: If we had only this one section of the Bible, we would have enough to believe in, love, and follow Jesus as our Lord and Savior!

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Adultery, 8:3, 11
 - Treating people differently; treating women as inferior to men (the law required both parties to adultery to be stoned), 8:3; *see Leviticus 20:10; and Deuteronomy 22:22.*

- ♦ Self-righteousness, 8:2–7
- ♦ A condemnatory spirit, 8:9
- ♦ Seeking to harm Jesus, 8:6
- ♦ Judging others according to outward appearances, 8:15
- ♦ Not believing in Jesus, 8:24

Its extent: All – except Jesus – have sinned, 8:7–9. *See Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:9.*

Its consequences

- ♦ Walking in moral darkness, separated from the light of God in Christ, 8:12; *see John 1:5.*
- Death – separation from God – forever, 8:21, 24

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Freedom from condemnation by God, 8:11
- ♦ Freedom not to keep on sinning in the same way, 8:11
- ♦ Having the light of life: spiritual enlightenment to know and follow Christ, 8:12

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who know they need forgiveness and happily receive it from God in Christ, 8:10–11
- ♦ Those who follow Christ, 8:12
- ♦ Knowing God the Father by knowing Jesus his Son, 8:19

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Avoid adultery.
- ♦ Have some sort of penalty for adulterers, though death is not now appropriate, for a variety of reasons.
- ♦ Judge fairly, not partially; judge men as well as women.
- ♦ Flee from self-righteousness.
- ♦ Extend forgiveness to contrite sinners, as God has to us. *See Ephesians 4:32.*
- ♦ Proclaim the gospel of forgiveness through Christ.

- ♦ Seek to follow Jesus, his example, and his teaching, by his power.
- ♦ Believe in Jesus and urge others to believe in him.
- ♦ Think about how Jesus reveals the Father in his words and works.

John 8:31–59

Truth

Revelation

Its origin

- ♦ The “word” which Christ spoke came from him and thus has divine origin, 31.
- ♦ The teaching, or “word” of Christ came from God the Father, 45, 50.
- ♦ The very words (plural) of Christ are words from God, 47; this is what is called “plenary” inspiration. In other words, not only concepts, but the very words of Scripture are divinely given.

Its literary structure and style

- ♦ It is a unified revelation, called one single “word” by Christ, referring to his entire body of teaching, 31, 37, 43, 51–52.
- ♦ Irony: “We have never been in bondage to anyone,” 33; but they had been in bondage in Egypt, subject to many pagan nations before the Exile, in bondage in Babylon for 70 years, then under the Persians, the Greeks, and now the Romans!

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “We are not born of fornication,” 41, referring to the assumption that Mary had become pregnant by Joseph and not the Holy Spirit; *see Matthew 1:18–25; and Luke 1:26–38; 2:1–7.*
- ♦ “Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad,” 56; *see Isaiah 6:1.*
- ♦ Before Abraham was, I AM, 58; that is, Jesus is Yahweh in the flesh. In Greek, “I AM” is “ego eimi,” the Greek translation of Exodus 3:14.

Its nature: Biblical revelation is not only true, but it is truth itself, 32, 40, 45–46.

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (usually called God in the New Testament), Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. All references to God, Father, and his Son Jesus reflect this reality, and form the basis for the doctrine of the Trinity that was developed later; 36, 38, 40, 42, 47, 49, 54, 55, 58.

His greatness

- ♦ He has the authority to judge us, 50.
- ♦ He is eternal, 51.

His goodness

- ♦ He revealed himself and his will constantly to Jesus, 40.
- ♦ He sent Jesus into the world to save sinners, 42. *See John 3:16.*
- ♦ Through Jesus, he revealed his words to people, 47.
- ♦ He honored his Son Jesus, 54.
- ♦ He revealed himself to Moses, and then in Jesus, as “I AM,” the eternal self-existing one, 58.

Christ

His person

- ♦ As the man Jesus, he was a rabbi, a teacher of God’s Word, 31–32.
- ♦ He enjoyed a unique relationship with God the Father and “saw” and “heard” the Father say words of truth to him, 38, 40.
- ♦ He proceeded from the Father, 42.
- ♦ As the God–man, he was free from sin, 46.
- ♦ He uniquely knew God, 55.
- ♦ He is eternal, 56.
- ♦ He is Yahweh in the flesh, the great I AM, 58.
- ♦ As the God–man, he could just walk through the midst of his murderous opponents, 59.

His work

- ♦ He spoke words of truth, 31–32, 45.
- ♦ He gathered and taught his disciples, 31.
- ♦ He brought freedom to his disciples, 33, 36.
- ♦ He came into this world from God, 42.
- ♦ He honored his heavenly Father, 54.
- ♦ He “kept,” that is, obeyed the commands of God the Father, 55.

Satan

His nature

- ♦ He is the “father” of all those who reject Jesus and seek to harm Jesus, 38, 44.
- ♦ He is the devil, that is, the slanderer, 44.
- ♦ He has been a murderer ever since he tempted Adam and Eve to take the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, which led to their immediate spiritual death and their ultimate physical death, 44. *See Genesis 3:1–8, 14–15.*
- ♦ He does not “stand” or abide in the truth, 44.
- ♦ There is no truth in him, 44.
- ♦ He is a liar and the father of lies.

Mankind

The only two “races”

- ♦ Disciples of Christ, who abide in his word, 31:
 - Are children of God, 35
 - Are not slaves to sin, 34–36
 - Love Jesus, 42
 - Are “of God” and hear the words of God, 47
- ♦ Those who do not continue in his word, 31:
 - Are slaves to sin, constantly disobeying God, 34
 - Are children of the devil, 38, 41, 44
 - Do not believe in Jesus, 45
 - Are not “of God,” 47

Note: The Gospel of John was written so that we may become children of God through faith in Jesus, and thus move from being slaves to sin into the freedom of the children of God. See John 20:31.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not abiding in the word of Jesus; that is, not believing it, meditating upon it, and doing it, 31, 43
- ♦ Seeking to harm Jesus, 50, 59
- ♦ Not loving Jesus, 42, 45–46
- ♦ Not receiving the truth, 45–47; *see John 3:19.*

- ♦ Seeing Jesus as evil, 48, 52
- ♦ Dishonoring Jesus, 49
- ♦ Not believing Jesus is who he said he was, 53
- ♦ Lying of all sorts, especially about one's spiritual condition, 55

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Knowing the truth through continuing in the word of Christ, 31–32
- ♦ “Abiding” forever in God’s house, that is, in God’s family and eventually in heaven with him, 35
- ♦ Being set free bondage to sin, its power, and its penalty, as well as from the lies of Satan, 32, 36
- ♦ Deliverance from eternal death, 51–52
- ♦ Being enabled to do the works of Abraham, that is, to believe in Christ and rejoice in him, 45, 56
- ♦ Being set free to love Christ, 42

Its origin

- ♦ Salvation comes through Christ by his word, 31–32, 36
- ♦ Those who believe the words of and about Jesus are made “able” by God, 43
- ♦ They are “of” God, that is, chosen by him, 47

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who “abide,” or remain, in the word of and about Christ, that is, those who receiving, believe, and obey it, 31
- ♦ Those who are “of” God, 47

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Read, study, memorize, meditate upon, and follow the words of Christ and all words in the Bible, which are all about him, 31–32.

Note: Some commands in the Old Testament do not apply to us, but only those which are repeated in the New Testament.

- ♦ Tell professing Christians that abiding in the words of Christ is an essential mark of true disciples.
- ♦ Thank God for setting us free from sin.
- ♦ Thank God for revealing truth to us through Christ.
- ♦ Realize that pre-Christians are under the dominion and deceit of Satan.
- ♦ Worship Jesus as the great "I AM", Yahweh come to us in the flesh.

John 9:1–41

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms

- ♦ Most of Scripture is narrative; in John, this chapter is mostly narrative.
- ♦ Scripture uses plays on words; for example, “Siloam” means “sent,” 7; Jesus is the one “sent” by the Father; *see John 3:17*.
- ♦ “Unlike the disabled person in 5:1–5, the healed man is grateful, quick-witted, and cynical toward religious leaders who will not face facts” (ZNIVSB), 13–14, and throughout this passage.
- ♦ Contrast the worship of the healed man, 38, with the unbelief of the people in 6:36.
- ♦ Using the same word with different meanings: “blind,” 41, refers to those who are spiritual blind but want to see the light; in 39, “blind” means so spiritually blinded and stubborn that they will not come to the light and believe.

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Sickness and suffering do not necessarily result from any particular sin, 2–3; *see Job 1:1–2:10; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10; and Galatians 4:13*.
- ♦ God can reveal his glory through sickness and death, 3; *see John 11:4*.
- ♦ “The night is coming,” 3; *see John 1:5; 3:2, 19; 13:30*.
- ♦ Work while it is day, both figuratively and literally, 4; *see John 11:9–10; 12:35*.
- ♦ Jesus uses saliva as part of healing, 6; *see Mark 7:33; 8:23*.
- ♦ Jesus commands a patient to go and do something, demonstrating his healing, 7; *see Matthew 9:6 and Luke 17:14*.
- ♦ The Pharisees object to Jesus’ “working” on the Sabbath, 16; *see John 5:17; 7:22*.
- ♦ “There was a division among them” 16; *see John 7:40–41*.
- ♦ “He is a prophet,” 17; *see John 4:19*.
- ♦ “Moses’ disciples,” 28; but Moses wrote of Christ, *John 1:17; 5:39–40, 45, 46*.
- ♦ Judgment, 39; *see John 3:17*.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (often called “God” in the New Testament), Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit. All mentions by Jesus of “God” or “the Father” or “Him who sent me” imply this Trinitarian life; 3–5.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is a kind of order or priority; the Father sent the Son into the world, and gave him works to do, 4.

His greatness: He does “works” of salvation that only he can do, though he works through the Son and the Spirit, 3, 4. *See John 5:17, 19–22.*

His goodness

- ♦ He gave to the Son “works” to do that demonstrated his kindness and love, 3, 4.
- ♦ He sent his Son into the world to save sinners, 4. *See John 3:16.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the Son of Mary, whose name means “Yahweh saves,” 3, 11.
- ♦ He is the one sent by God as Messiah to save us, 4.
- ♦ The light of the world, 5; *see John 1:4–5; 8:12.*
- ♦ Son of Man, 35; *see John 1:51; 3:13–14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:29.*
- ♦ A prophet, 17; actually, he is *the* prophet foretold by Moses; *see Deuteronomy 18:15.*
- ♦ He is Lord, Yahweh in the flesh, who deserves worship, 35–38.

His work

- ♦ He taught God’s Word and was thus called Rabbi, 1.
- ♦ He gathered and taught a group of disciples, like a rabbi, 1.
- ♦ He did the works of God, that is, the works that God the Father had shown him, 3. *See John 5:19–20.*
- ♦ He was the Light of the world while he was in the world; that is, by his character, teaching, and miracles, he reflected God’s glory, revealing what we should all be like and exposing our sinfulness, 5. *See John 3:19.*
- ♦ He healed the sick and infirm, 6–7, 10–11, 15–21, 24–26, 30, 32.

Note: The magnitude of this miracle, and its importance in revealing Jesus as God's Son and Light of the world, is emphasized by the number of times this text says that Jesus opened the blind man's eyes: at least 13!

- ♦ He thus gave literal "light" to this blind man, 7.
- ♦ He judged the world by his works, in the sense that his life, teachings, and miracles, exposed, and thus either affirmed or condemned, both faith and unbelief, 39–42.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Thinking that someone's afflictions are due to sin, 1–3, 34
- ♦ Not doing what God has given us to do each day, 4
- ♦ Persecuting Jesus and his followers, 13–34
- ♦ Refusing to accept miracles done in the name of Jesus, 16–34

Note: Are "cessationists" guilty of this error?

- ♦ Being a "disciple" of any human teacher, even Moses, rather than of Christ, 28–29

Note: Are fervent "denominationalists" guilty of this error?

- ♦ Thinking that we are spiritually enlightened when, in fact, we are in the dark about Jesus and about our own spiritual condition, 41.

Salvation

Its benefits: Receiving spiritual "sight," so that we "see" Jesus and believe in him, 35–39

Its origin: Salvation, of which the healing of this blind man is a symbol, comes entirely from God and his initiative; Jesus healed this man even without being asked, 6.

Its recipients: Those who believe in Jesus as Savior of the world, 35–39, and thus receive light, 5

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Have pity on all who are infirm, as Jesus did.

- ♦ Refuse to assume that people's ailments and afflictions are the result of any sins they have committed; we often just don't know.
- ♦ Seek to do what God has led us to do each day, not wasting time, 4. *See Ephesians 5:15; and Colossians 4:5.*
- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to us to be our saving light, 5. *See John 1:5; 8:12.*
- ♦ Bravely and boldly bear witness to what Christ has done for us, regardless of opposition, as the formerly blind man did, 25–33. *See John 20:21; and Acts 1:8; 4:23–31.*

John 10:1–21

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms: Biblical narratives, and especially the teachings of Jesus, include parables, which can either be short stories or comparisons stated in a few figurative words, like Jesus as “door” and “Good Shepherd” in this passage.

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ God’s people compared to a flock of sheep, and God as royal shepherd, 1–16; *see Psalm 23:1; 80:1; Isaiah 40:10–11; and Ezekiel 34:11–16.*
- ♦ “Bad” shepherds, 5, 8, 10; *see Isaiah 56:9–12; and Ezekiel 34.*
- ♦ A good shepherd will someday come; *see Ezekiel 34:23.*
- ♦ God’s people are erring sheep destined for death, 10, 15; *see Isaiah 53:6.*
- ♦ “He has a demon,” 20; *see John 7:20.*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ All of Jesus’ references to the Father, and to himself as Son, express the central feature of what became the developed doctrine of the Trinity: God is an eternal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 15, 17–18.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is some sort of order, with the Son being functionally subordinate to the Father who sent him into the world with a commission, including the “command” to sacrifice himself, 18.

His greatness: He has the power of life and death, as exercised by both the Father and the Son, through the Holy Spirit, 18. *See Romans 1:4; 8:11.*

His goodness: He sent his Son into the world with a “command” to lay down his life as a sacrificial offering for his sheep, 18.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the entrance – the only entrance – into the community of God’s redeemed people, 7–9.

- ♦ He is the good shepherd, unlike the bad shepherds who have ravaged God's flock, 11–13.
- ♦ He is the unique, only-begotten Son of God, 15, 17–18.
- ♦ He possesses unique “knowledge,” that is, intimate union and communion, with God the Father, 15.
- ♦ He is uniquely loved by the Father, 17–18.
- ♦ He had unique power over his own death and life, 18.

His work

- ♦ He knows his sheep individually by name, 3, 14.
- ♦ He effectually calls them into salvation, 3.
- ♦ He goes before us as an example and leader, 3–4.
- ♦ He provides the way – the only way – for people to enter into the community of the saved, 9. *See John 14:6.*
- ♦ He came down from heaven to save us, 10. *See John 6:38.*
- ♦ He gives true life to his people, 10. *See John 14:6; 6:35.*
- ♦ He gave his life as a sin offering for his people, 11, 15, 17–18. *See John 1:29, 3:53.*
- ♦ He became one of us – a “sheep” – and was thus able to offer himself for us. *See John 1:29.*
- ♦ He allows his people to know him intimately, 14. *See John 17:3.*
- ♦ He obeyed his Father's commands, even unto death, 17–19. *See Matthew 16:39, 42, 44; Philipians 2:5–8; and Hebrews 5:8.*
- ♦ He rose from the dead, as he had prophesied, 18. *See John 20:1–21:14.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Trying to get into the community of God's people by any other way than faith in Christ, 1.
- ♦ Preaching a different gospel than one centered on Christ and following the “voice” of one who is not a true messenger of Christ, 5, 8, 10; *see Matthew 7:15–20; Romans 16:17–18; Galatians 1:6–10; and 2 John 7–10.*
- ♦ Preaching the gospel for personal gain, and robbing God's people to enrich oneself, thus destroying the church of God, 8, 10.

Note: Some famous television preachers, including Benny Hinn and Joel Osteen, seem to fall into this category. In particular, those who identify “abundant life” with earthly prosperity and health.

- ♦ Seeking to save oneself rather than to fulfill one’s duty; seeking to save oneself rather than protecting the church of God, 12–13.

Note: This warning applies especially to pastors and preachers.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Membership in the people of God, 2–4
- ♦ “Pasture,” that is, spiritual nourishment and life, 9–10; *see John 6:35; and Psalm 23:2; 36:8.*
- ♦ “Life,” that is, fellowship with God now and forever, 10; *see John 3:16; 5:24; 17:3.*

Note: In John’s writings, “life” represents all the spiritual blessings brought to us by Christ, see John 1:3; 14:6; etc.

- ♦ Being known – that is, chosen and loved – by Christ, 3. 14
- ♦ Knowing Christ, that is, having an intimate relationship with him by faith, 14
- ♦ Membership in the worldwide people of God, 16

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Trust and follow Christ – as described and interpreted for us by the apostles and prophets in the New Testament – and him alone.
- ♦ Beware of, and avoid, all false prophets who would seek to lead us away from Christ.
- ♦ Thank God for sending salvation through Christ.
- ♦ Seek “life” – that is, full satisfaction of soul – in Christ alone, and not in this world.
- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to us as our Good Shepherd.
- ♦ Thank God for bringing us into the worldwide “flock” of God, the church.
- ♦ Praise and love Jesus for being willing to sacrifice himself.

John 10:22–42

Truth

Revelation

Its origin: The word of God came from God to men, 35.

Its literary structure

- ♦ The entire Old Testament, including, as here, the Psalms, is sometimes called the “Law,” or Torah, of God; that is, the teaching from and about God, 34.
- ♦ As written revelation, the Old Testament (and, later, New Testament), is called “Scripture,” that which has been written down, 35.
- ♦ It is a unified deposit of truth; thus, it is sometimes called “Scripture,” in the singular, 35.

Its abiding validity, authority, and coherence: “The Scripture cannot be broken,” 35.

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Solomon’s colonnade, 23; *see Acts 3:11*.
- ♦ “My sheep hear my voice,” 27; *see Psalm 95:7*.
- ♦ “Stone him,” 31; *see John 8:59*; stoning was the punishment for blasphemy.
- ♦ “Is it not written in your Law . . . gods?” 34–35; *see Psalm 82:6*. Jesus’ meaning here is unclear. He could be referring to the giving of the Law at Sinai.
- ♦ “Where John was baptizing at first,” 40; *see John 1:28*.

Its historical setting

- ♦ The Feast of Dedication, 22; Hanukkah lasted eight days. It celebrated Israel’s deliverance and the temple’s rededication in the time of the Maccabees, 167 B.C. (NKJV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible)
- ♦ “Beyond the Jordan,” 40; Perea, governed by Herod Antipas and thus outside the jurisdiction of the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament), Son (usually called “Lord”), and Holy Spirit.
- ♦ All references in John’s Gospel to the Father and the Son, or Jesus’ words to and about his relationship to the Father, imply this Trinity, 25, 29–30, 35– 38.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is a kind of functional (not essential or ontological) subordination; thus, the Son does works in the name of the Father – that is, relying on his power and in the Father’s authority, 32, 37–38; the Father gives people to Jesus, 29, 32; the Father sanctified and sent the Son into the world, 36.
- ♦ The Father and the Son enjoy an eternal and ultimate intimacy and union with each other (by the Holy Spirit), 38.

His greatness

- ♦ He is eternal, 28.
- ♦ He is greater than all, that is, than all his creatures, 29.
- ♦ He is all–powerful, and thus able to keep his elect for final salvation, 29.
- ♦ He enabled Jesus to work miracles by the power of God, 32, 37–38.

His goodness

- ♦ He protects all those whom he has given to the Son, 29.
- ♦ He gave Jesus the power to benefit people by miracles of healing, etc., 32.
- ♦ He sent his Word to his chosen people in the Old Testament, 34.
- ♦ He sent his Son to save us from our sins, 36.
- ♦ He is holy, and thus able to sanctify – set apart – the Son for his unique mission, 36.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the unique Son of God, 25, 29–30, 32, 36–38.
- ♦ He is the owner–shepherd of his people, 26–27.
- ♦ He is eternal and can thus bestow eternal life, 28. *See John 1:4; 5:26; 11:25; 14:6.*
- ♦ He is all powerful and can thus preserve the souls of his people forever, 28.

- ♦ He is all powerful and thus could do many miracles, 25, 32, 37–38.
- ♦ He is of one essence, being, or substance, with the Father, 30.

Note: “Of one substance (Greek homoousios) with the Father,” in the Nicene Creed reflects this statement and others in the New Testament. The word “one” in the Greek here is in the neuter gender, signifying that Jesus is not saying that he and the Father are the same person, but that they are the same “thing” – that is, God.

- ♦ He enjoyed a uniquely intimate relationship with the Father and with the same power as the Father, 32, 38.
- ♦ He was especially set apart by the father for his mission on earth, 36.
- ♦ He was sent by the Father into the world to save his people, and was thus the Messiah, or “sent one,” 36.
- ♦ He is “in” the Father and the Father is “in” him, meaning that they are inseparable, though distinct persons, 38.

His work

- ♦ He performed many miracles to benefit people, 25.
- ♦ He speaks to his sheep, that is, his chosen people, 27.
- ♦ He “knows” his people individually; that is, he purposes to have an intimate, loving relationship with them, 27. *See Genesis 4:1.*
- ♦ He leads his people, by example and teaching, 27.

Note: He “goes before” his people in every way, but especially into suffering and then out again by the power of God.

- ♦ He gives eternal life to his people, 28.
- ♦ He keeps his people spiritually safe until they die, or he returns to raise them from the dead, 29.

Mankind

The only two “races”

- ♦ Mankind is divided into only two “races,” or kinds: those who are Jesus’ sheep and those who are not, 26–27.

Note: We do not know who belong to each group and cannot pronounce a verdict on this matter unless and until a person dies without repenting of his sins and trusting in

Christ; even then, we cannot be sure of anyone's heart, but must leave the final judgment to God, unless a person explicitly makes known his lack of repentance and faith. All self-identifying atheists would fall into this category., as would all who persist in worshipping false gods.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Refusing to accept the clear teaching of Jesus about his identity, 24–25
- ♦ Not believing in Jesus, 25, 36
- ♦ Seeking to harm Jesus or his followers, 39

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Membership in the “flock” of Christ, that is, among his people, 26–27
- ♦ Hearing the voice of Jesus; that is, hearing him speak to us through his Word, by his Spirit, 27
- ♦ Being known by Jesus; that is, having an intimate relationship with him, 27
- ♦ Eternal life, that is, being reconciled to God and receiving his life within us now, as well as being assured of eternal life with God in heaven, 28
- ♦ Eternal security in Christ, 28; *see John 6:37–40.*

Its origin: Salvation comes entirely from God, who gives certain people to his Son Jesus to belong to his flock and to be saved, 29.

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who “hear” the voice of Jesus, 27
- ♦ Those who follow Jesus; not as a condition for receiving salvation, but as a mark of having been saved, 27

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Believe the teaching of Jesus about himself (and everything else), 25, 42.
- ♦ “Hear” his voice; that is, listen attentively to the gospel and receive it into our hearts, 27.

- ♦ Follow Jesus, his example, and his teaching, even unto persecution and death, 27.
- ♦ Trust that we are eternally secure in Christ, 28.
- ♦ Worship Jesus as the divine Son of God as well as the fully human son of Mary, 30.
- ♦ See the works of Jesus as expressions of the power and love of God for his people, 32.
- ♦ Believe that the Bible, including the Old Testament, is the Word of God in the words given by God, 34–35.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us knowledge of himself through Jesus and the Scriptures.
- ♦ Thank God for the gift of eternal life and eternal security in Christ.

John 11

Truth

Revelation

Its literary structure

- ♦ The Bible contains many stories of historical events; hardly any one is more touching than this narrative.
- ♦ The Bible sometimes uses irony, that is, when the reader knows what the characters in the narrative do not: “It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people,” 48; *see John 10:11*. Jesus and Caiaphas mean two different things, though they both say that Jesus would die for others.
- ♦ There is further irony in the fact that the Romans can and destroyed Jerusalem and obliterated the power of the Jewish leaders in 70 AD anyway, 50. *See Matthew 24:1–21*.
- ♦ The Passover of the Jews, 55; *see John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4*.

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, 1, 2–3, 5, 11, 19, 23, etc.
- ♦ Martha, the “practical” sister, 39; *see Luke 10:40–41*.
- ♦ Mary, the sister of Martha, devoted worshiper of Jesus, 2, 28–32; 12:3–5; *see Luke 10:39–42*.
- ♦ “This sickness is . . . for the glory of God,” 4; *see John 9:3*.
- ♦ Working and walking in the light of day, 9; *see John 9:4; 12:35*.
- ♦ “Lazarus sleeps,” 11; *see Matthew 9:24*.
- ♦ Thomas, 16; *see John 14:5; 20:26–28*.
- ♦ “I believe that You are the Christ,” 27; *see Matthew 16:16*.
- ♦ “Mary . . . fell down at his feet,” 32; *see Luke 10:39*.
- ♦ “Jesus wept,” 35; *see Luke 19:41*.
- ♦ Jesus opened the eyes of the blind man, 37; *see John 9:1–34*.
- ♦ “Because of the people who are standing by I said this,” 42; *see John 12:30; 17:21*.
- ♦ Believing in Jesus – at least to some degree – because of seeing a miracle, 45; *see John 2:23; 10:42; 12:11, 18*.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal Trinity of Father (usually called “God” in the New Testament), Son (usually called “Lord”), and Holy Spirit.
- ♦ All references in John’s Gospel to the Father and the Son, or Jesus’ words to and about his relationship to the Father, imply this Trinity, 3–4, 40–42.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is a kind of functional (not essential or ontological) subordination, so that Jesus the Son prays to the Father, presumably for the raising of Lazarus from the dead, 41, and the Father sends his Son into the world, 42.

His greatness

- ♦ He is sovereign over all events, with the result that all things, even death (the death of Lazarus, the impending death of Jesus), are orchestrated by him for his own glory and the glory of his Son, 4, 40.
- ♦ He is able to give life to the dead, 41–44.

His goodness

- ♦ He heard the prayers of Jesus for the life of Lazarus, 41.
- ♦ He sent his Son into the world to save us, 42.
- ♦ He has “children,” that is, those to whom he gives the authority to be born again and to receive his eternal life, 52. *See John 1:12–13; 3:3, 5.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Lord, Yahweh come in the flesh, 2, 3, 21, 27, 32, 39.

Note: Even though the use of the word “Lord” by the disciples and Mary and Martha probably did not mean, to them, that Jesus was God, this is certainly the meaning of John as he records these conversations, as we see from verse 2, which sets the tone for the whole passage.

- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 4, 5, 9, 13–14, 17, 20, 23, 25, 30, 32, 33, 35, 38, 40–41, 44–46, 54, 56.
- ♦ He is the very Life of God incarnate, 25.

- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah, the unique anointed Savior whom God sent into the world, 27, 42.
- ♦ He is the unique divine Son of God, 27.
- ♦ He was a Rabbi, a teacher of the Word of God, 28.
- ♦ As a man, he felt anger and grief over sin and its consequent suffering and over the unbelief of those around him, 33, 35, 38.
- ♦ As God's Son and the Messiah, he had the power to work many miracles, 37.

His work

- ♦ He loved his friends and demonstrated this love by his coming to help them and by his tears, 5, 11, 35–36.
- ♦ He came into this world to save us from sin and all its effects, 27.
- ♦ He taught people the truth about God, 28.
- ♦ He did many good works, such as giving sight to the man born blind, 37.
- ♦ As the God-man, he prayed to God the Father, 41–42.
- ♦ He raised Lazarus (and two others) from the dead, 43–44.

Note: Since this was the fourth day, Lazarus was irrevocably dead, 39.

- ♦ He came to die for God's people as a substitutionary sacrifice, 50–52. *See John 10:15–18; Isaiah 49:6; and 1 John 2:2.*

Mankind

Our nature

- ♦ We are all liable to get sick, 1.
- ♦ We are all going to die, unless Jesus returns first, 11, 21, 25–26.
- ♦ We have natural ties of friendship and kinship, 1, 2, 11.
- ♦ Death, especially the death of a loved one, naturally evokes grief and mourning, 19, 31–33.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Betraying Jesus to his enemies, 46, 57.
- ♦ Refusing to believe in Jesus, despite all the evidence that he is the Son of God, 47–48, 53.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ “Seeing” the glory of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, 4, 40; *see John 1:14; 2:11.*
- ♦ Resurrection from the dead on the last day, 25
- ♦ Immediate transformation of the body into the eternal resurrected state, for all who are alive when Jesus returns, 26

Its origin: Salvation comes from God through Jesus Christ alone, 25.

Its recipients: They are those who believe in Jesus as revealed in Scripture, 26, 40, 42.

The Last Things

Christ’s return

- ♦ He will raise those who have died, 25.
- ♦ He will transform believers who are still alive, 26.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask Jesus for help when we are in trouble, 3.
- ♦ Do not be surprised or doubt his love for us if he “delays” in coming to help us, 5–6.
- ♦ Walk in the light; that is, do the will of God while we can, 9–10.
- ♦ Risk our lives for our friends, 15–16. *See John 15:13.*
- ♦ Believe that Jesus will raise us from the dead on the last day or transform our bodies into the likeness of his glorious body if we are still alive when he returns, 25–26. *See Philipians 3:20–21.*
- ♦ Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God who was sent into this world by God to save us from our sins, 27.
- ♦ Freely mourn when loved ones die, though not like those without hope if our departed loved one is a believer in Christ, 31–32. *See 1 Thessalonians 4:13.*
- ♦ Comfort those who are mourning. *See 1 Thessalonians 4:18.*
- ♦ Thank God for giving us a Savior who fully understands our condition and feels our pain and grief, 35. *See Hebrews 2:14; 4:15.*

- ♦ Believe that Jesus can perform “resurrection” – like miracles for us today; that is, that he can take apparently hopeless situations and use them for his glory and our good.
- ♦ Expect those in power, especially religious and political power, to oppose Christians and their faith.

John 12:1–26

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “Martha served,” 2; *see Luke 10:38–41.*
- ♦ Mary anoints Jesus for his burial, 3–8; *see Matthew 26:6–13; and Mark 14:3–9.*
Note: This is a different anointing from the one by a “sinful” woman recorded in Luke 7:36–50. That the host in both accounts is name Simon is co-incident.
- ♦ “You will always have the poor with you,” 8; *see Deuteronomy 15:11.*
- ♦ Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, 12–19; *see Matthew 21:4–9; Mark 11:1–11; and Luke 19:28–40.*
- ♦ “Hosanna! Blessed is He whom comes in the name of the Lord!” 13; *see Psalm 118:25–26.*
- ♦ “Fear not, daughter of Zion . . .,” 15; *see Zechariah 9:9; and 2 Kings 19:21.*
- ♦ The disciples remember or understand things only after Jesus rose from the dead, 16; *see John 2:22, and often in John; Luke 18:34; 14:26.*
- ♦ People believe because they see or hear about miracles, 18; *see John 2:22; and often in John.*
- ♦ Jesus’ “hour,” 23; *see John 2:4; 4:21, 23; 7:30; 8:20.*
- ♦ Life through death, 24; *see 1 Corinthians 15:36–38.*
- ♦ “He who loves his life will lose it . . .,” 25; *see Matthew 10:39; Mark 8:35; and Luke 14:26.*
- ♦ “If anyone serves Me, let him follow me,” 26; *see Matthew 26:24.*
- ♦ “Where I am, there My servant will be also,” 26; *see John 14:3; 17:24.*

Its Christological center

- ♦ The entire Bible speaks of Jesus Christ, 16. *See Luke 24:44–49.*
- ♦ Statements written in one context often have another, and final, reference to Jesus, 13, 15.

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity, 26.

His greatness: He is the Lord, Yahweh the God of Israel, 13.

His goodness

- ♦ He revealed his will and his ways, especially salvation to be accomplished by Christ, to his people in the Old Testament, 16.
- ♦ He honors those who honor his Son Jesus, 26.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the earthly Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 1, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 21, 23.
- ♦ He possesses all power, such that he raised Lazarus from the dead, 1, 9, 17.
- ♦ He accepted honor and even worship, knowing that he deserved it, 7–8.
- ♦ He is the King of Israel prophesied by the Old Testament, 13, 15. *See John 1:49; 19:19.*
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied in 23. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*
- ♦ He is the unique divine Son of God the Father, 26.

His work

- ♦ He ennobled women by accepting their lavish worship with commendation, even as he rebuked critical men, 2–8.
- ♦ He set an example of absolute moral probity in his relationships with women, such that even their physical acts of love did not lead anyone to accuse him of sexual impropriety, 2. *See also Matthew 26:6–13; and Luke 7:36–50.*
- ♦ He came to die as a sin offering for his people, 7.
- ♦ He entered Jerusalem as the lowly King of Israel who came to die, 13.
- ♦ After his death, he was “glorified,” that is, he rose from the dead and later ascended to heaven, 16.
- ♦ He was also “glorified” when he was crucified, 23–24.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Despising “extravagant” acts of personal devotion in the name of a false concern for frugality, 4–5

Note: This passage does not provide support for spending huge amounts of money to build and embellish ornate church structures.

- ♦ Resisting clear evidence for the work and person of Jesus Christ, and seeking to harm Christians, 9–11
- Misuse of religious power and authority to crush reform movements, 10–11

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Liberation from self to worship Jesus with all that we have, 3
- ♦ Revelation from God through the apostles’ writings about the meaning of the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus, 16
- ♦ Eternal life, 25; *see John 3:15.*
- ♦ Being honored by God, 26; *see 1 Peter 1:6–7.*

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who love Jesus, 3
- ♦ Those who “hate” their lives in this world, in comparison to their love for Jesus, 25
- ♦ Those who faithfully follow Jesus, 26

The Last Things

Christ’s return

- ♦ He will take to himself all those who have faithfully followed him in this life, 25–26.
- ♦ He will bestow life everlasting with Jesus in heaven, 26 (or, in the new heaven and new earth).
- ♦ He will honor and glorify those who have followed him, 26. *See Romans 5:2; 8:18, 29–30.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Worship Jesus with all that we have, no matter what others think, 3.
- ♦ Do good to the poor, especially poor Christians, 8. *See Galatians 6:10.*
- ♦ Worship Jesus as the King sent to save us, 13.
- ♦ Imitate Jesus' humility, especially when we are leaders, 14. *See John 13:12-17.*
- ♦ Be prepared, like Jesus, to fall into the ground and die, that we may bear fruit, 24-25.

John 12:27–50

Truth

Revelation

Its origin: Biblical revelation comes from God the Father to and through God the Son, the Logos, the mediator of all revelation, 48–49.

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “Now my soul is troubled,” 27; *see John 11:33; 13:21; and Psalm 6:3.*
- ♦ “What shall I say? Save me from this hour?” 27; *see Matthew 26:38–39.*
- ♦ “Now is the judgment of this world,” 31; *see John 3:17; 5:22–30; 8:15–16.*
- ♦ “A voice came from heaven,” 28; *see Matthew 3:17; 17:5.*
- ♦ “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever,” 34; *see Psalm 72:17; 89:35–37; Isaiah 9:7; and Ezekiel 37:25.*
- ♦ “Walk while you have the light,” 35; *see John 1:9; 7:33; 8:12; 9:5, 35–41; and Ephesians 5:8–17.*
- ♦ “Sons of light,” 36; *see Ephesians 5:8; and 1 Thessalonians 5:5.*
- ♦ The Jews’ unbelief fulfills Scripture; *see Romans 9–11.*
- ♦ “Lord, who has believed our report?” 38; *see Isaiah 53:1.*
- ♦ “He has blinded their eyes . . . Heal them,” 40; *see Isaiah 6:10.*
- ♦ Isaiah “saw His glory,” 41; *see Isaiah 6:1–4.*
- ♦ “Isaiah . . . spoke of Him,” 41; *see Isaiah 52:13; 53:12.*
- ♦ “Believed in Him,” 42; a weak or spurious faith; *see John 2:23–25; 4:45; 5:35; 6:2, 26, 60, 64; 7:3–5; 8:30–31, especially 5:44.*
- ♦ “Believes in Me . . . sees Him who sent me,” 44–45; *see John 5:16–30; 6:37–40; 8:28b–29.*
- ♦ “Light . . . darkness,” 46; *see John 1:5; 3:2, 19; 8:12.*
- ♦ “Judge . . . save . . . condemn,” *see John 3:17; 8:15.*
- ♦ “Believe them [or, in many translations, “keep them”], 47; *see John 8:31.*
- ♦ “For I have not spoken on My authority . . .,” 49–50; *see John 5:16–30; 8:28b–29.*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity, 27, 28, 34, 38, 44–45, 49.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby the Son prays to the Father, the Father sends the Son, and he commands the Son what to say, 27, 44, 49.

His greatness

- ♦ He has the power to save his people even from death, 27.
- ♦ He possesses infinite glory, honor, dignity, and weight, 28.
- ♦ He “voice” is like mighty thunder, 29.
- ♦ He has power even over Satan, 31.
- ♦ He is eternal, 34.
- ♦ He has an “arm” of power that can work wonders for his people, 38.
- ♦ He has the authority to reveal himself to whomever he wills, 38, 40.

His goodness

- ♦ He answered Jesus’ prayer for the name of the Son to be glorified, by enabling to go to the cross and then raising him from the dead, 28.
- ♦ He kindly revealed himself to his people through Jesus, 30, 45.
- ♦ He is just and will judge all evil, starting with Satan, 31.
- ♦ He will extend salvation to people of all nations, 32.
- ♦ He is light, 35.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to save us from our sins, 44.
- ♦ He gives eternal life to those who trust in Christ’s saving work, 30.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the fully human son of Mary, and thus was subject to profound sorrow and distress, 27.
- ♦ He is the unique, divine Son of God the Father, 27–28, 49.

- ♦ He is the one Mediator who can unite people of all races and nations to come to God through his sacrifice, 32.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the anointed Messiah, 34.
- ♦ He is the divine–human son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 34. *See Daniel 7:13.*
- ♦ He is the Light, 35–36. *See John 1:4–5; 8:12; 9:5.*
- ♦ He is the LORD, Yahweh in the flesh, whom Isaiah saw in a vision, 41. *See Isaiah 6:1.*
- ♦ He is the one whom the Father sent into the world to save sinners, 44.
- ♦ He is the exact replica and representation of God; he is the image of God, 45. *See John 14:9–11; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ♦ He is the true revealer of the true word of God, whose words carry divine authority in judgment, 48.

His work

- ♦ He came to fulfill the Father’s will, which was to serve as a sacrifice for sins, 27. *See John 1:29.*
- ♦ He sought the glory of God the Father alone, 28.
- ♦ He was “lifted up” on the cross for our redemption, 32–33.
- ♦ He will now, as Risen Lord, draw people of all nations to himself, 32.
- ♦ He spoke to the people many true words, 36.
- ♦ He did many wonders and miracles before the people, 37. *See John 11:47.*
- ♦ He is the Suffering Servant prophesied by Isaiah, 38. *See Isaiah 53:1.*
- ♦ He obeyed the command of the sending Father, 44–45, 49–50.
- ♦ He came as light to deliver us from spiritual and eternal darkness, 46.
- ♦ He spoke only what God the Father commanded him to say, 49.

Satan

His nature

- ♦ He is the temporary ruler of this world, 31. *See John 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2; 6:12; and 1 John 5:19.*
- ♦ He has been decisively defeated by Jesus by his cross, resurrection, and ascension; he is cast down from his heavenly position, 31. *See Revelation 12:9, 13, 17.*
- ♦ He is bound and limited in his ability to deceive the nations. *See Revelation 20:1–3.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not believing in Jesus as our Savior, despite all the evidence of his signs and wonders, 37
- ♦ Seeking to save one's life rather than follow Jesus, 42
- ♦ Seeking acceptance and praise from men rather than from God, 43
- ♦ Not accepting and believing Jesus' words, 48

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Freedom from the dominion of Satan, 31; *see Colossians 1:13*.
- ♦ Membership in a new family consisting of people from all sorts of nations and cultures, 32

Note: "Draw all to Myself" – the meaning of "all" must be supplied – does not mean that Jesus will draw every person on earth to trust in him, as is obvious from this passage and from history. Jesus' statement was uttered, not to indicate how many people would believe in him, but to indicate the way he would do it, that is, by being "lifted up" on a cross, 32–33. The "all" here must refer to people of all races, etc., like the word "world" in 3:16. "World" does not need to mean "everyone without exception," as 12:19 makes clear.

- ♦ Having spiritual "light" that enables us to know and follow Jesus, 35–36
- ♦ Becoming a child of the light, that is, a child of God, 36; *see John 1:12*. That is, becoming one who knows Christ and follows him, rather than being in spiritual darkness.
- ♦ Receiving the saving revelation of God in Christ, 38
- ♦ Turning to God and being spiritually healed, 40
- ♦ "Seeing" – that is, knowing – God the Father through believing in Christ, 45
- ♦ Eternal life with Christ, 50

Its origin: Salvation comes entirely from the sovereign choice of God, who gives saving faith to whom he wills, 38–40. *See John 10:26*.

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who believe in Christ as the unique Light of the world, 36, 46

- ◆ Those whose spiritual eyes God has opened, 40
- ◆ Those who believe in Christ as the unique Son and messenger of God, 44

The Last Things

Christ's return: He will judge the world based on his revealed Word, 48.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for giving Jesus the will and ability to do the will of the Father by going to the cross for our salvation, 27–28.
- ◆ Thank God for setting us free from Satan's power, 31.
- ◆ Thank God for incorporating us into the worldwide family of God, 32, 36.
- ◆ Urge our friends and others to trust in Christ while there is still time, 35.
- ◆ Walk in the light while it is still day; that is, believe in Jesus and follow him now, 36.
- ◆ Thank God for opening our spiritual eyes to believe in Jesus, 38–40.
- ◆ Or, ask God to open our eyes and give us saving faith.
- ◆ Thank God for revealing many aspects of the coming Messiah in the Old Testament, 41.
- ◆ Read the Old Testament Christologically, seeking to see Christ in every book, 41. *See Luke 24:46–47.*
- ◆ Believe in and follow Jesus regardless of the social cost to us, 42–43.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us eternal life, 50.

John 13:1–17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ The feast of the Passover, 1; *see John 2:13; Matthew 26:2 17–29; Mark 14:12–25; Luke 22:7–20; and Exodus 12:1–28.*
- ♦ “His hour had come,” 1; *see John 12:23; 2:4; 7:6–8, 30; 8:20.*
- ♦ “Lord, not my feet only,” 9; Peter’s extravagant exuberance of devotion; *see John 20:3, 6; 21:7, 11; Matthew 16:22–23.*
- ♦ “He knew who would betray Him,” 11; *see John 6:64; 18:4.*
- ♦ “I have given you an example,” 15; *see Mark 10:42–45; 1 Peter 2:21.*
- ♦ “A servant is not greater than his master,” 16; *see John 15:20; Matthew 10:24; and Luke 6:40.*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity, 1, 3.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby the Father gives all things into the hands of the Son, 3; *see John 17:22, 24; and Acts 2:38.*

His greatness

- ♦ He is above this world, 1.
- ♦ He possesses “all things” and can thus give them to his Son, 3.

His goodness: He sent Jesus into the world to save us from our sins, 3. *See John 3:16 and Matthew 1:21.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is from another world: heaven, 1.
- ♦ He is the unique divine Son of God the Father, 1
- ♦ He is the heir of all things, the one to whom the Father has given all things, 3.
- ♦ As the divine-human Son of God, he knew all things, including the future, 11–12.
- ♦ He is the Teacher, 13.
- ♦ He is the Lord, 13.

His work

- ♦ He loved his own people to the uttermost, that is, unto death, 1.
- ♦ He came from God in the Incarnation, 3. *See John 1:1–3, 14.*
- ♦ He went back to his Father in heaven after he had finished his appointed task; that is, he ascended to God, 3. *See John 17:11; 20:17; Acts 1:1; 1 and Peter 3:21–22.*
- ♦ He served others throughout his life, including at the Last Supper, when he took the role of a household servant and washed his disciples' feet, 4–5, 15. *See Mark 10:45.*

Sin

Its nature: Sin is like a stain or like filth that needs to be washed away, 8–10. *See 1 John 1:9.*

It includes: Refusing to receive the cleansing work of Jesus, 8

Salvation

Its benefits: Cleansing from the guilt of sin; that is, forgiveness that restores us to fellowship with God, 8–10

Its origin: Sin comes to us only through the sovereign action of God in Christ, 5–10.

Its recipients: Those who humbly receive the sacrificial, saving work of Christ, 8.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Receive with faith and gratitude the work of Jesus for our salvation, 8–10. *See John 1:12–13.*
- ♦ Thank Jesus for coming humbly into this world as a servant to save us from our sins, 3–10.
- ♦ Thank God for the cleansing that comes through faith in Christ, 10. *See Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:22.*
- ♦ Believe in Jesus as our supreme Teacher, 13.
- ♦ Worship and obey Jesus as our divine Lord, 13.
- ♦ Imitate Jesus by serving others, first, through forgiving them of their sins (the meaning of Jesus' action) and then through humble acts of kindness and help, 14–16.
- ♦ Act on the commands of God that he has revealed to us, 17.

John 13:18–38

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me,” 18; *see Psalm 41:9.*
- ♦ “He who receives whomever I send receives Me,” 20; *see John 20:21 and Matthew 10:40.*
- ♦ “He was troubled in spirit,” 21; *see John 12:27.*
- ♦ “That the Scripture may be fulfilled,” 18; *see John 12:38; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 36; Matthew 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; and often; and Luke 4:21; 24:44.*

Note: Although some Psalms are quoted to refer directly to Jesus, all the Psalms are, in one way or another, “messianic,” in that they all point to Jesus, in his sufferings or in his glory. That is partly because David, the author of many Psalms, is a “type” of Christ. See 2 Samuel 7:12–16; and Psalm 2.

- ♦ “I am He,” 19; this is a reference to Exodus 3:14, and recalls many other similar statements by Jesus; *see John 6:35; 8:24, 58.*
- ♦ “One of you will betray Me,” 21; *see also verses 2, 10–11; John 6:70–71; 12:4; Matthew 26:21–25 and parallels.*
- ♦ “One of His disciples whom Jesus loved,” 23, that is, John, the author of this Gospel; *see John 19:26–27; 20:2–9; 21:2–25.*
- ♦ “Satan entered him,” 27; *see Luke 22:3.*
- ♦ “Judas had the money box,” 29; *see John 12:6.*
- ♦ “It was night,” 30; *see John 3:2; 11:10.*
- ♦ “The Son of Man is glorified,” 31–32; *see John 7:39; 11:4; 12:16; 17:1.*
- ♦ “Where I am going, you cannot come,” 33; *see John 7:34; 8:21.*
- ♦ “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you,” 34; *see Ephesians 5:2, 2; and 1 John 2:8–10; 3:16, 23.*
- ♦ Jesus predicts Peter’s denial, 36–38; *see Mark 14:29–31,*

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity, 31–32.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby the Father sends the Son to the world, 20. *See John 3:16–17.*

His greatness

- ♦ He exercises sovereignty over all events, even the acts of evil men, 18–19.
- ♦ He is eternal and can therefore predict the future, 18–19.
- ♦ He seeks his own glory, supremely in the revelation of his love in the work of Jesus, 31–32.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent his Son into the world to save sinners, 20.
- ♦ He is love, and through Jesus commands us to love, 34–35. *See 1 John 4:8.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the suffering Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament, 18.
- ♦ He is Yahweh in the flesh, I AM, 19. *See John 8:58.*
- ♦ He was a truly human person who could be terribly upset by betrayal, 21.
- ♦ He is the divine–human Son of Man prophesied by Daniel, 31. *See Daniel 7:13–14.*

His work

- ♦ He obeyed the Scriptures at all points, 18–19.
- ♦ He sent his disciples as his Father had sent Him, 20. *See John 20:21.*
- ♦ He glorified God by going to the cross in fulfillment of the Father’s will, 31.
- ♦ He loved his disciples, 34.
- ♦ He gave commands to his disciples, 34.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ Satan is a malevolent spiritual being who seeks to destroy God's people.
- ♦ He can enter into, and completely possess, people who are receptive to him through harboring sin, and drive them to further sin, 27. *See Luke 22:3.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Betraying those close to us, who trust us, 18, 21, 26, 30
- ♦ Presumption, assuming that we are spiritually stronger than we really are, 37
- ♦ Denying the Lord Jesus, 38

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect that there will be traitors in the church.
- ♦ Welcome and care for messengers of the gospel, 20.
- ♦ Thank God for giving Jesus to go all the way to the cross and thus to glory, 31 – 32.
- ♦ Love other Christians as Christ has loved us, 34–35.

John 14:1–14

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ♦ God supremely revealed himself in Jesus, 9. *See John 1:18; 12:45.*
- ♦ God revealed himself in many ways, including the miraculous works that Jesus performed, 10–11.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity; 1, 2, 6, 7, 9–11, 12, 13.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby the Jesus spoke only what the Father told him to say, 10.

His greatness

- ♦ He owns a great “house” in heaven, spacious enough to host all who would trust in Jesus, 2.
- ♦ He raised Jesus from the dead (prophesied here by Jesus) and caused him to ascend to his right hand in heaven, 2–3, 12.
- ♦ He dwells in a place different from this world; he is transcendent, 2–3, 12.
- ♦ He is all powerful, and thus was able to do great works through Jesus, 10–11.

His goodness

- ♦ He raised Jesus from the dead (prophesied her by Jesus), 2–3, 12.
- ♦ He welcomes into his heavenly house all who trust in Christ, 2–3.
- ♦ He brings people to himself through Jesus, 6.
- ♦ He enables us to know him as Father, 6, 7, 9.
- ♦ He revealed his will and his ways through the words that Jesus spoke, 10.
- ♦ He did many miracles of healing, provision, and life, through Jesus, 10–11.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is fully divine, deserving the same trust that we give God the Father, 1.
- ♦ He is the unique, only-begotten Son of the Father, 2. *See John 1:14, 18.*
- ♦ He knows all, 2.
- ♦ He has the authority to allocate places in his Father's heavenly house to whom he will, 2, 3.
- ♦ He belongs in heaven, 3.
- ♦ He is able to take his people to their heavenly abode, 3.
- ♦ He is the only way to God, the only truth about God incarnate, and the only life of God, in whom alone we have life, 6. *See John 1:4, 14, 17; 3:33; 11:24–26; and Acts 4:12.*
- ♦ He is the exact image and reflection of God the Father, 7, 9. *See John 1:1; 12:18; 12:45; Colossians 1:15; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ♦ He is “in” the Father, and vice versa; that is, they enjoy the closest possible intimacy and spiritual union, 10–11. *See John 17:21, 23; and Colossians 2:9.*
- ♦ He is divinely omnipotent, 13–14.

His work

- ♦ He went to prepare a place in heaven, God's abode, for each of his disciples, 2–3. *See Revelation 21.*
- ♦ He embodied, and fully revealed, all that we need to know about the Way, the Truth, and the Life, 6.
- ♦ He spoke words from God, 10.
- ♦ He did works of power and love as given by God the Father, 10–11.
- ♦ He gave authority to his followers to do great works also, 12.
- ♦ He went back to the Father after his death and resurrection, 12.
- ♦ He answers the prayers of his people 13, 14.

Note: He answers prayers according to certain conditions. They are to be in his name, that is, “in accord with his character and thus for God's glory” (ZNIVSB); John 15:7; Mark 11:24; and 1 John 5:14.

- ♦ He sought, and seeks, the glory of God the Father alone, 13.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ Peace in the midst of terrible trials and even death, 1, 27
- ◆ Assurance of an eternal home with Christ in heaven with God, 3
- ◆ Access to the Father, 6; *see Romans 5:1–2.*
- ◆ Knowledge of God the Father through knowledge of Jesus, 9
- ◆ The ability to do the works that Jesus did, and even greater works, by the power of the Spirit of the Risen Lord, 12

Note: These works include miracles of healing and provision, but they are mostly seen in the new life-transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers individually and in the life and ministry of the Church collectively. Not every believer will work miracles, but all can manifest the life-changing power of God and can be witnesses to others in a way that people will come to know Christ and be transformed by him.

- ◆ Answered prayer, 13–14

Note: We are to pray to God the Father or to the Son, in the name of Jesus. There is no warrant for praying to the Holy Spirit. Our prayers will be answered as and if they are “in his name,” as noted above, and according to his will. See 1 John 5:14.

Its recipients

- ◆ Those who believe – constantly and continually believe – in Jesus as the unique, fully divine Son of God the Father, 1, 12
- ◆ Those who come to God (Father or son) by active prayer, asking for things in faith in Christ, 12–14

The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, he will take each one of his followers to be with himself with God in heaven (or, the new heavens and new earth), 2–3. *See 1 Thessalonians 4:17.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Believe in Jesus just as we believe in God, 1.
- ♦ Believe that he will take us to be with himself forever when he returns, 3.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us Jesus as the only Way, Truth, and Life, 6.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us unrestricted access to him through Jesus, 6.
- ♦ Thank God for revealing himself as he is through Jesus, 9.
- ♦ Ask God to show us, by faith, the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, 11.
- ♦ Ask God to do great things in and through us and others, 12–14.

John 14:15–31

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “If you love Me, keep My commandments,” 15, 21, 23–24.
- ♦ Peace, 27; *see John 16:33; Philippians 4:7; and Colossians 3:15*. This is the Old Testament shalom, well-being, a characteristic of the Messianic kingdom. *See Numbers 6:26; Psalm 29:11; Isaiah 9:6; Ezekiel 37:26; Haggai 2:9; and Colossians 1:20.*
- ♦ “You have heard Me say, I am going away,” 28; *see John 14:3.*

Its origin, nature and content

- ♦ Biblical revelation includes specific commands from God and Christ, 15. *See John 13:34; 1 Corinthians 7:10; and 1 John 5:3.*
- ♦ Biblical revelation came to us through the revelation of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, through God’s chosen messengers, 17, 26.

Note: The work of the Holy Spirit in the apostles included teaching them new things as well as bringing to remembrance the teachings and actions of Jesus, 26. That is why we can say that Scripture is “God-breathed,” inspired by God. See 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20–21.

Note: A corollary to verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit is that the Scriptures are without error, since they come from the Spirit of truth, 17, 26.

- ♦ Biblical revelation came to us in specific words, not just concepts, 24.
- ♦ Biblical revelation is a consistent whole, and can thus be called a single “word” from Christ, 24.
- ♦ Biblical revelation came to us from God through Christ, 24–25.
- ♦ Biblical revelation contains specific prophecies of future events, 28–29.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity; 16–18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 31.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby: Jesus prays to the Father, who gives the Spirit, 16; Jesus spoke only what the Father told him to say, 24. At his ascension, Jesus went back to his Father in heaven, 28 the Father is greater than Jesus the Son, 28; the Father gave commandments to the Son, 31.
- ♦ Within the Trinity, the Father is the Sender of Jesus and of the Holy Spirit, 26. *See John 13:20.*
- ♦ The Father is “greater” than the Son functionally and positionally, 28. *See John 3:17; 5:19–30.*

His greatness

- ♦ He is Lord of life and death, 19.
- ♦ He is omnipresent, 23.
- ♦ He is greater even than Jesus, who worked mighty miracles, 28.

His goodness

- ♦ He allows us to know him as Father, 16, 26.
- ♦ He sends his Spirit to believers in Christ, 16.
- ♦ He loves those who obey Jesus’ commands, 21, 23.
- ♦ He manifests himself to those who follow Jesus, 21.
- ♦ He revealed himself in words which he gave to Jesus to speak to his disciples, 24.
- ♦ He sent his Son into the world to save us, 24.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He has the authority to issue binding commands, 15, 21, 23–24.

- ♦ He is a Helper, for he refers to the Spirit as another Helper of the same kind (in Greek), 16.
- ♦ He was and is the dwelling place of God by the Spirit, 17.
- ♦ He is a kind of father to his disciples, 18. *See Isaiah 9:6.*
- ♦ He has a unique and total intimacy with God the Father, 20.
- ♦ He is the Son of God, his Father, 21, 23–24.
- ♦ He is somehow less than God the Father, positionally and functionally, though not essentially or ontologically, 28.

His work

- ♦ He gave commandments to his disciples, 15, 21. *See John 14:34–35; and also Matthew 5–7.*
- ♦ He prays for his people, 16. *See John 17:1–26; Romans 8:34; and Hebrews 7:25.*
- ♦ He died, rose again, and appeared to his disciples, 18–19, 28; *See John 20:1–29.*
- ♦ He loves those who follow his commands, 21.
- ♦ He manifests himself to his obedient followers, 21.
- ♦ He manifests himself by coming, with the Father, through the Spirit, to dwell within his faithful followers, 23.
- ♦ He spoke to his disciples the words which his Father had given him, 24–25.
- ♦ He gives inner peace to his people, 27.
- ♦ He loved/loves God the Father, 31.
- ♦ He obeyed the commands of God the Father, 31.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He is the Helper, Paraclete, Comforter, Advocate, 16, 26.
- ♦ He is “another of the same kind,” which means that he shares the being, nature, and character of Jesus, and that he does, in our hearts, what Jesus did on earth; 16.
- ♦ He is sent by the Father at the request of Jesus the Son; thus, he is distinct from the Father and the Son, and somehow subordinate to them, functionally and positionally, though not essentially or ontologically, 16, 26.
- ♦ He is the Spirit of Truth; he communicates God’s truth to his people, 17, 26. *See 2 Timothy 3:16; and 2 Peter 1:21.*

- ♦ He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of holiness, who communicates and replicates God's holiness in his people, 26.

His work

- ♦ He advocates with us before the Father, chiefly in and through our prayers, 16. *See Romans 8:26.* He also advocates for the Father to us, by convincing us of God's love for us. *See Romans 5:5.*
- ♦ He abides (dwells) within those who trust and follow Christ, 16–17.
- ♦ He indwelt Jesus while he was on earth, 17.
- ♦ He is the Person by whom the Father and the Son together make their dwelling in the hearts of Christ's followers, 23.
- ♦ He taught the apostles all they needed to know, and revealed to them – especially to John, the author of Revelation – the things that would come, 26; he also inwardly instructs faithful followers of Christ now. *See 1 John 2:20–21.*

Note: The inner teaching of Christians by the Spirit is called illumination, by which he enables them to understand the Scriptures; it is different from the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Note: The inner leading, guiding, and prompting of the Spirit is a precious blessing for followers of Christ, but it does not have the same authority as the Spirit-breathed Scriptures, and is liable to distortion because of our sin and ignorance.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ Satan is the temporary and partial “ruler of this world,” 30. *See John 12:31 and 1 John 5:19.*
- ♦ He is temporary, because he has been cast down from heaven and the death and resurrection of Jesus and has only a brief time before he is cast forever into the lake of fire. *See John 12:31; 1 John 3:8; and Revelation 12:7–17.*
- ♦ His rule is partial, because it did not extend to Jesus, 30, and he does not rule over the true followers of Jesus. *See 1 John 4:4.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not loving Jesus above all, 24
- ♦ Not keeping the words – teaching, commands – of Jesus, 24

- ♦ Giving in to excessive emotional distress or fear, 27

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ The freedom to love Jesus and keep his commands, 15, 23; *see John 8:32–33*.
- ♦ The everlasting indwelling of the Holy Spirit, 16–17, 26
- ♦ New life in Christ; first, eternal life in our hearts, 5:24; then, eternal life on the new earth with Jesus forever, 19; *see 1 Corinthians 15:20. See also Ephesians 2:5–7*.
- ♦ A spiritual understanding of the co-inherence of Jesus and the Father, and of our union with them by the Spirit, 20
- ♦ An assurance of the love of God the Father for us, 21
- ♦ An assurance of the love of Christ for us, 21
- ♦ An internal manifestation of God the Father and God the Son dwelling in our hearts through God the Spirit, 21–23
- ♦ Internal peace that is above circumstances and independent of our condition in the world, 27; *see John 20:19, 21, 26*.

Its origin: Initial salvation and all consequent benefits come solely from God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, 16, 18–19, 21, 23, 26–27.

Note: Salvation and its benefits do not come through Mary, or the saints, or a priest, except insofar as a living minister of the Word of God proclaims that Word faithfully.

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ Love for Jesus, 15, 21, 23, 28
- ♦ Consistently keeping his commands, 15, 21, 23
- ♦ The presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, 16–17
- ♦ New life – a new principle of life within them, 19

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Ask God for a true love for Jesus, 15.
- ♦ Ask God to give us the grace to keep the commands of Jesus, 15.
- ♦ Thank God for the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit, 16–17.
- ♦ Thank God that we can know him and his Son Jesus, 20. *See John 17:3.*
- ♦ Thank God for his love for us.
- ♦ Dwell constantly on his love for us.
- ♦ Receive the peace of Christ by faith in every circumstance, 27. *See Philippians 4:6–7.*

John 15:1–27

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “I am the true Vine,” 1, 5; *see Psalm 80:8–10; Isaiah 5:1–7; and Jeremiah 2:21.*
- ♦ Vine: *see Matthew 20:1–16; Mark 12:1–12; and Luke 13:6, where the vine is not Jesus but God’s people and kingdom.*
- ♦ Gardener, that is, vinedresser, 1; *see Isaiah 5:1–7.*
- ♦ Fruitless branches, 2; that is, professing believers who have only a shallow relationship with Jesus, like Judas; *see John 13:1–2, 10–11, 26–30; and 1 John 2:19.*
- ♦ “Every branch that bears fruit He prunes,” 2; *see Hebrews 12: 3–11; and James 1:2–5.*
- ♦ “That it may bear more fruit,” that is, Christian character, 2; *see Matthew 3:8; 7:16–20; Galatians 5:22–23; Ephesians 5:9; and Philippians 1:11.*
- ♦ “You are already clean,” 3; *see John 13:10; 17:17; 1 John 1:9; Hebrews 10:22; and 1 Peter 1:22.*
- ♦ “Abide in Me,” 4; *see John 6:56; 14:20; 15:7; and Colossians 1:23; 2:19.*
- ♦ “And they gather them and throw them into the fire,” 6; *see Ezekiel 15:4; Matthew 3:10; and Ezekiel 15:1–8.*
- ♦ “And My words abide in you,” 7; *see 1 John 2:14; Colossians 3:16 (where “in you” can be translated, “among you,” that is, among gathered Christians); Joshua 1:8; and Psalm 1:2.*
- ♦ “You will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you,” 7; *see John 14:13; 16:23; see Matthew 7:7–12; 21:22.*
- ♦ “By this My Father is glorified,” 8; *see Matthew 5:16; 7:20.*
- ♦ “That you bear much fruit,” 8, 16; *see Genesis 1:28.*
- ♦ “So you will be My disciples,” that is, you will show that you are Jesus’ disciples, 8; *see Colossians 1:23; and 1 John 2:24.*
- ♦ “As the Father loved me, 9; *see John 5:20; 17:26.*
- ♦ “Keep My commands,” 10; *see John 14:15; and 1 John 2:5; 3:24; 5:2–3.*
- ♦ “That you love one another,” 12, 17; *see John 13:34; and 1 John 4:11–21.*

- ♦ “My friends,” 14; *see 1 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23 (Abraham); and Exodus 33:11 (Moses).*
- ♦ “If you do what I command you,” 14, not as a way of becoming a friend, but of demonstrating that one is a friend of Jesus; *see Matthew 12:50; 28:20.*
- ♦ “If the world hates you,” 18; *see 1 John 3:13.*
- ♦ “World,” 18; not the company of those whom God loves and has chosen, but those who lie under the sway of Satan and refuse to trust in Christ; *see John 1:9, 29; 3:16.*
- ♦ “A servant is not greater than his master,” 20; *see John 13:16 and Matthew 10:24.*
- ♦ “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin,” 22; that is, they would not incur guilt for not believing in Jesus; they would have other sins, of course, *see verse 24; John 9:41.*
- ♦ “They hated me without cause,” 25; *see Luke 24:49; and Psalm 35:19; 69:4.*
- ♦ “When the Helper comes,” 26; *see John 14:26.*
- ♦ “And you also will bear witness,” 27; *see Luke 24:49; and Acts 1:8.*

Note: 15:18–27 forms a bridge to, or a section with, 16:1–15, about the world’s hatred and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity; 1–2, 8–10, 15–16, 21, 23–24, 26.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby: the Father is the keeper of the Vine, 1–6; the Father gives commands to the Son, who obeys them, 10; the Father reveals to the Son what he should say to his disciples, 15; the Father hears prayers offered in the name of the Son, 16.
- ♦ This functional subordination extends to the Spirit, who is sent by the Son from the Father, and who proceeds from the Father, 26.

- ♦ There is also a sort of identity, whereby the person who hates Jesus the Son is said to hate the Father also, 23–24.

His greatness

- ♦ He “owns” the Vine – that is the Body of Christ, including Christ and his faithful followers – and has authority over it, 1–2, 6.
- ♦ He has the power to discipline people or even to punish them in hell, 2, 6.
- ♦ He has the power to answer all sorts of prayer, 7, 16.
- ♦ He is omnipresent, able to hear the prayers of his people anywhere, 7, 16.
- ♦ He issues binding commands, 10.
- ♦ He is eternal and thus able to predict the future through Scripture, 25.

His goodness

- ♦ He “prunes” the branches of the Vine; that is, he disciplines his children that they may bear more fruit, 2.
- ♦ He punishes unfaithful people with eternal fire, 6.
- ♦ He answers the prayers of the faithful followers of Jesus, 7, 16.
- ♦ He loves Jesus his Son, 9.
- ♦ He gives commands that enable us to know how to remain in a conscious awareness of his love, 9.
- ♦ He sent Jesus to die for us, 13; 20–21.
- ♦ He revealed his will to Jesus, who revealed it to his disciples, 15.
- ♦ He sends his Holy Spirit to the faithful followers of Jesus, 26.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the true Vine; unlike ancient Israel, and as God’s vine he repeatedly proved that he is now the true Israel because he is faithful, 1, 5.
- ♦ He is the source of all our life, both physical and spiritual, 15. *See John 6:35; 11:25; 14:6; and Colossians 3:4.*
- ♦ He is the unique divine Son of God the Father, 1.
- ♦ He is the Beloved of the Father, 9. *See Ephesians 1:6.*
- ♦ He is the fountain of all joy, 11. *See Psalm 16:11 and Philippians 4:4.*
- ♦ He is the supreme Lawgiver, 12, 17.
- ♦ He is the Friend of all who follow him, 13–14.
- ♦ He is our Master, 20.

- ♦ He is the exact representation of the Father, 23–24. *See Colossians 1:15 and Hebrews 1:3.*

His work

- ♦ He speaks cleansing words of forgiveness to his followers, 3.
- ♦ He enables his people to bear the fruit of changed lives, 4–5.
- ♦ He speaks words of instruction and promise to us through the Scripture, 7, 11, 15.
- ♦ He gathered disciples while on earth, and still does through his Spirit, 8.
- ♦ He loved his earthly disciples and loves us now, 9, 12–13.
- ♦ He kept his Father’s commands, 10.
- ♦ He gives his joy to those who follows his words, 11.
- ♦ He issued commands to his followers, 12, 14, 17.
- ♦ He gave his life as a sacrifice for our sins, 13. *See John 10:11, 15; and Ephesians 5:2, 25.*

Note: “Life” in John 10:11, 15, refers to his psyche, not to the zoe, eternal life, that he possessed forever; likewise, here, he gave himself without forfeiting his divine nature.

- ♦ He listened to the Father and then relayed to his disciples what he had heard, 15.
- ♦ He chose certain men to be his disciples, 16, 19. *See John 6:70; 13:18.*
- ♦ He appointed his disciples to bear spiritual and moral fruit, as God had done for Adam and Eve, 16. *See Genesis 1:18.*
- ♦ He allowed himself to be persecuted and killed in fulfillment of prophecies about the Messiah, 20, 25.
- ♦ He also spoke to unbelievers, 22.
- ♦ He did incomparably great miracles, 24.
- ♦ He sends the Holy Spirit to those who trust in him, 26. *See Acts 2:33.*

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He is the Paraclete, Helper, Comforter, 26.
- ♦ He is sent by Jesus from the Father and is thus the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, 26. *See Romans 8:9–11.*
- ♦ He proceeds from the Father, 26.

Note: The Western church added “and the Son” (filioque) in the Nicene Creed, causing deep division with the Eastern Orthodox churches. The controversy is complex, but both sides want to preserve the full deity of the Spirit as well as his relationship to the Father (at least) as one of proceeding, as distinct from the Son’s begetting.

- ♦ He is the Spirit of truth, 26.

His work

- ♦ As the Spirit of truth, he communicates truth by testifying to Jesus and enabling Christians to be witnesses of Christ, 26. *See Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ He is the Spirit of truth also in his ministry of governing the writers of the New Testament to write “God-breathed” words. *See 2 Timothy 3:16.*

Mankind

The only two “races”

- ♦ There are only two kinds of people, with two different destinies: those who abide in Christ and those who don’t, 2. The former bear much fruit; the latter are cast into eternal fire, 5–6.
- ♦ The latter constitute “the world” in the sense of those who are opposed to God and his Christ, 18.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Hating Jesus and his disciples, 18, 25
- ♦ Persecuting Jesus and his disciples, 20
- ♦ Refusing to accept and believe the truth about Jesus, 24

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Organic spiritual union with Jesus Christ and with his faithful followers, 1–8
- ♦ Being declared ritually clean by faith in the word of the gospel, 3
- ♦ Bearing “fruit,” that is, transformed living, especially loving, 5, 7–8, 12
- ♦ An awareness of the love of Christ and of the Father for us, 9

- ♦ Clear instruction on how to live and the example of Christ to guide and motivate us, 12–13
- ♦ Joy in Christ, 11
- ♦ Friendship with Jesus, 13–14
- ♦ Knowledge of saving truth through the revelation of Christ to his apostles, 15
- ♦ Being chosen by Christ for a life of fruitfulness and eternal purpose, 16
- ♦ Answered prayer, 16
- ♦ Membership in a fellowship, a family, of mutual love, 17
- ♦ Being chosen out of the world to belong to Christ, 19
- ♦ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, 26
- ♦ The privilege of being witnesses of Christ, 27

Its origin: Salvation comes entirely from the sovereign choice of God in Christ, 16, 19.

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ A life of spiritual and ethical fruitfulness, 2, 5, 8; *see Galatians 5:22.*
- ♦ Constant fellowship with Christ through faith, 4–5
- ♦ Hearing his word and praying to him in faith, 7
- ♦ Keeping the commands of Christ, especially the command to love other believers, 10, 12, 17
- ♦ Joy, 11
- ♦ Being hated by the world for their faith and Christlikeness, 18–21
- ♦ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, 26
- ♦ Bearing witness to Christ in word and deed by the power of the Spirit, 27

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns he will gather up all who have refused to believe in and obey him and cast them into eternal fire, 6. *See Matthew 3:10; 5:29–30, 13:41–42; 25:46; and Ezekiel 15:1–8.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Abide in Christ consciously and continuously by hearing (reading, listening to) his words in the Scriptures and praying to him, 7.
- ♦ Ask God for the grace to keep the commands of Christ, especially the command to love other believers, 10, 12.
- ♦ Thank God for choosing us out of the world into a life of purpose and productivity, 16, 19.
- ♦ Expect nonbelievers to hate us when we properly reflect the character of Christ and give testimony to our faith in him, 18–25.
- ♦ Thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit, 26.
- ♦ See ourselves as witnesses of Christ; make this the primary meaning and purpose of our life, 27. *See Matthew 6:33; and Acts 1:8.*

John 16:1–15

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble," 1; *see John 16:4.*
- ♦ "They will put you out of the synagogues," 2; *see John 9:22; and Acts 13:50.*
- ♦ "They have not known the Father nor Me," 3; *see John 8:19.*
- ♦ "I go away to Him who sent Me," 5; *see John 7:33; 13:33; 14:28; 17:11.*
- ♦ "Sorrow has filled your heart," 6; *see verse 20.*

Its origin, nature and content

- ♦ The Gospel accounts include words of Jesus as recorded by the apostles and their immediate disciples, 1, 4, 12.
- ♦ The New Testament Gospels, Acts, and Epistles were written by men who were infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit, 13–15
- ♦ The center and focus of the Bible is Christ, 14.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or "God," he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity; 3, 5, 7–9, 10, 13–15.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a kind of functional (not essential or ontological) order and subordination, whereby God is Father, indicating source and priority and authority in some way, 5; as Father, he sent Jesus his Son into the world, 5; the Son sends the Spirit, 7; the Spirit does all to the glory of the Son, 14.
- ♦ Within the Trinity, the Son "has" all things from the Father; he shares all rule, authority, glory, power, wisdom, truth etc., that the Father has, 15.

His greatness

- ♦ He has the power of life and was able to raise Jesus from the dead and take him to heaven to be with himself again forever, 5, 7 (thus, Jesus describes the coming ordeal as his “going” to the Father).
- ♦ He “owns” all things in the entire universe, which he created and which he sustains, 15.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent Jesus into the world to save us from our sins, 5.
- ♦ He shares with his Son all that he has, 15.

Christ

His person

- ♦ As the Son of God, he knew the future and could predict it, 1–4.
- ♦ He is the eternal Son of God the Father, 3.
- ♦ He is known only by those whom God has chosen; this shows his divine nature, 3.
- ♦ He is so identified with the Father in nature and mission that to know one is to know the other, though they remain two, 3.
- ♦ He is the one sent by God, 5.
- ♦ He is related to the Father and the Spirit in some way that he can send the Spirit from the Father, 7.
- ♦ He is the standard of righteousness and was fully righteous, as attested by his resurrection and ascension to the Father, 10.
- ♦ He shares the Father’s glory and inherent right to honor and praise, even from the equally divine Holy Spirit, 14.
- ♦ He possesses “all things” that the Father does, 15.

His work

- ♦ He spoke words of truth and consolation to his disciples, 1, 4, 6–7, 12.
- ♦ He prepared his disciples for what was to come to him and to them, 1–4.
- ♦ He spoke only what they could take at the time, 12.

- ♦ He “went” away from this earth through his death, resurrection, and ascension, 7.
- ♦ He sent the Holy Spirit to his disciples at Pentecost and continues to send the Spirit to those who believe in him, 7.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He is the Helper, the Paraclete, the Comforter, the Advocate, 7.
- ♦ He is sent from the Father by the Son, 7.
- ♦ He was not “sent” in this way until after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, 7. *See John 7:37–39; and Acts 2:33.*

His work

- ♦ He convicts the world of the supreme sin, that is, not believing in Jesus, 8–9.
- ♦ He convicts the world of true righteousness by raising Jesus from the dead and thus vindicating him as God’s righteous Servant rather than the malefactor that he was accused of being, 10.
- ♦ He convicts, or demonstrates, true judgment and justice, by raising Jesus from the dead and thus sealing the doom of Satan, the accuser, whose agents accused Jesus of blasphemy; through the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, the power of Satan has been decisively broken, 11.
- ♦ He guided the apostles and their disciples into the truth, enabling them to write the New Testament, which contains only truth and no errors, 13.
- ♦ He glorifies Jesus; thus, we should read the New Testament, indeed, all of Scripture, as the words of the Spirit glorifying the Messiah, 14–15.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ♦ Satan is the temporary and partial “ruler” of this world, 11.
- ♦ He was judged and stripped of his power by Jesus at his cross and resurrection, 11. *See John 12:31; Luke 10:18; and Revelation 12:9–10; 20:2–3.*

Note: Satan’s defeat by Jesus means that he can no longer accuse God’s people before him; his minions, the demons, can be cast out in the name of Jesus; his wiles are exposed and can be resisted by believers; the gospel has been taken to the whole world and the nations are being undeceived by its truth.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Persecuting Christians, 2
- ♦ Using religion as an excuse for hurting people, 2
- ♦ Using religion as an instrument of the state to punish people, 2
- ♦ Not believing in Jesus as Savior. This is the fundamental and gravest sin, 19.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Special revelation from God through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, 1–15
- ♦ The “coming” of the Holy Spirit into our hearts, 7; *see John 14:16–17*.
- ♦ The illumination of the inspired Scriptures, so that we know the truth about Jesus, God, and the salvation we have, 13–15

Its origin: All the benefits of salvation come to us from God through Jesus, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, 4, 7, 13.

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ Persecution for their faith in Jesus, 2–3
- ♦ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, 7, 13

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Remember Jesus’ words about coming persecution, and prepare ourselves for it.
- ♦ Thank God for the ministry of Jesus for us on the cross, and the consequent gift of the Holy Spirit to us, 7, 13–14.
- ♦ Be careful when we speak, to say only what will be helpful to people at the time, 12. *See Ephesians 4:29*.

- ♦ Thank God for enabling us to know him and the truth about him, 3, 13–15.
- ♦ Imitate the Holy Spirit by doing and saying all to the glory of Christ, 14. *See 3:26–30.*
- ♦ Seek “all things” that are really good for us, that is, all that we call “life,” in Jesus alone, 15. *See John 1:4; 14:6.*

John 16:16–33

Truth

Revelation

Its origin, nature, content, and purpose

- ♦ Some sayings of Jesus, and some passages of the Bible, are not easy to understand, for they are expressed in figurative language that only the Holy Spirit can interpret for us, 25.
- ♦ When he thinks best, Jesus will reveal the meaning to us, 29.
- ♦ Jesus spoke many things in order that his followers might have peace by trusting in him, 33.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity; 16–17, 23, 26–28, 30, 32.
- ♦ Within this Trinity, there is a sort of functional (not ontological or essential) subordination of the Son to the Father, whereby the Son goes to the Father, 16–17, 28; prayers in the name of the Son are offered to the Father, 23, 26–27.

His greatness

- ♦ He is transcendent, living in a realm beyond this world, whence Jesus came and whither he “went” by his death, resurrection, and ascension, 16, 28.
- ♦ He is all powerful and thus able to do great things for his people, 23.
- ♦ He is omnipresent and thus able to hear his people’s prayers, regardless of where they are, 23, 32.

His goodness

- ♦ He loves all those who trust in Jesus as the Savior sent by God into the world, and who love him, 27.
- ♦ He sent his Son into the world to save sinners, 27–28.
- ♦ He is with his Son constantly, 32.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the Son of the Father, 16–17, 23, 26, 32.
- ♦ He enjoys absolute favor with God the Father, and can thus guarantee that all prayers to God in his name will be granted, 23–24.

Note: “In My name” includes these elements: According to his teaching, in keeping with his life of sacrificial service, with faith in his atoning work at the cross and his victory at the resurrection, trusting in his imputed righteousness alone, not in our works, believing that he is our Advocate with the Father and that God is now our loving Father.

- ♦ He enjoys intimate and constant communion with the Father, 32.

His work

- ♦ He died for us (so he was not seen by his disciples), 16–17, 19.
- ♦ He rose again from the dead, and thus, they were able to see him again, 16–17, 19.
- ♦ He came forth into the world from the Father to save us as the incarnate word of God, 23, 27–28, 30. *See John 1:1–3, 14.*
- ♦ After his resurrection, he left the world and returned to the Father in his ascension, 28.
- ♦ He overcame the world, that is, the entire system of unbelief and rebellion, led by Satan and consisting of all who do not trust and follow Christ, by his cross, resurrection, and ascension, 33. *See Ephesians 1:20–23; and Colossians 2:15.*
- ♦ He taught his disciples the truth, including the coming events of the cross, resurrection, ascension, and their desertion of him, so that they might have peace of mind even in this sorrow-filled world, 32–33.

Spiritual Beings

Satan: Satan is the temporary and partial “ruler of this world, but he has been decisively defeated by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and is part of – indeed, the leader of – the “world” which Christ has overcome, 33.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Lasting and inextinguishable joy, 20–22, 24. *See John 15:11.*
- ♦ The privilege of praying to the Father in the name of Jesus, with the assurance that our prayers “in his name” will be answered, 23–24
- ♦ The love of God the Father for us, 27
- ♦ Peace from Christ, 33; *see John 14:27*

Its origin: Salvation comes to us from God the Father through the person and work of Jesus Christ, 23–24, 27–28.

Its recipients

- ♦ Those who ask God in faith, 24.
- ♦ Those who trust in Jesus Christ as the one who came from God to save us, 27.

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ Joy, 20, 22
- ♦ Prayer, 23–24, 26
- ♦ Faith in Jesus as the Son of God, 27, 30
- ♦ Persecution for Christ’s sake, 32–33
- ♦ Peace, 33

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.
- ♦ Pray to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, 23–24. 26.
- ♦ Continue to believe in Jesus for all he’s done for us and for who he is, 30–31.
- ♦ Expect to suffer persecution and to have trouble in this world, 33.
- ♦ Seek peace in Christ alone, 33.
- ♦ Thank Jesus for overcoming this world for us and claim the “good cheer” that results from his victory, 33.

John 17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “Lifted his eyes to heaven,” 1; *see Psalm 123:1; Mark 7:34; and Luke 18:13.*
- ♦ “The hour has come,” 1; *see John 12:23.*
- ♦ Eternal life in Christ, 2–3; *see John 1:4; 5:26; 11:25; 14:6; 20:31.*
- ♦ Knowing and glorifying the name of God, 6; *see Exodus 3:13–15 Psalm 22:22, Isaiah 52:6, and Ezekiel 39:7.*
- ♦ Declaring to God’s people what God has revealed to him, 8; *see Deuteronomy 18:18.*
- ♦ The holiness of God, 11; *see Leviticus 11:44; Psalm 71:22; 111:9; Isaiah 6:3; and Revelation 4:8; 6:10.*
- ♦ The consecration of a sin-offering, 19; *see Deuteronomy 15:19.*
- ♦ “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word” 20; *see Deuteronomy 29:14–15.*
- ♦ “That they may be one,” 21; *see John 10:16; 11:52; and Ezekiel 34:23; 37:24.*
- ♦ God’s righteousness, 25; *see Psalm 116:5; 119:137; and Jeremiah 12:1.*
- ♦ God’s dwelling in the midst of his people, 26; *see Exodus 29:45–46; 40:34; and Deuteronomy 7:21; 23:14.*

Its origin, nature, content, and purpose

- ♦ Biblical revelation includes the words of Jesus as recorded by the four Evangelists, 6, 8, 13–14, 17, 20.
- ♦ This revelation is sometimes called the “word” of God or Christ, indicating that it is a coherent, consistent, comprehensive whole, 6, 17, 20.
- ♦ It is also sometimes called the “words” of God or Christ, or “these things,” reflecting both the verbal inspiration of individual words in sentences and the variety of doctrine and history that they reveal, 8, 13. *See John 6:63; 15:7.*
- ♦ Thus, the origin of biblical revelation is God, speaking through Christ and his apostles (and in the Old Testament, the prophets), 17.

- ♦ The divine origin of biblical revelation as a whole and in its parts means that it can be called, without qualification, “truth,” 17. *See John 6:63.*
- ♦ And thus, biblical revelation is divinely inspired and carries divine authority.
- ♦ The content of biblical revelation is variously described; here, Jesus calls it the “name” of God the Father, referring to all of God’s character and works, especially the person and work of Jesus Christ, who reveals the Father to us, 6, 11–12, 25.
- ♦ The purposes of biblical revelation include
 - To give knowledge of God as he is revealed in Jesus Christ, 6–8, 25
 - To evoke faith, 8, 20
 - To provide protection from falling away into unbelief or disobedience, and from the devil’s devices, 11, 15
 - To give joy to believers, 13
 - To promote the initial (positional) sanctification of believers and their ongoing (progressive) sanctification, 17
 - To convey the knowledge, both objective and subjective, of God’s love for his people, 26
 - To convey the very presence of Christ to believers, 26

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity; 1–15, 17–18, 21–25.
- ♦ Within this Trinity there is an infinitely close bond of love and mutual indwelling between the Father and the Son; starting with Augustine, and including Jonathan Edwards, many theologians believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine personal bond of love between Father and Son; 3, 5, 10–11, 21, 23–26.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is a kind of functional or relational (not ontological or essential) subordination, whereby
 - The Son prays to the Father in this entire chapter
 - The Father has given authority to the Son, 2.
 - The Father gave work to the Son to accomplish and the Son finished the work, 4.

- The Son manifested the Father's name to his disciples, 6.
- The Father gave some people to the Son as his own, 6, 9, 11–12, 24.
- These people were originally the Father's, since he "owns" everything and everyone, 6.
- The Father gave "all things" to the Son, 7.
- The Father gave words to the Son to relay to his disciples, 8, 14.
- The Father sent the Son into the world, 18, 23.
- The Father gave glory to the Son, 22, 24.

His greatness

- ♦ He possesses all authority, and is thus able to delegate all authority to his Son, 2.
- ♦ He is eternal, 2, 5, 24.
- ♦ He possesses unending life in himself and can thus bestow it on others, 2.
- ♦ He is unique; there is no other so-called "god" like him, nor could there be, 3. *See John 5:44; Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; and 1 John 5:10.*
- ♦ He is transcendent, dwelling in "heaven," a place far "above" us, from which he sent his Son to us, 3, 8, 13, 18, 21, 23.
- ♦ He "owns" all people, and thus has the authority to "give" them to his Son to be saved, 6, 9–11.
- ♦ He is totally sovereign over all men, including wicked men and their actions, 12. *See Genesis 50:20.*

Note: The relationship between God's sovereignty and man's moral responsibility, both of which are taught in Scripture, is an impenetrable mystery.

- ♦ He is omnipotent and thus able to protect his people from Satan, 15.
- ♦ He is the Creator, the one who "founded" this world, 24.
- ♦ He is unknowable except insofar as he allows himself to be known, 25.

His goodness

- ♦ He deigns to be called "Father," not only of Jesus his Son but of all his people, 1–26.
- ♦ He is glorious, that is, beautiful and excellent in every way, 1
- ♦ He gives eternal life through the Son, 2–3.
- ♦ He allows us to know him and his Son Jesus Christ, 3.
- ♦ He sent his Son into the world to save us, 3, 21.

- ♦ He gave Jesus saving work to do and enabled him to complete his task, 4.
- ♦ He gave some people to his Son to be saved, 6, 9.
- ♦ He revealed his words to his people through his Son, 8
- ♦ He keeps his people for eternal salvation 11, 15.
- ♦ He is holy, 11.

Note: For the Pope to be called "Holy Father" is blasphemy, for this title belongs to God alone.

- ♦ He sanctifies his people through his revealed truth, 17.
- ♦ He gives his people unity and intimacy with himself and with Christ, 21.
- ♦ He is righteous, 25.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the unique Son of God the Father, 1, 5, 11, 21, 25.
- ♦ He is also a man totally dependent upon God, and thus he prays, 1–26.
- ♦ He has all authority in heaven and earth, 2. *See Daniel 7:13–14; Matthew 11:27; 28:18; and Ephesians 1:22.*
- ♦ He is Jesus, the son of Mary, 3.
- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One sent by God to save his people, 3.
- ♦ He is equal with the Father in glory, 5.
- ♦ He is eternal, 5, 24. *See John 8:58; 16:28; Proverbs 8:28, 20, with John 1:1–3.*
- ♦ He is the one sent by God into the world, 8.
- ♦ He “owns” all those whom the Father has given him, 6, 10.
- ♦ He is not of this world in any way, 14, 16.
- ♦ He is one with the Father in spirit and communion, though not in personal identity, 21.
- ♦ He shares the Father’s glory, 22, 24.
- ♦ He is the uniquely Beloved of the Father, 24, 26. *See Ephesians 1:6.*

His work

- ♦ He is our great High Priest, who intercedes for us, 1–26. *See Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25.*

- ♦ He gives eternal life to those whom God has given to him, that is, the elect, 2.
- ♦ He glorified God on earth by completing the mission on which God had sent him, 4.
- ♦ He manifested God's name – that is, his words, works, and character – before his disciples, 6, 26. In particular, he revealed the name of God as “Father” to those who trust in Christ.
- ♦ He gave God's words to his disciples, 8, 14.
- ♦ He willingly came forth from God down to this earth, 8.
- ♦ He went back to the Father after rising from the dead, 11.
- ♦ He protected his disciples from Satan's wiles while he was on earth, 12.
- ♦ He sent his disciples into the world after his resurrection, 18. *See John 20:21.*
- ♦ He sanctified himself – that is, he set himself apart from sin and wholly consecrated himself to the Father, to do his will – so that his disciples might also be sanctified, 19.
- ♦ He gave his glory to his disciples – that is, the grace and truth that he embodied, as well as the honor that would be theirs forever in heaven, 22.
- ♦ He enters into the closest possible spiritual union and communion with his disciples, 23.
- ♦ He loved his disciples and gave himself for them, 23. *See Galatians 2:20 and Ephesians 5:2.*

The Holy Spirit

His work

- ♦ He sanctifies believers as they are exposed to the Word of God, that is, the truth, 17. *See 1 Peter 1:2.* Though the passage in Peter refers primarily to initial sanctification, it may also apply to ongoing sanctification.
- ♦ He fills and empowers those who are sent by Jesus into the world, that is, all true believers, 18. *See John 20:21.*
- ♦ He is the bond of unity between believers and Christ, 21. *See Ephesians 4:3–4.*
- ♦ He is the one in and by whom Christ and the Father are “in” the followers of Christ, 23. *See Romans 8:1, 9–11.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Eternal life, that is, the life of God that believers begin to enjoy now and will enjoy forever with him, 2–3
- ♦ Knowing God the Father and God the Son intellectually and experientially; living in fellowship with him, 3
- ♦ Knowing God's name, especially his name as Father, and being related to him as Father by faith in the work of Christ, 6
- ♦ Belonging to Christ now and forever 6, 11
- ♦ Knowing Christ as his unique, divine authority, 7, origin and mission, 8
- ♦ "Receiving" the words of Christ both intellectually and experientially, 8, 14
- ♦ Having Christ as our constant Intercessor, 9
- ♦ Being instruments of reflecting the glory of Christ to the world, 10; *see 2 Corinthians 3:18.*
- ♦ Essential (ontological) unity with other believers in Christ, 11; *see Ephesians 4:3–4.* That is, all that now separates and divides us will be progressively and then finally eliminated
- ♦ Experiential unity and communion with other believers in Christ, 11, 1
- ♦ Experiencing the joy of Christ, 13, which comes from believing and obeying his words, 13; *see John 15:10.*
- ♦ Being kept from total dominion by Satan by the power of God in answer to the prayer of Christ, 15; *see John 10:28–29; and 1 Peter 1:5.*
- ♦ Ongoing sanctification by the word of God, 17
- ♦ Knowledge of the truth, 17
- ♦ The great privilege of being sent by Christ into the world with a commission to be witnesses of him, 18; *see John 10:27; 20:21; and Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ Membership in the worldwide body of Christ, 20
- ♦ Glory, both progressively now and ultimately later with God on the new earth, 22; *see Romans 8:30; 1 Corinthians 15:40–49; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 1:27; and 1 Thessalonians 2:12.*
- ♦ Experiencing in ourselves the love of God for Christ, 26

Its origin

- ♦ Salvation comes to us entirely from God's sovereign grace, 2, 6, 9–10,

- ♦ Some are not saved; this also is ultimately from God's choice, 12; it is a great mystery, one which is impenetrable to us.

Its recipients

- ♦ Those whom God the Father has given to God the Son, 2; *see above*.
- ♦ Those who believe in Jesus 8, 20

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ Faith in the Triune God, 8, 20
- ♦ Hope in eternal life through Christ, 3
- ♦ Spiritual and moral separation from the world, 6, 16
- ♦ Acceptance of, and obedience to, the commands of Christ and the Word of God, 8, 14, 17
- ♦ Joy in Christ, 13
- ♦ Hatred by the world, 14
- ♦ Changed lives that are shaped by the truth of God, 17
- ♦ Mission into the world in obedience to Christ, 18, 20
- ♦ Spiritual unity in Christ, 21, 23; *see Ephesians 4:4-6*.

Note: This unity is not organizational, and it is based upon common convictions based on God's Word. Where these common convictions are not shared, unity is not possible.

- ♦ Love for God and for each other, 26

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Seek to glorify Jesus Christ and God the Father, 1, 4, 18.
- ♦ Thank God for giving us eternal life through knowing Christ and God the Father, 3.
- ♦ Ask God to show us what he wants us to do, and to give us the grace to complete it, or at least to make substantial progress on it, realizing that the only one who ever completed his earthly assignment was Jesus, 4.
- ♦ Ask God to "give" us a few people to whom we can, by word and deed, manifest the "name" of the Father, 6.

- ♦ In our discipleship of others, make the words of Jesus and the Word of God in Scripture central, 8.
- ♦ Pray for those whom God gives us, starting with our family, 9.
- ♦ Realize that these people, though “given” to us, really belong to God, 10.
- ♦ Be prepared to discover that some professing Christians, even some leaders, will turn out like Judas, 12.
- ♦ Speak to others words that will promote their true joy, not our temporary enjoyment or pleasure, 13.
- ♦ Ask God to sanctify us by his truth in his Word, not only for our sakes, but for the sake of those to whom we minister, 17, 19.
- ♦ Spend much time in the Word of God, reading, hearing, memorizing, and meditating upon it, 17. *See John 8:31–32; 15:7; and Colossians 3:16.*
- ♦ Model our life and ministry after that of Jesus, 18.
- ♦ Seek true Christian unity with all sincere believers, 21, 23. *See Ephesians 4:3.*
- ♦ Eagerly await and long for the glory that will be ours when Christ returns, 24.
- ♦ Ask God to fill us with a sense of his love for us in Christ, 26. *See Ephesians 3:14–21.*

John 18

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Kidron Valley, 1; *see 2 Samuel 15:23; 1 Kings 2:37; 15:13; and 2 Kings 23:4, 6, 12.*
- ♦ Falling to the ground in the presence of a supernatural being, 6; *see Ezekiel 1:28; 44:4; Daniel 2:46; 8:18; 10:9; Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14; and Revelation 1:17; 19:10; 22:9.*
- ♦ Falling of soldiers, 6; *see Psalm 27:2; 35:4; 56:9; and 2 Kings 1:9–14 (Elijah).*
- ♦ The cup of God's wrath, 11; *see Psalm 75:8; Isaiah 51:17, 22; Jeremiah 25:15–17; Ezekiel 23:31–34; Habakkuk 2:16; and Revelation 14:10; 16:19; 18:6.*
- ♦ The prophecy of Caiaphas, 14; *see John 11:50.*
- ♦ "My kingdom is not of this world," 36; *see Daniel 2:44; 7:14.*

Its origin, nature and content

- ♦ Biblical revelation includes the spoken words of Jesus that were later recorded by the authors of the Four Gospels, 1 (referring either to John 17 or to all his words in John 13–17).
- ♦ These words include predictions that Jesus made earlier, 9, 32. *See John 17:12; 12:32–33.*
- ♦ They also include his public teachings, 20; *see, for example, John 5:19–47; 6:35–58; 7:16–29; 8:14–58; 10:1–18, 25–30, 34–38.*
- ♦ The words of Jesus were true, for he came to "bear witness to the truth," 37.
- ♦ Biblical revelation also includes historical narrative, like most of John's Gospel, including the Passion Narrative in 18–19.

God

His Triune nature: God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity, 11.

His goodness

- ♦ The Father “gave” many people to Jesus as those whom he would save, 9.
- ♦ He sent his Son to drink the cup of his holy wrath against sinners in our place, 11. *See Matthew 20:22; 26:39; and Jeremiah 25:15–38.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus of Nazareth, the fully human son of Mary, 1, 5, 7, 15, 19–20, 22–23, 28–29, 33–34, 36–37.
- ♦ As fully man, he was liable to betrayal, 2, 5; arrest and binding, 12; trial, 14–38; abandonment, 15–18, 25–27; beating, 22; death by crucifixion, 31–32.
- ♦ He is fully divine, as indicated by the use of “I AM” in his statements to the temple police, 5–6, 8; this goes back to passages like 8:58, which goes back to Exodus 3:14. This is the covenant name Yahweh. That is why the soldiers fell back to the ground when they first heard him pronounce the “I Am.”
- ♦ He is the unique Son of the Father, 11.
- ♦ He is rightly called “king of the Jews,” for he fulfills the prophecy given to David in 2 Samuel 7:12–16, 33, 37, 39.
- ♦ He is at the same time King over all, the divine–human personage who fulfills the prophecy made through Daniel (Daniel 7:13–14), 36.
- ♦ As a man, he “was born,” 37. *See John 1:14.*
- ♦ As the fully divine Son of God, he “came into the world” from the Father in his incarnation, 37. *See John 1:1–3, 14.*

His work

- ♦ He taught his disciples and large crowds, 1, 20.
- ♦ He gathered and trained a group of disciples, 1.

- ♦ He took the wrath of God upon himself for our sakes, 11. *See Matthew 20:22; 26:39; and Jeremiah 25:15–38.*
- ♦ He allowed himself to suffer, 18:12–19:20.
- ♦ He protected his disciples from premature harm, 8–9. *See John 17:12; 6:39; 10:28.* Jesus is the Good Shepherd who gives his life for the sake of his sheep. *See John 10:11, 15, 17–18, 28.*
- ♦ He died for the [sins of] the whole people of Israel, 14.
- ♦ He taught publicly and privately, 20.

Note: Jesus' saying that he said nothing in secret means that he said nothing to his disciples that contradicted what he said in public, and that he did not teach his disciples to foment a revolution.

- ♦ He did no evil, 23, 38.
- ♦ He prophesied the manner of his death, that is, by Roman crucifixion, 31–32.
- ♦ He was born and came into the world to bear witness to the truth by his words and deeds, 37.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Betrayal of one who trusted us, 5
- ♦ Denial of Christ, 15–18, 25–27
- ♦ Using violence to advance the cause of Christ, 36
- ♦ Skepticism about the existence and/or knowability of ultimate truth, 38
- ♦ Preferring violent revolution to peaceful following of Jesus, 40; *see Luke 23:19.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Eternal security in the love of God for us in Christ, 9; *see John 10:28–29.*
- ♦ Deliverance from God's wrath, 11
- ♦ Being “of the truth,” that is, hearing, receiving, believing, and obeying the truth of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, 37

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by hearing, believing, and following the truth as it is revealed in Jesus, 37. *See John 3:21; 8:31-32.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Reverence Jesus as God, Yahweh in the flesh, 6.
- ♦ Give our lives to protect other followers of Christ, 8-9.
- ♦ Refuse to use violence to protect or promote the kingdom of God, 10-11.
- ♦ Honor and love Jesus for taking upon himself the wrath of God that we deserve, 11.
- ♦ Follow Jesus closely, like John, and not at a distance, like Peter, 15-16.
- ♦ Beware of boasting of what we will do and suffer for Jesus, lest we fall like Peter, 17, 25-27. *See Mark 14:29, 31, 54; and 1 Corinthians 19:12.*
- ♦ Worship and obey Jesus as our King, 26-27.
- ♦ Believe and obey the truth(s) that Jesus taught and lived, 37.
- ♦ Be witnesses of the truth about Jesus, 37. *See Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ Expect the world to prefer violent revolutionaries over the suffering Christ, 40.

John 19:1–21

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ "King of the Jews," 3; *see John 1:49.*
- ♦ "They struck Him," 3; *see Isaiah 50:6.*
- ♦ "I find no fault in Him," 4; *see Isaiah 53:9; John 18:33, 38; and 1 Peter 2:22–24.*
- ♦ "We have a law," 7; *see Leviticus 24:16.*

Note: Claiming to be God's son was not necessarily blasphemous, for it could refer to the anointed king of Israel (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7; 89:26–27) or to the Messiah, as in John 1:49 (CNTUOT).

- ♦ "Jesus gave him no answer," 9; *see Isaiah 53:7; and Mark 14:61; 15:5.*
- ♦ "He went out," to die as a sacrificial lamb, 17; *see Leviticus 24:14, 23; Numbers 15:35–36; Deuteronomy 17:5; 21:19–21; 22:24; and Hebrews 13:12–13.*
- ♦ Crucified between two criminals, 18; *see Psalm 22:16; and Isaiah 53:12.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He governs the affairs of men, including the actions of those in power, 11. *See Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 2:1; and Romans 13:1.*
- ♦ He is "above," dwelling in heaven, transcendent over us and all creation, 11.

His goodness: He rules all things, even terrible miscarriages of justice, for the good of his people; this is supremely demonstrated in his sovereignty over Pilate and even the Jews, leading them to kill Jesus as a Passover lamb for us, 1.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus of Nazareth, the human son of Mary, and thus liable to trial and unjust execution, 1, 13, 16, 19.

- ♦ He is the King of the Jews, as foretold by Daniel and in the prophecies to David, 3, 14, 19–20.
- ♦ He is the true Man, even in his humiliation and suffering, 5.
- ♦ He was innocent of all crime and sin, 6.
- ♦ He is the true, unique, fully human and fully divine Son of God, 7. *See John 1:1:14, 18 (Majority Text), 34.*

His work

- ♦ He allowed himself to be scourged, mocked, falsely accused and condemned (though innocent), and crucified to save us from our sins, 1–18. *See John 1:29; 10:15.*
- ♦ He thus fulfilled his role as Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the fulfillment of the Passover lamb, 14.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Harming Jesus or his disciples, 1–21
- ♦ Mocking Jesus in any way, especially his authority, 3
- ♦ Punishing an innocent person, 6–16
- ♦ Rejecting Jesus' claim to be Son of God, 7
- ♦ For those in authority to imagine that they are acting on their own authority rather than as God's designated agents, 10
- ♦ Giving in to popular opinion, even when we know it is wrong, 10–16
- ♦ Giving ultimate allegiance to an earthly ruler rather than to God and his Christ, 15

Salvation

Its origin and agency: Salvation from God's wrath and the curse of sin comes only through the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ on the cross, 15–18. *See John 1:29; Mark 10:45; Romans 3:23–26; 5:6–11; 8:1; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:10–14; Ephesians 1:7; 5:2, 25–27; and 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Praise, thank, worship, and glorify Jesus for his infinite love in dying for us on the Cross.
- ♦ Avoid the sins mentioned above.
- ♦ Prepare to suffer unjustly as Jesus did. *See John 15:18-25; 16:2-3; 20:21*
- ♦ Worship and obey him as our King.
- ♦ Preach this good news throughout the world. *See Mark 16:15; and Luke 24:46-47.*

John 19:23–42

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “They divided My garments,” 24; *see Psalm 22:18.*
- ♦ “He said to His mother ‘Woman,’” 26; *see John 2:4.*
- ♦ “Behold your mother!” 27; *see Matthew 12:48–50; and Romans 16:13.*
- ♦ “I thirst!” 28; *see Psalm 22:15.*
- ♦ “It is finished,” 30; *see John 17:4; and Hebrews 9:26–28; 10:12–14.*
- ♦ “He gave up His spirit,” 30; *see Genesis 2:7; Matthew 27:50; Luke 8:55; 23:46; Acts 11:11; and 1 Corinthians 2:11; 7:54.*
- ♦ “That the bodies should not remain on the cross,” 31; *see Deuteronomy 21:23.*
- ♦ “Not one of His bones shall be broken,” 36; *see Psalm 34:20.*
- ♦ “They shall look on Him whom they pierced,” 37; *see Zechariah 12:10; 13:6.*
- ♦ Joseph of Arimathea, 38; *see Luke 23:50–56.*
- ♦ Nicodemus, 39; *see John 3:1–2; 7:50.*
- ♦ “Myrrh,” 39; *see Matthew 2:11.*
- ♦ “For fear of the Jews,” 38; *see John 7:13; 9:22; 12:42.*
- ♦ “Bound it in strips of linen,” 40; *see John 11:44; 20:5,7.*
- ♦ “There they laid Jesus,” 42; *see Isaiah 53:9.*

God

His greatness: He is eternal, omniscient, and sovereign; he planned long ago to send Jesus as a sacrifice for our sins, and moved the writers of the Old Testament to predict various aspects of the passion of Christ, 24, 28, 36–37.

His goodness

- ♦ He sent his Son Jesus to suffer in our place as a sin offering, 23–42.
- ♦ He revealed his will and his ways to his people Israel, including giving them the Sabbath day of rest, 31.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the human son of Mary, 23, 25–26, 28, 30, 33, 38–39, 42.

Note: Jesus was the oldest of several children, brothers and sisters.

His work

- ♦ He suffered terribly for us, taking what we deserve upon himself that we might have life, 23–42. *See John 6:31; 10:10–11, 15, 28; Romans 3:24–25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 5:2, 25–26; and 1 Peter 2:21–25; 3:18.*
- ♦ He cared for his mother even in his own extremity, 25–27.
- ♦ He did everything in order to fulfill the will of God as written in the Old Testament, 28. *See John 10:8–9.*
- ♦ He completed all that God had given him to do, 30. *See John 17:4; and Hebrews 9:28; 10:12–14.*
- ♦ He died of his own free will, at the time and in the way that he chose, 30. *See John 10:17–18.*

Sin

It includes: Hypocrisy and formal religion, like the Pharisees' punctilious observance of their conception of ritual purity while murdering their Messiah, 31; *see John 18:28.*

Salvation

Its benefits: Salvation's benefits include all that comes from the finished work of Christ on the cross, 30, including eternal life and all the other gifts of God mentioned in John's Gospel and especially in Jesus' prayer recorded in chapter 17.

Its origin and means: Salvation comes to us only through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross for us, 30, as well as his resurrection and glorification.

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ Attendance upon him, as he dwells with his disciples, in his/their suffering, 25; *see Hebrews 10:33–34.*
- ♦ Taking care of other believers, especially widows, 26–27
- ♦ Reverent devotion to Jesus, expressed in practical ways, 38–42

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Read and meditate frequently upon the sufferings of Christ for us.
- ♦ Search the Old Testament to see how many ways it points to Christ. *See Luke 24:25–27, 44–47.*
- ♦ Take care of widows and other believers in need, 26–27.
- ♦ Put all our social capital and material resources at the service of Christ and his kingdom, 38–42.
- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from our sins as the Lamb of God. *See John 1:29.*

John 20:1–31

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Appearance of the risen Jesus to Mary Magdalene, 1, 11–18; *see Mark 16:9–11.*
- ♦ “The Scripture that He must rise again from the dead,” 9; *see Psalm 16:9–11; 68:18; 110:1; Isaiah 53:10–12; Hosea 6:2; or perhaps the “Scripture” refers to the Old Testament as a whole. See also Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; Acts 2:24–32.*
- ♦ The ascension of Jesus, 17; *see Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9–11; Ephesians 1:20–23; Hebrews 1:3; and 1 Peter 3:22.*
- ♦ “Peace be with you,” 19; *as a greeting, see 1 Samuel 25:6; as a formula of coming revelation, see Judges 6:23; Daniel 10:19; (CNTUOT).*
- ♦ “As the Father sent Me, so I send you,” 21; *see other commissionings of successors: Moses to Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:1–8); and Elijah to Elisha (2 Kings 2:1–18).*
- ♦ “I send you,” 19; *see Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46–50; and Acts 1:8.*
- ♦ “Receive the Holy Spirit,” 21; *see Genesis 2:7; 1 Kings 17:21; and Ezekiel 7:9.*
- ♦ The authority to forgive sins – or, rather, to pronounce that they have been forgiven by God, 23; *see Isaiah 22:22; and Matthew 16:19.*

Its origin, nature and content

- ♦ The Scriptures include historical narratives that are meant to be taken at face value as accounts that actually happened, as are all the accounts of the resurrection appearances of Jesus.
- ♦ These accounts depend on eyewitnesses like Mary, Peter, John, the eleven apostles and, later, Paul and others. *See 1 Corinthians 15:3–8.*
- ♦ The Scriptures also contain prophecies and types that are fulfilled in the New Testament, 9.
- ♦ The Scriptures are, by definition, written documents, 30–31; this is important, for it preserves the record in a permanent form.

- ♦ The Scriptures do not exhaust the revelation of God, including all that Jesus said and did; though they are accurate and sufficient, they are not comprehensive, 30.
- ♦ The Scriptures are intended (partly) to lead people to faith in Christ, 31; *see 2 Timothy 3:15*; they are also meant to confirm our faith; *see 1 John 5:13*; and to lead us into maturity and effective ministry, *see 2 Timothy 3:15–16*.

God

His Triune nature

- ♦ God exists as an eternal and equal Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whenever Jesus mentions his Father, or “God,” he is referring to this relationship. Such references became the material for the later doctrine of the Trinity, 17, 22.
- ♦ Within this Trinity of equals, there is a kind of hierarchy of function and relationship (not essence or being); thus Jesus speaks of “My Father and your Father. My God and your God,” 17.

His greatness: He is all-powerful, and thus able to raise Jesus from the dead and give him a glorified body that was able to come and go at will and penetrate walls and locked doors, 1–29. *See Romans 6:4; and Ephesians 1:19–22*.

His goodness

- ♦ He fulfilled his promises and vindicated Jesus, guaranteeing our salvation, by raising him from the dead.
- ♦ He has given us reliable testimony of the resurrection through eyewitnesses, as recorded in Scripture.
- ♦ He sent Jesus into the world to save his people from their sins, 21. *See John 1:29; 3:16*.
- ♦ He gives the Holy Spirit, through Jesus, to those who trust in Christ, 22.
- ♦ He provides forgiveness, 23.

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is the risen Lord, 2, 13, 18, 20, 25, 28.

- ♦ He is Jesus, the human son of Mary, 2, 14–17, 19, 21, 26, 29, 31.
- ♦ He is the unique, divine Son of God the father, 17, 21, 31.
- ♦ He is God, 28. *See John 1:3.*

Note: He is not just like God the Father, but he is God; as Son, he is distinct from the Father and the Spirit, who are all equally God, as three Persons.

- ♦ He is the Christ, the Messiah promised by God who would save their people from their sins, 31.

His work

- ♦ He loved his disciples, including, perhaps especially, John, 2.
- ♦ He rose bodily from the tomb, 1–13.

Note: This body was recognizably that of Jesus, so that he could speak, hear, touch, breathe; but it was a glorified body, so that he could go through closed doors.

- ♦ He appeared to some of his followers, including Mary Magdalene and the Eleven, 14–29.
- ♦ He comforted Mary, 16.
- ♦ He (later) ascended into heaven, to the right hand of God the Father, 17. *See Mark 16:19; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20–22; and 1 Peter 3:22.*
- ♦ He gives his Holy Spirit to those who trust in him, 22. *See John 15:26; and Acts 2:33.*

*Note: Interpreters now believe that when Jesus breathed on his disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit,” this was a prophetic action, not an actual bestowal of the Spirit; it pointed to the giving of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, 22. *See John 7:39; and Acts 1:44–47; 11:15–19.**

- ♦ He announced grace and forgiveness to his disciples, who had failed him in the Garden and at Caiaphas’ palace, by greeting them with the word, “Peace,” and by his later actions toward them, 21–29.
- ♦ He sent his disciples, who represented the entire church, on a mission similar to the one on which he had been sent by the Father, 21.
- ♦ He granted to the church, represented by the apostles, the authority to declare the forgiveness of sins, 23.
- ♦ He kindly gave “doubting” Thomas another opportunity to believe in him as risen Lord, 24–28.

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ♦ He is holy, being God, 22. *See John 1:33; 7:39; 15:26; and Isaiah 6:3.*
- ♦ He is the Spirit of God and of Jesus the Son of God, who comes to us from God through Christ, 22.

His work

- ♦ Being holy, he sanctifies God's people, in two ways: First, by setting them apart from the world and consecrating them to be a holy people to God (*1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Peter 1:2*); and second, by transforming the followers of Christ into his moral likeness. *See Romans 8:13; 2 Corinthians 3:18; and Galatians 5:22.*
- ♦ Being omnipotent, he raised Jesus from the dead, and so is implicit throughout this passage. *See Romans 1:4; 8:11.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Not believing the apostolic testimony that Jesus is risen from the dead, 25
- ♦ Trusting in our senses rather than in the Word of God, 25

Note: Jesus understood Thomas and had mercy on him despite his initial unbelief.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Receiving the Holy Spirit; this is the foremost benefit of salvation, for it is nothing less than receiving God himself and having him live in us forever, 22; *see John 7:39; 14:16–17; Acts 2:38; 10:44–47; Romans 8:9, 11, 14–16; and Galatians 3:2.*

Note: This is the same event that is elsewhere called being born again by the Spirit; John 3:3, 5; being baptized with the Spirit, John 1:33; and Acts 10:45–47; 11:15–18.

Its origin and conveyance

- ♦ Salvation comes entirely from God through Jesus, 22.
- ♦ Salvation comes to those who believe, 29; 7:39. *See Galatians 3:2.*

Note: Salvation, or the gift of the Holy Spirit, does not come automatically (ex opere operato) through any human or through any religious ritual, such as baptism or confirmation, contrary Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, the original Book of Common Prayer, and other church teachings and rites.

The People of God

Their characteristics: The people of God are marked by

- ♦ Receiving the Holy Spirit in a way that transforms and gives new life, 22; see *John 3:3, 5*.
- ♦ Faith in Jesus as the risen Lord, 29–31

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God for raising Jesus from the dead for our salvation.
- ♦ Tell others about the resurrection, 18, 25.
- ♦ See ourselves as people sent on a mission like that of Jesus: to serve, to testify to the truth; to suffer; to overcome death.
- ♦ Ask Jesus to fill us with the Spirit daily, that we might serve him. See *John 6:33; and Acts 1:8*.
- ♦ Base our faith not on our feelings or on our sensory experiences, but on the Word of God, 29–31.
- ♦ Read the accounts of the resurrection of Jesus often, to be strengthened in our faith, 31.

John 21

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ “I am going fishing,” 3; *see Matthew 4:18–21.*
- ♦ “The disciples did not know that it was Jesus,” 4; *see Luke 24:16; and John 20:14.*
- ♦ A miraculous catch of fish as a result of following Jesus’ command, 6; *see Luke 5:4–7.*
- ♦ “The disciple whom Jesus loved,” that is, John, 7, 20; *see John 13:23; 20:2.*
- ♦ Jesus provides a meal for his disciples, 9–13; *see John 6:1–14.*
- ♦ “Feed My lambs,” 15, *see Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 4:6; and 1 Peter 5:2.*
- ♦ “My lambs . . . sheep . . . sheep,” 15–17; *see John 10:10–11, 14–16; Matthew 26:31; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 2:25; 5:2, 4.*
- ♦ “Do you love Me more than these?” 15–17; *see Matthew 26:33–35.*

Note: Many commentators make much of the different words for “love” in these verses but fail to note that there are also different words for “feed” and “tend,” as well as for “lambs,” “sheep,” and “flock.” John is almost certainly simply using different words to avoid repeating the same word too many times. The two words for “love,” therefore, mean the same thing.

Note: The same goes for the different words for “feed” and “sheep,” which probably do not refer to different sorts of care or different types of animals but are a repetition of the same idea.

- ♦ Jesus’ threefold question and Peter’s threefold affirmation of his love, 15–17, match Peter’s threefold denial of Christ the night he was arrested; *see Matthew 26:69–75.*
- ♦ “Follow Me,” 19; *see Matthew 4:19.*

Its origin, nature, and content

- ♦ Biblical revelation contains some passages that are hard to understand, like the mention that the net had 153 fish. Many interpreters have proposed various explanations, but none work very well. Perhaps the best thing is to take it as,

first, the record of an eyewitness, and second, an indication of just how plentiful this catch of fish was. The plenitude of fish may also point forward to the large “catch” of men– that is, believers in Christ – that Peter and the others would see after the Spirit came upon them at Pentecost. *See Matthew 4:19; and Acts 2:41.*

- ♦ Biblical revelation came to us from chosen messengers; in this case, through John, who was an eyewitness to the life of Jesus, 24. *See John 19:35.*
- ♦ This testimony is true, as certified by very early Christians, indicated by “we,” here, 24.
- ♦ Biblical revelation does not exhaust the revelation of God, especially the fullness of his self–revelation in the life, teachings, and actions of Jesus, 25. *See John 10:30.*

Christ

His person

- ♦ He is Jesus, the fully human son of Mary, 1, 4–5, 10, 12–15, 20, 21–23, 25. *See John 1:1–3; 5:18; 8:58.*
- ♦ He is the Lord, Yahweh in the flesh, fully God, 7, 12, 15–17, 20–21.
- ♦ He is the Risen Lord Jesus, with a human body that is glorified and thus was not fully or immediately recognized by his disciples, 4, 7.
- ♦ He is the Risen Lord, with full authority over all people, especially his followers, 19, 22.

His work

- ♦ He rose bodily from the tomb and showed himself to his followers on several occasions, 1, 14.
- ♦ He kept his promise to meet his disciples in Galilee, 1–20. *See Matthew 28:7; and Mark 16:7.*

Note: This promise to appear to his disciples in Galilee is not in John, but in two Synoptic Gospels, Matthew and Mark, showing how the Gospels complement and interpret each other.

- ♦ He provided food for his disciples, 5–13.
- ♦ He demonstrated divine knowledge and power by showing his disciples how to catch fish, 6.
- ♦ He served as host to his disciples, 12–13, like the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23:5.

- ♦ He graciously restored Peter after his threefold denial by enlisting him in his service as an under-shepherd and by re-issuing his initial call to follow the Lord, 15–19.
- ♦ He made preparations for the spiritual care and nurture of all his future disciples by commissioning Peter, as representative of the Twelve, to serve as their human shepherds, 15–17. *See Acts 20:28; and 1 Peter 5:1–1–4.*

Note: The word “pastor” refers to this office and function; see Ephesians 4:11.

- ♦ He predicted the manner of Peter’s death, which tradition says was by crucifixion upside down, involving stretching out his hands, as Jesus did, 18.
- ♦ He promised that he would return, 22. *See Matthew 16:27–28; 25:31; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 11:26; and Revelation 2:25; 3:11; 22:7.*
- ♦ He did so many wonderful things while on earth that they cannot be exhaustively recorded or numbered, 25.

The Holy Spirit

His work

- ♦ He emboldens and empowers people for witness to Jesus. *See John 15:26–27.* If 20:22 is taken as a symbolic action pointing towards Pentecost, that would explain why the disciples are fishing rather than engaging in preaching, since they had not yet received the Spirit.
- ♦ Furthermore, Peter had not yet been restored and personally commissioned by Jesus.

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Entangling oneself in the affairs of this life rather than following the command of Jesus to continue his mission, 3. *See John 20:21.* Many interpreters see the actions of Peter and the others as sin.
- ♦ But, if the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen upon Peter and the others, since they still had to eat, their going fishing did not constitute disobedience to Jesus. Instead, they had gone to Galilee in obedience to his promise to meet them there (see above) and were “waiting” for him to appear.

Salvation

Its benefits

- ♦ Forgiveness of sins, as Jesus' threefold restoration and commissioning of Peter demonstrate, 15–19
- ♦ Participation in the mission of Christ, especially the privilege of providing spiritual nourishment for God's people, 15–19
- ♦ The privilege of following Jesus in his suffering, 18; *see John 12:24–26; 20:21.*
- ♦ Being loved by Jesus, 20; *see John 15:9.*
- ♦ The assurance that our lives are entirely in the loving and sovereign hands of Jesus, 22–23

The People of God

Their identity and characteristics

- ♦ The people of God are the flock, or sheep, of Jesus the Good Shepherd, 15–17.
Note: Peter was personally commissioned by Jesus, but he later called himself a "fellow elder," 1 Peter 5:1. There is no biblical warrant for any human, including the Roman Pope, to arrogate to himself ruling authority over other Christians, including other elders (bishops, pastors). For one thing, no Pope is Peter; for another, the popes are not successors to Peter.
- ♦ Their spiritual needs are to be cared for by pastors and teachers who feed them with the Word of God, 15–17. *See Acts 28:26; Ephesians 4:11–12; and 1 Peter 5:2.*
- ♦ The people of God are marked by suffering for the sake of Christ, 18.
- ♦ Every Christian has a unique calling and destiny; what Christ ordains for one will be different from what he ordains for others, 21–22.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Look to Jesus to provide all our material needs, 5–13.
- ♦ Love Jesus more than anything or anyone else, 15.
- ♦ Do all we can to build up the Body of Christ, 15–17. *See Ephesians 4:11–16; and 1 Peter 4:9–11.*
- ♦ Prepare to suffer as followers of Christ, 18–19.

- ♦ Beware of comparing ourselves or God's dealings in our lives with the way he deals with others, 21–22.
- ♦ Eagerly await the return of Christ, 22. *See 1 Thessalonians 1:10.*
- ♦ Thank God for giving true and reliable accounts in Scripture of the life, ministry, death, resurrection, and promised return of Christ, 24–25.

ACTS *(currently unavailable)*