

- A. One of the best reasons for confession teaching and preaching is that it prevents a Pastor from “Riding a hobby horse” or having too much emphasis on one particular teaching or doctrine.
1. This is also a good reason why we should have preaching through entire books of the Bible.
  2. Some preachers do have an ability to pull certain doctrines out of a text that are not there.
- B. Confession teaching and preaching also forces the minister to teach on matter that may be beyond his comfort zone. This forces a congregation to do the same. It forces us to move beyond the milk of the Word to eat some meat that requires much more chewing and digestion time.

Sec 1. “All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by His Spirit, & by faith, have fellowship with Him in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, & glory:”

A. G.I. Williamson (GIW) described how true believers are united to Christ in various ways:<sup>1</sup>

1. Representative union – **Rom 5:19 “For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”**
2. Vital union
  - a. → **Jn 15:1-10**
  - b. → **Eph 2:4-6**
  - c. GIW wrote “Christ and his believing people have one life, and share together suffering, death, resurrection, and glory.”<sup>2</sup>
3. Spiritual union → **Eph 3:14-19**

B. These three divisions help us to make more sense of the language of Scripture; however, there could be overlap in the areas, especially in the areas of vital and spiritual union.

Because we are united to Christ by faith, sec 1 goes on to say; “...being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts & graces, & are obliged to the performance of such duties, public & private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward & outward man.”

A. → **Eph 4:7-16**

B. As those united to Christ and to one another, one member of the united body cannot say to the other: **“I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary” (1 Cor 12:21-22).**

1. A fractured toe can cause one’s entire gait [walking pattern] to be very awkward.
2. If someone is interested, I have some books on ministering to those with disabilities. The OPC has a recent episode of “The Reformed Deacon” called “Disabilities and the church.”
  - a. Perhaps some may think it is too much trouble to have a person who regularly visits this church with the need of a wheelchair.
  - b. A person who is wheelchair bound yet can independently transfer themselves from place to place is moderately disabled as far as the spectrum goes.
  - c. If I ever get wheelchair bound, I still want to come to church. So should you!

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<sup>1</sup> Williamson, G.I. the Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. p. 255

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

3. A hurting member of a church that suffers alone and without communicating his or hurt to others in the church can be likened to leprosy. According to the CDC: "The digits do not 'fall off' due to leprosy. The bacteria that causes leprosy attacks the nerves of the fingers and toes and causes them to become numb. Burns and cuts on numb parts may go unnoticed, which may lead to infection and permanent damage, and eventually the body may reabsorb the digit. This happens in advanced stages of untreated disease."

Sec 2. "Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship & communion in the worship of God, & in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities & necessities. Which communion, as God offered opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus."

A. **Heb 10:24-25: "let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."**

B. We prayerfully need to find ways we can encourage and stimulate one another to love and good deeds. The gifts of many in our churches are often underutilized.