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## GLOSSARY - “WORDS TO KNOW”

**Actual Sin:** Sinful thoughts, words, and actions that flow out of our sinful nature and into our lives.

**Atonement:** The act of two separated parties being connected (“at one”-ment)

**Baptism:** The sacrament which consists of applying water to a person in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Through baptism the Holy Spirit works to create/strengthen faith in the heart of the person. Note that baptism is not limited to any age group, nor is the application of water limited to pouring, sprinkling, or immersing.

**Church Fellowship:** The Bible’s teaching that Christians need to both seek unity with those who confess all the truths of Scripture, and also avoid supporting false teaching/false teachers at any cost.

**Close Communion:** The practice of limiting participation at the Lord’s Supper to those who have been instructed from God’s Word and have confessed agreement with our church’s teachings. This both prevents accidental spiritual harm (1 Corinthians 11:27-29) and also ensures that all who are partaking are one in their confession of faith (1 Corinthians 10:17)

**Communion:** The sacrament which consists of eating bread and wine in accordance with the command of Jesus. Through this sacrament Jesus assures us that we are also receiving his **real body and blood**, through which he gives us forgiveness of sins, assurance of salvation, and power to live a new life.

**Faith:** Knowing in the heart/trusting/believing that God sent Jesus to be my Savior. Faith is a gift of God the Holy Spirit, given through the message of the Gospel.

**God the Father:** First member of the “trinity,” often described as the creator and preserver of our world

**God the Son:** Second person of the “trinity,” also known as **Jesus Christ**, who came into our world by taking on human flesh, lived a perfect life, died, and rose from the dead in order to save all who believe.

**God the Holy Spirit:** Third person of the “trinity,” who is often called “the shy member of the trinity” because his work takes place “behind the scenes,” in human hearts. The Bible identifies the work of the Holy Spirit as creating and strengthening faith through the Means of Grace, and helping us to live out that faith in our Christian lives.

**Good Works:** God-pleasing attitudes and actions that flow from a believer’s heart. Our good works play no role in saving us, but are simply motivated by thankfulness for the salvation we have in Jesus Christ.

**Gospel:** From the Greek word for *good news*. The good news is that God has saved us through Jesus’ death on the cross.

**Grace:** God’s undeserved love for sinners

**Judgment Day:** The day, unknown to everyone except God the Father, on which Christ will return again to judge the world. The bodies of all mankind will rise from the grave. Bodies of unbelievers will go with their souls to eternal suffering in hell, while bodies of believers will go with their souls to everlasting happiness in heaven (John 5:29)

**Justified:** “Declared not guilty” - a courtroom term describing the verdict we have been given because of Jesus’ perfect life and death in our place. Justification is a powerful, one-time declaration of God which declares that nothing further must be done in order for those who believe to enter eternal life.

**Law:** God’s will for how we ought to live, how we fall short of God’s will, and how God responds to us falling short of his will. Summarized in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20), the Two Commands (Matthew 22:35-40), and the Law of Love (Romans 13:10).

**Law and Gospel:** The two major teachings in the bible. Both are found in the Old Testament, and both are found in the New Testament. See independent definitions for *law* and *gospel*.

**Lord’s Supper:** See *Communion*

**Means of Grace:** The Gospel in Word and Sacrament. These are the means through which the Holy Spirit creates and strengthens faith in our hearts.

**Natural Knowledge of God:** How God reveals himself to all people throughout all time. There are two types of natural revelation: knowledge of God from the created world, and knowledge of God from conscience. Note that natural knowledge of God is *limited*: all it can tell us is that there must be a powerful and ethical God somewhere out there, a god who hates evil and wants us to do good.

**New Testament:** The last 27 books of the Bible (Matthew - Revelation) which tell the history of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, and their impact on all who believe.

**Old Testament:** The first 39 books of the Bible (Genesis - Malachi) which trace the history of God’s people and God’s repeated promises of a Savior.

**Original sin:** The natural capacity and desire for sin that all human beings are born with. Also called the “sinful nature.”

**Real Presence:** The Bible’s teaching that 4 elements are eaten during Communion: bread & wine, and the body & blood of Christ.

**Representation:** The Reformed teaching that only bread and wine are eaten during Communion - they believe that the bread and wine only “represent” the body and blood of Christ.

**Revealed knowledge of God:** What God tells us about himself through the Bible alone. Only through the Bible do we learn the details of how this world was created, why there’s sin and evil in the world, and particularly, the *good news that God sent Jesus to die for us and overcome sin and evil*.

**Righteousness:** Holiness, perfectness, a state of moral perfection. Sinful human beings do not have righteousness of our own, but we receive righteousness through faith in Christ.

**Sacrament:** A sacred act, instituted by Christ, by which God promises to give forgiveness of sins, new life, and salvation.

**Sanctified:** “Set apart to be holy” - describes the way the Holy Spirit continues to work in our heart to promote thankful good deeds in our lives. Sanctification is an ongoing process that is never “finished” until we reach heaven.

**Sinful Nature:** The natural capacity and desire for sin that all human beings are born with. Also called “original sin.”

**Transubstantiation:** The Catholic teaching that the priest sacrifices Christ all over again during Communion, by permanently changing the bread and wine into only body and blood.

**Trinity:** The deep biblical truth that God is “3-in-1,” that is, three distinct persons and yet only one God. The three persons are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Vocations:** The various roles in which we find ourselves in life (husband/wife, father/mother, student/teacher, employer/employee, etc.) Each role serves as a “calling” in which we can thankfully serve God and others.