

Second London Baptist Confession Chapter 27: The Communion of the Saints

I. Its Redemptive Foundation: Union with Christ (Par. 1a)

-Believers are one with Christ: in the plan of God (Eph. 1:4); before the law (2 Cor. 5:21); in the life of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12, 13)

-Realization: Par. 1: *“All saints are united to Jesus Christ their head by His Spirit and by faith...”* (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:20)

-Qualification: Par. 1: *“...although this does not make them one person with Him.”*

-Scope: Par. 1: *“They have fellowship in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory.”* (Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:3, 4)

II. Its General Definition (Par. 1b)

-Bonds: *“They have fellowship in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory.”* (John 13:35; 1 John 3:14; 5:1)

-Benefits: Par. 1: *“...they have communion in each other’s gifts and graces...”* (Rom. 14:7, 8; 1 Pet. 4:10)

-Obligations: Par. 1: *“They are obligated to carry out these duties, both public and private, in an orderly way to promote their mutual good, both in the inner and outer aspects of their lives.”* (Rom. 12:10-13; Gal. 6:10; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14; 1 John 3:17, 18)

III. Its Specific Expressions (Par. 2a)

-Identity: Par. 2: *“Saints by profession are obligated to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in worshipping God and in performing other spiritual services that promote their mutual edification. They are to aid each other in material things according to their various abilities and needs.”* (Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2; Heb. 10:24, 25; 1 Pet. 3:8)

-Recipients: Par. 2: *“They should especially exercise communion in the relationships they have in their families and churches. Yet the rule of the gospel also directs them, as God provides opportunity, to extend their sharing to the whole household of faith, to all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.”* (Acts 11:27-30; 2 Cor. 8:1-4; 1 Tim. 5:8)

IV. Its Necessary Limitation (Par. 2b)

Par. 2: *“Nevertheless, their communion with one another as saints does not take away or infringe on the title or individual ownership that people have in their goods and possessions.”* (Ex. 20:15; Eph. 4:28).

What about the communion of goods practiced in Acts 2:44?

-There is no command in the Bible to hold all things in common.

-There is evidence that this communion was voluntary, not compulsory (Acts 4:32).

-There is evidence that the right of private property was recognized by the apostles (Acts 5:4; 6:1f; 12:12).