

CHAPTER 1 COVENANT OF GRACE

I. Definition of the covenant of grace

A. The “covenant of redemption”

Defined in WC 7:3-4, LC 30-32, SC 20

Parties: God the Father and God the Son (the Son representing the elect)

Conditions: perfect active and passive obedience on the part of the Son

Reward : an eternal kingdom and a people for his name

In this classical definition, the covenant of grace is a mutual purposing within the Godhead itself, prior to the creation. Sometimes Reformed writers refer to this particular covenant as the covenant of redemption, to distinguish it from the subsidiary form of the covenant (see below). With the covenant of redemption, the benefits Christians receive are seen as part of a larger plan.

B. The subsidiary “covenant of grace”

When Reformed writers refer to the above covenant as the covenant of redemption, they often will then refer to a covenant of grace which exists between God and the sinner as follows:

Parties: God and the sinner

Condition: faith

Reward: salvation and eternal life

This definition of the covenant of grace seems intended in WC 7:3. However, normally, Reformed theology sees this covenant of the gospel as a part and a corollary of the eternal covenant of grace (covenant of redemption), as in WC 8:1, 5, and LC 31-32.

II. Biblical defense of the covenant of grace (redemption)

While the covenant of grace is not named as such in Scripture, its essential features are clearly taught.

- A. The elect were chosen to salvation before the world was created, Eph. 1:4.
- B. The elect were chosen to salvation in Christ, Eph. 1:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11.
- C. Christ’s death for the salvation of the elect thus was determined before the foundation of the world, which is also stated in the Scripture, 1 Pet. 1:19-20, Rev. 13:8 (Gk. KJV, NIV, NASB margin; not as in ASV, RSV, NASB, NIV margin – a translation difference.)
- D. Christ’s humiliation, obedience, sufferings, and sacrifice were knowingly undertaken in response to his Father’s will, John 10:11-18; 17:4, 8, 18, 23, 25.
This submission involved a difficult decision for his human nature, as seen in the Garden of Gethsemane, and earlier, in Lk. 12:50 and John 12:27.
- E. In obeying this command of the Father, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the suffering

- of the Messiah, esp. Isa. 53 and NT quotations; Zech. 12:10 (Rev. 1:7).
- F. As the Messiah was to receive an eternal kingdom, so Jesus expected to receive it, Lk. 22:29-30.
 - G. As a part of this kingdom, Jesus Christ would receive as his own an elect seed, to be saved and glorified, and to be with him forever, Isa. 53:10-11; Jn. 17:2, 9, 11, 24; Eph. 5:25-27.

III. Covenant theology

This theological system considers the covenant of works and the covenant of grace to be basic to biblical theology. It seeks to subsume the various biblical covenants and dispensations under these larger concepts. It finds justification for this procedure in the similarity of content found in the promised blessings of the biblical covenants.

“Covenant theology” often is used to designate those who believe that the NT church continues to be under the Abrahamic covenant, thus establishing infant baptism.

Normally, however, the term is used as an alternative to dispensational theology, since covenant theology emphasizes the unity of the various dispensations, over against their distinctions.

IV. Relation of the covenant of grace to the biblical covenants

- A. A general rule: any biblical covenant which would lead to the fulfillment of the messianic kingdom must be a further enactment of the covenant of grace.
- B. Biblical covenants are often associated with various dispensations. Cf. Ryrie’s definition of dispensation, “a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God’s purpose” (*Dispensationalism Today*, 29).
The Westminster Confession distinguishes two dispensations, “the Old Testament and the New Testament,” or “the time of law” and “the time of the gospel.” It goes on to emphasize their unity under the covenant of grace. “There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations” (WC 7:5-6).
- C. The basic biblical covenants which clearly lead to the kingdom, and which are thus outworkings of the covenant of grace, are the following:
 - 1. The Abrahamic covenant, Gen. 12, 13, 15, 17, 22.
 - a. Continued with Isaac, Gen. 26
 - b. Continued with Jacob, Gen. 28
 - 2. The Mosaic covenant, Exodus-Deut.
 - e. g. Lev. 26; the whole book of Deuteronomy
 - 3. The Davidic covenant, 2 Sam. 7 = 1 Ch. 17; Ps. 89.
 - 4. The new covenant, Jer. 31; Ez. 36; Lord’s Supper institution (Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; “new” not in the Greek of Mt. 26:28 = Mk. 14:24); Heb 8.
- D. Suggested list of dispensations
 - 1. Adam (after the fall) to Abraham.
 - 2. Abraham to Moses
 - 3. Moses to Christ
 - a. Moses to the captivity
 - b. The captivity to Christ
 - 4. Christ to the second coming

5. The eternal kingdom

a. Millennium

b. Future ages

This scheme is basically the same as the suggested by Charles Hodge, who distinguishes four dispensations before the second coming (II, 373-77). All of these dispensations are included under the covenant of grace.

V. Modern Dispensationalism

Cf. Ryrie, 44-46, who distinguishes three points of difference between dispensational and covenant theology: “What, then, is the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism? The answer is threefold.

“(1) A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the Church distinct.... Chafer summarized it as follows: ‘The dispensationalist believes that throughout the ages God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to the earth with earthly people and earthly objectives involved which is Judaism; while the other is related to heaven with heavenly people and heavenly objectives involved, which is Christianity....’

“This is probably the most basic theological test of whether or not a man is a dispensationalist, and it is undoubtedly the most practical and conclusive. A man who fails to distinguish Israel and the Church will inevitably not hold to dispensational distinctions; and one who does, will.

“(2) This distinction between Israel and the Church is born out of a system of hermeneutics which is usually called literal interpretation. Therefore, the second aspect of the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism is the matter of plain hermeneutics....

“(3) A third aspect of the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism is a rather technical matter.... It concerns the underlying purpose of God in the world. The covenant theologian in practice makes this purpose salvation, and the dispensationalist says the purpose is broader than that, namely, the glory of God.”

Covenant theologians could well dispute Ryrie’s third point, and premillennial covenant theologians would also dispute his second point. But the first point, the absolute distinction between Israel and the church, does indeed exclude covenant theology; and this is the point Ryrie stresses.

CHAPTER 2 PERSON AND OFFICES OF CHRIST

B. B. Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ*, chpts. 4, 10-13

The existence of the Second Person of the Godhead, the eternal Son of God, is assumed. Likewise, the full deity of Jesus Christ is assumed as proved from Scripture. In this section we will study those characteristics and acts of Jesus Christ which contribute specifically to our salvation – i.e., the outworking of the covenant of grace.

I. Christ's place in the covenant of grace: Mediator

- A. The concept of “mediator” is found in Job 9:33. Job desired such a one. The Hebrew term is *mokiach*, the Hiphil participle of *yakach*, and is translated in the LXX as *mesites*. The Hebrew word is translated “referee, judge”; the ASV uses “umpire,” and the NIV “someone to arbitrate.”
- B. In the NT Christ is given the title *mesites* (“mediator”) between God and man in 1 Tim. 2:5. The term *mesites* was a Hellenistic technical term. According to Moulton and Milligan, p. 399, it carries these meanings:
1. “arbiter” in legal transactions
 2. “surety” for debt in business transactions
 3. “intermediary”
 4. “trustee”

A. Oepke in *TDNT IV*, 598-624, carefully analyzes this term. At the end of his article he states:

“if the infrequent occurrence of the term in the NT is surprising, even more so is its almost complete absence from the earliest Christian writings.... It did not for a while become a central concept in dogmatics. Other designations for Christ, e.g., Lord, or Son of God and Savior comprised in the fish symbol, were at first much more influential. Perhaps the mediator concept suffered from its strong secular and Jewish associations. In Roman Catholicism the Church and its agents largely took over the mediatorial function. In contrast, Reformation theology looked to the one Mediator, Christ.”

C. Other NT references emphasize Christ as mediator:

1. Intermediary – Moses in Gal. 3:19-20
“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.”
2. Dispenser – Christ dispensing the new covenant
Heb. 8:6, “But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.”
Heb. 9:15, “And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”
Heb. 12:24, “And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

- D. This central position Christ occupies in the covenant of grace is well expressed by the term *mesites*; and therefore, the Westminster Confession, ch. 8, entitles this chapter, which is concerned with the person and work of Christ, “Of Christ the Mediator.”

II. Why Christ is the mediator

This question must involve some speculation, but certain basic points are clear from the biblical doctrine of the atonement. This question was the essence of Anselm’s famous little book *Cur Deus Homo?*

A. The mediator must be a man

WLC 39 Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be man?

A. It was requisite that the Mediator should be man, that he might advance our nature, perform obedience to the law, suffer and make intercession for us in our nature, have a fellow-feeling of our infirmities; that we might receive the adoption of sons, and have comfort and access with boldness unto the throne of grace.

In God’s justice, the punishment must be inflicted on those who commit the crime – at least, on the same order of creation. Likewise, in order for us to receive Christ’s righteousness, his righteousness must be within the same sphere and order as ours, i.e., human righteousness. Also, no one but a human can suffer as we do – such sufferings resulting from and due for our sins.

B. The mediator must be God

WLC 38 Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God?

A. It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death; give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience, and intercession, and to satisfy God’s justice, procure his favour, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation.

WLC 40 Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God and man in one person?

A. It was requisite that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this in one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us, as the works of the whole person.

The following purposes would require the mediator to be God himself:

- a. That God may receive all the glory for our salvation
- b. That God may reserve the supreme sacrifice to himself
- c. That Adam’s race may be saved – no other order of being could become man, and still be born in Adam’s race
- d. That God’s justice would be satisfied – no one else could bear infinite punishment in limited time

III. Definition of Christ as the God-man

A. Primary elements

WCF 8.2 The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

1. Two distinct and complete natures: the full divine nature and the full human nature.
2. One inseparable person
Strong, "In brief, to use the antiquated dictum, orthodox doctrine forbids us either to divide the person or to confound the natures" (673).

B. Some "heretical" schemes

For helpful information: the standard theologies; Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* III, ch. 9, parts I and III; helpful clarification of heresies in A. A. Hodge *Outlines*, 386-89.

A. A. Hodge divides these heresies into three groups as follows:

Deny full deity	Deny full humanity	Deny unity of person
Ebionites	Gnostics	Nestorians (against <u>theotokos</u>)
Arians	Docetists	
Modernists	Apollinarians	
	Eutychians (Monophysites)	
	Monothelites	

IV. Biblical support for the two natures of Christ

A. Full deity of Christ

This area has been covered already in another theology course. For added information see B. B. Warfield, *The Lord of Glory*; also his "The Deity of Jesus Christ," in *The Fundamentals* I, 21-28, also in *Selected Shorter Writings* I, 151-57, *the Person and Work of Christ*, chs. 2-3.

B. Full humanity of Christ

The importance of Christ's humanity is seen in 1John 4:2.

At this point we will follow major points of the outline in Strong's theology.

1. Jesus is expressly called a man

Jn. 8:40, "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham."

1 Cor. 15:21, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

1 Tim. 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Genealogy in Lk. 3 – traces his ancestry to Adam.

He was “flesh” – Jn. 1:14, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

2. Jesus possesses elements essential to humanity: body and soul

a. Body

Lk. 24:39, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

Heb. 2:14, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part (perfect tense) of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

b. Soul

Jn. 11:33, “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.”

3. Jesus experienced normal human needs and emotions

a. Needs

Mt. 4:2, “And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.”

Jn. 19:28, “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.”

Jn. 4:6, “Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.”

b. Emotions

Mk. 10:21, “Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.”

Mt. 9:36, “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.”

Mk. 3:5, “And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.”

Heb. 5:7, “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.”

Cf. Warfield, “The Emotional Life of Our Lord,” in *Person and Works of Christ*, ch. 4.

4. Jesus experienced bodily, mental, and spiritual development.

a. Bodily – born as a baby

Lk. 2:40, “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.”

Lk. 2:52, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

b. Mental

Lk. 2:46, “And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.”

Mk. 6:3, “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.”

c. Spiritual

Heb. 2:10, 18 “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of

their salvation perfect through sufferings. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

5. Jesus suffered and died

Jn.19:30, “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

1 Cor. 15:3, “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”

V. Biblical support for the one person of Christ

A. Jesus Christ always is referred to as a single person, with singular pronouns (I, you, he) and singular verbs.

B. This unity is so complete that the Scriptures sometimes attribute the properties of one nature to the name normally designating the other nature

Jn. 1:18 (Gk.), “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”

Jn. 3:13, “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”

Acts 20:28 (Gk.), “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

WCF 8.7 Christ, in the work of mediation, acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself: yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.

C. The full sacrifice for atonement requires the joining of both natures in one person – the object of judgment and the victor over death

WLC 40 Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God and man in one person?

A. It was requisite that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this in one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us, as the works of the whole person.

VI. Christ’s estate

Although Christ as the Son of God is immutable in his attributes, as he has taken to himself a human nature he has changed in time.

A. Christ’s estate before his incarnation

1. God the Son shared in glory and love with other persons of the Godhead.

Jn. 17:5, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

Jn. 17:24, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

2. God the Son is the eternal expression and image of the Godhead.

Col. 1:15, “15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”

Heb. 1:3, “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

3. God the Son was the agent of creation.

Jn.1:10-11, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

Col. 1:15-17, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

Heb. 1:2, "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. (Gk. Ages)"

4. God the Son was the agent of appearance and communication with man throughout the OT period ("theophany" –John 1:18))

Called Jehovah, Gen. 3:8; 18:1ff

Called the angel of Yahweh, Gen. 16:7

Called the prince of Yahweh's host, Josh 5:14

B. Christ's estate of humiliation

Christ's voluntary humiliation was a part of his active and passive obedience to the will of the Father. The classic passage in the NT for Christ's humiliation and subsequent exaltation is Php. 2:5-11.

WSC 27 Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Here we will follow the outline of WSC 27.

1. Becoming a man

Being limited to a physical body

2 Jn. 7, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

Having his mind and emotion tied to his body

Lk. 22:44, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

Depending on knowledge

Lk. 22:64, "And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?"

Being required to learn in order to know

Lk. 2:51-52, "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

Limited to one place at a time

Lk. 13:31-33, "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Cf. Jn. 11:17, 21

Limited to one sex

Lk. 2:7, “And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Limited to one nationality and family

Jn. 4:9, “Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”

Mt. 13:55, “Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?”

Limited to one social status

Lk. 2:24, “And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

Lev. 12:8, “And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

Experiencing indignities of babyhood and childhood

Lk. 2:6-7, “And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”

2. Being born in a low condition (WLC 47)

Poor family (see above, Lk. 2:24)

Captive nation

3. Submitting to obey the law (WLC 48)

Biblical law

Mt. 5:17, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Gal. 4:4, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”

John's baptism

Mt. 3:15, “And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.”

Taxes

Mt. 17:24-27, “And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.”

4. Experiencing miseries of this life (WLC 48)

Those normal to humans: sickness, worry, injustice, temptation, etc.

Being poor.

Being disrespected

Mk. 3:21, “And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.”

Being rejected by his people

5. Experiencing the wrath of God and the death of the cross (WLC 49)

a. Physical sufferings

Terrible scourging, Mt. 27:26 (Isa. 53:5)

Crown of thorns, Mt. 27:29

Beard pulled out, back smitten, spitting, Mt. 27:30; Isa. 50:6.

Beatings with rods and fists, Mt. 27:30; Lk. 22:64 (Gk.).

Agonizing crucifixion, Jn. 19:18; cf. 20:25; Ps. 22:14-18 (see following note on crucifixion).

Death, “the last enemy”

b. Spiritual sufferings

Rejection by his people

Dread of anticipation

Jn. 12:27, “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” See also Lk. 12:50; Mt. 26:37-38.

Pollution and guilt of sin

2 Cor. 5:21, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Estrangement from the Father

Mt. 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Wrath and judgment of God

Isa. 53:4, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted”

6. Being buried (LC 50)

Jesus’ body was buried (I Cor. 15:4) and continued under the power of death for a time.

This concept is the original meaning of the phrase in the Apostles’ Creed, “he descended into hell.” See C. Hodge II, 616-25.

SPECIAL NOTE ON CRUCIFIXION

There were three types of crosses used in Roman times: “St. Anthony’s cross,” shaped like a T; “St. Andrew’s cross,” shaped like an X; and the traditional Latin cross, *crux imissa*, with four arms. According to Mt. 27:37, the superscription was above the head of Jesus, suggesting that the traditional Latin cross was used for Jesus. Usually the upright beam was already sunken in the ground. The victim carried the crossbeam to the site of execution. His forearms were nailed to the beam on the ground; then that beam was pulled up by ropes and fastened to the upright. Often a peg was stuck in the upright for the victim to straddle, thus prolonging the torture.

Recently excavations around the Jerusalem temple have uncovered the remains of a first century Jew who was crucified. This is the first such discovery. In his case a single spike passed through the ankles, with feet held together, and a wooden plaque prevented the feet from coming off the nail. For details, see Benjamin Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord*, 228-29; also IDB, Supp. Vol., 199-200.

IDB, I 747: “The cruelty of this form of capital punishment lay in the public shame that was involved and in its slow physical torture.

“a. The Public Shame. Partly as a warning to other potential offenders, the condemned man was made to carry his cross, or the transverse part, along the public roads and to the execution ground, which itself was nearly always in a public place. There he was stripped of all his clothing. Affixed to the cross, he could not care for his bodily needs, and was the object of taunts and indignities from passers-by.”

“b. The Torture. Crucifixion damaged no vital part of the body. The victim, set astride a peg in the upright beam, was fastened to the cross by nails through the hands or wrists, and through the feet or above the heels. Ropes bound the shoulders or torso to the wooden frame. He was thus held immobile, unable to cope with heat or cold or insects. Death came slowly—often after many days—as the result of fatigue, cramped muscles, hunger, or thirst.”

New Bible Dictionary, 282: “Death by this method was usually quite protracted, ... The pain was obviously intense, as the whole body was strained, while the hands and feet, which are a mass of nerves and tendons, would lose little blood. After a while, the arteries of head and stomach would be surcharged with blood, causing a throbbing headache, and eventually traumatic fever and tetanus would set in. When for any reason it was proposed to put the sufferer out of his misery before the end, as if to compensate for the abbreviated suffering, the legs were shattered with blows from a club or hammer and the coup de grace was dealt with a sword or lance, usually in the side.”

See also Hans-Ruedi Weber, *The Cross, Tradition and Interpretation*, and esp. Leon Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament*. An understanding of all the horrors of the cross helps us to love more our Lord Jesus, and appreciate its significance. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:17-18; Gal. 5:11; 6:12-14; Col 1:19-20; Php. 2:8; Heb. 12:2.

C. Christ's estate of exaltation

First Phase: preparation for the kingdom

1) Bodily resurrection of Jesus (LC 52)

The risen Jesus emphasized the bodily nature of his resurrection, Lk. 24:36-43.

His body is now glorious, as ours shall be. The various theories concerning Jesus' resurrection advanced by critics are considered in other sources (NT Introduction, Christ and the Gospels).

2) Jesus' ascension into heaven (LC 53-55)

Jesus' glory in his ascension is emphasized in Eph. 1-2. In heaven he is now:

–interceding for the church

–governing the church

–dispensing the gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 4:8; Ps. 68:18)

–preparing to establish his kingdom on earth

Second Phase: the Messianic kingdom

1) Bodily return to the earth (LC 56)

2) Millennial kingdom

3) Continuing eternal kingdom

VII. Christ's offices

A. Christ's offices or functions in the covenant of grace are defined as prophet, priest, and king (LC 42, SC 23). The duties of these three offices, taken together, include all that Christ has done and will do as our Mediator.

- B. These three offices are explicitly predicted of the Messiah:
 1. Prophet—Dt. 18:15, 18-19
 2. Priest—Ps. 110:4
 3. King—Isa. 9:6-7

- C. While Jesus Christ always performs certain duties related to each office, at particular times the duties of one or another office predominate.
 1. Prophet, LC 43, SC 24
 - a. earthly teaching ministry
 - b. superintending writing of Scripture
 - c. enlightening minds of the elect
 2. Priest, WC 8:5, LC 44, SC 25
 - a. offering himself on Calvary
 - b. appearing to God with his blood
 - c. interceding for us
 3. King, LC 45, SC 26
 - a. directing the lives of the elect (applying salvation, distributing gifts, etc.)
 - b. governing the church
 - c. ruling in the Messianic (mediatorial) kingdom

VIII. The Messianic kingdom

- A. The Messianic or mediatorial kingdom promised to Christ should be kept distinct from God's general sovereignty over the universe, which can thus also be called God's kingdom (sometimes his universal kingdom), as in Dan. 4:34-35.

- B. Most early Reformed systems, including the Westminster standards (cf. WC 25:2) followed the tradition from Augustine and the medieval church and limited this kingdom to the church age. Some added "the kingdom of glory" as the eternal state.

- C. Increased study in the areas of eschatology and NT theology and backgrounds during the last two centuries in both the conservative and the critical camps has confirmed the importance of eschatology in the theology of Jesus and the apostles. With a few exceptions (e.g. C.H. Dodd), scholars recognize the importance in the NT of the future kingdom, brought about by the return of the Messiah to earth, and accompanied by the resurrection of the dead.

- D. Premillennialists (and many amillennialists) place many kingdom passages therefore in the future earthly kingdom of Christ. Most admit that such is the most natural understanding of the covenants and prophecies, and such is the way the Jews of NT times understood them.

- E. Descriptive terms. The following terms have been used to describe the Messianic kingdom:
 - future (after the resurrection)
 - physical (not "carnal")
 - spiritual (not mystical)
 - Jewish (with Gentiles grafted in)
 - forceful (Christ to rule "with a rod of iron")
 - everlasting (not just 1000 years)

- F. These works approach the view of this course concerning the biblical theology of the Messianic kingdom:
- E.R. Craven, "Excursus on the Basileia," in John Peter Lange, *Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, 93-100; George N.H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom of Our Lord Jesus, the Christ*, 3 vols. (Vol. I most helpful); Alva J. McClain, *the Greatness of the Kingdom* (dispensational, but moderate; well organized presentation of biblical theology on this subject).

CHAPTER 3 FOREKNOWLEDGE AND ELECTION

WC 3:3-8, LC 13

WCF 3.3-8, “By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto; and all to the praise of His glorious grace. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ; are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men, attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation, to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.

WLC 13 What hath God especially decreed concerning angels and men?

A. God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory; and in Christ hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof: and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favour as he pleaseth hath passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonour and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.

I. Definition of Election

God’s sovereign choosing of those who would become the recipients of the blessings obtained through the covenant of grace—i.e., through the redemption purchased by Christ.

II. Biblical terms used for election

The Bible teaches that God made such a selection, and uses various terms to describe it; for example:

bachar, “choose”

Dt. 4:37, “And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt.”

Dt. 7:6-7, “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people.”

haireo, “take, choose”

II Thess. 2:13, “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

eklegomai, “elect, choose”; *ekloge*, “election, choosing”; and *eklektos*, “elected, chosen”

Eph. 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

I Thess. 1:4, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

I Pet. 1:1-2, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

tasso, "appoint, ordain"

Acts 13:48, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

proginosko, "foreknown"; and prognosis, "foreknowledge"

Rom. 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Rom. 11:2, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew."

I Pet 1:1-2, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

proorizo, "foreordained, predestinate"

Rom. 8:29-30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Eph. 1:5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Eph. 1:11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

protithemi, "to purpose"

Eph. 1:9, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself."

proetoimazo, "prepare beforehand"

Rom 9:23, "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

Eph. 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

III. Objects of God's election

While the main emphasis of this chapter is on election of sinners to salvation, the term can be more general.

A. Christ

I Pet. 1:20, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

I Pet. 2:6, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

B. Angels

I Tim. 5:21, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."

C. Israel

Isa. 45:4, "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."

D. Individuals for a task

Acts 9:15, "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

E. Believers

Eph. 1:4-5, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

IV. Defense of the doctrine of election

A. This doctrine is implied by passages which refer to God's people before their salvation:

Mt. 1:21

Jn. 17:2

Acts 18:10

B. Election is a necessary consequence of the doctrine of divine sovereignty.

Eph. 1:11,

–cf. the argument concerning king Cyrus in Isa. 44-45; Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God*, links these concepts well.

C. The doctrine of election is necessary to explain salvation, assuming that man in his sinful condition is totally depraved—i.e., totally unable of himself to come to salvation.

D. Election is abundantly illustrated by biblical history; cf. esp. Rom. 9:6-24.

E. The commands and illustrations of prayer for the unsaved found in Scripture and in Christian practice imply an underlying belief in divine election.

V. The criteria of election

A. Not the will of man

John 1:13

Rom. 9:16

B. Not the works of man

Rom. 9:11,16

Rom 11:5-6

II Tim. 1:9

C. But God's own grace and sovereign pleasure

Eph. 1:5,11

Eph. 2:7

II Tim. 1:9

VI. The relation of election to foreknowledge

Arminian and Calvinistic views contrasted:

The Arminian view of this doctrine is "conditional election," i.e., God does indeed elect the saved ones, but he does so on the basis of what he foresees: if they will believe, then he elects them; if they will reject the gospel message, then he does not elect them. Thus God's election is conditioned by his foreknowledge, which is merely cognitive. Cf. the statements from the Lutheran and Remonstrant positions reproduced in A.A. Hodge *Outlines*, 234-36.

Verses commonly used by Arminians in this regard are

Rom. 8:29

I Pet. 1:1-2

It is interesting to note the vague wording of the Old Scofield Bible in the note on foreknowledge at I Pet. 1:19-20 (cf. Eph. 1:5), and the progress in the New Scofield Bible at I Pet. 1:20 and 5:13 (cf. at Eph. 1:11 also). However, the New Scofield does not seem to understand foreknowledge as much more than cognition.

The Calvinistic view is “unconditional election,” i.e., God elects the saved ones apart from any faith or works which God might foresee in them; he views them as sinners, no more deserving of salvation or tending to salvation than the non-elect. This view is based on a more biblical understanding of the concept “to foreknow.” Cf. Canons of the Synod of Dort, First Head: “Of Divine Predestination,” esp. Art. 9-10 (in Schaff’s *Creeds of Christendom*, 3:583).

VII. Arguments for the Calvinistic view of foreknowledge

A. The words “know” or “knowledge” often denote intimate personal fellowship, not merely knowledge about someone.

Gen. 4:1 (ASV), “And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah.”

Mt. 1:25 (ASV), “and knew her not till she had brought forth a son: and he called his name JESUS.

(The two passages above speak of sexual union.)

Jer. 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”

Amos 3:2 “You only have I known of all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

Mt. 7:23

I Cor 8:3

Gal. 4:9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how *is it that* you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements...

II Tim. 2:19

B. Foreknowledge is more than omniscience, the knowledge of all things possible. In the NT foreknowledge is related to events two times (Acts 2:23; II Pet. 3:17), but is related directly to people five times (Acts 26:5; Rom. 8:29; 11:2; I Pet. 1:2, 19-20). The term has been described as showing “a previously determined or established loving relationship.”

—e.g., Rom. 11:2

C. In Acts 2:23 foreknowledge is grammatically linked via the single article and *kai* to “determined counsel,” indicating that the two concepts are considered in that context as one entity. This is an application of the Granville Sharp Rule; cf. Moulton III, 181-82.

D. In Rom. 8:29, a verse often quoted by Arminians, note that very same people who are foreknown are eventually glorified; only the saved are “foreknown”.

E. In I Pet. 1:1-2, the other passage most often cited by Arminians, note that the believers were “elect according to foreknowledge unto obedience,” not “foreknowledge of obedience.” The obedience spoken of here is conversion, resulting in justification. This

passage clearly demonstrates that faith and repentance are not the cause of election or foreknowledge, but the results.

VIII. The purpose of election

Election always is linked to a spiritual or ethical goal:

Eph. 1:4

Eph. 2:10

Rom. 8:29

The ultimate purpose of this election is the glory of God;

Eph. 1:11-12

I Pet. 2:9

IX. The preaching of election

A. The preaching of election always should be linked to moral and spiritual ends.

B. The preaching of election always should be linked to the assertion of human responsibility to believe the gospel. Notice this pattern in biblical preaching:

election

responsibility

Mt. 11:25-27

Mt. 11:28-30

Lk. 22:21-22a

Lk. 22:22b

Jn. 6:37a

Jn. 6:37b

Rom. 9:16, 18, 21

Rom. 10:6-13

C. The preaching of election may often follow the preaching of the gospel, especially to those who appear to be hardened. Such preaching has been very effective (e.g., Edwards, Spurgeon). Such often was Christ's pattern:

gospel

election

Mt. 11:20-24

Mt. 11:25-27

Lk. 4:17-22

Lk. 4:23-27

Jn. 6:35-36

Jn. 6:37

Jn. 6:38-40

Jn. 6:44-45

Jn. 10:7-9

Jn. 10:26-27

D. The preaching of election is useful and necessary for the saints.

See esp. WC 3:8. "the doctrine... is to be handled with special prudence and care,... So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation, to all that sincerely obey the gospel."

CHAPTER 4 PARTICULAR ATONEMENT AND THE ORDER OF DECREES

I. Definition

–WC 8:5; Canons of Dort, 2nd Head, Art. 3,8 (Schaff, *Creeds...* III:586-87)

Christ's atonement was intended primarily to fulfill the terms of the covenant of grace, and thereby secure the salvation of the elect.

This definition can be clarified further as follows:

- 1) Christ did not die for all men equally.
- 2) Christ did not die merely to make salvation possible for all.
- 3) Christ died to save his people, to make salvation certain for the elect.

Cf. Calvin, at 1 Jn. 2:2, "Christ died sufficiently for all, but efficiently only for the elect." (Calvin asserts the truth of this statement, but does not think it the best interpretation of that particular verse.)

cf. A. A. Hodge Outlines, 417:

Christ died

...incidentally, to make salvation possible for all, and to provide opportunities for many.

...specially, to obtain salvation for the elect, basic reason.

II. Scriptural support for the particular ("limited") atonement

A. Passages which teach particular atonement under the covenant of grace

B. Passages which apparently limit the extent of the atonement

Mt. 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Mt. 26:28, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Heb. 9:28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

C. Passages which describe the saving power of the atonement, compared with passages which deny these benefits to the non-elect

Rom. 8:33-34, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

1 Cor. 15:3-4, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

Eph. 1:4-7, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Compare

Mt. 7:23, "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Mt. 25:41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Jn. 10:26, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."

Rom. 1:24-32

Belief in the particular atonement stems naturally from the covenant of grace, and Calvinistic system in general. It is the foundation of the other "points" of Calvinism according to the authors of the five points.

III. Passages used against this doctrine

A. Passages which apply fruits of atonement to all or to the world

1. Terms that are applied universally

a. Redemption

1 Tim. 2:6, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

2 Pet. 2:1, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

b. Propitiation

1 Jn. 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

c. Reconciliation

2 Cor. 5:19, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

Col. 1:20, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

d. Substitution

Jn. 6:51, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Heb. 2:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

e. Salvation

1 Tim 4:10, "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."

Titus 2:11, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

2. Answer

a. Obviously, not everyone is saved. These verses should be interpreted with that fact in mind. The Arminian interpretation of them could prove too much.

b. To apply these terms to the lost is to weaken these terms, which usually apply to the saved.

- c. The terms all and world are often limited by context; many passages could refer to the world in distinction from national Israel.
- d. It also is possible that some of these verses may be speaking of the whole world in an eschatological sense.

B. Passages which present a universal gospel appeal

1. Passages used

Jn. 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jn. 7:37, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

Mt. 18:4, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

1 Jn. 4:15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

Rev. 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

2. Answer

- a. The gospel offer is made in good faith to everyone; salvation is available if received by faith.
- b. But at the same time, no one is able to receive the offer unless effectually called by the Holy Spirit (regeneration), and this call comes as a result of the atonement.
- c. Calvinistic statements assert the universal offer of the gospel.
Cf. "Declaratory Statement" made by the Bible Presbyterian Church at its first Synod: "In adopting the Confession of Faith this General Synod declares: First: its firm and glad belief in the reality and universality of the offer of the Gospel to mankind. We believe that Christ's atonement is sufficient for the sins of all, adapted to all, and is freely offered to all men in the Gospel. We believe that no man will be condemned except upon the ground of his sin."
- d. Note on John 3:16. Many take the expression "For God so loved the world" to indicate a universal atonement. However, the word "so" is not a particle emphasizing amount, but rather manner: houtos, "in this way, thus, so." Thus the verse says "God in this manner loved the world,...that the believers may have eternal life." God's love is selective, benefiting in this case only the elect.

IV. Three positions concerning the extent of the atonement

- A. Arminian - Christ died for all people equally.
- B. Calvinistic. Christ died for the elect only.
- C. Amyraldian. Christ died hypothetically for all people, but elected only some.
Amyraldianism could be called "four-point Calvinism." (Moses Amyraut, 1596-1664, French Protestant pastor.)

V. Relation of the atonement to the order of decrees

A. Logical order

The “order of decrees” refers to the logical order by which God’s important decrees relating to the covenant of grace should be arranged; it does not refer necessarily to a temporal order, either in their conception or in their fulfillment.

By logical order, we mean the following: if A is a necessary prerequisite for B, but A does not require or imply B, then A is logically prior to B.

Example: A = take glass from shelf

B = fill glass with water

B implies A.

A does not imply B.

Therefore, A is prior to B.

Four possibilities of relationship between A and B:

- 1) no relation between A and B
- 2) A implies B; B may or may not be prior to A.
- 3) A is implied by B; A may or may not be prior to B.
- 4) A implies and is implied by B; A and B are not prior or posterior, but are equivalent in order.

Rule of thumb: if A be assumed, and one can stop before deciding on B (which is now made possible by A), the A is logically prior to B.

B. The relation of election to man’s estate of sin

This question defines the various “lapsarian” views, from “lapse,” meaning the “fall” of man into sin. These views compare the relative logical order of the decrees for the fall and for election.

1. Supralapsarianism

The decree to elect precedes the decree to ordain the fall

Supralapsarian order of decrees:

- 1) create mankind
- 2) elect some to life, others to death
- 3) ordain the fall
- 4) redeem the elect

Supralapsarianism views the end of God’s plan as its logical beginning. God chooses from “neutral” people, some to be glorified and some to be tormented; the logical order of the decree is driven by that result.

2. Infralapsarianism (or Sublapsarianism)

Decree to elect follows the decree to ordain the fall.

Infralapsarian order of decrees:

- 1) create mankind
- 2) ordain the fall
- 3) elect some to life; pass by others
- 4) redeem the elect

The infralapsarian view depends more on Scripture. Most passages picture God electing us, considered as sinful and needing salvation. John 15:19; Rom. 11:5; Eph. 1:4-5; I Pet. 1:2.

Concerning Eph. 3:9-11, a passage supposed to support supralapsarianism, the Greek *hina* in v. 10 refers not to God’s reason for creating all things, but to verse 8, Paul’s preaching; see A.A. Hodge *Outlines* 233-34.

This position is that of most Reformed theologians. Cf. WC 3:7, and Conclusion of Canons of Dort, para. 2 (Schaff III:596A)

C. Relation of election to redemption

1. The Amyraldian system

The Amyraldian view of “hypothetical redemption” differs from Calvinism in the order of decrees. In order to maintain a universal, unlimited atonement, at least hypothetically in the mind of God, this view changes the order of decrees so that God elects people who are already considered as redeemed.

Amyraldian order of decrees:

- 1) create mankind
- 2) ordain (or permit) the fall
- 3) send Christ as Redeemer of all
- 4) elect some
- 5) send Holy Spirit to apply salvation to the elect

Amyraut developed this system in an attempt to harmonize Reformed and Lutheran doctrine at this point, by allowing sovereign election, while at the same time maintaining a universal atonement (however, hypothetically universal).

2. The Calvinistic System

In contrast to Amyraldianism, Calvinism consistently applies redemption and election to the same people.

Calvinistic order of decrees:

- 1) create mankind
- 2) ordain the fall
- 3) elect some
- 4) send Christ to redeem the elect
- 5) send the Holy Spirit to apply salvation to the elect

The Calvinistic understanding of redemption is better than the Amyraldian for two reasons:

- (1) It is logically better: redemption and election actually imply each other, assuming that Christ’s atonement was the only way we could have been saved. Redemption and election belong together, and the decree for each should refer to the same people. Amyraldianism changes the essence of redemption and of the atonement itself, to separate it from election.
- (2) It is Scripturally better: Christ’s death appears to have been originally intended to save his people. Redemption in Scripture nearly always is specifically related to the elect.

CHAPTER 5 REGENERATION

I. Effectual calling and regeneration

A. General definitions

This chapter on regeneration deals with the divine part of initial salvation; the next chapter, “Conversion,” will discuss the human side.

The Arminian and inconsistent Calvinist positions redefine effectual calling so that it precedes regeneration; for the Calvinist, the two terms refer to the same process:

- ◆ “Effectual calling” emphasizes the power of this saving work, distinguishing it from the “general call” given to all people in the gospel.
- ◆ “Regeneration” (new birth) emphasizes the extent of this saving work, showing the total change made in the individual.

These terms are equivalent to the fourth point of Calvinism: irresistible grace, thus being distinguished from the Arminian view that people can resist the work of the Holy Spirit which leads them to conversion, while that same grace succeeds in others.

B. Effectual calling

There is a general call of the gospel to all people

Isa. 1:18-20, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Isa. 45:22, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

Mt. 22:14, “For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Jn. 7:37, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.”

Rev. 22:17, “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

But there is a special call given to the elect, whereby God effectually draws them to receive the gospel and come to Christ. See especially Rom. 8:30, where the same ones who are called are also justified – none is lost. This effectual call normally comes through the preaching and hearing of the Word of God.

2 Thess. 2:13-15, “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

C. Regeneration

God’s effectual call does not bring us to Christ by force, against our nature; rather, it changes our nature so that we come willingly.

Jn. 6:37, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

Jn. 6:44-45, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

Rom. 6:16-18, “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

This entire change of nature is a divine work – regeneration, as in the classic passage John 3:3-8. We notice that only the results of this divine work are visible to man.

Regeneration includes these elements

1) enlightens the mind

Acts 26:18, “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

2) renews and purifies the nature (heart)

Ez. 36:26, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

3) results in a new will

Ez. 36:27, “And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”

Dt. 30:6, “And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.”

When God begins his work of regeneration, man is passive, not active

Eph 2:5, “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”

II. Relation of regeneration to faith

Reformed view: regeneration precedes faith

Arminian view: faith precedes regeneration

Much confusion comes through inadequate definitions. First, notice that regeneration is not the same as justification, sanctification, eternal life, etc. Rather, regeneration is limited to the work of renewing the mind, heart, and will to receive the gospel; the other blessings follow faith. Therefore, Calvinists allow for verses which put salvation and eternal life after faith – e. g. Jn. 1:12; 3:36; 5:24, 40; Acts 11:18; 16:31; Eph. 2:8. These verses do not contradict the Reformed view, which sees the necessity of the new birth as a prerequisite to faith, as in 1 John 5:1 (perfect tense).

We should also notice that the nature or heart is actually the person himself. An inadequate definition of effectual calling (held by some inconsistent Calvinists) declares that God changes the will without changing the nature, and that the nature is changed as a result of faith. Yet we see that this view fails in two points:

(1) It denies the freedom of the will at the crucial point of conversion.

(2) By denying that faith springs from the nature, it does not allow that the faith present is actually that person’s own faith.

III. Regeneration without knowledge

A. Biblical teaching

The Bible clearly teaches that all unbelieving adults are lost, even though they may not have heard the gospel.

Jn. 14:6, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Acts 4:12, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Rom. 1:18-25, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”

Rom. 3:19, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

Eph. 2:12, “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”

But the Bible does not give clear teaching regarding the fate of infants dying in infancy or of insane people—those incapable of rational response to the gospel message.

B. Westminster Standards

The Westminster standards are properly undogmatic on this point.

WC 10:3:

“Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.”

By adopting the phrases “elect infants” and “all other elect persons,” the Confession does not declare in how many such cases the person involved is actually elect. It is clear, however, that whoever is saved of this group, must be regenerated by God before dying (John 3:8; Rom. 8:9; I Jn. 5:12). This is possible: Jer. 1:5; Lk. 1:15, 41, 44.

The Bible Presbyterian Church has asserted its belief that all infants dying in infancy could possibly be saved, thus allowing the popular Presbyterian position that all are saved (as in Hodge I, 26-27). Declaratory Statement:

“In adopting the Confession of Faith this General Synod declares:

Second: with regard to the salvation of those dying in infancy we do not

regard our Confession as teaching or implying that any who die in infancy are lost.”

The B.P. statement was less dogmatic than that of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., which had gone ahead to say, “We believe that all dying in infancy are included in the election of grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases.”

Support for this position is seen in such passages as Matt. 18:14; cf. vv. 1-6.

C. Suggested position

The position one takes on this issue is based on inference, and therefore cannot be certain. We must rest content in the knowledge that “the Judge of all the earth will do right.”

It is reasonable that the infants of saved parents who would properly rear their children, are elect, according to the principle of Gen. 18:25, cf. also Ex. 20:5-6; I Cor. 7:14. II Sam. 12:23 must be used with caution, since it is capable of two interpretations.

On the other hand, infants of unbelieving parents do not seem to appear in Scripture as elect. Normally they are pictured as sharing the judgment on their parents: Josh. 6:21; 7:24; 8:26; Jud. 21:10; Ps. 137:9; cf. the plagues on Egypt and in Revelation.

In sum, we must confess ignorance in particular cases. God’s glory is the first factor.

CHAPTER 6 CONVERSION

I. The term “conversion”

While regeneration explains God’s work in first saving a soul, conversion views the same process from the perspective of the one being saved.

The English term is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* II, 943b, as follows: “the bringing of anyone over to a specified religious faith, profession, or party, esp. to one regarded as true, from what is regarded as falsehood or error. (Without qualification, usually = conversion to Christianity.)” The etymology of the word derives from Latin and French, meaning “to turn.” We note the two aspects of this word: turn from and turn to, emphasized in the OED.

II. Biblical terms for conversion

A. OT term: *shubh*

Ps. 19:7, “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”

Ps. 51:13, “Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.”

Isa. 6:10, “Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”

B. NT terms:

epistrepho (most frequent term for conversion), “turn to”

Mt. 13:14 -15, “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” (= Mk. 4:12 = Jn. 12:40 = Acts 28:27), (quotation of Isa. 6:10, above)

Lk. 22:32, “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

I Thess. 1:9

strepho, “turn”

Mt. 18:3, “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

apostrepho, “turn from”

Acts 3:26, “Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”

As in the English term, the Greek terms likewise display the two aspects of conversion.

turning to Christ = faith

turning from sin = repentance

Each term, while emphasizing one side of conversion, also includes the other side. E.g., Acts 20:21 speaks of repentance to God, and Rom. 1:5 speaks of faith as including new obedience.

Acts 20:21, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Rom. 1:5, “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.”

Both repentance and faith must be seen in true conversion:

WLC 153 What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?

A. That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,¹ and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.²

¹Acts 20:21; Matt. 3:7, 8; Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 16:30, 31; John 3:16, 18

²Prov. 2:1-5; Prov. 8:33-36

WSC 85 What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin?

A. To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life,¹ with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.²

¹Acts 20:21

²Prov. 2:1-5; Prov. 8:33-36; Isa. 55:3

III. Faith

A. Definition of faith

SC 86, “Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.”

This definition is expanded in LC 72, and in the end of WC 14:2

Faith then involves three acts:

1) accepting as true the facts relating to the gospel and to our own need

I Cor. 15:1-5, “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.”

I Jn. 5:1, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.”

2) receiving for ourselves the salvation offered in Christ

Jn. 1:12, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

Jn. 6:35, 54, “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (cf. v. 63)

3) yielding ourselves to all that this salvation involves (committal)

II Tim. 1:12, “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

Rom. 10:9, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

B. Biblical terms for faith

'aman, Qal “confirm, support,” Niphal “be confirmed, established,” Hiphil “believe, trust”; cf. “Amen”

Gen. 15:6, “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

Isa. 43:10, “Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.”

batach, “trust”

Ps. 9:10 (Heb., v. 11), “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”

There is no OT noun for “faith,” but the term “faithfulness,” 'emunah, is found—esp. in Hab. 2:4, “but the righteous will live by his faith.” This verse is quoted three times in the NT with the Greek word pistis—Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38.

pisteou, “believe”

with the dative case: to believe a person or believe in a person

Titus 3:8, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”

with hoti, “to believe that”

Mt. 9:28, “And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.”

with preposition en (most frequent usage in LXX)

Mk. 1:15, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.” (ASV)

with preposition epi and the dative, “to rely on”

Lk. 24:25, “Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.”

with preposition epi and the accusative (7 times in NT)

Acts 16:31, “And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

with preposition eis and the accusative (49 times)

John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Gal. 2:16, “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

pistis, “faith”

this noun has three basic meanings:

1) the objective belief, the “body of truth”

Gal. 1:23, “But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.”

Jude 3, “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

2) the quality of steadfastness, faithfulness

Rom. 3:3, “For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?”

Gal. 3:9, “So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

3) subjective belief in the gospel (the usual meaning)

Rom. 5:1-2, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

C. Objects of faith

This section follows the outline of WC 14:2—

“By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein: and acteth differently, upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.”

1) Intellectual assent

Faith accepts certain facts on the authority of God:

–the truth of God’s Word, I Thess. 2:13

–facts about Christ, Rom. 10:9; I Thess. 4:14

–Christ as Lord and Savior, Acts 16:31

2) Sincere belief

This faith is real belief, resulting in changed actions—the point of James 2.

As we read the Bible, we are to “act differently,” as the thief in Eph. 4:28.

“tremble at the threatenings,” Heb. 10:19-30

“embrace the promises for this life,” II Cor. 9:8

“and that which is to come,” Heb. 11:13

3) Minimum faith content

Is there a minimum faith content for salvation? The answer to this question lies in the area of attitude. Faith is receptive of God’s Word, not rebellious.

Limitation of knowledge is one thing; rejection of revelation is another.

Reliance on Christ for salvation appears to be the minimum knowledge content, but saving faith will accept additional information.

Cf. Jesuits and probabilism (not much required).

4) Source of faith

Faith is not a mere intellectual acceptance of gospel truths, James 2:19.

Rather, it is a moral response, which must therefore spring from a renewed nature.

This renewal of the nature, which produces faith, is the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the elect.

Acts 16:14, “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.”

Eph. 1:17-19, “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”

Eph. 2:8-9, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Note the Greek of this last passage, in order to clarify the antecedent of “that.” There five possible interpretations:

- 1) “grace” – different gender, but possible if idea be considered as abstract; not the closest substantive noun; this could be considered a tautology
- 2) “faith”—different gender, but again possible, as with “grace”; the closest substantive noun; note that NIV links “this” with faith”
- 3) “you are saved”—the periphrastic perfect taken as a substantive idea, would fit use of neuter (cf. Robt. 704); but not closest substantive
- 4) “gift”—agreement in gender; requires antecedent to follow pronoun
- 5) “and this” = “and indeed”—idiomatic phrase as in Rom. 13:11, etc.; view of Turner in Moulton III, 45: allowed by Robertson, 705; BDF, 229

In any case, this passage makes it clear that the faith required for salvation is in no sense considered as a work, and is rather the result of God’s grace.

As was mentioned under “Regeneration,” saving faith normally comes through the preaching of the gospel, as a means.

Rom. 10:14,17, “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

I Pet. 2:2, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”

D. Merit of faith

Faith should not be thought of as a good work meriting salvation because of relaxed standards on God’s part. Rather, although faith is a good work, it is only the instrument by which we receive the salvation merited by Christ (LC 73).

The blood of Jesus, i.e., the atonement, is the only ground or basis of our salvation; faith is the instrument in receiving this salvation. Our salvation is not grounded on our faith, but on Christ’s redemption.

The contrast between faith as an instrument and faith as meritorious is seen in Rom. 4:4-5, 16:

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.”

E. Necessity of faith

Although faith is not a meritorious work in itself, it should not be minimized. It is the only instrument by which we can be saved.

Faith is the central point in conversion:

Jn. 6:28-29, “Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

Heb. 11:6, “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

The centrality of faith is shown by the fact that Christians are referred to often as “believers.”

Acts 5:14, “and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”

1 Tim. 4:12, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

F. Growth of saving faith

Saving faith is not static; furthermore, the faith by which a Christian continues to live is the same kind of faith as that by which he was saved; Gal. 3, 5; WCF 14:3 There are variations of strength in the faith of different Christians, and of the same Christian at different times.

Heb. 5:12-14, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

However, in the true Christian, the pattern is for faith to grow stronger.

1 Jn. 5:4-5, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

A high achievement of faith is full assurance of salvation, Col. 2:2. While this assurance is not necessary for salvation, the Christian should not rest content without it. For various reasons, the assurance of salvation may be interrupted. For a helpful outline of this subject, see WCF 18.

IV. Repentance

A. Definition of repentance

WSC 87 What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace,¹ whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin,² and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,³ doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God,⁴ with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.⁵

¹Acts 11:8 ²Acts 2:37, 38 ³Joel 2:12; Jer. 3:22 ⁴Jer. 31:18, 19 ⁵Ezek. 36:31

Repentance emphasizes one’s sorrow for sin, his turning from sin, and his turning to righteousness.

B. Biblical terms for repentance

nacham, Niphal “be sorry, repent”

Ex. 13:17, “And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.”

Job 42:6, “Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

When the Bible speaks of God’s repenting – as in Gen. 6:6-7, cf. 11, 35, and in Jonah 3:9-10 – it should be understood as a change in his outward providence, not in his inner nature or plan. This change in God’s providence normally arises from a

change on man's part. God is always consistent with himself; compare 1 Sam. 15:10-11 with v. 29.

Shubh, "turn back, repent"

Ez. 14:6, "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations."

Metamelomai, "regret, be sorry, change mind" (6 times)

– from melei, to matter; meta, after.

Mt. 21:29, "He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went."

Mt. 27:3, "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders."

2 Cor. 7:8, "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season."

Metanoeo, "repent, change heart, turn from sins" (34 times)

– meta, after; noeo, think.

Mt. 3:2, "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Acts 3:19, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Rev. 3:19, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

The Vulgate acceptably translate this word by paeniteo, "be sorry, repent."

But the Douay version renders it in English, "do penance," a translation apparently dictated by polemical considerations.

Note the contrast of the two preceding terms in 2 Cor. 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

Metanoia, "repentance" (22 times)

Mt. 3:8, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

2 Cor. 7:9, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing."

C. Elements of repentance

1. Repenting from sin

ek, ("out of") Rev. 9:21, "Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

Apo, ("from") Heb. 6:1, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God."

This repentance includes a genuine sorrow for sin – e. g., Mt. 11:21 links it with sackcloth and ashes, and Paul praises such an attitude in 2 Cor. 7:8-11.

Likewise, this repentance includes a genuine hatred of sin and forsaking of sin.

Ezekiel 18:30-31, "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Ezekiel 36:31, "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations."

Joel 2:12-13, “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.”
2 Corinthians 7:8-11, “For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* vehement desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge! In all *things* ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.”

2. Repenting unto God

eis, (“unto, toward”) Acts 20:21, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”
ASV, “testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Repentance results in a firm resolve to walk in holiness. This resolve is the spirit of Psalm 119; cf. also Mt. 3:8; Acts 26:20.

Both aspects of repentance are seen in 1 Thess. 1:9 – “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.”

D. Origin of repentance

As with faith, so repentance comes from God’s sovereign dispensing.

Acts 5:31, “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

Acts 11:18, “When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

2 Tim 2:25, “In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”

But, as faith, the responsibility remains with the individual to exercise this grace.

Lk. 13:3, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

E. Importance of repentance

Repentance is a necessary part of conversion and salvation. When listed with faith or with conversion, repentance is always listed first. Examples:

Mt. 21:32, repent and believe

Mk. 1:15, repent and believe

Acts 3:19, repent and be converted

Acts 20:21, repentance and faith

Heb. 6:1, repentance and faith

For these reasons, repentance must be preached (WCF 15:1)

Mk. 1:15, repentance preached by Jesus

Lk. 24:47, repentance commanded by Christ to be preached by the apostles.

F. Scope of repentance

All sins should be repented (WCF 15:4)

No sin is too small

Jas. 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

No sin is too large. Consider these examples:

David's sin, Ps. 51:4-5, 7, 9, 14.

Israel apostasy, Isa. 1:18.

Peter's denial, Mt. 26:69-75; Jn. 21:15-19.

Crucifixion of Jesus, Acts 2:23, 37-38.

We should confess all sins to God, 1 Jn. 1:9.

We should confess public sins publicly, Ps. 51.

We should confess private sins privately, Lk. 17:3-4.

When a fellow Christian confesses his sins, we have the corresponding duty to forgive him. Lk. 17:3-4; 2 Cor 2:6-8 (Note the special cases of civil punishments for crimes, and depositions of church officers for major offenses).

CHAPTER 7 JUSTIFICATION

The redemption purchased by Christ includes these items:

- 1) regeneration
- 2) repentance and faith (conversion)
- 3) justification
- 4) adoption
- 5) sanctification
- 6) glorification

The first two items have just been discussed. The last item will be discussed under “Eschatology.”

The other three items are those experienced in this life by the believer after he is converted. Justification and adoption are instantaneous, and occur immediately when one first exercises faith in Christ. Sanctification is a process which begins at conversion and continues throughout life. These three rewards of redemption are applied to the believer by the Holy Spirit, and are gracious acts.

I. Biblical terms for justification

tsadeq, Qal “be just, righteous,” Piel & Hiphil “justify, vindicate, declare righteous”

Job 32:2 (piel),

Dt. 25:1 (hiphil—most common),

This verb is related to many Hebrew nouns:

tsedeq, m. righteousness

tsedaqah, f. righteousness (157 times)

tsadiq, adj. just, righteous (206 times)

names tsadoq, Zadok, “righteous”; tsidqiyyahu, Zedekiah, “Yah is righteous”

dikaioo, “justify, declare or treat as righteous” (40 times)

Lk. 10:29, “but he (the lawyer) wanted to justify himself.”

Rom. 3:26,

This verb also is related to other parts of speech:

dikaiosune, “righteousness” (92 times)

dikaioima, “regulation, righteous deed” (10 times)

dikaiosis, “justification (2 times—Rom. 4:25; 5:18)

dikastes. “judge” (3 times, Lk. & Acts)

dike, “penalty, judgment, justice” (4 times)

dikaios, adj. “righteous, just” (81 times)

dikaios adv. “righteously” (5 times)

II. Definition of justification

SC 33, “Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.”

–cf. WC 11:1, LC 70

To justify means to treat as righteous, or to declare righteous.

Thus we can “justify” God:

Ps. 51:4,
Lk. 7:29,
Rom. 3:4,

Thus God can “justify” Christ:

I Tim. 3:16,

Thus one can “justify” wicked sinners (which is bad):

Prov. 17:15,

Or one can “justify” doers of the law (which is good):

Dt. 25:1,
Rom. 2:13

But usually the term refers to God’s justifying repentant sinners through faith in Christ:

Rom. 3:19-28, (where *dikaioo* occurs four times)

We should note that “to justify” does not mean to “make righteous” in practice.

This translation of the verb in William Beck’s *The Holy Bible, An American Translation* in places like Rom. 3:20, 26, 28, has caused much controversy in the LCMS: cf. his rendering of the verb in Lk. 7:29 and Pro. 17:14. It has been announced that future editions will change the translation back to “justify.”

III. The ground of justification

How can God the Father in his pure righteousness justify the ungodly? This question is the heart of Rom. 4:5. This section follows the outline of WC 11:1.

A. The ground of justification is not righteousness found in us.

Ps. 130:3
Rom. 3:20

B. The ground of justification is not righteousness infused into us (see under Sanctification).

C. The ground of justification is not anything done or worked in us, even faith (see under Faith).

D. The ground of justification is not God’s benevolence or pity.

God cannot countenance sin; he just judges it. (cf. under Nature of God, Sin).
Note the plea of the patricide: a boy killed his father and then begged mercy because he was an orphan! (illustration of Dr. Charles Smith).

E. The ground of justification is the perfect righteousness of Christ, applied to us on the basis of his blood shed for us.

Rom. 5:9,
Eph. 1:7,

IV. The instrument of justification

A. Faith is the only instrument to receive justification.

Gal. 2:16,
Rom. 1:17

Rom. 3:28

B. Faith has always been the instrument of justification.

WC 11:6, “The justification of believers under the Old Testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.”

Abraham, Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:1-5, 9-25

David, Ps. 32:1-2; Rom. 4:6-8

—see also Gal. 3:6-9; Heb. 11

Modern dispensational theology recognizes this truth; see Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, ch. 6, “Salvation in Dispensationalism,” where he maintains that dispensationalism has always held to one way of salvation. Against the notes in the Old Scofield Bible, p. 1115, Ryrie notes the remarks on pp. 93 and 1245; the New Scofield has changed the note at John 1:17. Ryrie admits that dispensationalists need to further clarify the relation of grace to the Old Testament dispensation (p. 116: see his explanation, pp. 116-22).

C. This faith is saving faith, and is always accompanied by the other saving graces.

WC 11:2, “Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.”

With this fact in view, we can appreciate those verses which appear to contradict the principle of justification by faith alone:

Rom. 3:24, justified by grace

Rom. 5:9, justified by blood

Rom. 3:28, justified by faith

Jas. 2:24, justified by works

James 2:14-26, read carefully agrees with this analysis of saving faith.

D. Even this faith is by grace.

—WC 11:1, LC 71 (see above under Faith)

Thus all of our salvation is a work of God—all of his grace!

V. Time of justification

A. Justification is applied at the time faith is exercised.

WC 11:4, “God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for all the elect; and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification: nevertheless they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.”

B. Justification continues in its effects; all sins are forgiven throughout life.

WC 11:5, “God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified: and although they can never fall from the state of justification,...”

Justification is experienced at the time of conversion (Isa. 1:18); and the state of justification continues throughout life (I Jn. 1:7-9; 2: 1-2).

Justification continues in force, even as saving faith continues. This is the point of Hab 2:4 and its NT quotations in Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38.

- C. Although the Christian is justified throughout life and all his sins are forgiven, he still may be chastened in this life and lose rewards in the next for his sins.

WC 11:5b, “yet they may by their sins fall under God’s fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restore unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.”

Chastening for sin on the part of the Christian is a frequent theme of Scripture: Ps. 32:3-5; 51:7-12; 89:30-33; Pro. 3:11-12; I Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:9-10.

Likewise, Christians’ future rewards are affected by sins committed during life, whether of omission or commission; I Cor. 3:12-15 (for ministers especially) and II Cor. 5:10 (for all Christians). See further under Eschatology.

CHAPTER 8 ADOPTION

I. Definition of adoption

SC. 34, “Adoption is an act of God’s free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.”
–also WC 12, LC 74

In biblical theology adoption is an extremely important theme; yet the Westminster Confession is the only confession which gives a full chapter to it (ch. 12).

II. Biblical terms for adoption

A. There is only one specific term for adoption used in the Bible: *huiiothesia*. This term is found five times, all in Paul’s epistles:

Rom. 8:15, “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

Rom. 8:23, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Rom. 9:4, “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.”

Gal. 4:5, “To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Eph. 1:5, “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”

This term is found often, however, in the papyri.

B. Adoption, however, often is referred to indirectly, by the use of “son,” “daughter,” or “Father.”

C. Examples:

David’s sons in the Davidic covenant, 2 Sam. 7:14

Israel as God’s children, Ex. 4:22; Jer. 31:9, 20; Hos. 1:11

God as Israel’s Father, Dt. 32:6; Jer. 3:4, 14 (husband)

Thus adoption related to the covenant, Isa. 43:6; cf. 2 Cor. 6:16-18, quoting OT passages.

Often used in the NT, Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:16-17; 1 Jn. 3:1

Sometimes linked to marriage, similar to husband-wife relationship, Hos. 1-3; Ez. 16; Jer. 3:4, 14.

III. Benefits of adoption

Here we follow the outline of WCF 12

A. Liberty of children of God

–cf. WCF 20; Rom. 8:15

liberty from:

- ◆ sin
- ◆ death
- ◆ wrath of God
- ◆ law (Gal. 3:23-4:7)
- ◆ other people

B. Privileges of children of God

- 1) God's name on us – Jer. 14:9; Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16; Rev. 3:12.
- 2) Have spirit of adoption – Rom. 8:15
- 3) Have access to God in prayer – Mt. 6:9; Rom. 5:2; Eph. 3:12
- 4) Can call God as “Father” – Mt. 6:9; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6
- 5) Are pitied – Ps. 103:13
- 6) Are protected – Pro. 14:26
- 7) Are provided for – Mt. 6:30-32; 1 Pet. 5:7
- 8) Are chastened as children – Pro. 3:11-12; Heb. 12:7-10
- 9) Are secure as children, never cast off – Lam. 3:31; Jn. 10:27-20; Heb. 13:5
(Gk.)
- 10) Are sealed by the Holy Spirit – Eph. 4:30
- 11) Are heirs to inherit the promise – Heb. 1:14; 10:36; 11:39-40; 1 Pet. 1:3-4; 1 Jn. 3:2.

CHAPTER 9 SANCTIFICATION

I. Definition of sanctification

WSC 35 What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace,¹ whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God,² and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.³

¹2 Thess. 2:13 ²Eph. 4:23, 24 ³Rom. 6:4, 6; Rom. 8:1

Also WLC 75, WCF 13:1

Notice that in the Westminster standards, sanctification includes all divine increase in holiness, even prior to and including regeneration; cf. WCF 13:1, "further sanctified," and WLC 75, "having seeds...put into their hearts."

But normally theologians, along with the bulk of the standards, define sanctification as the process of increasing holiness after conversion.

Sanctification is distinguished from justification in three ways (WLC 77):

Justification

Imputes Christ's righteousness

Sin is pardoned

Total, equal, complete

Sanctification

Infuses grace to exercise own righteousness

Sin is subdued

Partial, different, growing

II. Biblical terms for sanctification

qadash, Piel and Hiphil "set apart, consecrate, sanctify"

related to other words:

qodesh, "apartness, sacredness, holiness" (469 times)

qadesh—qedeshah, "temple prostitute, harlot"

miqdash, "holy place, sanctuary" (74 times)

qadosh, adj. "holy"

The primary meaning of this word is to set apart, separate; but it does not require a good moral purpose (cf. the term for temple prostitute, and the example in Isa. 66:17). Normally this verb, however, is associated with sacred purposes, with a corresponding good moral flavor; e.g., Ez. 37:21-28.

The verb *qadash* is applied to various subjects:

Things:

–Sabbath day, Gen. 2:3

–houses and fields, Lev. 27:14, 16

–firstling beasts, Lev. 27:26

–tabernacle and furniture, Lev. 8:10-11

People:

–firstborn, Ex. 13:2

–priests, Ex. 28:41

–nation Israel, Ex. 19:14

–prophet Jeremiah, Jer. 1:5

–God himself, Ez. 38:23 (declarative and revelatory)

hagiazō, “make holy, consecrate, sanctify, set apart” (29 times)

related to other words:

hagios, adj. “holy, sacred, dedicated” (164 times)

hagia, “sanctuary” (11 times)

hagios, “saint, Holy One” (65 times)

hagiotēs, “holiness” (1 time)

hagiosunē, “holiness” (3 times)

hagiasmos, “holiness, consecration, sanctification” (10 times)

This noun seems to emphasize a condition which results from a practice;
e.g., Rom. 6:19, 22; 1 Thess. 4:3-7.

As with qadash, so hagiazō refers to things and to people:

Things:

–gold on temple, Mt. 23:17

–sacrifice, Mt. 23:19

–food, 1 Tim. 4:5

People:

–the church, Eph. 5:26

–children, 1 Cor. 7:14

–Christians, 1 Thess. 5:23

–God himself, Mt. 6:9; 1 Pet. 3:15

Conclusion regarding biblical usage. – The term “sanctify” is used in the Bible in a general sense, “to set apart for some (usually sacred) purpose,” and in a theological sense to describe personal growth in holiness.

This growth is seen in four stages:

- 1) preparation to conversion—I Cor. 7:14; 1 Pet. 1:2
- 2) conversion and justification—Heb. 10:14; 13:12
- 3) growth in grace during Christian life—I Thess. 5:23 (this is the most common theological usage)
- 4) final perfection, Eph. 5:26

III. Sanctification in the Christian

Meaning (3) above is the normal understanding given to the term sanctification in theological literature.

Sanctification is a continuous process, beginning at conversion and continuing throughout the Christian life. As closely linked to repentance and faith, it includes two aspects:

- 1) sanctification from sin: Rom. 6:5-6, 14; 8:13; Gal. 5:24
- 2) sanctification to God: II Cor. 7:1; Eph. 3:16-19; 4:14-15; Col. 1:11

The work of sanctification is a work of grace, carried out by all three persons of the Trinity:

Father, Jn. 17:17

Son, Eph. 5:25-26

Holy Spirit, II Cor. 3:18

IV. Extent of sanctification

Sanctification affects every part of man (I Th. 5:23), but is never complete in this life. (WC 13:2, LC 78)

Eccl. 7:20, “There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.”
Php. 3:12, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”

We note that while Paul strive for perfection, he did not attain it in this life. Jas. 3:2, “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”

1 Jn. 1:8-10, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

Paul’s own testimony in Rom. 7:14-25 must be taken as the testimony of a spiritual Christian; cf. vv. 22, 25b (contrast with 8:7-8), and the present tenses starting at v. 14. For an excellent discussion, see Cranfield *Romans* (ICC) I, 355-70.

Since sanctification is incomplete in this life, and since the Christian is responsible to progress in sanctification, effort is required on the part of the Christian. As a result, the Christian life is described in Scripture as a warfare (WCF 13:2-3).

V. Means of Sanctification

The weapons of this spiritual warfare are the various means of grace – Gal. 3:2-3; 5:16-25; Eph. 6:10-18.

The Westminster standards name three mean of grace (WLC 154, WSC 88):

A. The Word of God

1. Enables us to examine our hearts - 12 Cor. 3:28; Heb. 4:12-13; Jas. 1:23-24.
2. Cleanses us - Jn. 15:3; Eph 5:26.
3. Shows us Christ - 2 Cor. 3:18

B. Prayer

1. Grace for ourselves - Lk. 18:13-14; 22:40; Rom. 8:26; Jude 20.
2. Grace for others - 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 1:6-19; 3:14-16; 5:18-19.

C. The sacraments

– e. g., 1 Cor. 11:28 (see under Ecclesiology)

D. Providence

While providence is not named in the Westminster standards as a means of grace (since it happens to all, and is not voluntary), some Reformed writers include it – e. g., Dabney, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* 665-66. Cf. Heb. 12:10

VI. Fruits of Sanctification

WSC 36 lists the benefits of sanctification and the other results of conversion as follows:

- 1) assurance of God's love
- 2) peace of conscience
- 3) Joy in the Holy Ghost
- 4) increase of grace
- 5) perseverance therein to the end

These benefits, added to the prospect of eternal rewards, make the struggles of Christian sanctification abundantly worthwhile.