

Lecture 3: The Wisdom of 2LCF 7.3

I. What is an administration?

John Tombes,

“To *dispense* is to lay out [distribute] as a steward lays out [distributes] money. To dispense a covenant may be understood either by making it known, or performing the things promised on either said; the same may be conceived to be meant by *administration*. *The ceremony of administration* I understand not what it is, unless by it be meant the rites of the Old and New Testament.”¹

OED

“The action of administering or giving something to a person” or,
“To bring about a state of affairs.”

Robert Steed, Abraham Cheare, Edward Hutchinson, Thomas Delaune, and Philip Cary

II. What is a difference in substance?

John Tombes,

“The essentials of a thing are in corporeal substances, matter and form, in other beings those things which in proportion to them show what it is, and wherein it is differenced from others under the same *genus*, which essentials the logicians call the *genus* and the *difference*. The essential difference of one action from another, is the *terminus* or effect, as heating from cooling, in the object, subject, end. *A covenant being essentially a promise, differs essentially from another promise, when the things promised are different*, as the promise of land differs essentially from the promise of life...The new covenant is not the old renewed, but they differ specifically in the essentials, and not only in rites.”²

Now, add two-level typology...

John Brinsley,

“*Quest.* But how are those sacrifices said to make an *Atonement* for the people, or to *Expiate them?* for so the Hebrew word is there most properly rendered, importing a freeing and delivering one from the Guilt and punishment of sin. Now how are those sacrifices said to have done this?

¹ Tombes, *Antipaedobaptism...the Third Part*, 305.

² Tombes, *Antipaedobaptism...the Third Part*, 306.

A. For answer to this, we must take notice that in those sins committed under the Law there was a twofold *guilt*; A *Ceremonial* and a *Moral* guilt; or an *External* and an *Eternal* guilt. An *External* or *Temporal* guilt, a guilt before *men*, binding the offenders over unto temporal punishment. An *Eternal* or *Spiritual* guilt before *God*, binding them over unto Eternal condemnation.

Now as for the former of these, that *External* or *Ceremonial* guilt, that was expiated and taken away by performing that which was legally required in the way of a Ceremonial satisfaction. Hereby the people offending was acquitted before men, *in foro Externo*, and freed from Temporal guilt and punishment, by virtue of that Sacrifice, or rather God's Ordinance and Institution concerning it.

But for the latter, that *Eternal* and *Moral* guilt, that was expiated and taken away by those Sacrifices only *Typically* and *Sacramentally*: *viz.* as they represented and shadowed out the true Expiatory Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And thus are those Sacrifices said to have *Expiated* the people.

It is a *Sacramental* phrase and manner of speech, wherein that which is the proper effect of the thing *signified*, is attributed to the *sign*. Even as the *Sacramental water* in *Baptism* is said to *wash away sins*, Act. 22.16. Thus did the blood of these Sacrifices *expiate* the sins of the people, by representing the *Expiation of Christ*, that *Satisfaction* whereby his people are freed from eternal guilt."³

"As for those Sacrifices, they extended only to a *Ceremonial* and *Temporal* Expiation; and that only of *some sins*. But the Sacrifice of Christ extends to a real, *Eternal* Expiation; and that of *all sins*. So *Paul* delivers it in his Sermon at *Antioch*, Act. 13.39. *By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses. By the Law of Moses, by those Legal Sacrifices therein prescribed, none could be justified before God for any sins. So much we may learn from this our Apostle, Heb. 10.1. The law can never by those sacrifices, which they offered year by year, make the comers thereunto perfect. That is, as touching the Conscience, as the same pen expounds it, chap. 9.9.*

They could not in and by themselves, as separated from their spiritual significations, sanctify or purify the *Conscience*; they being *Corporal*, and that *Spiritual*. Neither could they give an absolution *in foro conscientiae*, they could not give any assurance to the *Conscience* that sin was pardoned, and reconciliation obtained with God. In reference hereunto the Apostle tells us *ver. 4.* of that 10th chapter, that *It is not possible that the blood of Bulls and of Goats should take away sin: Take away the Eternal guilt of it. And as for the External and Temporal, it extended (as I said) only to some kinds of sin.*"⁴

³ John Brinsley, *MESITHS, Or, The One and Onely Mediatour Betwixt God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus* (London: Thomas Maxey, 1651), 101-102.

⁴ Brinsley, *MESITHS*, 102-103.

III. Administrative Difficulties

Philip Cary,

“We do indeed acknowledge the *subserviency* of the law to Christ, and the covenant of grace...***But it does not therefore follow***, that *the law is a covenant of gospel-grace*...The law is not the gospel, nor the gospel the law. And therefore though the one of them is plainly subservient to the other, yet they ought not to be mixed, blended, or confounded the one with the other, as if they were but one and the same covenant, and no difference to be made between them; only in respect of the different degrees of the discovery of gospel grace, as has been suggested... A subserviency in any thing to promote the ends of something else, does not make it to be the thing itself; the ends whereof are promoted thereby.”⁵

IV. The Wisdom of 2LCF 7.3

Thomas Hardcastle,

“Q: Were those under the Old Testament, the Jews, under a covenant of works?

A: No, Adam was under a covenant of works, but the Jews were under a covenant of grace. Adam was under a covenant of works, *Do this and live*. The Jews were under a covenant of grace, which was obscured by types, sacrifices, and figures which did typify and prefigure Christ, and these sacrifices [were] the gospel they had. Through this they looked to a Christ to come. Through the type they could behold the antitype. Through the blood of beasts they could see the blood of the lamb, though many of them very obscurely. The Spirit applies redemption by uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.”⁶

Everyone can affirm 2LCF 7.3

No one is attacked by 2LCF 7.3

The difficulty of the language of “administration” is avoided by 2LCF 7.3

Cf. 2LCF 8.6; 2LCF 20.1

⁵ Philip Cary, *A Solemn Call Unto all that would be owned as Christ’s Faithful Witnesses, speedily, and seriously, to attend unto the Primitive Purity of the Gospel Doctrine and Worship: Or, a Discourse concerning Baptism* (London: John Harris, 1690), 167.

⁶ Thomas Hardcastle, *Manuscript Exposition of the Westminster Shorter Catechism*, 52.