

INTRODUCTION

A. ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH & LIFE (*Westminster Confession, c.22; Larger Catechism Q.108,113; Shorter Catechism Q.50,55; reformedvoice.com outlines & audio of sermons in series*)

B. DISTINCT TERMS THOUGH OFTEN USED INTERCHANGEABLY (i.e. confusion!)

I. OATH (e.g., swearing-in a witness; *membership covenant #1,2,3a,7*; mean what you say; “this is true”)

A. WHAT: CALL ON GOD TO JUDGE YOUR STATEMENT (e.g., trial testimony; 1Kngs.8:31f; Dt.6:13)

B. WHO: A WITNESS (2Cor.1:23)

C. WHY: TO ENABLE JUDGMENT (Heb.6:16; Num.5:19)

D. WHEN: NECESSITY (2Cor.1:23; 1Kngs.8:31f; see Mt.5:33f)

E. WHERE: BEFORE GOD (1Kngs.8:31f; Dt.10:20; Ex.20:7; see 1Cor.6:1f)

F. HOW: WORD & SIGN (Rev.10:5,6; Dt.6:13)

II. PROMISSORY OATH (e.g., “*vows*” of baptism, marriage, loans, etc.; *membership covenant #3b,4,5,6*; say what you mean, “I will do”)

A. WHAT: CALL GOD TO JUDGE FREE PROMISE (Dt.23:21f,23; Eccl.5:4f; Ps.66:13,14; 76:11; 132:2f; 1Sm.25:22)

B. WHO: A BELIEVER (Heb.11:6; Eccl.5:4-6)

C. WHEN: ABLE, RESOLVED & PERMITTED (Rom.14:22; Ps.15:4 | Acts 23:12f; Mk.6:26 | Num.30:1f)

D. WHERE: MADE & PAID BEFORE GOD (Ps.61:8; 66:13,14; 116:14,18; see 1Kngs.8:31f; Eccl.5:6)

E. WHY: SELF-DISCIPLINE (Ps.132:1f; Dt.23:21f; Eccl.5:1f; see Num.6:1f)

F. HOW: WORD & SIGN (see Rev.10:5,6; Dt.6:13)

III. VOW (e.g., business contracts; say what you mean, “*If you do (a), I will do (b)*”)

A. WHAT: CALL UPON GOD TO JUDGE YOUR CONDITIONAL PROMISSORY OATH
(Gen.28:20-22; 1Sam.1:11; Ps.50:14; 66:14)

B. WHO: A BELIEVER (Heb.11:6; Ps.65:1,2; Eccl.5:4-6)

C. WHEN: DESPERATE NEED OR DEEP DESIRE (Gen.28:20f; 1Sam.1:11; see Jms.5:16)

D. WHERE: MAKE IN PRIVATE & PAY IN PUBLIC (Ps.22:1f,9; 66:13,14; 116:3f,14,18; Jonah 2:1f,9)

E. WHY: THANKSGIVING (Ps.50:14; 56:12; Jon.2:9; Job 22:27)

F. HOW: PAY ON TIME & IN FULL UPON ANSWER (Dt.23:21; 1Sam.1:21; Eccl.5:4f; Mal.1:14 /Lev.7:16,etc)

IV. BE FAITHFUL IN OATHS & VOWS (Dt.5:20; 23:21f,23; Eccl.5:4f; Ps.66:13,14; 76:11; 132:2f; 1Sm.25:22)

A. BEST, BETTER AND BAD (Mt.5:33f; Heb.6:13f; Dt.23:21f; Eccl.5:4f; Mal.1:14)

B. TAKE OATHS ONLY WHEN NECESSARY AND THEN BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL TO SPEAK THE TRUTH (Heb.6:16f; see Mt.5:33f; 26:63)

C. MAKE PROMISSORY OATHS AND CONDITIONAL VOWS CAREFULLY AND THEN KEEP THEM DILIGENTLY IN THE FEAR OF GOD (Dt.23:21f,23; Ps.15:4; Eccl.5:4f; Heb.11:6 /Mal.1:14)

D. CONSIDER THE USEFULNESS OF PROMISSORY OATHS FOR SELF-DISCIPLINE (Ps.132:1f; Dt.23:21f; Eccl.5:1f; see Num.6:1f; note: simple in details, limited in scope and brief in time)

E. CONSIDER THE USEFULNESS OF VOWS IN PRAYER (Gen.28:20-22; 1Sam.1:11; Ps.50:14; 66:14; see fasting; Dan.9:3; Mt.6:16f; Acts 13:3; 14:23; note: simple in details, limited in scope and brief in time)

F. BEWARE OF THE EXPENSIVE REDEMPTION FROM BROKEN VOWS (Num.30:5.8.12; Lev.27:1f; Num.6:1f; see Heb.10:1f)