

# 1689 London Baptist Confession Outline and Notes:

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*Symbolics Class IRBS (2006)*

## Interpretive Layers of the Confession:

- I. One Confession
- II. Thirty-two chapters
- III. Multiple paragraphs
- IV. Sentences and semicolons (with prooftexts)
- V. Individual words
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- VI. Biblical, historical, theological, and philosophical underpinnings

**Organizing principle of the Confession:** The first paragraph is a broad outline of the chapter. The remaining paragraphs flesh out that paragraph.

## Ch. 1: Of the Holy Scriptures

- 1.1 - General and Special Revelation
- 1.2 - The Content and Inspiration of Scripture
- 1.3 - Denial of the Apocrypha
- 1.4 - The Authority of Scripture
- 1.5 - The Testimony of the church & the Holy Spirit in Interpreting, Understanding, & Believing Scripture
- 1.6 - The Sufficiency of Scripture
- 1.7 - The Perspicuity of Scripture
- 1.8 - Scripture as Final Authority in Church Controversies and the Translation of Scripture Into Languages
- 1.9 - The Analogy of Faith
- 1.10 - Scripture as the Judge of All Controversies and Sola Scriptura

### I. *General and Special Revelation* (§ 1.1)

*1.1 The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible <sup>1</sup> rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience, although the <sup>2</sup> light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and his will which is necessary unto salvation. <sup>3</sup> Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterward for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto <sup>4</sup> writing; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.*

[1] [2 Timothy 3:15-17](#); [Isaiah 8:20](#); [Luke 16:29, 31](#); [Ephesians 2:20](#); [2] [Romans 1:19-21](#); [Romans 2:14, 15](#); [Psalms 19:1-3](#);  
[3] [Hebrews 1:1](#); [4] [Proverbs 22:19-21](#); [Romans 15:4](#); [2 Peter 1:19, 20](#)

#### § 1 A. The *first sentence* (added by the LBC)

The rest is virtually identical to Savoy and WCF (they begin: “Although the light of nature...”)

#### First sentence outlined:

The Holy Scripture is the only 

{	sufficient	} <u>RULE</u> of all saving	{	knowledge
	certain			faith
	infallible			obedience

  
↓  
criteria, test, canon, judge, standard

### First sentence discussed

**inerrancy** { “only” = unique status to Scripture (not apocrypha, new revelations, traditions)  
“sufficient” = Scripture has all teaching on saving knowledge, faith, and obedience  
“certain” = *does not err* (exactly as represented, wholly trustworthy, nothing misleading, that which is sure  
“infallible” = *it cannot err*

*Saving Knowledge.* What we need to know God.

~ It is not saying it tells us about everything in the world.

*Saving Faith.* How we convert to God (ch. 14)

*Saving Obedience.* Repentance and sanctification

## **B. The rest of 1.1. The Necessity of Scripture**

### **1. Natural Revelation.**

- b. Types
  - i. The light of nature
  - ii. The works of creation and providence
- c. It's reality and trustworthiness
- d. Tells us about God
  - i. His goodness
  - ii. His wisdom
  - iii. His power
- e. Leaves us inexcusable
- f. It is insufficient to save

### **2. Supernatural Revelation**

- a. Types
  - i. Non-written (“sundry times, divers manners;” e.g. prophets, Apostles, direct contact)
  - ii. Written (inscripturated)
- b. Its reality and importance
  - i. Declares his will to the church
  - ii. Preserves, propagates the truth
  - iii. Establishment and comfort of the church against
    - The corruption of the *flesh*
    - The malice of *Satan*
    - The *world*
- c. Revelation comes progressively:



- d. Written form is not necessary to be saved however...
- e. Complete commitment to inspired Scripture. It is necessary now to bring us to God because the former ways have ceased.

### **3. Consequences of the Necessity of Scripture**

- a. God's will (with regard to para. 1) is wholly committed to writing.

- b. Does not negate generation revelation as continuing
- c. Does not mean Scripture only speaks about salvation
- d. Refutes tradition (Rome), inner life (Quakers, Charismatics) and others who would change salvation.

## **II. Definition of Scripture (§ 1.2-3)**

**1.2.** Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these,

### **Of the Old Testament.**

*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*

### **Of the New Testament.**

*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, To Titus, To Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle of James, The first and second Epistles of Peter, The first, second, and third Epistles of John, The Epistle of Jude, The Revelation.* All of which are given by the <sup>5</sup> inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

[5] [2 Timothy 3:16](#)

**1.3.** The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of <sup>6</sup> divine inspiration, are no part of the canon (or rule) of the Scripture, and, therefore, are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings.

[6] [Luke 24:27, 44](#); [Romans 3:2](#)

§ 2 A. Scripture defined extensively (size) (the canon)

B. Scripture defined intensively (not size) (“inspired” or “God-breathed”)

§ 3 C. Scripture defined exclusively (does not include the apocrypha)

## **III. Properties of Scripture (Authority, perfection, perspicuity) (§ 1.4-7)**

**1.4** The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon <sup>7</sup> God who is truth itself, the author thereof; therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.

[7] [2 Peter 1:19-21](#); [2 Timothy 3:16](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:13](#); [1 John 5:9](#)

**1.5** We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, and the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole which is to give all glory to God, the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God; yet not withstanding, our <sup>8</sup> full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

[8] [John 16:13, 14](#); [1 Corinthians 2:10-12](#); [1 John 2:20, 27](#)

**1.6** The whole counsel of God concerning all things <sup>9</sup> necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the <sup>10</sup> inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word, and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be <sup>11</sup> ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

[9] [2 Timothy 3:15-17](#); [Galatians 1:8,9](#); [10] [John 6:45](#); [1 Corinthians 2:9-12](#); [11] [1 Corinthians 11:13, 14](#); [1 Corinthians 14:26, 40](#)

**1.7** All things in Scripture are not alike <sup>12</sup> plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation, are so <sup>13</sup> clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them.

[12] [2 Peter 3:16](#); [13] [Psalms 119:7](#); [Psalms 119:130](#)

## A. Authority of Scripture

### § 4 1. Source

- a. Not the testimony of any man or church
- b. But wholly upon God (who is truth itself). He is its author.
- c. We receive it because it is the Word of God.

### § 5 2. **Proof of authority** (its nature)

- a. Evidence: internal and external to the Scripture (but it is not God's word because of evidence):
  - i. External: Testimony of the church
  - ii. Internal: Heavenliness of the matter
  - iii. Efficacy of the doctrine
  - iv. Majesty of the style
  - v. Consent of all the parts
  - vi. Scope of the whole
  - vii. The full discovery it makes of the only way to man's salvation
  - viii. Other incomparable excellencies and perfections
- b. The necessary function of Divine evidence (i.e. the Holy Spirit bearing witness to us)

### § 6 B. **Perfection or Sufficiency of Scripture** (its nature)

1. All we need FOR God's glory, man's salvation, faith and life is expressly or implicitly in Scripture.
  - a. Nothing is to be added ("new revelations" "traditions of men")  
Ancient charismatics                      Rome
  - b. (Nothing is to be subtracted—not in LBC, but implied)
2. "Good and necessary consequences" (WCF) is changed to "necessarily contained in." This is a rejection of "good" not "necessary" (relates especially to infant baptism).
3. Need for spiritual illumination for saving understanding
4. Light of nature, logic, reason, prudence, wisdom for "circumstances" as opposed to "elements" (see ch. 22.5) of worship, government of the church, common to human actions and societies.

### § 7 C. **Perspicuity** (Clarity) of Scripture (its nature)

1. Scripture is diverse, it is not all equally clear.
2. The things necessary to be known, believed and observed *for salvation* are clear.
  - a. Not only the learned, but the unlearned can know them *through ordinary means*
  - b. It doesn't mean people won't misinterpret them (see III.A.2.b.; III.B.3.).

## IV. *The Use of Scripture (Transmission, Interpretation, Controversies)* (§ 1.8-10)

**1.8** *The Old Testament in <sup>14</sup> Hebrew which was the native language of the people of God of old, and the New Testament in Greek which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations, being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore <sup>15</sup> authentic; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them <sup>16</sup>. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read <sup>17</sup> and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they <sup>18</sup> come, that the Word of God dwelling <sup>19</sup> plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope*

[14] [Romans 3:2](#); [15] [Isaiah 8:20](#); [16] [Acts 15:15](#); [17] [John 5:39](#); [18] [1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 28](#); [19] [Colossians 3:16](#)

**1.9** *The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the <sup>20</sup> Scripture itself; and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture which is not manifold, but one, it must be searched by other places that speak more clearly.*

[20] [2 Peter 1:20, 21](#); [Acts 15:15, 16](#)

**1.10** *The supreme judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which <sup>21</sup> Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved.*

[21] [Matthew 22:29, 31, 32](#); [Ephesians 2:20](#); [Acts 28:23](#)

## **§ 8 A. Form and Transmission**

1. Originals (Hebrew OT; Greek NT) and copies
  - a. Originals were immediately inspired by God (gives them authority)
  - b. Copies are authentic, but are nevertheless, copies (and have errors via human transmission)
  - c. All controversies of religion must make final appeal to Scripture (not tradition, etc.)
2. We do not speak those languages and we have the right and duty to translate them
  - a. So that the word may dwell in all peoples
  - b. So they may all know how to properly worship God
  - c. So that we may all have hope and comfort

## **§ 9 B. Infallible Rule of Interpretation**

1. Analogy of faith (Scripture interprets Scripture)
2. Single sense of Scripture (this teaches that there is a real, objective original intent)

## **§ 10 C. Controversies**

1. Scripture is the supreme judge in controversy (see IV.A.1.c.)
  - a. Not tradition (not even the Reformed tradition)
  - b. Not councils
  - c. Not great commentators
  - d. Not personal, private spirits
  - e. Not the Confession
2. Scripture is the test of all other sources of “truth” as it regards matters of salvation, faith, and life

## Ch. 2: Of God and the Holy Trinity

- 2.1 – God’s Nature and His Attributes
- 2.2 – God’s Relationship to Creation
- 2.3 – God’s Tri-unity

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Changes in 1689

Ch. 2.1 in the 1689 and changes from previous Confessions			
1689 2.1	Savoy (1658)	WCF	1644
<p>The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of Himself, infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself; a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who is immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and withal most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.</p>	<p>There is but one only living and true God; who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure Spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory, most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.</p>	<p>There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments; hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.</p>	<p>The Lord our God is but one God, whose subsistence is in himself; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; who is in himself most holy, every way infinite, in greatness, wisdom, power, love; merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; who giveth being, moving, and preservation to all creatures.</p>

#### § 1 B. All additions come from 1644 § 1-3

1. 1<sup>st</sup> changes: personalizes the statements about God
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> change: introduces “subsistence”
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> change: prepares for para 3—incomprehensibility
4. 4<sup>th</sup> change: immortality of God
5. 5<sup>th</sup> change: infinite as attribute

- § 2 6. 1<sup>st</sup> change: “creatures” (attempt to bring consistency)
- § 3 7. 1644 change: adds many historical philosophical terms:
- a. *Persona* (person)
  - b. *Prosopon* (face, expression)
  - c. *Substantia* (substance)
  - d. *Ousia* (either *substantia* or *essentia*—essence)
  - e. *Hupostasis* (similar to *persona*/*substantia*)
  - f. *Subsistentia* (substance, individual example of an essence)
  - g. *Essentia* (essence, whatness of a being)
  - h. *Naturae* (genus of a thing)

## II. One True God: His Identity (§ 2.1)

**2.1** *The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; <sup>1</sup> whose subsistence is in and of Himself, <sup>2</sup> infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself; <sup>3</sup> a most pure spirit, <sup>4</sup> invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; <sup>5</sup> who is immutable, <sup>6</sup> immense, <sup>7</sup> eternal, <sup>8</sup> incomprehensible, almighty, <sup>9</sup> every way infinite, most holy, <sup>10</sup> most wise, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, <sup>11</sup> for His own glory; <sup>12</sup> most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, <sup>13</sup> and withal most just and terrible in His judgments, <sup>14</sup> hating all sin, <sup>15</sup> and who will by no means clear the guilty.<sup>16</sup>*

[1] [1 Cor. 8:4](#), 6; [Deut. 6:4](#) [2] [Jer. 10:10](#); [Isa. 48:12](#) [3] [Exod. 3:14](#) [4] [John 4:24](#) [5] [1 Tim. 1:17](#); [Deut. 4:15](#), 16 [6] [Mal. 3:6](#) [7] [1 Kings 8:27](#); [Jer. 23:23](#) [8] [Ps. 90:2](#) [9] [Gen. 17:1](#) [10] [Isa. 6:3](#) [11] [Ps. 115:3](#); [Isa. 46:10](#) [12] [Prov. 16:4](#); [Rom. 11:36](#) [13] [Exod. 34:6,7](#); [Heb. 11:6](#) [14] [Neh. 9:32, 33](#) [15] [Ps. 5:5](#), 6 [16] [Exod. 34:7](#); [Nahum 1:2](#), 3

### A. God’s self-existence/self-knowledge (aseity, from a se, from himself)

### B. God’s attributes

1. Without passions (his *simplicity*—uncompounded, uncomposite nature), but not without emotions (love, wrath, etc.)
  - a. Attributes are self-moved; not externally moved.
  - b. Affection vs. passion

## III. God’s External Relations (§ 2.2)

**2.2** *God, having all life, <sup>17</sup> glory, <sup>18</sup> goodness, <sup>19</sup> blessedness, in and of Himself, is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creature which He hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, <sup>20</sup> but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them; He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, <sup>21</sup> and He hath most sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever Himself pleases; <sup>22</sup> in His sight all things are open and manifest, <sup>23</sup> His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain; <sup>24</sup> He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works, <sup>25</sup> and in all His commands; to Him is due from angels and men, whatsoever worship, <sup>26</sup> service, or obedience, as creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever He is further pleased to require of them.*

[17] [John 5:26](#) [18] [Ps. 148:13](#) [19] [Ps. 119:68](#) [20] [Job 22:2](#), 3 [21] [Rom. 11:34-36](#) [22] [Dan. 4:25, 34, 35](#) [23] [Heb. 4:13](#) [24] [Ezek. 11:5](#); [Acts 15:18](#) [25] [Ps. 145:17](#) [26] [Rev. 5:12-14](#)

### A. God’s aseity (see above). Independence. God is alone in life, glory, goodness, blessedness

1. God does not lack
2. God’s self-existence gives his creatures glory
3. Consequent dominion is his.

### B. Omniscience

- |   |   |                           |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Infinite</li> <li>ii. Infallible</li> <li>iii. Independent</li> </ol> | } | God is wisdom & knowledge |
|---|---|---------------------------|

- C. God's Omnipotence
- D. God's Lordship and its attendants

#### ***IV. God's Internal Relations: (Tri-Unity) (§ 2.3)***

**2.3** *In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, the Father, the Word or Son, and Holy Spirit, <sup>27</sup> of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet the essence undivided: <sup>28</sup> the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; <sup>29</sup> the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son; <sup>30</sup> all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on Him.*

*[27] 1 John 5:7; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14 [28] Exod. 3:14; John 14:11; I Cor. 8:6 [29] John 1:14, 18  
[30] John 15:26; Gal. 4:6*

- A. God is three subsistences
  - 1. Words of Scripture: Father, Son, Holy Spirit
  - 2. Said of one, said of all
  - 3. Distinct properties and relationships
    - a. Nicaea
    - b. Athanasian
    - c. Chalcedon
- B. Importance (last clause) on THIS doctrine as all our foundation



## Ch. 3: Of God Decree

- 3.1 – God’s Decree is Universal
- 3.2 – God’s Decree is Unconditional
- 3.3 – God’s Decree is Selective
- 3.4 – God’s decree is Specific
- 3.5 – God’s Decree is Gracious
- 3.6 – God’s Decree and its Means
- 3.7 – God’s Decree is Praiseworthy

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Ch. 3 follows logically from God as he exists as One and Three (ch. 2) to his internal work in determining in eternity past all that would take place in time (ch. 3), to his external work of creating the universe (ch. 4), to his providence over that creation (ch. 5). The confession is moving from Heaven to Earth as it develops a systematic way of thinking about God and his world.
- B. The decree of God, the focus of this chapter, was briefly introduced in 2.2 when it discussed how God is “most free” and “the decree and providence of God.” Also, 3.6 and its discussion of God’s Decree and its Means will be addressed in more detail in later chapters.
- C. In this chapter, we discuss God’s decree and moves from the general to specific.

### II. Reality and Extent of God’s Decree: Universal (§ 3.1)

*3.1 God hath decreed in himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things, whatsoever comes to pass; <sup>1</sup> yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein; <sup>2</sup> nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established; <sup>3</sup> in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing His decree.<sup>4</sup>*

*[1] Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:11; Heb. 6:17; Rom. 9:15, 18 [2] James 1:13; 1 John 1:5 [3] Acts 4:27, 28; John 19:11 [4] Num. 23:19; Eph. 1:3-5*

- A. God’s decree is real (addition “in himself” is covenantal, trinitarian language)
- B. God’s decree extends to all things
  - 1. Everything that happens fits into God’s specific decree. With God, there are no contingencies or variables
  - 2. Yet, God is not the author of sin
  - 3. Rather, by his decree and because he is not his creation, the liberty and contingency of second causes is established.
    - a. Humans (angels, and higher level beasts) have true liberty (freewill, properly defined) (See ch. 9)
    - b. Humans (angels, and higher level beasts) are responsible for their actions.
    - c. It is through these “second causes” that we can uphold both the universal divine decree and understand the problem of evil.
  - 4. This demonstrates God’s wisdom and power.

### III. God’s Decree is not Conditional (§ 3.2)

*3.2 Although God knoweth whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions, <sup>5</sup> yet hath He not decreed anything, because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.<sup>6</sup>*

*[5] Acts 15:18 [6] Rom. 9:11, 13, 16, 18*

#### IV. *God's Creatures and the Decree* (§ 3.3-5)

**3.3** By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup> to the praise of His glorious grace; <sup>8</sup> others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of His glorious justice.<sup>9</sup>

[7] [1 Tim. 5:21](#); [Matt. 25:34](#) [8] [Eph. 1:5](#), 6 [9] [Rom. 9:22, 23](#); [Jude 4](#)

**3.4** 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.<sup>10</sup>

[10] [2 Tim. 2:19](#); [John 13:18](#)

**3.5** Those of mankind that are predestinated to 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,<sup>11</sup> without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving Him thereunto.<sup>12</sup>

[11] [Eph. 1:4](#), 9, 11; [Rom. 8:30](#); [2 Tim. 1:9](#); [1 Thess. 5:9](#) [12] [Rom. 9:13, 16](#); [Eph. 2:5, 12](#)

**3.6** As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so He hath, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto;<sup>13</sup> wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ,<sup>14</sup> are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified,<sup>15</sup> and kept by His power through faith unto salvation; <sup>16</sup> neither are any other redeemed by Christ, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.<sup>17</sup>

[13] [1 Pet. 1:2](#); 2; [Thess. 2:13](#) [14] [1 Thess. 5:9, 10](#) [15] [Rom. 8:30](#); [2 Thess. 2:13](#) [16] [1 Pet. 1:5](#) [17] [John 10:26, 17:9, 6:64](#)

**3.7** The doctrine of the 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;<sup>18</sup> so shall this doctrine afford matter of praise,<sup>19</sup> reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility,<sup>20</sup> diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.<sup>21</sup>

[18] [1 Thess. 1:4, 5](#); [2 Pet. 1:10](#) [19] [Eph. 1:6](#); [Rom. 11:33](#) [20] [Rom. 11:5, 6, 20](#) [21] [Luke 10:20](#)

##### § 3 A. Election is in Christ and for God's glory

1. Both men and angels
2. Preterition (lit. "to pass by"; i.e. they are left in their sin)
3. Because of God's decree (reprobation), which is not based on their elect status, but their sin.

##### § 4 B. Fixed number

1. The number cannot be changed

##### § 5 2. Unconditional

##### § 6 C. Order of Salvation

1. In eternity past (*pactum salutis* in the Covenant of Redemption)
  - a. *Infralapsarian* (the decree to elect first has sin in mind)
  - b. *Supralapsarian* (the decree to elect comes prior to sin in mind)
2. In time (*historia salutis*)
  - a. Elect, effectually called, faith, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance
  - b. These are chs. 10-14.

#### V. *How to Handle the Doctrine of the Decree* (§ 3.7)

The doctrine of the 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;<sup>18</sup> so shall this doctrine afford matter of praise,<sup>19</sup> reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility,<sup>20</sup> diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.<sup>21</sup>

[18] [1 Thess. 1:4, 5](#); [2 Pet. 1:10](#) [19] [Eph. 1:6](#); [Rom. 11:33](#) [20] [Rom. 11:5, 6, 20](#) [21] [Luke 10:20](#)

- A. This doctrine is given to lead the elect to certainty of their salvation as they learn to love and obey God's law (anti-hypercalvinism)
- B. A humbling doctrine for all who obey the gospel



## Ch. 4: Of Creation

4.1 – God’s Decree of Creation

4.2 – God’s Creation of Mankind

4.3 – God’s Command in Creation

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The doctrine of creation in ch. 4 is a logical progression from the focus on God’s decree in ch. 3. We are moving from heaven (God) to earth (creation). God’s work of creation is done by decree and should logically be understood as the first of God’s decrees. Ch. 5 will deal with the other major aspect of God’s decree which is divine providence.
- B. LBC drops “out of nothing” from Savoy/WCF. They are not denying creation *ex nihilo* or active creation (*creatio active*), but are contemplating creation passive creation (*creatio passive*), i.e. the coming to be of the world as created order.
- C. Splits WCF 2 into two paragraphs.
- D. Adds a Godward focus to § 3.

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF CREATION (§ 4.1)

*In the beginning it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, <sup>1</sup> for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, <sup>2</sup> wisdom, and goodness, to create or make the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.<sup>3</sup>*

[1] [John 1:2, 3](#); [Heb. 1:2](#); [Job 26:13](#) [2] [Rom. 1:20](#) [3] [Col. 1:16](#); [Gen. 1:31](#)

- A. Persons acting – Trinitarian.
- B. Purpose of creation:
  - 1. Not a lack or need.
  - 2. Rather, to manifest God’s Glory (eternal power, wisdom, goodness)
    - a. Not by adding to it
    - b. By reflecting it
- C. Act of
  - 1. Extent: The world and all therein.
  - 2. Time: six days
  - 3. Result: very good. (Satan had to have fallen after day 7)

### III. GOD AND MAN (§ 4.2)

*After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female,<sup>4</sup> with reasonable and immortal souls,<sup>5</sup> rendering them fit unto that life to God for which they were created; being made after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness;<sup>6</sup> having the law of God written in their hearts,<sup>7</sup> and power to fulfill it, and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change.<sup>8</sup>*

[4] [Gen. 1:27](#) [5] [Gen. 2:7](#) [6] [Eccles. 7:29](#); [Gen. 1:26](#) [7] [Rom. 2:14, 15](#) [8] [Gen. 3:6](#)

- A. Time: “After”; man is the culmination
- B. Act: God creation man
  - 1. “Man” is male and female
  - 2. “Man” is reasonable
  - 3. “Man” has a soul/spirit (an invisible part that goes with the visible body)
- C. Purpose: “Life to God”
- D. Image of God: Defined in moral terms

1. Knowledge
  2. Righteousness
  3. Holiness
- E.** The Law of God
1. Identified. Law of Nature and Moral law (10 Commds.)
  2. Natural ability (“power to fulfill it”; does not speak to spiritual ability)
  3. Probation: possibility of transgressing (two wills of God)

#### ***IV. POSITIVE LAW (§ 4.3)***

*Besides the law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil,<sup>9</sup> which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.<sup>10</sup>*  
[9] [Gen. 2:17](#) [10] [Gen. 1:26, 28](#)

- A.** Positive law is a law given directly via revelation; rather than a law written on the heart.
1. External commandment.
  2. Present result.
    - a. Enjoyed communion with God and were happy
    - b. Had perfect dominion over the creatures

## Ch. 5: Of Divine Providence

- 5.1 – God’s the Good Creator of All Things
- 5.2 – God, the First Cause
- 5.3 – Providence and Means
- 5.4 – First and Secondary Causes
- 5.6 – Leaving to Temptations
- 5.6 – Providence and the Wicked
- 5.7 – Providence and the Church

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Definition.

1. Etymology. “Providence” from *pro* “ahead” + *videre* “to see.” It literally means to see ahead (like foreknowledge).
2. The word means to go before hand.
3. A fuller definition would be “Divine providence is the governance of God by which He, with wisdom and love, cares for and directs all things in the universe. The doctrine of divine providence asserts that God is in complete control of all things. He is sovereign over the universe as a whole (Psalm 103:19), the physical world (Matthew 5:45), the affairs of nations (Psalm 66:7), human destiny (Galatians 1:15), human successes and failures (Luke 1:52), and the protection of His people (Psalm 4:8).”
4. The difference between sovereignty and providence is the difference between the decree (ch. 3) and governance (ch. 5).

B. After having discussed creation, we are now ready to see how God deals with his creation in space and time. This is the doctrine of divine providence.

### II. DOCTRINE STATED (§ 5.1)

1. *God the good Creator of all things, in His infinite power and wisdom does uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures and things,<sup>1</sup> from the greatest even to the least,<sup>2</sup> by His most wise and holy providence, to the end for the which they were created, according unto His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will; to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness, and mercy.<sup>3</sup>*

[1] [Heb. 1:3](#); [Job 38:11](#); [Isa. 46:10, 11](#); [Ps. 135:6](#) [2] [Matt. 10:29-31](#) [3] [Eph. 1:11](#)

A. The Personhood of God (Godhead) as opposed to fate or karma or chance.

1. God’s attributes,
2. including goodness (no dualism).

B. The Act of ...

1. Basis – “Most wise and holy providence”
2. Four-fold act:
  - a. Uphold
  - b. Direct
  - c. Dispose

- d. Govern
- 3. Aim: to bring glory to God
- 4. Fundamental: the Creator/creature distinction
- C. Basis of providence:
  - 1. Foreknowledge
  - 2. Council of his will

### **III. FIRST VS. SECOND CAUSES (§ 5.2)**

2. *Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly;<sup>4</sup> so that there is not anything befalls any by chance, or without His providence;<sup>5</sup> yet by the same providence He ordered them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.<sup>6</sup>*

[4] [Acts 2:23](#) [5] [Prov. 16:33](#) [6] [Gen. 8:22](#)

- A. First cause = the decree of God
- B. Second causes
  - 1. Also the decree of God
  - 2. But such that things work:
    - a. Necessarily (such as laws of nature)
    - b. Freely (such as creatures with wills)
    - c. Contingently (if/then; such as weather)

### **IV. ORDINARY PROVIDENCE (§ 5.3)**

3. *God, in his ordinary providence makes use of means,<sup>7</sup> yet is free to work without,<sup>8</sup> above,<sup>9</sup> and against them<sup>10</sup> at His pleasure.*

[7] [Acts 27:31, 44](#); [Isa. 55:10, 11](#) [8] [Hosea 1:7](#) [9] [Rom. 4:19-21](#) [10] [Dan. 3:27](#)

- A. Use of means
- B. Suspension of means (miracles)

### **V. MYSTERY OF PROVIDENCE - THE EXISTENCE OF SIN (§ 5.4)**

4. *The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in His providence, that His determinate counsel extends itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men;<sup>11</sup> and that not by a bare permission, which also He most wisely and powerfully binds, and otherwise orders and governs,<sup>12</sup> in a manifold dispensation to His most holy ends;<sup>13</sup> yet so, as the sinfulness of their acts proceeds only from the creatures, and not from God, who, being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin.<sup>14</sup>*

[11] [Rom. 11:32-34](#); [2 Sam. 24:1](#); [1 Chron. 21:1](#) [12] [2 Kings 19:28](#); [Ps. 76:10](#) [13] [Gen. 1:20](#); [Isa. 10:6, 7, 12](#) [14] [Ps. 1:21](#); [1 John 2:16](#)

- A. Ontological problem of divine causality (see Isa 10)
- B. Dispensational problem – why decree sin?
- C. Psychological problem – How could it arise in God
  - 1. Source is in God (the decree)
  - 2. Source is outside of God (the action/sin)

## **VI. THE ELECT (HIS WAYS WITH HIS FRIENDS) (§ 5.5)**

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious God does often times leave for a season His own children to manifold temptations and the corruptions of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled; and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon Himself; and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for other just and holy ends.<sup>15</sup> So that whatsoever befalls any of His elect is by His appointment, for His glory, and their good.<sup>16</sup>

[15] [2 Chron. 32:25, 26, 31](#); [2 Cor. 12:7-9](#) [16] [Rom. 8:28](#)

A. He leaves them to themselves ... sometimes

1. Chastisement/humility
2. Dependence
3. Mortification

B. Genesis 50:20. By his appointment, for his glory, for their good

## **VII. THE ENEMIES/REPROBATE (GOD'S WAYS WITH THEM) (§ 5.6)**

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as the righteous judge, for former sin does blind and harden;<sup>17</sup> from them He not only withholds His grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding, and wrought upon their hearts;<sup>18</sup> but sometimes also withdraws the gifts which they had,<sup>19</sup> and exposes them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin;<sup>20</sup> and withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan,<sup>21</sup> whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, under those means which God uses for the softening of others.<sup>22</sup>

[17] [Rom. 1:24-26, 28, 11:7, 8](#) [18] [Deut. 29:4](#) [19] [Matt. 13:12](#) [20] [Deut. 2:30](#); [2 Kings 8:12, 13](#) [21] [Ps. 81:11, 12](#); [2 Thess. 2:10-12](#) [22] [Exod. 8:15, 32](#); [Isa. 6:9, 10](#); [1 Pet. 2:7, 8](#)

A. Identifies – wicked and ungodly men

B. What does he do? Withholds grace

C. Withdrawals gifts (i.e. Christian ministers)

D. Gives them to lusts

1. The world
2. The flesh
3. The devil

E. Result ...

1. Further hardening of some
2. Softening of other

## **VIII. MYSTERY OF PROVIDENCE AND THE CHURCH (§ 5.7)**

7. As the providence of God does in general reach to all creatures, so after a more special manner it takes care of His church, and disposes of all things to the good thereof.<sup>23</sup>

[23] [1 Tim. 4:10](#); [Amos 9:8, 9](#); [Isa. 43:3-5](#)



## Ch. 6: Fall of Man

- 6.1 – Man Created Upright, but Fell
- 6.2 – Original Righteousness, Gone
- 6.3 – Original Sin and Federal Headship
- 6.4 – Total Inability
- 6.5 – Corruption Remains Even in Christians

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Savoy introduces the “covenant of works” in §1. LBC does not use that term here, or in the next chapter. However, it is found in 19.6 and 20.1. LBC adds a moral “perfection” to Adam not found in Savoy or WCF. The 1<sup>st</sup> London Baptist Confession calls this “perfection of nature” and refers to the creation as “very good.”

## II. FALL OF MAN IN HISTORY (§ 6.1)

6.1 *Although God created man upright and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, and threatened death upon the breach thereof;<sup>1</sup> yet he did not long abide in this honor; Satan using the subtlety of the serpent to subdue Eve, then by her seducing Adam, who, without any compulsion, did willfully transgress the law of their creation, and the command given to them, in eating the forbidden fruit, <sup>2</sup> which God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.*

[1] [Gen. 2:16,17](#) [2] [Gen. 3:12,13](#); [2 Cor. 11:3](#)

- A. Previous state (upright and perfect). On “perfect,” see Introduction.
- B. The Law.
  - 1. The law is the occasion of the law.
  - 2. The law’s threats and promises.
    - a. Life if he had kept it.
    - b. Death upon the breach of it
- C. Historical act: Satan → Eve → Adam
  - 1. *Satan using the subtlety of the serpent.* It seems that Satan and the serpent are not identical. However, if the Nachash (a watcher) is serpentine, if “serpent” describes Satan, then it could be understood as “the subtlety of “a” serpent.
  - 2. Eve seduced Adam.
  - 3. Both (“their creation”) sinned willingly and without compulsion.
- D. God’s permission and purpose of the fall.
  - 1. Permission: He was not surprised.
  - 2. Purpose: His own glory.

## III. RESULTS OF FALL (§ 6.2)

6.1 *Our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and we in them whereby death came upon all:<sup>3</sup> all becoming dead in sin, <sup>4</sup> and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body<sup>5</sup>.*

[3] [Rom. 3:23](#) [4] [Rom 5:12](#), etc. [5] [Titus 1:15](#); [Gen. 6:5](#); [Jer. 17:9](#); [Rom. 3:10-19](#)

- A. Adam and Eve “fell”
  - 1. From “original righteousness

2. From communion with God.
- B. We fell “in them” and death came upon all. There have been different views of what this means.
  1. Agnosticism.
  2. Realism (Augustine, Shedd). Somehow we were all really present with Adam.
  3. Federal Headship (most). Adam represented humanity, and therefore, his curse became ours.
  4. Immediate/mediate Imputation.
    - i. God imputes sin *immediately* at birth.
    - ii. The process of conception *mediates* the transmission of sin
- C. Total depravity extends to all humanity. Wholly defiled does not mean as bad as they could be, but rather that every part of our nature is tainted; there is no part that remains pristine.

#### **IV. TRANSMISSION OF SIN (§ 6.3)**

6.3 They being the root, and by God’s appointment, standing in the room and stead of all mankind, the guilt of the sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation,<sup>6</sup> being now conceived in sin,<sup>7</sup> and by nature children of wrath,<sup>8</sup> the servants of sin, the subjects of death,<sup>9</sup> and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus set them free<sup>10</sup>.

[6] [Rom. 5:12-19](#); [1 Cor. 15:21, 22](#), 45, 49 [7] [Ps. 51:5](#); [Job 14:4](#) [8] [Eph. 2:3](#) [9] [Rom. 6:20, 5:12](#) [10] [Heb. 2:14, 15](#); [1 Thess. 1:10](#)

- A. Their posterity through ordinary generation all receive:
  1. Their guilt imputed to them
  2. Their corrupt nature conveyed to them
  3. “Ordinary generation” is here to explain why Christ did not have original sin.
  4. They are conceived in sin (but not concupiscence, that somehow the sexual act is evil).
  5. They are by nature children of wrath
  6. They are servants of sin
  7. They are subjects of death
  8. And all other miseries:
    - a. Spiritual
    - b. Temporal
    - c. Eternal
- B. Unless the Lord Jesus sets them free.

#### **V. ORIGINAL SIN AND ITS FRUITS (§ 6.4)**

6.4 From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil,<sup>11</sup> do proceed all actual transgressions<sup>12</sup>.

[11] [Rom. 8:7](#); [Col. 1:21](#) [12] [James 1:14, 15](#); [Matt. 15:19](#)

- A. Original corruption makes us utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil (again, not that we are all equally inclined to all evil, but that our nature seeks out evil, and there is no part of us that doesn't do that. We, however, can be very clever in the way we go about this.
- B. From this original corruption all actual transgressions proceed.
  - 1. Original corruption = Original sin
  - 2. Actual transgressions

## **VI. SIN AND THE BELIEVER (§ 6.5)**

*6.5 The corruption of nature, during this life, does remain in those that are regenerated;<sup>13</sup> and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and the first motions thereof, are truly and properly sin<sup>14</sup>.*

[13] [Rom. 7:18, 23](#); [Eccles. 7:20](#); [1 John 1:8](#) [14] [Rom. 7:23-25](#); [Gal. 5:17](#)

- A. Christians do not escape the corruption of nature in this life. This is against all forms of perfectionism.
- B. Christ pardons our corrupt nature, forgives it, justifies us, wipes our slate clean once-for-all.
- C. Through the Spirit Christ mortifies (put to death) sin.
- D. Nevertheless, our corrupt nature which remains and all of its motions are truly and properly sin.

## Ch. 7: Of God's Covenant

7.1 – The Covenant of Works

7.2 – The Covenant of Redemption

7.3 – The Covenant of Grace Revealed by Steps

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Robert Rollock: “All the word of God appertains to some covenant; for God speaks nothing to man without the covenant.” (*Treatise of God's Effectual Calling*)
- B. This is the first chapter that the LBC really differs significantly from WCF and Savoy: LBC = 3 chs; WCF = 6 chs; Savoy = 5 chs.
- C. This is because, while still covenantal, the Reformed Baptists understood covenant theology differently.
- D. The biggest difference is pragmatic and not in the chapter: baptism. RBs are credobaptists; Savoy and WCF are paedobaptists. But it is difficult to know if the baptism horse pulls the covenant cart or the covenant horse pulls the baptism cart. Which came first? I suggest baptism did and the system developed around it.

### II. Our Need of Covenant (§ 7.1)

7.1 *The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience to Him as their creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of life but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.*<sup>1</sup>

[1] [Luke 17:10](#); [Job 35:7](#), 8

- A. *Distance* is not physical, but ontological (Creator/creature).
- B. All reasonable creatures owe obedience to God as their Creator.
  - 1. Angels
  - 2. Humans
  - 3. Higher animals
  - 4. (personification?) Earth/Stars/Sun/Moon etc. (Jer 33:20; 5:22; Job 38:33)
- C. “*Attaining the reward of life*” is covenant of works language.
  - 1. LBC takes “*covenant of works*” out of this chapter, but has it in chs. 19–20.
  - 2. The focus in LBC is therefore not on what this covenant is so much as our need of God coming in covenant condescension.
- D. What is a covenant?
  - 1. “A formal definition of relationship between two parties.”
  - 2. The covenant is almost always formalized by blood and/or food.
  - 3. Rather than sweeping generalizations or definitions that we must force most/all covenants into, each covenant should be determined by the revelation of God pertaining to it.
  - 4. Covenants generally consist of five parts (see the book of Deut as example):

- a. *Preamble* (Deut 1:1-5)
- b. *Historical Prologue* (Deut 1:6-4:43)
- c. *Ethical Stipulations* (Deut 4:44-26:19)
- d. *Sanctions* (Deut 27:1-28:68)
- e. *Succession Arrangements* (Deut 29:1-34:12)

### **III. Man Receives Covenant (§ 7.2)**

7.2 Moreover, man having brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace,<sup>2</sup> wherein He freely offers unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved;<sup>3</sup> and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life, His Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.

[2] [Gen. 2:17](#); [Gal. 3:10](#); [Rom. 3:20, 21](#) [3] [Rom. 8:3](#); [Mark 16:15,16](#); [John 3:16](#); [4] [Ezek. 36:26, 27](#); [John 6:44, 45](#); [Ps. 110:3](#)

A. “Man having brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall...” is covenant of works language. So what is the covenant of works?

1. The covenant of works is the original covenantal relationship that God created man in.
2. However, this covenant, in my opinion, also extended to the angels and creation itself. It bound all creation up together in a relationship to God.
3. Can we derive it from Genesis? I think so:
  - a. Preamble (Gen1:1-2)
  - b. Historical Prologue(Gen1:3-2:3;2:4-2:25)
  - c. Stipulations (Gen2:16-17)
  - d. Sanctions (Gen 2:17b; 3:22), argument over sanctions (3:1-5), and judgment (3:8-19)
  - e. Succession arrangements (Gen3:15;21-24)
4. The covenant of works (sometimes “life” or “creation) promised life upon obedience and death upon disobedience.

B. “Covenant of grace.” How do RBs understand this covenant?

1. First, we view it differently than paedobaptists who define the covenant of grace as one overarching covenant that began after the fall in Eden (though, their own language in the WCF they begin not with Adam but Abraham) and was administered in stages, the final stage being the new covenant in Christ.
2. LBC defines it as:
  - a. God freely offers to sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ
  - b. Requiring of them faith in Him
  - c. That they may be saved
  - d. Promising to give to all those ordained to eternal life, his HS

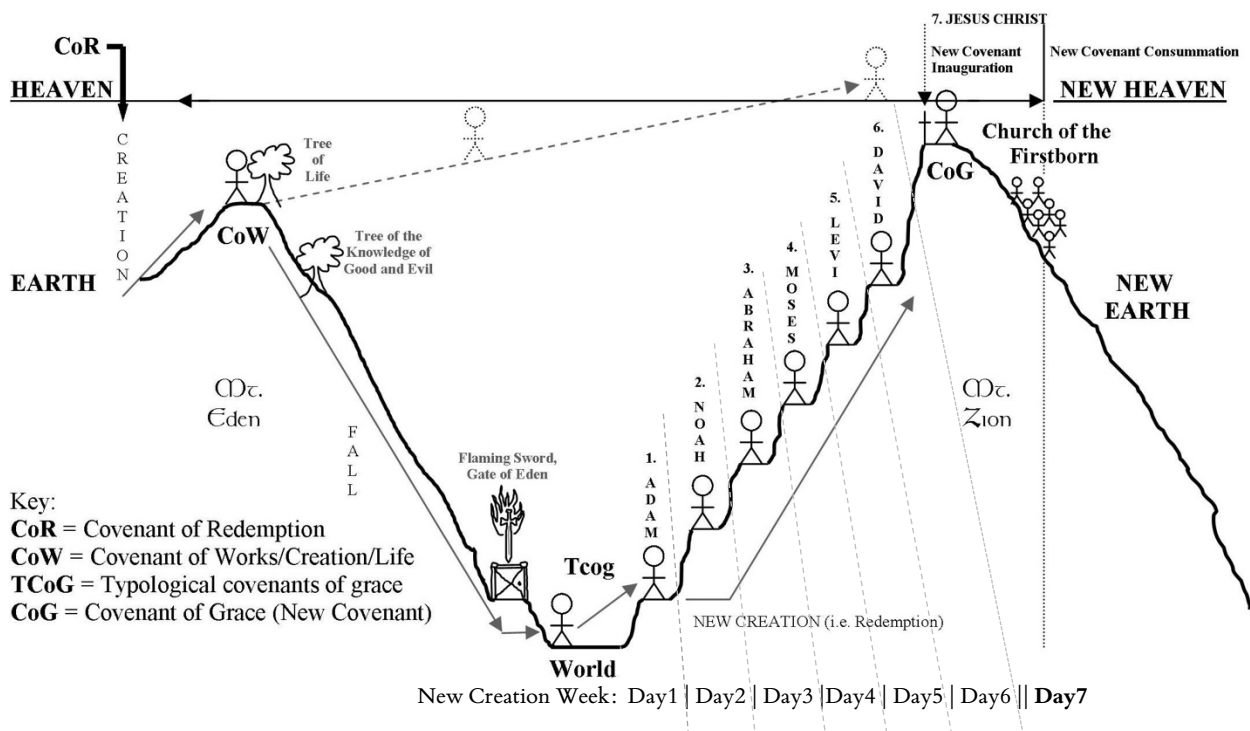
- e. Who makes them willing and able to believe
- 3. “Ordained to eternal life” is the language of the Covenant of Redemption (see below).

#### IV. Covenant of Grace (§ 6.3)

7.3 This covenant is revealed in the gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman,<sup>5</sup> and afterwards by farther steps, until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament;<sup>6</sup> and it is founded in that eternal covenant transaction that was between the Father and the Son about the redemption of the elect;<sup>7</sup> and it is alone by the grace of this covenant that all the posterity of fallen Adam that ever were saved did obtain life and blessed immortality, man being now utterly incapable of acceptance with God upon those terms on which Adam stood in his state of innocency<sup>8</sup>.

[5] [Gen. 3:15](#) [6] [Heb. 1:1](#) [7] [2 Tim. 1:9](#); [Titus 1:2](#) [8] [Heb. 11:6,13](#); [Rom. 4:1](#), 2, etc.; [Acts 4:12](#); [John 8:56](#)

- A. “This covenant” = “the covenant of grace” (7.2)
- B. “Is revealed in the gospel” (the gospel is found in the OT):
  - 1. First of all to Adam and Eve in Gen 3:15
  - 2. Afterwards by steps (the various OT covenants) until the full completion:
    - a. Covenant with Adam (Humanity)
    - b. Covenant with Noah (The world)
    - c. Covenant with Abraham (The Chosen People)
    - d. Covenant with Moses (Prophet)
    - e. Covenant with Levi (Priest)
    - f. Covenant with David (King)
    - g. New covenant with Christ



C. “*Founded in the eternal covenant transaction...*” This is the pre-temporal (before creation) covenant (Covenant of Redemption) between the members of the Trinity to bring to salvation all those elected beforehand. In this way, the LBC really sees the Covenant of Grace being closely associated with the CoR. The CoG would therefore be the final manifestation of the CoR in the coming of Jesus Christ.

## Ch. 8: Of Christ the Mediator

- 8.1 – Christ and the Covenant of Redemption
- 8.2 – Christ the Mediator
- 8.3 – Human and Divine Christ
- 8.4 – The Work of Christ
- 8.5 – The Godward Success of Christ and His Work
- 8.6 – The Work of Christ Applied to All the Elect throughout the Ages
- 8.7 – The One Person's Work According to Two Natures
- 8.8 – The Manward Success of Christ and His Work
- 8.9 – The Only True Prophet, Priest, King
- 8.10 – The Greatness of our Need

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 8 covers two major issues. Christ and his person (2, 3, 7, 9); Christ and his work (4, 5, 6, 8, 10).

### II. *Covenantal Context* (§ 8.1)

1. *It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the mediator between God and man;<sup>1</sup> the prophet,<sup>2</sup>3 and king;<sup>4</sup> head and savior of the church,<sup>5</sup> the heir of all things,<sup>6</sup> and judge of the world;<sup>7</sup> unto whom He did from all eternity give a people to be His seed and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.<sup>8</sup>*

[1] [Isa. 42:1](#); [1 Pet. 1:19, 20](#) [2] [Acts 3:22](#) [3] [Heb. 5:5, 6](#) [4] [Ps. 2:6](#); [Luke 1:33](#) [5] [Eph. 1:22, 23](#) [6] [Heb. 1:2](#) [7] [Acts 17:31](#) [8] [Isa. 53:10](#); [John 17:6](#); [Rom. 8:30](#)

- A. The paragraph is divided into three sections.
  - 1. The covenant of redemption to save (*Pactum Salutis*)
  - 2. The history of salvation (*Historia Salutis*)
  - 3. The order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*)
- B. Covenant of Redemption. The appointment of God in eternity for Christ to become our mediator. Christ is the elect (chosen and ordained) one.
- C. Threefold office: priest (mediator), prophet, king
- D. Object of mediation: God and man
- E. Actions of mediation: redeems, calls, justifies, sanctifies, glorifies

### III. *Identity of the Mediator* (§ 8.2)

2. *The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with Him who made the world, who upholds and governs all things He has made, did, when the fullness of time was complete, take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities of it,<sup>9</sup> yet without sin;<sup>10</sup> being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her: and the power of the Most High overshadowing her; and so was made of a woman of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David according to the Scriptures;<sup>11</sup> so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures 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.<sup>12</sup>*

[9] [John 1:14](#); [Gal. 4:4](#) [10] [Rom. 8:3](#); [Heb. 2:14,16,17, 4:15](#) [11] [Matt. 1:22, 23](#) [12] [Luke 1:27, 31, 35](#); [Rom. 9:5](#); [1 Tim. 2:5](#)

- A. Full Deity
  - 1. Personal identity



- 2. Divine nature
- 3. Creator
- B. True and Full Humanity
- C. Unique Personality – Two whole, perfect, distinct natures.
- D. One Person: without conversion, composition, confusion. This is the language of Nicaea and Chalcedon.
- E. This makes him the perfect mediator between God and man, because he is both.

#### ***IV. Christ's Suitability for this Work of Mediator (§ 8.3)***

3. *The Lord Jesus, in His human nature thus united to the divine, in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure,<sup>13</sup> having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;<sup>14</sup> in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell,<sup>15</sup> to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled,<sup>16</sup> and full of grace and truth,<sup>17</sup> He might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of mediator and surety;<sup>18</sup> which office He took not upon himself, but was thereunto called by His Father;<sup>19</sup> who also put all power and judgement in His hand, and gave Him commandment to execute the same.<sup>20</sup>*

[13] [Ps. 45:7](#); [Acts 10:38](#); [John 3:34](#) [14] [Col. 2:3](#) [15] [Col. 1:19](#) [16] [Heb. 7:26](#) [17] [John 1:14](#) [18] [Heb. 7:22](#) [19] [Heb. 5:5](#) [20] [John 5:22,27](#); [Matt. 28:18](#); [Acts 2:36](#)

- A. Nature of his character—priestly
- B. Purpose of grace—“to the end that”
- C. Means of appointment—not self-appointment

#### ***V. Identity of his Work (§ 8.4)***

4. *This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake,<sup>21</sup> which that He might discharge He was made under the law,<sup>22</sup> and did perfectly fulfill it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have born and suffered,<sup>23</sup> being made sin and a curse for us;<sup>24</sup> enduring most grievous sorrows in His soul, and most painful sufferings in His body;<sup>25</sup> was crucified, and died, and remained in the state of the dead, yet saw no corruption:<sup>26</sup> on the third day He arose from the dead<sup>27</sup> with the same body in which He suffered,<sup>28</sup> with which He also ascended into heaven,<sup>29</sup> and there sits at the right hand of His Father making intercession,<sup>30</sup> and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.<sup>31</sup>*

[21] [Ps. 40:7, 8](#); [Heb. 10:5-10](#); [John 10:18](#) [22] [Gal 4:4](#); [Matt. 3:15](#) [23] [Gal. 3:13](#); [Isa. 53:6](#); [1 Pet. 3:18](#) [24] [2 Cor. 5:21](#) [25] [Matt. 26:37,38](#); [Luke 22:44](#); [Matt. 27:46](#) [26] [Acts 13:37](#) [27] [1 Cor. 15:3, 4](#) [28] [John 20:25, 27](#) [29] [Mark 16:19](#); [Acts 1:9-11](#) [30] [Rom. 8:34](#); [Heb. 9:24](#) [31] [Acts 10:42](#); [Rom. 14:9, 10](#); [Acts 1:11](#); [2 Pet. 2:4](#)

- A. Active/passive obedience
  - 1. Active obedience is his perfect sinless life and ministry and work
  - 2. Passive obedience is his atoning death on the cross
- B. His death: the whole man
- C. His resurrection: same body
- D. His ascension
- E. His return (This is all the language of the Apostle's Creed)

#### ***VI. Godward Success of His Work (§ 8.5)***

5. *The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself, which He through the eternal Spirit once offered up to God, has fully satisfied the justice of God,<sup>32</sup> procured reconciliation, and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father has given unto Him<sup>33</sup>.*

[32] [Heb. 9:14, 10:14](#); [Rom. 3:25, 26](#) [33] [John 17:2](#); [Heb. 9:15](#)

- A. Satisfaction of God’s justice (particular redemption, i.e. 3.6)
- B. Purchase of eternal redemption

### **VII. Retrospective Benefits of His Work (§ 8.6)**

6. *Although the price of redemption was not actually paid by Christ until after His incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefit thereof were communicated to the elect in all ages, successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices wherein He was revealed, and signified to be the seed which should bruise the serpent’s head;<sup>34</sup> and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,<sup>35</sup> being the same yesterday, and today and for ever<sup>36</sup>.*

[34] [1 Cor. 4:10](#); [Heb. 4:2](#); [1 Pet. 1:10, 11](#) [35] [Rev. 13:8](#) [36] [Heb. 13:8](#)

- A. The price was paid at his death, not in eternity past (anti eternal-justification)
- B. But the elect in ages past received the benefits of this work, even though it had not happened yet, because the plan and purposes of God could not be thwarted.

### **VIII. Clarification to Avoid Heretical Confusion (§ 8.7)**

7. *Christ, in the work of mediation, acts 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<sup>37</sup>.*

[37] [John 3:13](#); [Acts 20:28](#)

- A. The work of Christ is done by one Person with two inseparable natures. Particularly against Nestorianism.
- B. We must not split the natures of Christ into parts, thereby dividing the Person. A good example is the historical confession that “Mary is the mother of God.”

### **IX. Manward Success of His Work (§ 8.8)**

8. *To all those for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption, He does certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them;<sup>38</sup> uniting them to Himself by His Spirit, revealing to them, in and by His Word, the mystery of salvation, persuading them to believe and obey,<sup>39</sup> governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit,<sup>40</sup> and overcoming all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom,<sup>41</sup> in such manner and ways as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation; and all of free and absolute grace, without any condition foreseen in them to procure it<sup>42</sup>.*

[38] [John 6:37, 10:15, 16, 17:9](#); [Rom. 5:10](#) [39] [John 17:6](#); [Eph. 1:9](#); [1 John 5:20](#) [40] [Rom. 8:9, 14](#) [41] [Ps. 110:1](#); [1 Cor. 15:25, 26](#) [42] [John 3:8](#); [Eph. 1:8](#)

- A. Application of Salvation: obtained and applied
- B. Prophet, priest, king
- C. Basis—The free grace of God

### **X. Exclusive Office/Position of Christ (§ 8.9)**

9. *This office of mediator between God and man is proper only to Christ, who is the prophet, priest, and king of the church of God; and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof, transferred from Him to any other<sup>43</sup>.*

[43] [1 Tim. 2:5](#)

- A. There is no co-mediatrix (i.e. Mary)
- B. Anyone who might take the term “priest” is not a priest in the same sense Christ is. All of us are a priesthood of believers, but not as the High Priest.

## ***XI. The Magnitude of our Need (§ 8.10)***

10. *This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of His prophetic office;<sup>44</sup> and in respect of our alienation from God, and imperfection of the best of our services, we need His priestly office to reconcile us and present us acceptable unto God;<sup>45</sup> and in respect to our averseness and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need His kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to His heavenly kingdom<sup>46</sup>.*

[44] [John 1:18](#) [45] [Col. 1:21](#); [Gal. 5:17](#) [46] [John 16:8](#); [Ps. 110:3](#); [Luke 1:74, 75](#)

- A. Our ignorance: We need a Prophet (He teaches)
- B. Our alienation: We need a Priest (He intercedes)
- C. Our weakness: We need a King (He rescues)

## Ch. 9: Of Freewill

9.1 – The Will Defined

9.2 – Man and his Will Before the Fall

9.3 – Man and his Will After the Fall

9.4 – Man and his Will After Salvation

9.5 – Man and his Will in Glorification/Eternity

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 9 deals one of the most misunderstood, not to mention abused, topics on all of theology—Freewill. TULIP can be helpful here as a backdrop. TULIP actually goes out of the order of the Synod of Dort’s Five Points of Calvinism. Its order is a logical order. Many people think that the opposite of freewill is predestination, hence, everyone pits the two against one another. This is quite incorrect. The opposite of freewill is the bondage of the will (as Martin Luther called it). If predestination is the opposite of freewill, then the opposite of freewill is no-will, in other words, people are robots. But if bondage is the opposite, then the issue is not whether we have a will (per the predestination opposite), but whether it is free or a slave, spiritually speaking.

- A. This discussion is subsumed under “covenant.” It therefore deals with man’s relationship to covenantal grace and works in his various states of existence
- B. Lost men are stuck in Paragraph 3.
- C. There is virtually no difference in the three Confessions on this Paragraph.
- D. The chapter takes us through human nature in its fourfold state:

Pre-Fall Man	Post-Fall Man	Reborn Man	Glorified Man
able to sin able to not sin	able to sin unable to not sin	able to sin able to not sin	able to not sin unable to sin
<b>Augustine</b> ( <i>posse peccare, posse non peccare</i> )	( <i>non posse non peccare</i> )	( <i>posse non peccare</i> )	( <i>non posse peccare</i> )

## II. General Statement about Man’s Will (§ 9.1)

1. God has endued the will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is neither forced, nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.<sup>1</sup>

[1] [Matt. 17:12](#); [James 1:14](#); [Deut. 30:19](#)

- A. God. Whatever it says about man is based upon God.
- B. “endued the will of man.” God’s act.  
Endue: to invest or endow with dignities. To invest with a power or quality.
- C. Object of endowment is the will. In other words, we confess that humans have a will.

D. Nature of endowment:

1. It is inherent to our constitution (*libertas naturae*)
2. *Libertas arbitrium*. Muller defines: **liberum arbitrium**: *free choice*; often loosely and incorrectly rendered “free will.” Lutherans and Reformed agree that the faculty of will, the *voluntas* (q.v.), is itself free and that the bondage into which humanity has fallen is not a bondage of the faculty of will as such. No human being is compelled to sin; the will is thus free from external constraint (*coactio*) and from an imposed necessity (SEE *necessitas coactionis*). The human predicament is therefore defined neither as the loss of the faculty of will nor of the inward freedom, or *libertas*, of the will.

E. Nature of Liberty is defined in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Paragraph.

1. Not forced (not automaton)
2. Necessity of nature does not determine its outcome.

### **III. Man in Innocency: A Mutable Being (§ 9.2)**

2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well-pleasing to God,<sup>2</sup> but yet was unstable, so that he might fall from it.<sup>3</sup>

[2] [Eccles. 7:29](#) [3] [Gen. 3:6](#)

- A. Adam/Eve had natural ability to morally please God. Natural ability is the physical faculties needed.
- B. “Potential” to change. Unconfirmed in this state of innocency.

### **IV. Man After the Fall (§ 9.3)**

3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, has wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation;<sup>4</sup> so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.<sup>5</sup>

[4] [Rom. 5:6](#), [8:7](#) [5] [Eph. 2:1](#), 5 [6] [Titus 3:3-5](#); [John 6:44](#)

- A. Fall: Loss to will that which is good. (This does not deny good in a humanitarian sense)
- B. A fallen man cannot prepare himself or convert himself to salvation.

### **V. Man in Grace: Freedom from Bondage (§ 9.4)**

4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, He frees him from his natural bondage under sin,<sup>7</sup> and by His grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good;<sup>8</sup> yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruptions, he does not perfectly, nor only will, that which is good, but does also will that which is evil.<sup>9</sup>

[7] [Col. 1:13](#); [John 8:36](#) [8] [Phil. 2:13](#) [9] [Rom. 7:15](#), [18](#), [19](#), [21](#), [23](#)

- A. God converts sinners.
  1. Frees them from natural bondage,
  2. Enables them to freely do spiritual good.
- B. Carefully stated. Not “does only good.”

### **VI. The Will is immutable in glory (§ 9.5)**

5. This will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone in the state of glory only.<sup>10</sup>

[10] [Eph. 4:13](#)

## Ch.10: Of Effectual Calling

10.1 – Effectual Calling Defined

10.2 – God as the Source of the Call

10.3 – Elect Infants

10.4 – Non-Elect Individuals

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 10 deals with effectual calling. This doctrine is to be understood against the backdrop of the general call of the gospel that goes out to anyone who hears it. That call is both sincere and well-meant (the “free offer” of the Gospel as the Puritans called it) by God, even though it does not save everyone. Effectual calling does save all that it is intended to save. The two callings are not in disagreement, but are sent out for different purposes. Along with the atonement, it is sometimes stated that God would never, for example, love the entire world, call the entire world, but only die for some of it. Or another one is that God would not love everyone, die for everyone, but not call everyone. That would mean the Trinity is not working together in harmony. This simplistic view of salvation is sometimes set forward by Arminians to deny certain tenants of Calvinism, and by certain Calvinists to deny certain tenants of Arminians that other Calvinists also agree with. It is better to see the Triune Persons as working in lock-step according to two columns of people (the elect and the non-elect), each harmoniously with the other, but according to their own distinct purposes for each group:

<b>God’s Multi-Faceted Love as Funneled through the Death of Christ</b> <i>A Moderate Calvinist Reading of Certain Texts</i>		
	<b>The World (non-salvific love)</b>	<b>The Elect (salvific love)</b>
<b>The Father</b>	Does not delight in the death of the Wicked (Ezek 33:11) Gives blessings to the children of Adam (Matt 5:45) Will redeem the <i>kosmos</i> (Rom 8:21) Has general love for all mankind (John 3:16)	Gives the Son a limited number of people (John 6:39) Grants faith and belief to a limited number of people (Eph 2:8-9; Php 1:29) Has special love for the elect (John 3:16)
<b>The Son</b>	Weeps over Jerusalem (“who killed the prophets;” Matt 23:37) Lifted up as a propitiation for the sins of the world (John 3:14-15; 1 Jn 2:2)	Loves his bride with a special love (Eph 5:25; Rev 19:7) Will lose none that the Father has given him (Eph 5:25; John 6:39)
<b>The Spirit</b>	Calls all men with a general calling, and means it (Matt 22:14)	Calls the elect with an effectual calling (Acts 13:48)

## ***II. Effectual Calling Defined (§ 10.1)***

1. Those whom God hath predestinated unto life, He is pleased in His appointed, and accepted time, effectually to call,<sup>1</sup> by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; <sup>2</sup> enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; <sup>3</sup> taking away their heart of stone, and giving to them a heart of flesh;<sup>4</sup> renewing their wills, and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; <sup>5</sup> yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.<sup>6</sup>

[1] [Rom. 8:30, 11:7](#); [Eph. 1:10, 11](#); [2 Thess. 2:13, 14](#) [2] [Eph. 2:1-6](#) [3] [Acts 26:18](#); [Eph. 1:17, 18](#) [4] [Ezek. 36:26](#) [5] [Deut. 30:6](#); [Ezek. 36:27](#); [Eph. 1:19](#) [6] [Ps. 110:3](#); [Song. 1:4](#)

- A. Definition includes calling, regeneration, and conversion
- B. The action of effectual calling is rooted in predestination
- C. The means of the calling:
  - 1. Word/spirit (outward)
  - 2. mind/heart/will (inward)
    - a. Enlightenment of the mind
    - b. New heart
    - c. Renewed will
- D. Freedom and willingness

## ***III. Source of the Call (§ 10.2)***

2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, nor from any power or agency in the creature,<sup>7</sup> being wholly passive therein, being dead in sins and trespasses, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit; <sup>8</sup> he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it, and that by no less power than that which raised up Christ from the dead.<sup>9</sup>

[7] [2 Tim. 1:9](#); [Eph. 2:8](#) [8] [1 Cor. 2:14](#); [Eph. 2:5](#); [John 5:25](#) [9] [Eph. 1:19, 20](#)

- A. This is the antidote to Roman Catholic and Arminian semi-pelagianism (synergism = cooperation)
- B. From God alone
- C. Not based on looking into the future (wrong understanding of foreknowledge)
- D. Act of the Holy Spirit
- E. Resurrection power: Imputation of new life

## ***IV. Status of the Elect Infant (§ 10.3)***

3. Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit; <sup>10</sup> who works when, and where, and how He pleases; <sup>11</sup> so also are all elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

[10] [John 3:3, 5, 6](#) [11] [John 3:8](#)

- A. See 5.3. God is free to do things in his providence outside of the normal means he has put in this world.
- B. Elect infants. That's all it says. It doesn't say how many there are, so it could be none or all infants. It leaves that up to each individual conscience. It does seem to presuppose that there are at least some, but even this is debatable.
- C. Means of salvation: Christ through the Holy Spirit
- D. If God did save an infant, what about God's justice be compromised?

1. My answer is twofold. First, Jesus died for original sin, so there is legal problem with Jesus forgiving a baby in the womb or an infant that has not committed actual sin yet.
2. God may be pleased to give faith to the youngest of humans, since it is a gift. Also, at least at some point, infants seem to be able to know something about the outside world (John the Baptist leapt in the womb when he was around Jesus).

#### ***V. Status of the Non-Elect (§ 10.4)***

4. Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit,<sup>12</sup> yet not being effectually drawn by the Father, they neither will nor can truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved: <sup>13</sup> much less can men that do not receive the Christian religion be saved; be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of that religion they do profess.<sup>14</sup>

[12] [Matt. 22:14, 13:20, 21](#); [Heb 6:4, 5](#) [13] [John 6:44, 45, 65](#); [1John 2:24, 25](#) [14] [Acts 4:12](#); [John 4:22, 17:3](#)

#### **A. Those who have the gospel but are not effectually called**

1. Recognizes the general calling
2. The Spirit works in more ways that just salvific
3. “Neither will not can truly come” refers to the moral ability, not the natural ability distinction we discussed in ch. 9

#### **B. Those who do not have the Gospel aren’t saved because they refuse to obey God even though they know him and right from wrong**



## Ch.11: Of Justification

- 11.1 – What is Justification
- 11.2 – Justification and Faith
- 11.3 – Basis of Justification
- 11.4 – Justification and Eternity/Time
- 11.5 – Fruit of Justification
- 11.6 – Justification and the OT

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 11 deals with Justification, the doctrine upon which the church stands or falls, as the Reformers put it. Justification is how God saves an individual. It is a legal, courtroom term dealing with a verdict from a judge. The Reformed Baptists made no changes to this doctrine from Savoy or Westminster.

### II. Nature of Justification (§ 11.1)

1. Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies, <sup>1</sup> not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; <sup>2</sup> not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone;<sup>3</sup> not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death for their whole and sole righteousness by faith, <sup>4</sup> which faith they have not of themselves; it is the gift of God.<sup>5</sup>

[1] [Rom. 3:24, 8:30](#) [2] [Rom. 4:5-8, Eph. 1:7](#) [3] [1 Cor. 1:30,31, Rom. 5:17-19](#) [4] [Phil. 3:8, 9; Eph. 2:8-10](#) [5] [John 1:12, Rom. 5:17](#)

A. Relationship to effectual calling (it necessarily follows)

B. 3 denials, 3 affirmations

1. Not infusion, but pardoning (anti-Papists, Socinians, Quakers). Not our own righteousness, but Christ's
2. Not for something done in them, but for Christ's sake. Justification is forensic, judicial
3. Not by human act, but by Christ's act. Faith is the instrumental cause of salvation.

	Definition	Example	Salvation (see <i>Inst.</i> 3.14.17)
<b>Material cause</b>	That out of which something is made.	The stone out of which a statue is carved.	Redemption in Christ
<b>Formal cause</b>	The design or idea followed in the process of making something.	A sketch made by the sculptor as a pattern for the sculpture.	The Decrees of God, Christ and his Righteousness
<b>Final cause</b>	The purpose for which something is made.	The reason why the sculptor is doing the sculpture.	Divine Justice and Goodness
<b>Efficient cause</b>	The chief agent causing something to be made.	The sculptor.	The mercy and grace of God
<b>Instrumental cause</b>	The means or instrument by which something is made.	The sculptor's chisel.	Faith in Christ

C. Imputation of Christ's righteousness

1. Active obedience
2. Passive obedience (suffering)

D. Dependent upon Christ alone

E. Divine source: The gift of God

**III. Justification and Faith (§ 11.2)**

2. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification;<sup>6</sup> yet is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but works by love.<sup>7</sup>

[6] [Rom. 3:28](#) [7] [Gal.5:6](#), [James 2:17](#), [22](#), [26](#)

A. Alone

B. Not Alone

**IV. Basis of Justification: Work of Christ (§ 11.3)**

3. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those who are justified; and did, by the sacrifice of himself in the blood of his cross, undergoing in their stead the penalty due to them, make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf;<sup>8</sup> yet, in as much as he was given by the Father for them, and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them,<sup>9</sup> their justification is only of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.<sup>10</sup>

[8] [Heb. 10:14](#); [1 Pet. 1:18](#), [19](#); [Isa. 53:5](#), [6](#) [9] [Rom. 8:32](#); [2 Cor. 5:21](#) [10] [Rom. 3:26](#); [Eph. 1:6](#), [7](#); [2:7](#)

A. Double focus of Christ's work

1. He paid the debt
2. He endured the punishment

B. Father's relationship to Justification: to satisfy his wrath. God saves us from God.

C. Justice is by free grace

1. Justice is glorified
2. Grace is glorified

**V. Justification in Eternity and Time (§ 11.4)**

4. God did from all eternity decree to justify all the elect,<sup>11</sup> and Christ did in the fullness of time die for their sins, and rise again for their justification;<sup>12</sup> nevertheless, they are not justified personally, until the Holy Spirit in time does actually apply Christ to them.<sup>13</sup>

[11] [Gal. 3:8](#), [1 Pet. 1:2](#), [1 Tim. 2:6](#) [12] [Rom. 4:25](#) [13] [Col. 1:21](#), [22](#) [Titus 3:4-7](#)

A. Anti-justification from eternity (in *pactum* and *historia*)

1. Planned in eternity
2. accomplished in history

B. In *ordo* (order of salvation)

1. Sinners not justified from eternity
2. But only when Holy Spirit applies Christ in their life through faith.

## ***VI. Ongoing Fruit of Justification (§ 11.5)***

5. God continues to forgive the sins of those that are justified,<sup>14</sup> and although they can never fall from the state of justification, <sup>15</sup> yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure;<sup>16</sup> and in that condition they usually do not have the light of his countenance restored to them, until they humble themselves, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.<sup>17</sup>

[14] [Matt. 6:12](#), [1 John 1:7](#),<sup>9</sup> [15] [John 10:28](#) [16] [Ps. 89:31-33](#) [17] [Ps. 32:5](#), [Ps. 51](#), [Matt. 26:75](#)

- A. Forgiveness and Never Falling
- B. God's displeasure and its consequences
- C. Terms of recovery: Humble, confess, renew, faith, repent

## ***VII. OT Justification (§ 11.6)***

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.<sup>18</sup>

[18] [Gal. 3:9](#); [Rom. 4:22-24](#)

- A. Faith was in Christ!
- B. It is the same object and same view of faith/works

## Ch.12: Of Adoption

### 12.1 – Partakers of Christ through Adoption

#### ***I. INTRODUCTION.*** Ch. 12 deals with Adoption.

- A. This is the doctrine Calvin identifies with the mystical union. “By this adoption, this ;mystical union,’ the Lord claims them as belonging solely and wholly to God in life and in death, as God’s people and members of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit” (*Writings on Pastoral Piety*).
- B. The Scripture uses other metaphors for the same thing (some are corporate):
  - 1. *Horticulture*: Vine/branches (John 15:1ff)
  - 2. *Human being*: Head/body (Col 1:18)
  - 3. *Temple*: Cornerstone/house (Eph 2:19-20)
  - 4. *Marriage*: Bridegroom/bride (Rev 18:23)
  - 5. *Farming*: Firstfruits/harvest (1Cor 15:23)
- C. Adoption differs from the others in that it is a *family* metaphor. Hence, the NT will call us “sons” (of the Father) and “brothers” (of Christ).

#### ***II. Adoption (§ 12.1)***

1. *All those that are justified, God conferred, in and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption,<sup>1</sup> by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God,<sup>2</sup> have his name put on them,<sup>3</sup> receive the spirit of adoption,<sup>4</sup> have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry Abba, Father,<sup>5</sup> are pitied,<sup>6</sup> protected,<sup>7</sup> provided for,<sup>8</sup> and chastened by him as by a Father,<sup>9</sup> yet never cast off,<sup>10</sup> but sealed to the day of redemption,<sup>11</sup> and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.<sup>12</sup>*

[1] [Eph. 1:5](#); [Gal. 4:4](#),<sup>5</sup> [2] [John 1:12](#); [Rom. 8:17](#) [3] [2 Cor. 6:18](#); [Rev. 3:12](#) [4] [Rom. 8:15](#) [5] [Gal. 4:6](#); [Eph. 2:18](#) [6] [Ps. 103:13](#) [7] [Prov. 14:26](#); [1 Pet. 5:7](#) [8] [Heb. 12:6](#) [9] [Isa. 54:8](#),<sup>9</sup> [10] [Lam. 3:31](#) [11] [Eph. 4:30](#) [12] [Heb. 1:14](#), [6:12](#)

- A. The Fact of Adoption
  - 1. *All* who are justified. Not one exception.
  - 2. For Christ’s sake we partake of the grace of adoption
  - 2. Taken into the number
  - 2. Enjoy the liberties of God’s children
  - 3. Enjoy the privileges
- B. Blessings of Adoption
  - 1. The Name
  - 2. The Spirit
  - 3. Access to the throne of grace
  - 4. We cry “Abba, Father”
  - 5. Pitied, protected, provided for, reprov’d (chastened)
  - 6. Never cast off (hall mark of true Calvinism): Preserved
  - 7. Sealed
  - 8. Inherit the promises
- C. Result of adoption: Heirs of everlasting salvation

## Ch.13: Of Sanctification

13.1 – What is Sanctification

13.2 – Progressive Sanctification Imperfect in this Life

13.3 – The War of Sanctification

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 13 deals with Sanctification, a most mysterious doctrine. Technically, sanctification means to be “set apart” as holy. Its OT equivalent is “You shall be holy as I am holy,” and is often used in Leviticus for making a thing holy. Those “things” include not only people or priests, but also vessels and objects. The point is, they are being fit for “sacred space.” As temples of God, the Holy Spirit comes into us (and the church) and sets us apart through Christ’s death to make us fit for his presence. This takes place in two stages: a definitive once-for-all sanctification and an ongoing war that the Christian must (and will) wage in this life.

### **II. Sanctification Defined (§ 13.1)**

*1. They who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, are also farther sanctified, really and personally, through the same virtue, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

[\(Acts 20:32; Rom 6:5, 6; John 17:17; Eph 3:16-19; 1Th 5:21-23; Rom 6:14; Gal 5:24; Col 1:11; 2Cor 7:1; Heb 12:14\)](#)

#### A. Definitive Sanctification.

1. *Defined.* “Dominion of sin is destroyed.” No longer slaves to sin (Rom 6).
  - a. Justification: The *penalty* of sin is destroyed.
  - b. Sanctification: The *power* of sin is destroyed.
  - c. Glorification: The *presence* of sin is destroyed.
2. *Asserted.*
  - a. Identical here to union with Christ (adoption).
  - b. Based on *ordo* (order of salvation): union, effectual calling, regeneration.
  - b. Consists of a new heart and new spirit.
  - c. Based on the death and resurrection of Christ.

#### B. Progressive Sanctification.

1. *Defined.*
  - a. Lusts are “more and more weakened and mortified” (put to death).
  - b. Saving graces are “more and more quickened and strengthened.”
  - c. It must (this is not a command, but a fact) happen, without it “no man shall see the Lord.”
2. *Asserted.*
  - a. Based upon the sacrificial death of Christ (see Leviticus) and resurrection.
  - b. Through the Word and Spirit dwelling in us.
  - b. Is real and personal

c. Done by the Word and Spirit

### ***III. Sanctification Imperfect in this Life (§ 13.2)***

2. *This sanctification is throughout the whole man, yet imperfect in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.*

[\(1Th 5:23; Rom 7:18, 23; Gal 5:17; 1Pet 2:11\)](#)

- A. Definitive Sanctification reaches the whole man. No part is seen as “unholy” to God.
- B. Nevertheless, “Remnants of corruption” reside in every part of us.
  - 1. This creates a continual and irreconcilable war
  - 2. The war is between the flesh and Spirit.
- C. Therefore, Progressive Sanctification remains incomplete in *all* of us until death.

### ***IV. Sanctification’s Upward Movement (§ 13.3)***

3. *In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail, yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome; and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, pressing after an heavenly life, in evangelical obedience to all the commands which Christ as Head and King, in His Word hath prescribed them.*

[\(Rom 7:23; Rom 6:14; Eph 4:15, 16; 2Co 3:18; 2 Cor 7:1\)](#)

- A. The War.
  - 1. Remaining corruption can “for a time” prevail.
  - 2. The “regenerate parts” overcomes through the continual supply of the strength from the Holy (Sanctifying) Spirit of Christ.
- B. Progressive Sanctification is therefore a growing process.
  - 1. Holiness is perfected in the fear of God.
  - 2. The Fight is a pressing after a heavenly life.
    - a. We fight by obeying all the commands of Christ
      - i. Our Head
      - ii. Our King
    - b. Such obedience is “evangelical” (because of the Gospel) and not because we feel we now “merit” something.

## Ch.14: Of Saving Faith

14.1 – Origin of Saving Faith

14.2 – Basis of Saving Faith

14.3 – Nature of Saving Faith

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 14 deals Saving Faith. The question comes after we have discussed most of the order of salvation. Why would it do this now? So that as you look over what we have just discussed, you can reevaluate and understand better this most important subject of what true saving faith really is and does. Saving faith must be of the mind (understanding; *notitia*); the heart (agreement; *assensus*); the will (trust; *fiducia*). It is highly pastoral. As an overview of important differences with the WCF:

- A. Para 2. Saving faith is based on the nature of Scripture and the nature of God (Triune). This is an addition to WCF that comes from the First London Conf.
- B. The object of faith is explicitly Christ centered (“have immediate relation to Christ”) is an addition unique to 1689.
- C. Changes WCF to the Savoy’s definition of the nature of saving Faith (para. 3).

## II. Origin of Faith (§ 14.1)

1. *The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts;<sup>1</sup> and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word;<sup>2</sup> by which also, and by the administration of baptism and the Lord’s supper, prayer, and other means appointed of God, it is increased and strengthened.<sup>3</sup>*

[1] [2 Cor. 4:13](#); [Eph. 2:8](#) [2] [Rom. 10:14, 17](#) [3] [Luke 17:5](#); [1 Pet. 2:2](#); [Acts 20:32](#)

- A. Faith is a grace of God
  - 1. Whereby the elect are enabled to believe
  - 2. To the saving of their souls
- B. Faith is the word of the Spirit of Christ in our hearts
  - 1. How it comes
    - a. At first
      - i. Ordinarily: through the preached word
      - ii. Extraordinarily: God is free to use any means he so wishes; it is his gift
    - c. Ongoing “means” (the LBC’s equivalent of the “means of grace”) to “increase and strengthen” our faith.
      - i. Lord’s Supper
      - ii. Prayer
      - iii. “Other means” (baptism, fellowship, evangelical obedience) would probably be included). *Note: Technically, the “means of grace” for the Presbyterians are the sacraments (communion, baptism). Prayer, fellowship, Bible Study, service to others, Christian obedience, etc. would be “means of*

*discipleship.” The LBC is not committed to those distinctions, however it is committed to the means of grace.*

iv. This is all quite mysterious but is rooted in Christ the Word.

### **III. Basis of Faith (§ 14.2)**

*2. By this faith a Christian believes to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word for the authority of God himself,<sup>4</sup> and also apprehends an excellency therein above all other writings and all things in the world,<sup>5</sup> as it bears forth the glory of God in his attributes, the excellency of Christ in his nature and offices, and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his workings and operations: and so is enabled to cast his soul upon the truth consequently believed;<sup>6</sup> and also acts differently upon that which each particular passage thereof contains; yielding obedience to the commands,<sup>7</sup> trembling at the threatenings,<sup>8</sup> and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come;<sup>9</sup> but the principle acts of saving faith have immediate relation to Christ, accepting, receiving, and resting upon him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.<sup>10</sup>*

[4] [Acts 24:14](#) [5] [Ps. 19:7-10, 69:72](#) [6] [2 Tim. 1:12](#) [7] [John 15:14](#) [8] [Isa. 116:2](#) [9] [Heb. 11:13](#) [10] [John 1:12; Acts 16:31](#) ; [Gal 2:20; Acts 15:11](#)

#### **A. Definition of faith**

1. A Christian believes to be true
  - a. whatsoever is revealed in the Word
  - b. for the authority of God himself
2. and also apprehends an excellency therein
  - a. above all other writings
  - b. and all things in the world
    - i. as it bears forth the glory of God in his attributes
    - ii. the excellency of Christ in his nature and offices
    - iii. and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his workings and operations
3. Faith acts appropriately but differently
  - a. We are enabled to cast our soul upon the truth we have believed
  - b. We act differently according to the different parts of Scripture
    - i. yielding obedience to the commands
    - ii. trembling at the threatenings
    - iii. embracing the promises of God
      - for this life
      - and that which is to come

#### **B. The principle acts of saving faith in Christ**

1. Accepting. The Mind (understanding, *notitia*)
2. Receiving. The Heart (agreement, *assensus*)
3. Resting/Trusting/Loving (the will, *fiducia*)
  - a. Justification
  - b. Sanctification
  - c. Eternal life



4. by virtue of the covenant of grace

#### ***IV. Nature of True Faith (§ 14.3)***

*3. This faith, although it be in different stages, and may be weak or strong,<sup>11</sup> yet it is in the least degree of it different in the kind or nature of it, as is all other saving grace, from the faith and common grace of temporary believers;<sup>12</sup> and therefore, though it may be many times assailed and weakened, yet it gets the victory,<sup>13</sup> growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,<sup>14</sup> who is both the author and finisher of our faith.<sup>15</sup>*

[11] [Heb. 5:13, 14](#); [Matt. 6:30](#); [Rom. 4:19, 20](#) [12] [2 Pet. 1:1](#) [13] [Eph. 6:16](#); [1 John 5:4](#), 5 [14] [Heb. 6:11,12](#); [Col. 2:2](#) [15] [Heb. 12:2](#)

##### A. Its stages:

1. Weak vs. strong
2. Assailed and weakened
3. Immature and mature
4. Little to no assurance vs. full assurance (though not to all). Assurance is a subjective state of the mind, not an objective reality.

##### B. Its kind:

1. Saving vs. common
2. Lasting vs. temporary
3. Victorious vs. gives up

##### C. Its Source and Only Object: Christ

1. Its Author
2. Its Finisher

## **Ch.15: Of Repentance Unto Life And Salvation**

- 15.1 – Repentance and the Elect
- 15.2 – Repentance and Restoration
- 15.3 – Repentance Defined
- 15.4 – Repentance and Specific Sins
- 15.5 – Repentance and The Greatness of Sins

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 15 deals Repentance. This necessarily corollary to faith (those with faith repent of their sins) is a total overhaul of the WCF but follows Savoy quite closely. Savoy came first, so why the changes? It has to do with repentance, infants, and their relation to the church. Savoy were Paedobaptists on baptism, but Baptists on church government. Thus, the focus is much more on the life-long (think Martin Luther) need for repentance in the lives of individual believers. Nevertheless, all three confessions seek to confess the same basics about what repentance is and why it is needed.

### **II. The Place of Repentance (§ 15.1)**

1. *Such of the elect that are converted at riper years, having sometime lived in the state of nature, and therein served divers pleasures, God in their effectual calling gives them repentance to life.<sup>1</sup>*

[1] [Titus 3:2-5](#)

#### A. Exercised by those of “ripened years.”

1. Whereby the elect are enabled to believe
2. Exercised by those who have committed actual sins (so, not infants)
3. God grants upon effectual calling
4. Two comments:
  - a. All in 15.1-2a tells relationship between 15.1 and 10.3 in LBC and to provide background of the overhaul from WCF. (10.3 -- *Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit; <sup>10</sup> who works when, and where, and how He pleases; <sup>11</sup> so also are all elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.*)
  - b. Nothing in paragraph is unorthodox.

### **III. Necessity and Provision of Repentance (§ 15.2)**

2. *Whereas there is none that does good and does not sin,<sup>2</sup> and the best of men may, through the power and deceitfulness of their corruption dwelling in them, with the prevalency of temptation, fall in to great sins and provocations; God has, in the covenant of grace, mercifully provided that believers so sinning and falling be renewed through repentance unto salvation.<sup>3</sup>*

[2] [Eccles. 7:20](#) [3] [Luke 22:31, 32](#)

- A. Universal statement of sin (“best of believers”)
- B. God’s act (covenant of grace)
- C. Result → Renewal unto salvation

#### ***IV. Components of Repentance (§ 15.3)***

3. *This saving repentance is an evangelical grace,<sup>4</sup> whereby a person, being by the Holy Spirit made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin, does, by faith in Christ, humble himself for it with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorranc<sup>y</sup>,<sup>5</sup> praying for pardon and strength of grace, with a purpose and endeavor, by supplies of the Spirit, to walk before God unto all well-pleasing in all things.<sup>6</sup>*

[4] [Zech. 12:10](#); [Acts 11:18](#) [5] [Ezek. 36:31](#); [2 Cor. 7:11](#) [6] [Ps. 119:6, 128](#)

- A. It is *evangelical* not legal
- B. Conviction by the Holy Spirit (personal)
- C. Has a Christ centered faith
- D. Four things:
  - a. Humility
  - b. Godly sorrow
  - c. Detestation
  - d. Self-abhorrence
- E. Approaches God: “pardon me”
- F. Determination to walk in God’s sight

#### ***V. Duration and Duty or Repentance (§ 15.4)***

4. *As repentance is to be continued through the whole course of our lives, upon the account of the body of death, and the motions thereof, so it is every man’s duty to repent of his particular known sins particularly.<sup>7</sup>*

[7] [Luke 19:8](#); [1 Tim. 1:13, 15](#)

- A. Life long
- B. Because of indwelling sin
- C. Everyone must do it
- D. Must repent of every particular known sin

#### ***VI. Duration and Duty or Repentance (§ 15.5)***

5. *Such is the provision which God has made through Christ in the covenant of grace for the preservation of believers unto salvation, that although there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation,<sup>8</sup> yet there is no sin so great that it shall bring damnation to them that repent,<sup>9</sup> which makes the constant preaching of repentance necessary.*

[8] [Rom. 6:23](#) [9] [Isa. 1:16-18, 55:7](#)

- A. Result of Repentance
  - 1. Covenant of grace again (God gives it)
  - 2. No sin is to great to bring damnation

## **Ch.16: Of Good Works**

- 16.1 – What are Good Works
- 16.2 – Natures of Good Works
- 16.3 – Source and Practice of Good Works
- 16.4 – Limitations of Good Works
- 16.5 – Weakness of Good Works
- 16.6 – Acceptableness of Christian Good Works
- 16.7 – Rejection of non-Christian Works

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 16 focuses on good works. A natural question that arises after a discussion of the gospel and faith and repentance is, “But if God forgives us of everything, then why do good works?” Or “If what you are saying is true, then we can do whatever we want, so what about the law of God?” So this chapter unfolds one of the most abused topics in the Christian Faith. What are good works? How do we identify them? What is their source? Are there limitations to them? What is the difference between Christian works and works of unbelievers?

### **II. Good Works Identified (§ 16.1)**

1. *Good works are only such as God has commanded in his Holy Word,<sup>1</sup> and not such as without the warrant thereof are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretense of good intentions.<sup>2</sup>*

[1] [Mic. 6:8](#); [Heb. 13:21](#) [2] [Matt. 15:9](#); [Isa. 29:13](#)

- A. Positively: Only what is commanded in the word of God.
- B. Negatively: Good works are not what men make up
  - 1. Apart from God’s word
  - 2. Out of Blind zeal for God
  - 3. Out of any pretense of good intentions
- C. Good works are therefore not subjective, but objective. We can know what they are because God has told us.

### **III. Evidence of True and Lively Faith (§ 16.2)**

2. These good works, done in obedience to God’s commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith;<sup>3</sup> and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,<sup>4</sup> strengthen their assurance,<sup>5</sup> edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel,<sup>6</sup> stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glory God,<sup>7</sup> whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto,<sup>8</sup> that having their fruit unto holiness they may have the end eternal life.<sup>9</sup>

[3] [James 2:18, 22](#) [4] [Ps. 116:12, 13](#) [5] [1 John 2:3, 5](#); [2 Pet. 1:5-11](#) [6] [Matt. 5:16](#) [7] [1 Tim. 6:1](#); [1 Pet. 2:15](#); [Phil. 1:11](#) [8] [Eph. 2:10](#) [9] [Rom 6:22](#)

- A. Reiteration: Done in obedience to God’s commandments
- B. Fruit (the fruit of the Spirit): Evidences of a true and lively faith.
  - 1. We are saved by faith ALONE
  - 2. We are saved by a faith that is NOT “alone” (i.e. produces no fruit)

whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto,<sup>8</sup> that having their fruit unto holiness they may have the end eternal life.<sup>9</sup>

C. Six blessings that believers manifest through works:

1. Thankfulness
2. Greater assurance of faith
3. Edification of fellow believers
4. Adorn and beautify the gospel
5. Stop the mouths of adversaries
6. Glorify God

D. God centeredness of Christian works:

1. His workmanship
2. Created in Christ Jesus (union with Christ)
3. Fruit is holiness
4. Result is eternal life

#### ***IV. Source and Practice of Good Works (§ 16.3)***

3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ;<sup>10</sup> and that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is necessary an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit, to work in them and to will and to do of his good pleasure;<sup>11</sup> yet they are not bound to perform any duty, unless upon a special motion of the Spirit, but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.<sup>12</sup>

[10] [John 15:4](#), [5](#) [11] [2 Cor. 3:5](#); [Phil. 2:13](#) [12] [Phil. 2:12](#); [Heb. 6:11,12](#); [Isa. 64:7](#)

A. Not natural, but SUPERnatural

B. Source of this enablement is two-fold

1. Grace already received (we are already Christians)
2. Real influence of the Holy Spirit
  - a. Who works his good pleasure in us
  - b. Who wills his good pleasure in us

C. This does not put us in an inactive mode (Quietism: a doctrine of Christian spirituality that holds perfection consists in passivity of the soul, in the suppression of human effort so that divine action may have full play.)

D. Rather, we diligently stir up the grace of God in us

#### ***V. Limitations of Good Works (§ 16.4)***

4. They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.<sup>13</sup>

[13] [Job 9:2](#), [3](#); [Gal. 5:17](#); [Luke 17:10](#)

A. The very best Christians are impossibly far from being perfect.

B. Anti-supererogationism of the Roman Catholics.

1. Supererogate: The performance of more work than duty requires.

2. Example 1: In 1 Cor. 7, Paul says everyone is free to marry, but Rome said that a priest must remain celibate to better serve God.
  3. Example 2: Indulgences performed by the saints form a “treasury of merit” which the church can apply to exempt repentant sinners from the works of penitence that would otherwise be required to achieve full remission of the punishment due to their sin.
- C. All fall short of much of the duty God actually requires.

## ***VI. Weakness of Good Works (§ 16.5)***

5. We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins;<sup>14</sup> but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because they are good they proceed from his Spirit,<sup>15</sup> and as they are wrought by us they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's punishment.<sup>16</sup>

[14] [Rom. 3:20](#); [Eph. 2:8, 9](#); [Rom. 4:6](#) [15] [Gal. 5:22, 23](#) [16] [Isa. 64:6](#); [Ps. 43:2](#)

- A. We cannot merit pardon
  1. Because of the disproportion of God's glory and our works
  2. Because of the infinite distance between us and God
  3. They are unprofitable to God
  4. They cannot satisfy God's righteousness.
- B. Our works are always a mixture
  1. Whatever is good is from the Holy Spirit
  2. Always tainted by our sins
  3. Cannot endure God's severe judgment

## ***VII. Acceptableness of Christian Good Works (§ 16.6)***

6. Yet notwithstanding the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him;<sup>17</sup> not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unrepvable in God's sight, but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfection.<sup>18</sup>

[17] [Eph. 1:5](#); [1 Pet. 1:5](#) [18] [Matt. 25:21, 23](#); [Heb. 6:10](#)

- A. Believer's works (as their persons) are accepted in Christ
- B. Not because of any blamelessness in their works
- C. Because God loves us in His Beloved Son
- D. God not only accepts our works, but rewards those that are sincere, even if they are weak and imperfect

## ***VIII. Rejection of non-Christian Works (§ 16.7)***

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and to others;<sup>19</sup> yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith,<sup>20</sup> nor are done in a right manner according to the Word,<sup>21</sup> nor to a right end, the glory of God,<sup>22</sup> they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, nor make a man meet to receive the grace from God,<sup>23</sup> and yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing to God.<sup>24</sup>

[19] [2 Kings 10:30](#); [1 Kings 21:27](#), [29](#) [20] [Gen. 4:5](#); [Heb. 11:4](#), [6](#) [21] [1 Cor. 13:1](#) [22] [Matt. 6:2](#), [5](#) [23] [Amos 5:21](#), [22](#); [Rom. 9:16](#); [Titus 3:5](#) [24] [Job 21:14](#), [15](#); [Matt. 25:41-43](#)

- A. Unregenerate men may do “good works” in two ways:
1. They do externally what God commands
  2. They do works that are of good use to themselves and others
- B. Unregenerate works lack three things:
1. They do not proceed from a heart purified by faith
  2. They are not done in a right manner according to the word (disinterestedly)
  3. Not done with a right purpose (end) in mind: the Glory of God
- C. Must therefore be viewed in three ways:
1. They are sinful even though they are good works
  2. They cannot please God
  3. They cannot qualify them for God’s grace
- D. Nevertheless, their absence increases their sin and God’s displeasure

## Ch.17: The Perseverance of the Saints

- 17.1 – Perseverance Asserted
- 17.2 – Positive Basis of Perseverance
- 17.3 – Certainty of Perseverance

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 17 focuses on perseverance, a doctrine distinguished from assurance in the next chapter. Perseverance deals with God keeping us or preserving us to the end. This is his work, and he is faithful and just and will bring his work to completion. It is a glorious promise for all of God’s children who trust in Christ by faith.

### II. Perseverance Asserted (§ 17.1)

1. *Those whom God has accepted in the beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved, seeing the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, from which source he still begets and nourishes in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality; <sup>1</sup> and though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon; notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of God may for a time be clouded and obscured from them, <sup>2</sup> yet he is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraved upon the palm of his hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.*<sup>3</sup>

[1] [John 10:28, 29](#); [Phil. 1:6](#); [2 Tim. 2:19](#); [1 John 2:19](#) [2] [Ps. 89:31, 32](#); [1 Cor. 11:32](#) [3] [Mal. 3:6](#)

#### A. Rooted in Pactum (Cov. of Redemption) and Ordo (Order of Salvation).

- 1. Flows out of one eternity (election)
  - 2. Flows out of effectual calling
  - 3. Flows out of sanctification
  - 4. Flows out of faith
- } 4 channels of flowing water

#### B. Perseverance defined negatively

- 1. Cannot totally fall away
- 2. Cannot finally fall away

#### C. Perseverance defined positively: “to the end”

#### D. Reasons for perseverance

- 1. God’s acts cannot be reversed
- 2. God continues his work

#### E. Factors necessitating perseverance

- 1. World (storms)
- 2. Flesh (unbelief): doubt, forgetfulness, refusal
- 3. Devil (temptation of Satan)
- 4. All may impede the sight of God

#### F. Facts of perseverance in the face of the three-fold opposition (W, F, D)

- 1. God is always the same
- 2. God’s people are kept
- 3. Names are engraved on his hands
- 4. Names in Book of Life



### **III. Positive Basis of Perseverance (§ 17.2)**

2. *This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election,<sup>4</sup> flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father, upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and union with him,<sup>5</sup> the oath of God,<sup>6</sup> the abiding of his Spirit, and the seed of God within them,<sup>7</sup> and the nature of the covenant of grace;<sup>8</sup> from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.*

[4] [Rom. 8:30, 9:11, 16](#) [5] [Rom. 5:9, 10](#); [John 14:19](#) [6] [Heb. 6:17, 18](#) [7] [1 John 3:9](#) [8] [Jer. 32:40](#)

A. Not upon freewill.

B. Three factors:

1. Immutability of the decree of election (*pactum*)
  - a. Decree is immutable
  - b. From unchanging character of God
2. Work of Christ in accomplishing and applying redemption (*historia*)
  - a. Intercession and merit of Christ (satisfies the Father)
  - b. Union with Christ (How can union be broken?)
  - c. Oath of God (Can God lie?)
  - d. Abiding of the Holy Spirit (How can he leave them?) (*ordo*)
3. Covenant of grace

### **IV. Certainty of Perseverance (§ 17.3)**

3. *And though they may, through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein,<sup>9</sup> whereby they incur God's displeasure and grieve his Holy Spirit,<sup>10</sup> come to have their graces and comforts impaired,<sup>11</sup> have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded,<sup>12</sup> hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves,<sup>13</sup> yet shall they renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.<sup>14</sup>*

[9] [Matt. 26:70, 72, 74](#) [10] [Isa. 64:5, 9](#); [Eph. 4:30](#) [11] [Ps. 51:10, 12](#) [12] [Ps. 32:3, 4](#) [13] [2 Sam. 12:14](#) [14] [Luke 22:32, 61, 62](#)

A. Obstacles

1. Devil
2. World
3. Flesh
  - a. Indwelling sin (the age)
  - b. Neglect of means (powers of the age to come)

B. Temporal problems

1. May fall into grievous sins (like David)
2. May continue in grievous sins (like David)
3. They incur God's displeasure
4. Grieve the Holy Spirit
5. Growth is impaired, heart is hardened
6. Conscience wounded
7. Harm others
8. Suffer temporal judgments

C. Certain result: Believers renew repentance.

## **Ch.18: Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation**

- 18.1 – Possibility of Assurance
- 18.2 – Foundation of Assurance
- 18.3 – Cultivation of Assurance
- 18.4 – Renewal of Assurance

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Ch. 18 is the flip-side of perseverance. It deals with assurance. If perseverance is God's work, assurance is ours. Assurance is the subjective knowledge rooted in objective truth that God has in fact saved me and will keep me to the end. This chapter assures us that assurance is possible for all of us in this age, here and now. But it takes works and many sadly suffer from an entire life with no assurance, even though they are saved and will persevere to the end.

### **II. Possibility of Assurance (§ 18.1)**

1. *Although temporary believers and other unregenerate men, may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favor of God and in a state of salvation, which hope of theirs shall perish;<sup>1</sup> yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God,<sup>2</sup> which hope shall never make them ashamed.<sup>3</sup>*  
*[1] [Job 8:13, 14](#); [Matt. 7:22, 23](#) [2] [1 John 2:3, 3:14, 18, 19, 21, 24, 5:13](#) [3] [Rom. 5:2, 5](#)*

#### **A. Reality of Delusion (false assurance)**

1. Think they are right with God when they are not
2. Deception results in perishing

#### **B. True believers may enjoy assurance**

1. Conditions
  - a. True faith in Christ
  - b. Sincere love to Christ
  - c. Walking in good conscience before Christ
2. They may enjoy assurance if conditions are met
3. May rejoice in hope of the Glory of God

#### **C. Implication: True believers may lack assurance**

### **III. Foundation of Assurance (§ 18.2)**

2. *This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion grounded upon a fallible hope, but an infallible assurance of faith,<sup>4</sup> founded on the blood and righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel;<sup>5</sup> and also upon the inward evidence of those graces of the Spirit unto which promises are made,<sup>6</sup> and on the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God;<sup>7</sup> and, as a fruit thereof, keeping the heart both humble and holy.<sup>8</sup>*  
*[4] [Heb. 6:11, 19](#) [5] [Heb. 6:17, 18](#) [6] [2 Pet. 1:4, 5, 10, 11](#) [7] [Rom. 8:15, 16](#) [8] [1 John 3:1-3](#)*

#### **A. Assurance is infallible**

#### **B. Primary objective ground of assurance is Christ's person and work as revealed in Scripture**

1. First, most basic ground is external: revealed in the Gospel
  2. Conscious understanding of the work of Christ. God is fully satisfied with Christ.
  3. Assurance is Christ centered.
- C. First secondary subjective ground: inward evidence of grace
1. *The practical syllogism:*
    - a. According to Scripture only those who have saving faith with receive the Scripture's testimony that their lives will produce fruit
    - b. I cannot deny that I manifest these fruits
    - c. Therefore: I may be assured that I partake of salvation
  2. *The mystical syllogism:*
    - a. According to Scripture only those who have saving faith will experience the Spirit's testimony confirming in word, grace, and godliness such that self will decrease, God increase
    - b. I cannot deny that I experience this testimony by the grace of God.
    - c. Therefore, I may be assured that I partake of salvation
- D. The second secondary subjective ground: Witness of the Holy Spirit

#### ***IV. Cultivation of Assurance (§ 18.3)***

3. *This infallible assurance does not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and struggle with many difficulties before he be partaker of it;<sup>9</sup> yet being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of means, attain thereunto:<sup>10</sup> and therefore it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure, that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance;<sup>11</sup> so far is it from inclining men to looseness.<sup>12</sup>*

[9] [Isa. 50:10](#); [Ps. 88](#); [Ps. 77:1-12](#) [10] [1 John 4:13](#); [Heb. 6:11, 12](#) [11] [Rom. 5:1, 2, 5, 14:17](#); [Ps. 119:32](#) [12] [Rom. 6:1, 2](#); [Titus 2:11, 12, 14](#)

- A. Believers may wait for assurance. Assurance is not of the essence of faith
- B. Believers may attain assurance:
  1. Without extraordinary revelation
  2. By right use of means
- C. Believers' duty to seek assurance
- D. Assurance brings blessed fruit:
  1. Enlarged peace and joy in spirit
  2. Love/thankfulness to God
  3. Strength and cheerfulness in duties of obedience
- E. Assurance does not lead to sin

## V. *Renewal of Assurance* (§ 18.4)

4. *True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as by negligence in preserving of it,<sup>13</sup> by falling into some special sin which wounds the conscience and grieves the Spirit;<sup>14</sup> by some sudden or vehement temptation,<sup>15</sup> by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance, and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light,<sup>16</sup> yet are they never destitute of the seed of God<sup>17</sup> and life of faith,<sup>18</sup> that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart and conscience of duty out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be revived,<sup>19</sup> and by the which, in the meantime, they are preserved from utter despair.<sup>20</sup>*

[13] [Song. 5:2, 3, 6](#) [14] [Ps. 51:8, 12, 14](#) [15] [Ps. 116:11; 77:7, 8, 31:22](#) [16] [Ps. 30:7](#) [17] [1 John 3:9](#) [18] [Luke 22:32](#) [19] [Ps. 42:5, 11](#) [20] [Lam. 3:26-31](#)

- A. True believers may lose the enjoyment of assurance through shaken, diminished, intermitted
1. By negligence
  2. By falling into sin
  3. By vehement temptation
  4. By divine act (think Job)
- B. But they do not lose salvation if they lose assurance
1. Seed of God
  2. Life of faith
  3. Love of Christ
  4. Love of the brothers
  5. Sincerity of love
  6. Conscious of duty

## Ch.19: Of the Law of God

- 19.1 – Original Gift of the law
- 19.2 – The Law and the Ten Commandments
- 19.3 – Ceremonial Law
- 19.4 – Judicial Law
- 19.5 – Moral Law
- 19.6 – Law as Covenant of Works
- 19.7 – Law and the Gospel

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Having now worked our way through the doctrines of God and salvation, the Confession moves to more practical matters. “How shall we then live?” Ch. 19 begins these practical matters by taking us the law of God. The law is badly misunderstood in our day, and many Christians say we are not under it in any sense. The Confession begs to differ and explains to us its origin, purpose to man, divisions, and relationship to the gospel.

## II. *Law and Historia Salutis (History of Salvation)* (§ 19.1-19.5)

1. God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart, and a particular precept of not eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil;<sup>1</sup> by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience;<sup>2</sup> promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.<sup>3</sup>

[1] [Gen. 1:27](#); [Eccles. 7:29](#) [2] [Rom. 10:5](#) [3] [Gal. 3:10, 12](#)

### A. Original gift of law (§ 1)

1. Its two-fold substance
  - a. Internal/moral – written on heart
  - b. External/positive – positive precept
2. Its perpetual obligation (bound all to perpetual obedience)
  - a. Federal headship
  - b. Permanent obligation of descendants to obey law
3. Attached promise and threat (Promise of life is found in the threat)
4. Original ability

2. *The same law that was first written in the heart of man continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall,<sup>4</sup> and was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables, the four first containing our duty towards God, and the other six, our duty to man.<sup>5</sup>*

[4] [Rom. 2:14, 15](#) [5] [Deut. 10:4](#)

### B. Law after the Fall (§ 2)

1. Same law remained in force after the fall
2. Law = 10 Commandments
  - a. Duty to God
  - b. Duty to man

3. *Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits;<sup>6</sup> and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties,<sup>7</sup> all which ceremonial laws being appointed only to the time of reformation, are, by Jesus Christ the true Messiah and only law-giver, who was furnished with power from the Father for that end abrogated and taken away.<sup>8</sup>*  
 [6] [Heb. 10:1](#); [Col. 2:17](#) [7] [1Cor. 5:7](#) [8] [Col. 2:14, 16, 17](#); [Eph. 2:14, 16](#)

### C. Mosaic Addenda – another gift from God (§ 3-4)

1. Ceremonial laws (§ 3)
  - a. Come are typical of Christ
  - b. Some hold forth moral duties/obligations
  - c. All were temporary, abrogated by Christ
  
4. *To them also he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any now by virtue of that institution; their general equity only being of modern use.<sup>9</sup>*  
 [9] [1Cor. 9:8-10](#)
  
2. Judicial laws (§ 4)
  - a. Belong to Mosaic institution and have expired
  - b. Though their general equity is of moral use
  
5. *The moral law does for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof,<sup>10</sup> and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it;<sup>11</sup> neither does Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.<sup>12</sup>*  
 [10] [Rom. 13:8-10](#); [James 2:8, 10-12](#) [11] [James 2:10, 11](#) [12] [Matt. 5:17-19](#); [Rom. 3:31](#)

### D. Perpetuity of moral law (§ 5)

1. Asserted
2. Theological arguments
  - a. Content of laws (love to God and one's neighbor)
  - b. Authority of God (Law is "holy, righteous, good." If it was abrogated, God would be abrogating his goodness)
3. Christ does not
  - a. Dissolve this obligation
  - b. He strengthens it

## III. Law and Ordo Salutis (order of salvation) (§ 19.6-19.7)

6. Although true believers are not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned,<sup>13</sup> yet it is of great use to them as well as to others, in that as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their natures, hearts, and lives, so as examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against, sin;<sup>14</sup> together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and the perfection of his obedience; it is likewise of use to the regenerate to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin; and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse and unallayed rigour thereof. The promises of it likewise show them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof, though not as due to them by the law as a covenant

of works; so as man's doing good and refraining from evil, because the law encourages to the one and deters from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law and not under grace.<sup>15</sup>

[13] [Rom. 6:14](#); [Gal. 2:16](#); [Rom. 8:1, 10:4](#) [14] [Rom. 3:20, 7:7](#) [15] [Rom. 6:12-14](#); [1 Pet. 3:8-13](#)

## A. Law must be understood carefully in relation to believer (§ 6)

1. It is not a covenant of works “for true believers”
2. It is of great use as a rule of life
  - a. Informs of duties
    - i. Convict
    - ii. Humiliations for
    - iii. Promote hatred
    - iv. Press them to Christ
  - b. Exposes sins
    - i. Restrain corruptions
    - ii. Forbids sin
    - c. Sheds light on afflictions
  - c. Tool of self-examination
    - i. Check on sin
    - ii. Promises show
    - iii. Obedience does not mean we are “under law”

7. *Neither are the aforementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it,<sup>16</sup> the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God, revealed in the law, requires to be done.<sup>17</sup>*

[16] [Gal. 3:21](#) [17] [Ezek. 36:27](#)

## B. Law and Gospel (§ 7)

1. Not contrary but complementary
2. Spirit accompanies the law giving us the ability to obey it

## **Ch.20: Of the Gospel and the Extent Thereof**

- 20.1 – Revelation of the Gospel
- 20.2. – Revealed only By God in Scripture
- 20.3. – Sovereignty of God and the Spread of the Gospel
- 20.4. – Word and Spirit

***I. INTRODUCTION.*** Chapter 20 has no parallel in the WCF. It was added by Savoy and the LBC basically copied it. The Savoy Divines wrote, “After the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Law, we have added a chapter of the Gospel, it being a title that may not be omitted in a Confession of Faith: In which chapter, what is dispersed, and by intimation in the [WCF] with some little addition, is here brought together, and more fully under one head.”

### ***II. Revelation of the Gospel (§ 20.1; see 7.3)***

1. The covenant of works being broken by sin, and made unprofitable unto life, God was pleased to give forth the promise of Christ, the seed of the woman, as the means of calling the elect, and begetting in them faith and repentance; in this promise the gospel, as to the substance of it, was revealed, and [is] therein effectual for the conversion and salvation of sinners. ( [Genesis 3:15](#); [Revelation 13:8](#) )
  - A. Historical Cause of the gospel is the fall of man
    1. Covenant of Works is broken
    2. Men could not earn salvation
  - B. God’s sovereign pleasure is found in a promise (covenant)
    1. Genesis 3:15
    2. Purpose: To call the elect and give them faith/repentance
  - C. This promise revealed the gospel and as such became effectual for conversion

### ***II. Promise is revealed only by God and Special Revelation (§ 20.2)***

2. This promise of Christ, and salvation by him, is revealed only by the Word of God; neither do the works of creation or providence, with the light of nature, make discovery of Christ, or of grace by him, so much as in a general or obscure way; much less that men destitute of the revelation of Him by the promise or gospel, should be enabled thereby to attain saving faith or repentance. ( [Romans 1:17](#); [Romans 10:14,15,17](#); [Proverbs 29:18](#); [Isaiah 25:7](#); [Isaiah 60:2, 3](#) )
  - A. Promise is only in the word of God
  - B. Inadequacy of General Revelation
    1. Creation can’t reveal the Gospel
    2. Providence can’t reveal the Gospel
    3. Light of nature (reason) can’t reveal the Gospel
    4. Not even in a general or obscure way
  - C. Even less can anyone without Special Revelation be saved



### ***III. Sovereignty of God and the spread of the Gospel (§ 20.3)***

3. The revelation of the gospel unto sinners, made in divers times and by sundry parts, with the addition of promises and precepts for the obedience required therein, as to the nations and persons to whom it is granted, is merely of the sovereign will and good pleasure of God; not being annexed by virtue of any promise to the due improvement of men's natural abilities, by virtue of common light received without it, which none ever did make, or can do so; and therefore in all ages, the preaching of the gospel has been granted unto persons and nations, as to the extent or straitening of it, in great variety, according to the counsel of the will of God. ( [Psalms 147:20](#); [Acts 16:7](#); [Romans 1:18-32](#) )

- A. Special revelation depends upon the sovereignty of God
- B. It does not come because of some good present in a pagan world
- C. Spread of the Gospel is traced to the sovereignty of God.

### ***IV. Word and Spirit (§ 20.4)***

4. Although the gospel be the only outward means of revealing Christ and saving grace, and is, as such, abundantly sufficient thereunto; yet that men who are dead in trespasses may be born again, quickened or regenerated, there is moreover necessary an effectual insuperable work of the Holy Spirit upon the whole soul, for the producing in them a new spiritual life; without which no other means will effect their conversion unto God. ( [Psalms 110:3](#); [1 Corinthians 2:14](#); [Ephesians 1:19, 20](#); [John 6:44](#); [2 Corinthians 4:4, 6](#) )

- A. Gospel is sufficient outward means of revealing Christ and grace
- B. But for salvation it is necessary
  - 1. For a work of the Holy Spirit
  - 2. Without it, there is no conversion

## Ch.21: Christian Liberty

21.1 – Christian Liberty Defined

21.2. – Boundaries of Liberty

21.3. – Perversion of Christian Liberty

**I. INTRODUCTION.** Chapter 21 deals with the vital topic of Christian Liberty. It logically follows the gospel. Calvin called Christian Liberty “*an appendage of justification [the subjective gospel] and is of no little avail in understanding its power*” (*Institutes* 3.19.1). John Owen called it “The second principle of the Reformation.” Why? Michael Horton puts it this way. “*One cannot enjoy the ‘good news’ and then live as if it isn’t true for him or her.*” Again Calvin, “*Apart from a knowledge of [Christian liberty] consciences dare undertake almost nothing without doubting; they hesitate and recoil from many things; they constantly waver and are afraid.*” We Christians must understand Christian Liberty so that on one hand we do not harm the weaker brother and on the other so that we will not give in to legalists who insist on turning the gospel back into law. As soon as we submit to human laws in religion, we lose our freedom in Christ.

## II. *Christian Liberty Defined* (§ 21.1)

*The liberty which Christ has purchased for believers under the gospel, consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the severity and curse of the law,<sup>4</sup> and in their being delivered from this present evil world,<sup>2</sup> bondage to Satan,<sup>3</sup> and dominion of sin,<sup>4</sup> from the evil of afflictions,<sup>5</sup> the fear and sting of death, the victory of the grave,<sup>6</sup> and everlasting damnation:<sup>7</sup> as also in their free access to God, and their yielding obedience unto Him, not out of slavish fear,<sup>8</sup> but a child-like love and willing mind.<sup>9</sup> All which were common also to believers under the law for the substance of them;<sup>10</sup> but under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in their freedom from the yoke of a ceremonial law, to which the Jewish church was subjected, and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.<sup>11</sup>*

[1] [Gal. 3:13](#) [2] [Gal. 1:4](#) [3] [Acts 26:18](#) [4] [Rom. 8:3](#) [5] [Rom. 8:28](#) [6] [1 Cor. 15:54-57](#) [7] [2 Thess. 1:10](#) [8] [Rom. 8:15](#); [9] [Luke 1:73-75](#); [1 John 4:18](#) [10] [Gal. 3:9, 14](#) [11] [John 7:38, 39](#); [Heb. 10:19-21](#)

A. Christ’s purchase – basis of Liberty

B. Consists of deliverances

1. Freedom from
  - a. guilt of sin
  - b. wrath of God
  - c. Rigor and curse of the law (7.2)
2. Deliverance from
  - a. world
  - b. devil
  - c. flesh
3. Deliverance from evil of afflictions
4. Deliverance from fear and sting of death

- 5. Victory of grave and everlasting damnation
- C. Consists of privileges
  - 1. free access to God
  - 2. obedience from a childlike love
- D. All believers have enjoyed this privilege
  - 1. Believers under the law—from the substance
  - 2. Believers under the NT
    - a. freedom from the ceremonial law
    - b. greater boldness of access to God's throne
    - c. fuller communications of the Holy Spirit

### ***III. Boundaries of Liberty (§ 21.2)***

*God alone is Lord of the conscience,<sup>12</sup> and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to his word, or not contained in it.<sup>13</sup> So that to believe such doctrines, or obey such commands out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience;<sup>14</sup> and the requiring of an implicit faith, an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also.<sup>15</sup>*

[12] [James 4:12](#); [Rom. 14:4](#) [13] [Acts 4:19, 29](#); [1 Cor. 7:23](#); [Matt. 15:9](#) [14] [Col. 2:20, 22, 23](#) [15] [1 Cor. 3:5](#); [2 Cor. 1:24](#)

- A. God alone is Lord. Thus the conscience is free:
  - 1. from the doctrines of men
  - 2. from the commands of men
    - a. contrary to the word
    - b. not contained in the word
- B. Liberty of conscience can be destroyed
  - 1. By believing human doctrines
  - 2. By obeying human commands
- C. Liberty of reason is also destroyed
  - 1. by requiring implicit faith (anti-RC)
  - 2. Absolute/blind obedience

### ***IV. The Perversion of Christian Liberty (§ 21.3)***

They who upon pretense of Christian liberty do practice any sin, or cherish any sinful lust, as they do thereby pervert the main design of the grace of the gospel to their own destruction,<sup>16</sup> so they wholly destroy the end of Christian liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of all our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our lives.<sup>17</sup>

[16] [Rom. 6:1, 2](#) [17] [Gal. 5:13](#); [2 Pet. 2:18, 21](#)

- A. Sinning under pretense
  - 1. brings personal destruction
  - 2. destroys liberty
- B. Goal of Christian Liberty
  - 1. Deliverance from our enemies hands
  - 2. So we might serve God

C. Following Savoy: no paragraph 4 from WCF

20.4 WCF: *And because the power which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Christ hath purchased, are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another; they who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God. And for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation; or to the power of godliness; or such erroneous opinions or practices as, either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church; they may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded against by the censures of the Church, and by the power of the Civil Magistrate.*

2. The Baptists (and separatists of Savoy) were unwelcomed in England and were heavily persecuted by the government. Is it any wonder that they dropped this paragraph? Indeed, the WCF paints with much too broad of strokes, taking what can itself be an issue of Christian Liberty (it isn't always) and turns it into moral obligation for everyone at all times.