

# WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

Sandy Springs OPC • Pastor Ganzevoort & Elder Robson • March 6, 2022

## CHAPTER VII: OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH MAN

### 1. Covenants in General

### 2. Covenant of Works

### 3-4. Covenant of Grace (CG)

- A. CG need: sinners are incapable of attaining life, and need salvation
- B. CG source: God's good pleasure and free grace
- C. CG features (cf. WLC 32)
  - i. God offers sinners life, salvation by Christ, and the Holy Spirit
  - ii. God grants the Holy Spirit, faith, and holiness to the elect
  - iii. God "requires" faith in Christ "to interest them in him"
- D. CG can be called a "testament"
  - i. similarities: made unilaterally, gifts graciously given, irrevocable, enacted by death
  - ii. but...frequently?
- E. CG purpose: our assurance (Genesis 15:8; Hebrews 6:16-18) and communion with God
- F. CG hermeneutics: it underlies and unifies the story of Genesis 3 – Revelation 22
- G. CG aspects unresolved by the Confession and Assembly
  - i. who are the actual parties to the Covenant of Grace? (but see WLC 31)
  - ii. should we distinguish a Covenant of Redemption—i.e., a third covenant within God?
  - iii. is the Covenant of Grace inward and eternal, or outward and historical, or both?

### 5. Old Testament Administration of the Covenant of Grace

- A. old-CG administration: by "promises...and other types and ordinances"
  - i. pointers to Christ
  - ii. made effective by the Holy Spirit
  - iii. "for that time" (no going back, per the point of Hebrews)
- B. old-CG salvation: same benefits, through same faith, in same Messiah, caused by same Spirit
- C. old-CG stages – *each builds on what came before*
  - i. Adam: CG anticipated (Genesis 3)
  - ii. Noah: CG enabled (Genesis 6, 9)
  - iii. **Abraham**: CG established (Genesis 12, 15, 17, 22; cf. Galatians 3)
  - iv. **Moses**: CG supplemented (Exodus 19, 24—and pretty much most of the OT)
    - a. heavy emphasis on laws and ceremonies
    - b. secondary to Abrahamic promises; functioned as a gospel tutor; much is obsolete
    - c. basis of Israelite prophets' prosecution and historical explanations
    - d. focus of NT contrasts (old/new, law/faith, letter/Spirit) – *be careful with these*
    - e. "republication" of the Covenant of Works?
  - v. **David**: CG crowned (2 Samuel 7; Psalms 89, 132)
  - vi. covenant renewals: accession (cf. Deut 17), repentance (Ezra 10), etc. (2 Chronicles 34)

### 6. New Testament Administration of the Covenant of Grace

- A. new-CG promised by the prophets (Ezekiel 36, Jeremiah 31)
- B. new-CG fulfilled by **Christ** (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8-9)— mediator and "substance" of whole CG
- C. new-CG ordinances: preaching, baptism, and the Lord's Supper
  - i. lesser in number, complexity, and outward glory
  - ii. greater in fullness, effectiveness, and inclusiveness
- D. new-CG is essentially continuous with old-CG (although it brings us new privileges and power)