

## 6. God's covenant with man

### Recap: where are we?!

#### Foundations

1. Of the Holy Scripture
2. Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

#### The decrees of God

3. Of God's Eternal Decree
4. Of Creation
5. Of Providence

#### Sin & the saviour

6. Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and its Punishment
7. Of God's Covenant with Man
8. Of Christ the Mediator

#### Salvation

9. Of Free Will
10. Of Effectual Calling
11. Of Justification
12. Of Adoption
13. Of Sanctification
14. Of Saving Faith
15. Of Repentance unto Life
16. Of Good Works
17. Of the Perseverance Of the Saints
18. Of Assurance Of Grace and Salvation

### WCF chapter 7 *Modern Language version – 1993 – OPC*

7.1. The distance between God and the creature is so great that, even though rational creatures are responsible to obey him as their Creator, yet they could never experience any enjoyment of him as their blessing and reward except by way of some voluntary condescension on his part, which he has been pleased to express by way of covenant.

2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works in which life was promised to Adam and, in him, to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

#### How do you have a relationship with God?

Relationships: Your spouse... your bank

A "relationship with God": but what sort?

A problem we cannot solve: the gulf is too great – the creator must come to the creature and create fellowship

#### By way of "covenant"

e.g. [Matt. 26:28](#) – why "covenant"?

>300x in Bible

= a bond of life and death between God and people, in which God promises blessing for obedience and curses for disobedience

#### A covenant of works/creation/Adamic

God's people... God's place... God's presence

Adam's job - [Genesis 1:28](#)

God's warning - [Genesis 2:16-17](#)

Blessing: eternal and incorruptible life with God

(Noah: covenant with creation is already in place – [Genesis 6:18](#))

Covenant head: with Adam and all humanity – Romans 5:12-21... Therefore, we all FALL with him

- cursed: people... place... God's presence
- guilty... corrupt natures

3. Since man, by his fall, made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was then pleased to make a second covenant, commonly called the covenant of grace. In it God freely offers life and salvation by Jesus Christ to sinners, requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved, and promising to give his Holy Spirit to all those who are ordained to eternal life, to make them willing and able to believe.

4. This covenant of grace is sometimes presented in the Scriptures by the name of a will or testament, with reference to the death of Jesus Christ (the testator) and to the everlasting inheritance—with all that belongs to it—bequeathed in it.

5. In the time of the law, this covenant was administered differently than in the time of the gospel. Under the law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the passover lamb, and other types and ordinances given to the Jewish people, all of which foreshadowed Christ to come. These were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the work of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in their faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they received complete forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation. This covenant administration is called the old testament.

6. Under the gospel, Christ (the reality) having been revealed, the ordinances by which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. Although these are fewer in number and are administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them the covenant is set forth in greater fullness, clarity, and spiritual efficacy to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, and is called the new testament. Therefore, there are not two covenants of grace differing in substance, but only one, under various administrations.

## The covenant of grace

The law did not bring life – Gal. 3:21

“pleased to make...” a God-ordained bond with *sinners*. Praise Him!

= Christ: he IS the new covenant... the promise... the bond of grace

GOD does the work of saving and transforming...

... All who believe: only condition of the covenant (e.g. John 3:16)

...by giving His Spirit to enable willing belief (e.g. Ezek. 36:26)

## Presented in the Scriptures...

= the Bible's story from Genesis 3 to the End  
- glimpsed in Genesis 3:15

- ABRAHAM: Genesis...  
12:1-3, promises people, place, presence  
15:1-21, God commits *Himself*  
15:6, Abraham believes...  
17:9-11, the promise sealed (Rom. 4:11)

- a “testament”: Jesus makes a bequest...  
and we inherit... after the death of the  
Saviour – Hebrews 9:15-17

## One story of salvation

Time of the Law: MOSAIC covenant – Ex. 19ff

- People... place... blessing  
- Gracious gifts... warning of curse  
- Not complete – Hebrews 8-10  
- But used by the Spirit... graciously...  
- To point to Christ and strength the elect's  
faith in Him

Covenant with DAVID: His obedience leads to  
blessing for the covenant people

- 2 Samuel 7, Psalm 132:11-12  
- Israel's kings... King Jesus!

The “NEW” covenant:

(“building a new house”... or “becoming a new man?”)

- People... place... blessing  
- Through the obedience of our covenant  
head... with whom we are joined in union  
- Through preaching and 2 sacraments

**Personal response: for what should we give thanks... confess... pray?**