

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

Q30. Doth God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A. God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Works; but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Grace.

(God, has appointed his elect to obtain salvation by Christ)

1 Thessalonians 5:9: ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

(Mankind in sin and misery because of the breach of the Covenant of Works)

Galatians 3:10-12: ¹⁰ For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” ¹¹ Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” ¹² But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”

(The elect are saved from sin by the kindness, love and mercy of God)

Titus 3:4-7: ⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

(There is no hope of salvation on the basis of our own works)

Galatians 3:21: 21 Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

(Salvation by works being impossible, God has provided another way, by the righteousness of a substitute)

Romans 3:20-22: 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

Q31. With whom was the Covenant of Grace made?

A. The Covenant of Grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

(The Covenant of Grace made with Christ, Abraham's seed)

Galatians 3:16: ¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

(Christ the second Adam)

Romans 5:15-21: ⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(The elect, as Christ's "seed," represented by Christ in the Covenant of Grace)

Isaiah 53:10-11: ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;

he has put him to grief;

when his soul makes an offering for guilt,

he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;

the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;

by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,

make many to be accounted righteous,

and he shall bear their iniquities.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

Q32. How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?

A. The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of truth of their faith and thankfulness of God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.



(A Redeemer from sin is promised)

Genesis 3:15: ¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

(Christ promised “for a covenant of the people”)

Isaiah 42:6: ⁶ “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,

(Christ appointed by God the Father to give men eternal life)

John 6:27: ²⁷ Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.”

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

(Eternal life given in the Son of God)

1 John 5:11-12: 11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

(Faith required as the condition of interest in Christ)

John 3:16: 16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

(Faith in Christ needed to become children of God)

John 1:12: 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

(God’s Holy Spirit promised to his elect)

Proverbs 1:23: 23 If you turn at my reproof,
behold, I will pour out my spirit to you;
I will make my words known to you.

(Faith wrought in the elect by the Holy Spirit)

2 Corinthians 4:13: 13 Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, “I believed, and so I spoke,” we also believe, and so we also speak,

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

(Various graces wrought in the elect by the Holy Spirit)

Galatians 5:22-23: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

(The elect enabled unto obedience by the Holy Spirit)

Ezekiel 36:27: 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

(Good works of the elect an evidence of their faith)

James 2:18, 22): 18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works;

(By a good life, the elect show their thankfulness to God)

2 Corinthians 5:14-15: 14 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15 and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

(The Christian's good works foreordained by God, that he should walk in them)

Ephesians 2:10: ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

Q33. Was the Covenant of Grace always administered after one and the same manner?

A. The Covenant of Grace was not always administered after one and the same manner, but the administrations of it under the Old Testament were different from those under the New.



(The old and new dispensations of the Covenant of Grace contrasted)

2 Corinthians 3:6-9: **6** who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, **8** will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? **9** For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

Q34. How was the Covenant of Grace administered under the Old Testament?

A. The Covenant of Grace was administered under the Old Testament by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the Passover, and other types and ordinances, which did all fore-signify Christ then to come, and were for that time sufficient to build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they then had full remission of sin, and eternal salvation.



(Christ a minister of the Old Testament dispensation)

Romans 15:8: 8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,

(Christ the true message of the Old Testament)

Acts 3:20, 24: 20 that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,

²⁴ And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days.

(The law had a shadow of the things to come)

Hebrews 10:1: 1 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

(Abraham saved by imputed righteousness received by faith)

Romans 4:11: ¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well,

(Christ the true meaning of Passover)

1 Corinthians 5:7: ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

(The Old Testament saints, from “afar off,” saw and embraced the promises of the gospel of Christ)

Hebrews 11:13: ¹³ These all died in faith, ^cnot having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

(The gospel preached of old unto Abraham; his faith essentially the same as the faith of the New Testament believers)

Galatians 3:7-9, 14: ⁷ Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

¹⁴ so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

Q35. How is the Covenant of Grace administered under the New Testament?

A. Under the New Testament, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the same covenant of grace was and still is to be administered in the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper; in which grace and salvation are held forth in more fulness, evidence, and efficacy, to all nations.

(Under the New Testament, the covenant of grace is to be administered throughout all nations, with baptism in the name of the Triune God.)

Mark 16:15: ¹⁵ And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

Matthew 28:19-20: ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

(The Lord's supper, a New Testament ordinance of the covenant of grace)

1 Corinthians 11:23-25: ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The Westminster Larger Catechism – The Covenant of Grace

(How the New Testament administration excels the Old Testament administration of the covenant of grace)

2 Corinthians 3:6-9: 6 who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? ⁹ For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, ¹⁰ the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.

(The superiority of the New Testament administration over the Old Testament administration of the covenant of grace)

Hebrews 8:6, 10-11: 6 But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord:
I will put my laws into their minds,
and write them on their hearts,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.

11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,'
for they shall all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.