

God controls everything. WCF, Ch. 5 Of Providence

[Falls Church – An OPC Family Watch Your Life and Doctrine Course 2020]

We can rest because we know that God controls everything for our advantage and for His glory. See Romans 8:28-29

5.1 We can rest because our God who has predetermined everything, is a good God.

God not only created, but is even now sustaining all things. Pv. 21:1, Ps. 135:6
God's control extends all His creatures and all their actions of every kind. Phl.2:13.
God's control is always accomplishing His good purposes. Proverbs 19:21, Eph 1:11
Providence shows God's character and His glory. Daniel 4:35, Hebrews 6:18
Believing in providence results in meaningful, merciful, hopeful outlook. Acts 15:18

5.2 We can rest, because the same God who created all, also controls all.

Nothing and no one is an exception to God's providential rule. Genesis 50:20
God controls creatures consistent with how He made them. 2 Peter 1:10

5.3 We can rest because God uses means, but can also act outside of them.

God ordinarily chooses to control not directly, but rather through means. Col. 1:17
God always can, and sometimes does, control directly. Hebrews 1:3 2 Kings 6:4-6

5.4 We can rest because God ordered even our sins and overruled them for His good purposes.

God does more than permit sinful acts; God directs and controls them to determine His own purposes. What wicked men do, God ordained, restrained, and overruled for His good goals. Isaiah 45:7 Acts 4:28.

The sinfulness of the actions is only from the sinner; God in no case is the author of sin. What wicked men do, God forbids, discourages, and punishes. James 1:13

5.5 We can rest because God is up to something good; chastising us, humbling us, making us rely more on Him, and making us more watchful.

God's providence is one connected system of governing creation, but there are several subordinate systems at work also. Isaiah 55:8

God governs things. God governs right and wrong for humans. God cares for His Church. Each of these systems is subordinate to the next one. Eph. 2:15 1 Pet. 1:6

5.6 We can rest because God draws those He is drawing.

God oversees mankind, and restrains evil in every single human being. Rom 2:14-15

5.7 We can rest because God has special plans to take good care of His church.

The providence of God pays close attention to rescuing and redeeming His people.
All things are for the good of those who love God. Romans 8:28-29
All of God's purposes have been accomplished in Christ. Ephesians 3:11

How shall we now live?

- a. Is there such a thing as chance, or rather is there a plan?
- b. Do things happen by necessity/fate?
- c. How should you respond? Romans 9:17 and 11:36

The Mess Sin Made; The Hope Christ Gave. WCF/Ch. 6/The Fall

[Falls Church – An OPC Family Watch Your Life and Doctrine Course 2020]

We grieve, and even rage, that in one moment of disobedience, the beautiful world became this broken mess; yet we hope in God, because His wrath toward sin is right, relentless, and bent on restoring everything that was lost.

6.1 We grieve that Adam and Eve sinned when they ate what was forbidden, yet we hope because God had a good purpose in it all.

Sin came and made the whole human race into sinners, dead in sin. Gen. 1:31; 3:6.

The sin was eating. Gen. 2:16,17. 3:6 List sins related to food. John 4:34

What role does the devil have? Genesis 3:1-4 Mark 1:9-14 2 Cor. 11:3 1 Tim.2:14

What could be God's good purpose in permitting the Fall?!? Romans 11:32

6.2 We grieve that right away Adam and Eve died in sin and lost right standing and fellowship with God, and yet we hope because God offered full restoration.

What happened to their communion with God? When?

How severely were they injured in their spiritual lives by sin?

Name some of the parts of soul and body that were defiled.

6.3 We grieve that at birth, we each start with guilt of sin, death of sin, and corruption of sin, yet we hope because God has a solution for sin.

Explain the natural headship of Adam, compare to the federal headship of Adam.

So, what happens to your "account." Explain the word "imputed."

How many persons have the moral corruption resulting from the Fall?

How extensive is this hereditary depravity within fallen humans?

6.4 We grieve that all humans are bad from the start, and we add bad actions, yet we hope because God has a plan for reversal.

Why do we think, say, and do bad things?

6.5 We hope because as Christians we are forgiven and changed, yet we grieve/rage that we still have our bad nature in this life.

When does Christ remove every last bit of moral corruption from us Christians?

Until then, how do we worship and serve God in a way acceptable to Him?

Does the state of our corruption remain the same through years as a Christian?

6.6 We grieve that all sin from the start, and all sin along the way, brings guilt, wrath, death, and misery, while we hope because Christ brings the opposites: forgiveness, covering, life, and peace.

Does a bad desire count as a transgression or violation of God's law?

So, is a newborn baby already subject to death because of his/her original sin?

In what ways should we be grieving, raging, and hoping?

- a. How do you relate to food? How does the cross fit in? 1 Cor. 10:31 Col. 3:17
- b. What makes you raging mad? John 11:33 What made Jesus 'quake with rage'?
- c. Tell of a time when Christ gave you a different perspective - a living hope. 1 Peter 1:3

Such a Deal!

WCF Ch. 7 The Covenant

[Falls Church – An OPC Family Watch Your Life and Doctrine Course 2020]

Because the first deal in Adam has left us with no chance to receive favor from God, we are thankful for the second deal in Christ. We truly live, both now and eternally.

7.1 Because we cannot reach up to God, God must reach down, and He has.

Can we ‘climb up’ and introduce ourselves to God? Gen. 11. Acts 17:24-25

What do we owe to our Creator/He...us? Love & obedience. Ps.100:2-3 Lk. 17:10.

Can we obey and gain God as our reward? Only by His grace. Isaiah 42:5-6.

7.2 God made the first deal with Adam – a conditional contract – obey and you can live.

What did God promise to Adam? Galatians 3:12 Genesis 2:16-17

What are the names that we use to describe this initial deal? Hosea 6:7

Who were the parties in this contract? Who was represented? Romans 5:12-20

What did Adam have to do to get the goodies? What were the conditions? Rom.10:5

7.3 God made a second deal with Christ for our benefit.

Was Adam or anyone else, after the fall into sin, able to keep the first deal?

Why are we alive? The Lord decided to make a second deal. Romans 8:3 (see v.1-4)

How do we know this good news? God told us! Gen,3:15 Rom. 3:20-21 Gal 3:21.

What do we call this second deal? See Westminster Larger Catechism Q 31-36.

What is the 2nd deal? To us dealbreakers, God offers rescue in Jesus. Rom. 10:6-11

What is the condition of participating in the 2nd deal? Faith. Jn 3:16 Gal 3:11

Where do you get this faith? Eph 2:8. See Hymn 472, lines 4 and 5.

What about people who are presently dead in sin? Ezekiel 36:26-27 John 6:44-45.

Did anyone bring himself into Christianity? 1 Corinthians 12:3

7.4 The 2nd deal is the New Testament, because of the death of our Testator/representative.

Who is the head of the new deal, 2nd deal, new Covenant, New Testament?

Christ. See John 17:4,5 Hebrews 7:22 9:15-17 Luke 22:20 1 Cor 11:25

How do we fit into the New Contract? The Father gave us to Christ. John 17:2, 24.

Who are the parties of the new arrangement? Father & Son. Isa.53:10-11 Ps.89:3,4

What are the conditions to fulfill the 2nd deal? Gal 4:4,5 Mt.5:17,18 Jn.8:29 2 Cor 5:21

Have the conditions been met? Yes, in Jesus. 2 Corinthians 1:20

Who hands out the blessings? Christ, by His providence, Word, Spirit, sacraments.

7.5 Since the 2nd deal started already back in Old Testament days, there are older ways of the deal being applied to believers, and newer ways of the deal being applied to believers.

Is the 2nd deal (covenant of grace) itself different in the Old Testament days? No!

Is there a difference in application of the deal before Christ’s death and since? Yes!

What is that difference? Administration. Application. (How we get what He gives.)

2 Corinthians 3:6-9.

7.6 Christ, the Head of the 2nd deal, since His death and resurrection (the New Testament age), gives Himself to us in the ordinary church practices of preaching and sacraments.

By what ways does Christ bless us today? Jeremiah 31:33-34 and Hebrews 12:22-24

What must be our response? When you hear the deal, what must you do? Hebrews 4:2

Wesminster Larger Catechism, Questions 31-36

Q31: With whom was the covenant of grace made?

A31: The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

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

A32: 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 the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.

Q33: Was the covenant of grace always administered after one and the same manner?

A33: The covenant of grace was not always administered after the same manner, but the administrations of it under the Old Testament were different from those under the New.

Q34: How was the covenant of grace administered under the Old Testament?

A34: 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 foreshadow 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.

Q35: How is the covenant of grace administered under the New Testament?

A35: 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.

Q36: Who is the Mediator of the covenant of grace?

A36: The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, in the fulness of time became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever.