

## Lecture 1: 2LCF 7 in Historical and Theological Perspective

### I. A Historical Introduction

### II. Purposes of Publication

“We have also industriously endeavored to manifest, that in the fundamental articles of Christianity we mind the same things, and have therefore expressed our belief in the same words, that have on the like occasion been spoken by other societies of Christians before us.”

“This we have done, that those who are desirous to know the principles of religion which we hold and practice, may take an estimate from ourselves (who jointly concur in this work) and may not be misguided, either by undue reports; or by the ignorance or errors of particular persons, who going under the same name with ourselves, may give an occasion of scandalizing the truth we profess.”

“And although we do differ from our brethren who are paedobaptists; in the subject and administration of baptism...yet we would not be from hence misconstrued, as if the discharge of our own consciences herein, did any ways disoblige or alienate our affections, or conversation from any others that fear the Lord.”

- To express agreement “in the fundamental articles of Christianity”
- To distance themselves from errant persons “going under the same name with ourselves”
- Not to disoblige or alienate paedobaptists

“We are not insensible that as to the order of God’s house, and entire communion therein there are some things wherein we (as well as others) are not at a full accord among ourselves...and therefore we have purposely omitted the mention of things of that nature, that we might concur, in giving this evidence of our agreement, both among ourselves, and with other good Christians, in this important articles of the Christian Religion, mainly insisted on by us.”

### III. The Basics of Reformed Covenant Theology

1. The law and the gospel are contrary doctrines
2. The law and the gospel are successive periods of history
3. The law and the gospel as contrary doctrines run through the law and the gospel as successive periods of history
4. The Papists hold that the gospel is a new law.
5. The Anabaptists/Socinians hold that the gospel was absent during the time of the law.
6. There is one covenant of grace, different in substance from the covenant of works (the law and gospel as contrary doctrines).
7. The one covenant of grace was administered differently in the times of the law and the gospel. (the law and the gospel as successive time periods)

Thomas Hardcastle,

“There is a covenant of grace, and there is a twofold administration of this covenant of grace.

1. There is the old administration which is called the Old Testament.
2. The new administration which is called the New Testament, both one covenant, though called old and new, though called two commonly, but one covenant.”

#### IV. Survey of 2LCF 7

##### 2LCF 7.1

- Covenants are “voluntary”
- 2LCF 7 is not focused on the covenant of works. It was already covered in 2LCF 6.
- The “reward of life” is unavailable except by covenant.

##### 2LCF 7.2

- It “pleased the Lord” – again covenant is voluntary.
- It is a “free offer”
- The covenant is “conditional.” Faith is *required*, but also promised and supplied.

##### 2LCF 7.3

- One of the most unique paragraphs in the entire confession, relative to preceding confessional documents. But not unique, at all, relative to theology.

William Perkins,

“This covenant was first of all revealed and delivered to our first parents in the garden of Eden, immediately after their fall by God himself, in these words, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpent’s head*, and afterwards it was continued and renewed with a part of Adam’s posterity, as with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David etc. but it was most fully revealed and accomplished at the coming of Christ.”

- The covenant of grace is founded on the covenant of redemption
- All salvation in all ages comes from the grace of this covenant.

#### V. Conclusions

- 2LCF 7 is Protestant and Reformed
- 2LCF 7 is irenic toward paedobaptists
- 2LCF 7 is charitable toward Baptists
- We must look outside 2LCF 7 to understand the issues and arguments that distinguish Particular Baptist covenant theology from others.