

Title: WSC Question 88: What are the Outward and Ordinary Means Whereby Christ Communicateth to Us the Benefits of Redemption?

- I. The doctrine stated:
 - A. WSC Answer 88: The Outward and Ordinary Means Whereby Christ Communicateth to Us the Benefits of Redemption, are His Ordinances, Especially the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer; All Which are Made Effectual to the Elect for Salvation.
 - B. WLC Answer 154: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his mediation, are all his ordinances; especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation.

- II. The doctrine proved and explained.
 - A. MT 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Notice that the Great Commission is to be fulfilled primarily through the ministry of the Word and Sacraments.)
 - B. AC 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers...[46] And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, [47] Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Notice that the diligent [daily] use of the outward means of grace [the Word, the sacraments and prayer] in the context of Christian fellowship resulted in the Lord building up His church.
 - C. Christ's ordinances are the outward and ordinary means of grace.
 1. Ordinances are those things Christ has ordained to be used as instruments by which he shares the benefits of redemption with his people.
 2. Outward means are contrasted with the inward means such as the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart enabling faith and repentance.
 3. The ordinary means are those things that Christ usually uses and thus can be trusted to bring us into a state of grace.
 - D. The primary outward and ordinary means of grace are the Word, the sacraments, and prayer.
 - E. The means of grace are not effectual in themselves or made so by a Minister, rather they are made effectual to the elect only by the blessing of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

- III. The doctrine applied.

- A. If you would be saved from the wrath and curse of God due unto you because of your sin you must beware despising or neglecting the outward means of grace.
 - 1. You cannot expect to be made a partaker of the benefits of redemption if you neglect the outward means God uses to apply them to you.
 - 2. God may remove access to the outward means of grace if you neglect or despise them.
- B. If you would be saved from the wrath and curse of God due unto you because of your sin you must value highly the outward means of grace.
 - 1. Thank God for them.
 - 2. Make diligent use of them. (According to Acts 2 as compared with the rest of Scripture, diligent would appear to mean daily or at least weekly.)
 - 3. Prepare for and improve them.
- C. Pray that others may be given access to the outward means of grace.

Conclusion: The Outward and Ordinary Means Whereby Christ Communicateth to Us the Benefits of Redemption, are His Ordinances, Especially the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer; All Which are Made Effectual to the Elect for Salvation. If you would escape the wrath and curse of God due to you for your sins you must make diligent use of these outward and ordinary means of grace whereby Christ shares with you the benefits of His redemption to the saving of your soul.