

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17 & John 3:1-21

Psalters: 349:1-4 – 68:1 – 53:1-5 – 90:6 – 120:3-4 – 425:3-6

The Westminster Confession, chapter 7, par. 3 states,

*Man, by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace: whereby He freely offers unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, **requiring** of them faith in Him that they may be saved; **and promising** to give unto all those that are ordained unto life His holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.*

A. Holy Baptism is God's visible sign and seal of this offer and promise

1. It is God's sacramental token of the God's Gospel message
2. God forbid we forget how *special and astounding* this tiding is
3. God prevent us from erring like the Jews & many Christians
 - a. offer or tiding of life and salvation is not salvation itself
 - b. life and salvation need to become *personally applied*

THE ONLY HOPE FOR US AND OUR CHILDREN

I. Heavenly birth by Holy Spirit II. Heavenly gift in the Son

I. Our only hope: *The heavenly birth by the Holy Spirit*

A. All parents face raw facts of Gen. 5:3 which best parenting does not cancel

B. Two key truths of Jesus' teaching of Nicodemus

1. We all need a *heavenly birth* for without it we *cannot* enter God's Kingdom
 - a. define Kingdom of God
 - b. define *cannot see/enter* (John 3:3, 5)

2. This heavenly birth is the *sole and sovereign work* of the Spirit (John 3:6, 8)

C. Use the revelations of the *old heart* to illustrate the of a new heart

II. Our only hope: *the heavenly Gift in the Son*

A. God's means to work salvation is Gospel of cross (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:17-18)

1. Teaching is sowing *the seed of new birth* (1 Peter 1:23; Canons 3-4, art 17)

2. Follow Jesus' teaching method: *share the Gospel of God's love*
a. go from the *what* to the *why*

b. conclude with *what to do with this Gospel*: vs. 15, 16, 18

B. What is the *heart of the Gospel* of Jesus' life and death?

1. It is God's provision for our other great need: *a perfect record of obedience*

a. we are all born 'children of wrath' (Eph. 2:3; Gal. 3:10)

b. we are *only capable* to make our condition worse (Is. 64:6)

2. Gospel is the good news about Jesus Who brings life and salvation

a. He did this by His 'doing and dying' for sinners (vs. 17)

b. He offers this to all hearers of the Gospel and invites us all to place our trust in His satisfaction of all God's requirements we cannot meet

c. God's promise is *that whosoever relies and rests upon the obedience of Christ alone, His obedience becomes ours* (John 3:15)

Are you thinking ...?

A. All this is so impossible to believe: *how can I trust that this true for me?*

1. His Word should be enough

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (Numbers 23:19)

2. His sacramental tokens are added to reassure us

We believe that our gracious God, on account of our weakness and infirmities has ordained the sacraments for us, thereby to seal unto us His promises, and to be pledges of the good will and grace of God towards us, and also to nourish and strengthen our faith which He hath joined to the Word of the Gospel, the better to present our senses both that which He signifies to us by His Word and that which He works inwardly in our hearts, thereby assuring and confirm in us the salvation which He imparts to us. (Belgic Confession, art. 33)