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ST 602 DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Course Syllabus

Spring Semester 2001

Robert B. Strimple

Requirements

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Requirements

I. Reading
Reading assignments are indicated at the relevant points in the course outline. For maximum profit, these assignments should be read prior to the related class lectures and discussion. Questions on themes treated in these assignments, whether discussed in class or not, will be considered fair and appropriate for the examinations.

All books listed in the assignments are on the Reserve Shelf in the library. Most can be purchased in the seminary bookstore. I have noted the number of pages in each reading assignment as a guide to your planning. The total is approximately 1000 pages.

II. Term Paper
A term paper consisting of an exposition and critique of an influential contemporary false teaching regarding the person and/or work of Christ in the light of the Biblical teaching is to be submitted before 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 11. Note this date very well. PLAN AHEAD. A severe academic penalty will be imposed upon late papers.

The target of your criticism may be a contemporary theologian (a Pannenberg, Hick, Pinnock, or Rahner), a cult or false religion, or even an unscriptural position taken by someone who would be considered essentially "evangelical." Your critique might well take the form of the exegesis of a crucial Bible passage or passages.

This paper is to be TYPED and is not to exceed fifteen (15) pages of text (double-spaced). Bibliography and footnotes (or endnotes) should appear in accepted form. (See Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.) This term paper is to be written in clear, readable English. It may seem unfair to require this of students for whom English is a second language. But Westminster Seminary in California is a graduate institution in which the academic enterprise is carried out in the English language, and thus it must require academic assignments to be completed in accordance with at least minimal standards of English spelling, grammar, and syntax. With this in mind, be sure your paper is carefully edited before submission.

The term paper will count for 1/3 of your course grade. Note, however, that you must receive a passing grade on both the term paper and the final examination in order to pass the course. An "F" grade will not simply be "averaged in."

III. Examination
A three-hour examination will be given during final examinations week. This will count for 2/3 of your course grade.

Copies of examinations given in previous years are available from the assistant to the Librarian.
OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS


THE PLAN OF SALVATION

I. The Order of the Divine Decrees

Reading Assignment:


A. The legitimacy of such an inquiry.

eternal plan (decrees) and temporal execution

Deut. 29:29

"The decree of election, according to Beza, preceded the fall of man...infralapsarianism represented the divine decree as subsequent to the fall." McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, p. 263f. See f.n. 5, p. 469 of LCC edition of Calvin's *Institutes*.


How is it possible to speak of an order within a plan which is eternal? (Indeed, must we not speak of God's "decree" rather than his "decrees"? *prothesis* in Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11--*boule*, *thelema*; Eph. 3:11)

A "logical" order perhaps?

Dabney, p. 233: "In my opinion this (the order of the decrees, RBS) is a question which never ought to have been raised." All the decrees of God were "equally present, and all equally primary to His mind."

B. Historical Christian views of the plan of salvation.

"Who saves?"

1. Naturalism vs. Supernaturalism
   autosoterism, Pelagianism

"How does God save?"
2. Sacerdotalism vs. evangelicalism

sacerdos (Latin) = priest, "one who does the sacred"

extra ecclesiam nulla salus = “there is no salvation outside the church”

ex opere operato  Canon 8 of Council of Trent

The Teaching of the Catholic Church, ed. by George D. Smith, vol. I, pp. 73, 67, 610, 611.

"Why is it that some are saved and some are not saved?"

3. Universalism

a. Lutheranism non-resistance
   Hodge, Part III, ch. I, #5
   Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, II.

b. Remonstrant Arminianism co-operation
   a "naturally retained ability"

c. Evangelical (Wesleyan) Arminianism appropriation ("improvement")
   John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 5:18
   John Miley, Systematic Theology, vol. II, 241ff
   H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology

4. Particularism

Romans 9:19

a. Supralapsarianism

   (1) The glory of God in Christ and His Church
   (2) The election of Christ as the Head of the Church
   (3) The elect Church in Christ (and reprobation)
   (4) The fall of all men
   (5) The creation of the world and man
   Herman Hoeksema, Reformed Dogmatics, p.165.

The Philosophy of Gordon Clark, ed. by Ronald Nash, p. 396.
Romans 9:19-24
b. Infralapsarianism

(1) It cannot properly be objected against supralapsarianism that it would be *unjust* for God to decree an unmerited favor to some and to deny that to others *quite apart* from any question of sin and ill-desert.

(2) But can there be a meaningful decree of election unto *salvation* that does not presuppose sin? Or a decree to *damnation* that does not presuppose the sinfulness of those damned? See WCF III:VII.

(3) What election decree does the Scripture speak of? Ephesians 1:4 (See Institutes 2:12:4,5); Romans 8:29; 9:19ff.

Canons I:6, 7, 10, 15.
Synod of Utrecht (1905)
"Explicitly Infralapsarian Confessions": Belgic Confession (1561), Canons of Dort (1618) *in massa corrupta*
"Less Clearly Infralapsarian": Genevan Confession (1537), 2nd Helvetic Confession (1562), Heidelberg Catechism (1563).
"Neutral": English Articles (1553), Irish Articles (1615), Westminster Confession (1646).

c. Amyraldianism (Hypothetical Universalism, Post-redemptionism, "Four Point Calvinism")
P.S. The Doctrine of Reprobation

W.C.F. III:7 [See p. 65 in this Syllabus.]

(preterition, pass over, pass by, non-election)

"Equal Ultimacy"?
Berkouwer, *Divine Election*, "asymmetry"

John Davenant
Canons of Dort I:5
\textit{eodem modo}="in the same manner"

W.C.F. III:7 1) Sin is not the ground on which the non-elect are passed by; but 2) sin \textit{is} the ground of the dishonor and wrath to which they are ordained; and 3) God's sovereign will comes to expression in this ordination to wrath also.
II. Sovereign (Unconditional) Election

Reading Assignment:


2. John Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, ch. 11 (9 pp.).

3. Thomas Schreiner, "Does Romans 9 teach individual election unto salvation?," in *Still Sovereign*, eds. Thomas Schreiner and Bruce Ware [Baker].

A. The primary point at issue.

Of the historic branches of the professing Church, which have affirmed belief in election, in predestination?

prescience=foreknowledge

- Lutheranism - non-resistance
- Remonstrant Arminianism - cooperation
- Wesleyan Arminianism - faith and perseverance
- Particularism - Exodus 33:19; Romans 9:16

Does the Bible indicate that God has elected certain individuals to salvation? If so, what does the Bible reveal concerning the basis of God's choice?

B. The broader Biblical framework in which the revelation concerning election is given.

1. The final end of all God's decrees is the manifestation of his own glory.

   Eph. 1:6,12,14; 2:7; 3:8-11; Rom. 9:22-24
   Proverbs 16:4; Psalm 76:10

2. Fallen man is totally depraved and totally unable to do any truly good thing, including responding to God in repentant faith.

   Jack Cottrell (*Grace Unlimited*, p. 68): This is "the keystone in the Calvinistic system. This is what makes unconditional election logically and doctrinally necessary."

3. God is absolutely sovereign over all his creation, all history, all events.

   Spurgeon's comment on Romans 9:13.
C. Ephesians 1:1-14

1. Vv. 3ff. = a doxology.

   a. *en tois epouraviois en christo*. Cf. Colossians 3:1-5. *pneumatikos*. The tension between our earthly and our heavenly life (spatial categories) = the tension between our life in this age and our life in the age to come (temporal categories).

   b. *eulogia pneumatike* =

      (1) holiness, v. 4
      (2) adoption, v. 5
      (3) redemption, the forgiveness of our trespasses, v. 7
      (4) an inheritance, v. 11
      (5) the seal of the Holy Spirit, as the guarantee of our inheritance, vv. 13, 14.

   c. *kathos exelexato hemas en auto pro kataboles kosmou* (v. 4).

      (1) This is the first blessing; and all these other spiritual blessings flow from and are guaranteed secure by that eternal choice.

      (2) This election is "*in Christ*" (v. 4).
      Compare 1 Corinthians 1:9 and Ephesians 2:12.

      (3) It is an election of *individuals*.

      Glenn McKinley, *Where Two Creeds Meet*: Paul is speaking of God's choice of certain "character standards" for his Church.

      *hemas*, v. 4, and the personal pronouns in the ff. vv.

      The Biblical warning ("if", see Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 3:6, 14) is not everywhere repeated.


      Cottrell (pp. 56-61) vs. Shank & Wiley.

   d. Relation between * exelexato in v. 4 and proorisas in v. 5 - progression or synonymous parallelism? 
2. What conditions God's election in Christ?

a. Election is in order to (*einai*), not conditioned upon, holiness (v. 4).

b. The source, or motive, of our predestination=God's sovereign love (v. 5-taking *en agape* as the beginning of this verse).

c. What conditions this predestination motivated by love? Not anything proceeding from human will but God's sovereign will alone (vv. 5,9,11).

d. Our *eternal* union with Christ is the source of all our blessings (v. 4 followed by vv. 5,6,7,11,13 & 14).

F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on Ephesians*, pp. 29-30.

D. Romans 8:29

1. A definite progression, order, is in view in this passage. (See Murray, *Redemption*, pp. 100-102 hardback, vs. Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, chapter II.)

Foreknowledge
Predestination
Calling
Justification
Glorification

Therefore, this verse teaches that *predestination is based upon foreknowledge*.

2. If *proginosko* means simply "to know beforehand" (2 Peter 3:17; Acts 26:5), what are we to say God knew beforehand?

a. Faith? Cottrell, p. 61; *Wesleyan Bible Commentary*.

Only a Socinian (e.g., Richard Rice, Clark Pinnock) would deny God's foreknowledge of our faith! But what does the Bible teach concerning the *origin* of that faith which God foresees? Philippians 1:29; James 2:5; John. 6:44,45,65

b. What does Paul say God foreknew? *hous*

Must we assume an ellipsis here? Could God's foreknowing his people be the first blessing in this series of spiritual blessings?
3. Yes, and we see this as soon as we look carefully at the use of the verb *ginosko* in the Scripture.

a. Its use in the LXX to translate the Hebrew verb *yadah*.

*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Kittel), I, 698): "...it also has an element of emotion, or better, of movement of the will...knowledge as a grasping of the significance and claim of what is known, can have the connotation of an anxious concern about something, whether in relation to God or man....the element of will in *yadah* emerges with particular emphasis when it is used of God, whose knowing establishes the significance of what is known. In this connection *yadah* can mean 'to elect,' i.e., to make an object of concern and acknowledgement."

"to know with particular interest and concern, to set one's affection upon," "to love."

Genesis 18:19; Exodus 33:12 (Isaiah 43:1); Amos 3:2; Hosea 13:5; Jeremiah 1:5; Exodus 2:25; Psalm 1:6


2 Tim. 2:19; Matthew 7:23; 1 Corinthians 8:3 (John. 14:23); Galatians 4:8,9.

4. Resulting interpretation: this foreknowing by God is not a knowledge of those differences which exist among men, but is rather that knowledge which causes differences to exist.

a. Note how this interpretation fits the context, both the immediate context (*five* blessings listed here) and the somewhat larger context (Dean Alford: "The apostle, remember, is speaking entirely of God's acts on behalf of the believer; he says nothing now of that faith through which this justification is on our part obtained.").

b. Note how this interpretation accords with the meaning of *proginosko* throughout the N.T. when used with *God* as the subject. 1 Pet. 1:2, 20; Romans 11:2; Acts 2:23.

c. Note how Romans 8:29 is thus exactly parallel to Ephesians 1:5 (compare Jeremiah 31:3).

THE COVENANT OF GRACE

I. The Covenant of Redemption

Reading Assignment:

1. Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, Part III, ch. II, secs. 3 and 4 (6 pp.).

A. Early covenant theology (Bullinger, Calvin, John Preston, William Perkins, the Westminster Standards)

Later (17th century) covenant theology:
   Covenant of Redemption - eternity - Father/Son
   Covenant of Grace - history - God/sinners in Christ

Calvin's comments on Ps. 89:28,34; Isa. 42:6; 49:8;55:3. Intratrinitarian economic relationships not explained in terms of a covenantal arrangement.

Westminster Larger Catechism 31; Confession VII:3 (see p. 66 in Syllabus)

B. Cocceius (1648) - "counsel of peace" (consilium pacis, Zech. 6:13)

Mastrecht, "the eternal covenant"
Turretin, "the covenant between the Father and the Son"
Rutherford, "the covenant of redemption"

Cocceius: A pact between God the Father and the Mediator - task (obedience unto death), reward (a spiritual seed and a kingdom).

Isaiah 42:1,6; 49:5,6,8; 53:6,10,11; Psalm 40:7-8; John 6:38,39,40; Romans 5:15.

Father - the rights of deity (esp. justice)
Son - the mercy of God
Holy Spirit - the power of God, and the grace of God


Heppe, Turretin, Charles Hodge, Shedd, Vos, Bavinck, Dabney, Berkhof

C. Objections

1. The Scriptures themselves nowhere speak of such intratrinitarian arrangements in terms of a covenant.

   Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, pp. 130-1, "the intratrinitarian economy of salvation"
2. The alleged "proof-texts" speak not of an arrangement between the eternal Father and the eternal Son but rather of a relationship between the Father and the Incarnate Son, the Servant of the Lord, the Mediator.


John 17:18,19; 4:34; 6:38-40; 5:30; 10:18
Psalm 40:7,8 (Hebrews 10:7)
Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21,22; 45-49.

3. The covenant of redemption/covenant of grace construction cannot do justice to the unity of God's gracious covenant.

Jonathan Edwards, *Observations Concerning the Scripture Oeconomy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption*, pp. 198-199
Shedd, vol. II, p. 360; Berkhof, pp. 268-270; Dabney, p. 432


Covenant of Works - God/Adam (the race)
Covenant of Grace - Father (Trinity)/Christ (his people)


Christ is the one with whom the covenant is made (Psalm 89:3); the one whom the Lord gives as a covenant to the people (Isaiah 42:6); and the one who is the mediator of the covenant (Hebrews 9:15).

[Compare Christ's relation to the church: Matt. 16:18 (Eph. 2:20); 1 Cor. 3:11; 1 Peter 2:6 (Eph. 2:20).]


II. The Covenant of Grace

Reading Assignment:

1. Calvin, Book II, chs. IX, X, XI (36 pp.).

A. The Biblical concept of "covenant."
It seems to me that Professor Murray has generally succeeded in making the case for that understanding of the fundamental nature of the Biblical covenants which he presented in the Tyndale Biblical Theology Lecture delivered in Selwyn College, Cambridge, in 1953. Five features of the Biblical covenants stand out in that presentation, though I have difficulty with one of them. (The following is my outline of what I think are Murray's key points here, not Murray's outline. See p. 79 of the Syllabus.)

1. A Biblical covenant is always an administration to MAN. (On my view the covenant of grace is made with Christ as the Second Adam, and thus with man [the God-man].) It is for that reason, as we have noted, that Mr. Murray was unwilling to speak of the intratrinitarian economy of redemption as a "covenant." (I have pointed out above that he is willing to apply more Biblical texts to that intratrinitarian economy than I am.)

2. A Biblical covenant is, according to Murray, always an administration of GRACE to man, almost always a form of redemptive revelation and a way of bestowing his saving favor. The notable exception would seem to be the post-diluvian Noahic covenant. While an instructive example of covenant administration (so much so that it becomes for Murray practically the paradigm covenant, "covenant in the purity of its conception" (p. 15), helping us "perhaps more than any other (covenant) in the Scripture...in discovering what the essence of covenant is!" (p. 12)), it is not an administration of specifically redemptive grace, of discriminating grace, but rather of what Reformed theologians have referred to as "common grace." (In the course entitled DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT we discuss whether that is the best designation to employ.) It is a covenant made with the whole world, in fact with "every living creature" (Gen. 9:10). But as a covenant of "common grace" it is intimately related to redemptive grace. That universal preservation and maintenance of life promised provides that platform of life, that living opportunity for God's redemptive purpose with respect to mankind to be realized.

This second point is the one I had in mind above when I said that I could not follow Mr. Murray at one of his five points. He could say that a Biblical covenant is ALWAYS a dispensation of GRACE to man because he refused to speak of the Adamic administration as a covenant, in spite of the fact that the Biblical revelation of that administration evidences the essential characteristics of a covenant, and indeed that administration is referred to as a covenant, I believe, in Hosea 6:7. I believe we have ample warrant to view the Adamic administration as a COVENANT, and I therefore cannot agree with Murray on this second point.

(It might be thought that perhaps Mr. Murray could have defined a Biblical covenant as always a dispensation of grace to man even if he had been willing to view the original Adamic administration as a covenant, because of his willingness to speak of "the elements of grace entering into the administration" (vol. 2, p. 49). It was his insistence, however, that "Scripture always uses the term covenant...in reference to a provision that is redemptive or closely related (Noahic covenant, rbs) to redemptive design" (p. 49).

I might simply note in passing that here is another point on which I disagree with Professor Murray; i.e., with regard to his willingness to speak of the "grace" involved in the Adamic administration. While it is certainly true that that administration evidenced God's goodness —the very fact that a promise of eternal life was held before Adam when no special reward was owing to man for obedience, perfect obedience being owed by the creature to his Creator in any case; and the fact that the promise spoke of an eternal life of confirmed holiness, a reward out of all proportion to the
condition to be fulfilled— I believe that we do well to restrict the Biblical term, "grace," to specifically redemptive grace. And my fear is that to speak of "the elements of grace" in the Adamic administration may so play down the very real and tremendously important distinction between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace as to blur the distinctive character of each.)

3. A Biblical covenant is a SOVEREIGN administration on the part of God. Man is simply the recipient. It is never to be conceived as a contract, compact, or agreement framed or established by a mutual arrangement between God and man. God and man do not sit down and work out the terms. Christ is Mediator, but he is not the mediator at a collective bargaining session! God ESTABLISHES his covenant.

4. A Biblical covenant is one confirmed by God himself, so that its validity and security rest upon the divine faithfulness. Murray offered this definition of a covenant (p. 10): "It is a bonded relationship of unreserved commitment in respect of the particular thing involved or the relationship constituted." "It is the promise of unreserved fidelity, of whole-souled commitment that appears to constitute the essence of the covenant."

And so we find so often God's covenant and his oath paralleled; indeed, they become virtually synonymous. God's covenant is an oath-bound promise. For example, Deut. 29:1 (28:69 Hebrew): "These are the words of the covenant (dibrey haberith) which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb." V. 9 (8) "So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do." V. 12 (11) "that you may enter into the covenant with the Lord your God, and into His oath (*alah) which the Lord your God is making with you today." V. 14 (13) "Now not with you alone am I making this covenant (berith) and this oath (*alah)."

(Regarding the covenant made in Moab, Keil writes: "it consisted literally in a renewed declaration of the covenant which the Lord had concluded with the nation at Horeb." See Kline, By Oath Consigned, p. 19.)

See 1 Chronicles 16:15,16 where the terms in synonymous parallelism are berith and shebuah (fem. passive participle of shabah, "to seven oneself, to swear." "Remember His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac." The same wording appears in Psalm 105:8,9. The classic passage, of course, is Genesis 15:7ff. where the eternal God binds HIMSELF to his promise to Abraham by taking a self-maledictory oath--passing as a flaming torch between the pieces of the heifer, the goat, the ram, the turtledove, and the pigeon which had been cut in two. The writer to the Hebrews comments in 6:13ff. that "when God made the promise to Abraham, since he had no greater by whom to swear, he swore by Himself."

5. A Biblical covenant demands the proper human response to covenant promise (faith) and to covenant law (obedience). And so we read of Abraham (Gen. 15:6): "And he believed the Lord, and he reckoned it to him as righteousness." And (Gen.17:1): "I am God Almighty, walk before me, and be blameless." Here is enunciated precisely the same relationship between grace and law, faith and obedience, that you find enunciated in Exodus 19:3-6 (which we shall be looking at under point D).

Murray wrote (p. 22): "What needs to be emphasized...is that the Mosaic covenant in respect of the condition of obedience is not in a different category from the Abrahamic. It is too frequently assumed that the conditions prescribed in connection with the Mosaic covenant place the Mosaic dispensation in a totally different category as respects grace, on the one hand, and demand or obligation, on the other. In reality there is nothing that is principally different in the necessity of keeping the covenant and of obedience to God's voice, which proceeds from the Mosaic covenant, from that which is involved in the keeping required in the Abrahamic. In both cases the keynotes are obeying God's voice and keeping the covenant (cf. Gen. xviii. 17-19;Ex. xix. 5, 6)." And earlier, on p. 18: "Without question the blessings of the covenant and the relation which the covenant entails cannot be enjoyed or maintained apart from the fulfillment of certain conditions on the part of the beneficiaries.... Fellowship is always mutual and when mutuality ceases fellowship ceases."

This thought is further explained on p. 19 as follows: "The continued enjoyment of this grace and of the relation established is contingent upon the fulfillment of certain conditions. For apart from the fulfillment of these conditions the grace bestowed and the relation established are meaningless. Grace bestowed implies a subject and reception on the part of that subject. The relation established implies mutuality. But the conditions in view are not really conditions of bestowal. They are simply the reciprocal responses of faith, love and obedience, apart from which the enjoyment of the covenant blessing and of the covenant relation is inconceivable."

And thus it is appropriate that man, the recipient of the covenant, binds himself also with an oath. Thus Abraham cuts the covenant in his very flesh in circumcision (Gen. 17), which I take to have also the force of a self-maledictory oath.
B. Does the Bible speak of a "covenant of grace"?

Abrahamic covenant, Genesis 17
Mosaic covenant, Exodus 19
Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7
New covenant, Jeremiah 31; Hebrews 8,10

"The covenant of grace"=covenant grace, i.e., the grace of God as it has been progressively revealed and realized in history in terms of a succession of covenant promises and covenant relationships until it reaches its final fruition in the New Covenant--redemptive grace progressively disclosed and covenantally administered until it reaches its consummation in that New Covenant which is never going to give way to any "newer" covenant administration.

“Progressive” Dispensationalism: e.g. Darrell Bock and Craig Blaising
Luke 1:46-55; 67-79; Ephesians 2:11-22; Romans 11;
Romans 4:11-12, 16, 23-25; 15:4, 8-12.

W.C.F. VII:5,6 [See p. 67 in this Syllabus.]

The essential unity of the covenants in terms of the promise, the mediator, and the required response.

C. The promise of the covenant of grace.

The Immanuel promise: "I will be your God, and you shall be my people."

Genesis 17:7,8; Jeremiah 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; 31:33; 32:38; Revelation 21:3

The correlation in the O.T. between the terms berith and hesed ("covenant love," "steadfast love").


hesed="election-love" Exodus 15:13; Psalm 106:7; Nehemiah 9:17.
"covenant-love," "steadfast love" Psalm 136; Deuteronomy 7:9; 1 Kings 8:23; Nehemiah 1:5; 9:32; Isaiah 55:3; Daniel 9:4; 1 Samuel 20:8 (David and Jonathan)
Hoeksema, p. 329, covenant not "a mere way of salvation or...a way unto life, but...the highest possible form of all life and bliss itself."

John 17:21; 2 Chronicles 20:6,7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23; Exodus 25:8; 29:45; John 15:15; John 14:1-3,23; Revelation 21:1-4

D. The unity of the covenant of grace.

Marcion; Anabaptists; Ritschlian Liberalism

1. Classic Dispensationalism's denial of that unity.

Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, esp. vol. IV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABRAHATIC MOSAIC</th>
<th>CHURCH</th>
<th>KINGDOM</th>
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<tr>
<td>covenant of grace</td>
<td>covenant of works</td>
<td>covenant of grace</td>
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<td>pure grace</td>
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<td>merit feature</td>
<td>&quot;live and do&quot;</td>
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a. Galatians 3:15-22

vv. 17,18 - the administration of Law at Sinai was in no way inconsistent with the principle of Grace exemplified in the Abrahamic covenant.

v. 19 - the Law was *supplementation* for the promotion of the ends contemplated in the original Abrahamic promise.


As others have put it: "They rashly exchanged Grace for Law."
v. 21 - the Law was given to serve God's purposes of Grace, not to save but only that there might be transgressions (v. 19) and that all might be shown to be sinners (v. 22) in order that the absolute necessity of Faith and Grace might be made manifest. Compare Romans 3:19-20; 5:20; 7:7, 13. Reformed theology speaks of this as "the first use of the Law."

The Mosaic covenant was an addition, and the Abrahamic covenant underlies and is continuously operative in the entire Mosaic economy.

The distinction between Law and Grace is **functional** not **dispensational.** "Law without Grace is powerless, and Grace without Law is meaningless" (Murray).

b. Hebrews 8:6-13 (Compare 10:11-18)

An explicit contrast between the Mosaic covenant (see v. 9) and the New covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

(1) Immediate argument

(a) The ineffectiveness of the Old covenant

Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on Hebrews*, vol. II, pp. 38-41

The goal of the New covenant is thus no lesser obedience than that required under the Mosaic covenant. See Romans 8:3-4.

(b) The "better promises" of the New covenant

*1* greater inwardness (v. 10)


greater affinity for the Law of God and greater spontaneity in fulfilling it

*2* newly universal efficacy (v. 11)

John 6:45 (Isa. 54:13); 1 John 2:20,26,27 - in this New Covenant all are to be scribes and Levites.
Error of Reformed Baptists (e.g. Fred Malone and Greg Welty)

Fulfillment in the Millennium? Error of both Premillennialism and Postmillennialism.

3* final forgiveness (v. 12)
See 10:11-18.

(2) Larger context

From 7:1 on, a sustained contrast between two orders of priesthood (Aaron and Melchizedek).

The defectiveness of the Mosaic covenant is construed in terms of the defectiveness of the Levitical economy. Thus, the imperfection of the Mosaic covenant did not reside in the principle of works as over against the principle of grace, but rather in the shortcomings of its gracious provisions. The contrast is altogether in the sphere of grace. (John Murray)

9:15-24. It is the New covenant in the reality and fullness of its grace that provided the pattern for the Old covenant. The affinities of the Old covenant are with the New covenant, not with any covenant of works.

DISPENSATIONALIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE NEW COVENANT PROPHECY

“THESIS”: THE NEW COVENANT HAS NO RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH

(John Nelson Darby; Harry Ironside, Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 99-102)

“ANTITHESIS”: ONE NEW COVENANT WITH TWO ASPECTS
(Scofield Reference Bible)

“SYNTHESIS”: TWO NEW COVENANTS, BOTH BASED ON THE ONE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

(John Walvoord, The Millennial Kingdom, 216-219; Charles Ryrie, The Basis of the Premillennial Faith, 105-124)

Is there a “Fourth View” now, that of Progressive Dispensationalism? Progressive dispensationalists speak in terms of “present preliminary fulfillment” for the Church and “future complete fulfillment” for Israel (see Bruce Ware in Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church, ed. by Blaising and Bock, 91-97). To me this looks quite similar to the second view above, that of Scofield.

Contemporary reversion to the Darby/Ironside “most extreme” (Ryrie) view among those “classic”

c. 2 Corinthians 3:1-4:1

The glory (*doxa*) of Paul's ministry rests in the fact that it is a ministry of the New covenant (v. 6), and therefore is a ministry of the Spirit (v. 8), of righteousness (v. 9), of life (v. 6), of Christ (v. 14,17)--and is permanent (v. 11).

The Old covenant (v. 14) is a covenant mediated by Moses (v. 15), of *gramma* ("written code", v. 6), of death (v. 7), of condemnation (v. 9)--and has passed away (v. 11).

Romans 4:5ff.; 1 Corinthians 10:4; Ephesians 2:12

Paul's interest is in *historia salutis* (*heilshistorie*), not in *ordo salutis* (*heilsorde*). As in John 1:17, it is a relative (historical) contrast expressed rhetorically in absolute terms. (Ridderbos)

Conclusion: 2 Corinthians 4:1

(See “REFORMED COMMENTS ON THE NATURE OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT IN GENERAL AND ON ROMANS 10:5-13 IN PARTICULAR” pp. 80-83 in this Syllabus.)
THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT

Reading Assignment:

2. Calvin, Book II, chs. XII, XIII, and XIV (24 pp.)
3. Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, ch. 12 (10 pp.)

Introduction: The Person and Work of Christ

We must not allow the traditional practice of studying the Biblical revelation of Christ in terms of the revelation concerning his *person* on the one hand, and the revelation concerning his *work* on the other, to obscure the fact that Christ's person and work form a fundamental unity. The Scripture never abstracts the one from the other; and if we are to be true to Scripture, we must not either.

The scholastic theologians of the High Middle Ages.


Hendrikus Berkhof (*Christian Faith; Christ the Meaning of History*)
World Alliance of Reformed Churches
Hebrews 1:2,3,6,8; 2:9-17; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:6-8.

Cornelius Van Til: "A man has risen from the grave? What a surprising occurrence! Send it in to Ripley! Believe it or not!"

Albrecht Ritschl: "value-judgment" ("Old Liberalism"); Rudolf Bultmann: “Do we see the Cross as the saving act of God because it is the cross of Christ, or do we see the Cross as the cross of Christ because it is the saving act of God?” [See sections on Ritschl and on Bultmann in Robert B. Strimple, *The Modern Search for the Real Jesus* (P & R 1995).]


Calvin, *Institutes* III:i.; John 6:53

21
I. The Fact of the Incarnation (Hypostatic Union)


The Mystery of the Incarnation

- Infinite/finite
- Eternal/temporal
- Immutable/mutable
- Invisible/visible
- Creator/creature
- Sustainer/dependent
- Almighty/weak
- Divine/human

GOD became man.

The doctrine of the Hypostatic Union
THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (451)

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial (homoousion) with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God (theotokos), according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures (phusesin), inconfusedly (asungchutos), unchangeably (atreptos), indivisibly (adiairetos), inseparably (achoristos); the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person (prosopon) and one Subsistence (hupostasis), not parted or divided into two persons (prosopa), but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.
Hypostatic union=the union in one person (prosopon), one subsistence (hypostasis) of two natures (phusesin).

asungchutos and atreptos vs. Eutyches
adiairetos and achoristos vs. Nestorius

The impersonal (anhypostasia), or "inpersonal" (enhypostasia) character of Christ's human nature. (See Murray, vol. 2, pp. 137-9, and Berkouwer, The Person of Christ, ch. XII.)

The conditions under which the Incarnation took place: sin and sin's consequences (suffering and death): Romans 8:3 en homoiomati sarkos hamartias. (Compare Phil. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:16; John 1:14.)

Dean Henry Alford, John Murray, Bauer/Arndt/Gingrich
Adolf Schlatter (see Theological Dictionary of the New Testament article on homoioma).
Phil. 3:21; Isa. 52:14; Heb. 2:14-18.

II. The Mode of the Incarnation

A. What is the theological significance of the Virgin Birth?

We shall not be discussing here the historicity of the Virgin Birth. Instead we shall be operating on the premise that the Savior's birth of the Virgin Mary is clearly presented in the Gospels as a historical fact, and we do not question its historicity. If you wish to consider critical attacks upon its historicity and the defense of the Biblical accounts against these attacks, the best treatment to consult is still J. Gresham Machen's magnum opus entitled The Virgin Birth.

As Warfield says in chapter 1 of The Person and Work of Christ (p. 32), the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection and the Ascension "can appear strange only when the intervening life is looked upon as that of a merely human being, endowed, no doubt, not only with unusual qualities, but also with the unusual favor of God, yet after all nothing more than human and therefore presumably entering the world like other human beings, and at the end paying the universal debt of human nature."

As Warfield says further in the Appendix to Christology and Criticism (p. 454): "In point of fact, accordingly, it is just in proportion as men lose their sense of the Divine personality of the messianic king who is Immanuel, God with us, that they are found to doubt the necessity of the virgin birth; while in proportion as the realization of this fundamental fact of the Christianity of the New Testament remains vivid and vital with them, do they instinctively feel that it is alone consonant with it that this Being should acknowledge none other father than that Father which is in heaven, from whom alone he came forth to save the world."

This last statement seems already to have included something of an answer to the question that we must raise here, which is: does the Virgin Birth have doctrinal significance? The question is often raised in those terms. Perhaps it is better put this way: what essential relationship, if any, does the fact that Christ was born of the Virgin bear to other facts which the Bible reveals concerning his
person and work?

Of course, the denial of the Virgin Birth is significant—we are not questioning that here—because that is not a denial of a particular interpretation of Scripture but of a clear unequivocal Biblical statement of historical fact. And the reason for the denial of that historical fact is certainly most significant. The reason, in a word, is naturalism, the denial of the possibility of the occurrence in history of the supernatural. If we adopt that naturalistic premise, our final authority then is no longer the Bible but what modern man can accept as "reasonable." (See Machen, pp. 395ff.)

(Some try to confuse denial of the fact with ignorance of the fact. I recall a Barthian pastor asking our Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship group in my student days years ago: "Does a person have to believe in the Virgin Birth in order to be saved?" and then pointing out that the evangelistic sermons recorded in the book of Acts contain no mention of the Virgin Birth. What he did not go on to consider was whether denial of this truth when it was later made known to them on the basis of apostolic authority would be consistent with faithful submission to the authority of God's Word.)

Alan Richardson writes: "It is most important to recognize that both Matthew and Luke state the fact of Christ's birth of a virgin in a straightforward and unargumentative way; they offer no hints as to why it should have happened thus and they draw no conclusions from it." (An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, p. 172.)

Is there any possibility of denying that? Berkhof says (p. 336): "In answer to the question, whether the virgin birth has doctrinal significance, it may be said that it would be inconceivable that God should cause Christ to be born in such an extraordinary manner, if it did not serve some purpose." And this is true enough, perhaps. But the question is: does the Bible itself indicate to us what purpose was served?

What implications ("significances," consequences) have Reformed theologians seen in the fact of the Virgin Birth?

1. Deity

As we noted Warfield saying, it was consonant with (agreeable, consistent with) the uniqueness, the divinity, of the Person conceived. F. F. Bruce writes (Basic Christian Doctrines, p. 128): "The more we appreciate the uniqueness of the incarnation, the more may we recognize how fitting—indeed, how inevitable—it is that the means by which it was brought about should also be unique." Machen makes the same point on p. 381. As Vos puts it: It carries "back the supernaturalism of the whole person and work of Christ into the very origin of his human nature, as directly derived from God."

2. Nativistic Sonship

Along the same lines, Vos also stresses (Biblical Theology, p. 332) "the fitness which this mode of birth possessed for introducing into human nature, One who was already antecedently in more than one sense, 'the Son of God.' It was eminently appropriate that the human personality of Joseph should give way to the paternity of God." Vos appeals to Luke 1:32 and 35. Note the force of the δίο there: "therefore," "for that reason." Vos speaks of Jesus' "nativistic sonship." (In The Self-Disclosure of Jesus Vos helpfully examines the four senses in which the title "Son of God" is attributed to Jesus in the Gospels: ontological, messianic, nativistic, religio-ethical [Matt. 17:24-27].) Compare what is
said in Luke 3:38 regarding the paternity of the first Adam ("the son of God").

3. Divine Initiative

This mode of birth also underscores the fact of the divine initiative in the providing of redemption. Warfield writes (Christology, p. 453): "If there had been nothing extraordinary in the coming of the Saviour into the world, a discordant note would have been struck at this point in the 'heterosoteric' Christianity of the New Testament, which would have thrown it in all its elements out of tune."

Some see a correspondence between the initiative of God in the birth of Jesus and the initiative of God in the new birth of every Christian. John 1:13--"who were born, not of blood nor of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

Compare the redemptive events of the Old Testament: the birth of Isaac, of birth of Samson, the "sign" spoken of in Isaiah 7:14.

Hoeksema combines the points we have made thus far in this statement (Reformed Dogmatics, p. 352): "Even though we may not be able to demonstrate the truth of this proposition, we much rather assume on the basis of Scripture that the virgin birth of Christ was also ontologically necessary, that is, that the Son of God could assume human nature only by way of the elimination of the will of man. But whether this be so, or not, certain it is that God purposely creates the sign of the virgin birth to make known unto us that Jesus Christ's coming into the flesh is His act exclusively, and that Christ is born, not by the will of man, but by the conception of the Holy Ghost."

4. The Savior and the Penalty of Sin

This mode of entry into the race was not only consonant with the deity of his Person, but was also a necessity in view of the Work that he came to perform--the work of Redemption. Warfield (Christology, p. 456): "Assuredly no one, resting for himself under the curse of sin, no one owing the law its extreme penalty for himself could pay this penalty for others. And certainly in the Christianity of the New Testament every natural member of the race of Adam rests under the curse of Adam's sin, and is held under the penalty that hangs over it. If the Son of God came into the world therefore...specifically to save sinners, it was imperatively necessary that he should become incarnate after a fashion which would leave him standing...outside that fatal entail of sin in which the whole natural race of Adam is involved." F. F. Bruce (p. 129): "In this way, for once, the entail of sin was broken within the human family." See also Machen, p. 395.

The clause at the end of section 3 of chapter VI of the Westminster Confession of Faith seems to imply some such thought on the part of its framers: "They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed; and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation." (Emphasis added.)

John 3:6--"That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Appeal is often made here to Luke 1:35--"therefore...holy." (See the translation of the RSV: "therefore...shall be called holy, the Son of God.") Vos notes (p. 333) that "holy" here "may, however, be taken in the sense of 'consecrated,' in which case there would be no direct reference to
the sinlessness of the child, although the 'consecration' would seem to presuppose the sinlessness."

It is sometimes argued that such a conclusion--namely, that Christ was virgin born in order that he might not be involved in the sin of the race--would be valid only if there were some evidence that Original Sin were transmitted through the father specifically; and, of course, no evidence to that effect is to be found. Calvin's comment at this point (II:xiii:4) would seem to be quite sound: "It is childish trifling to maintain, that if Christ is free from all taint, and was begotten of the seed of Mary, by the secret operation of the Spirit, it is not therefore the seed of the woman that is impure, but only that of the man. We do not hold Christ is to be free from all taint, merely because he was born of a woman unconnected with a man, but because he was sanctified by the Spirit, so that the generation was pure and spotless, such as it would have been before Adam's fall." (And, as Vos notes [p. 333], the maternity of Mary could not very well have been dispensed with without falling into Docetism!)

It might perhaps be questioned whether all these four correlations are "expressly set down in Scripture"--although point 2 (as well as point 4) seems to come to explicit expression in Luke 1:35--and point 3 is compelling on biblical-theological grounds--but the question is, of course, whether any or all of them "by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture" (WCF I:6). If so, then Alan Richardson is clearly incorrect in insisting that the Gospel writers "offer no hints as to why it (the virgin birth, RBS) should have happened thus..." And it is an interesting indication of the almost irresistible impulse to see some specific theological significance in the Virgin Birth that three pages after he has emphasized that Matthew and Luke "offer no hints as to why it should have happened thus, and draw no conclusions from it," Richardson himself draws a conclusion sufficiently distinctive and suggestive that I shall list it as a fifth point here (although it is closely connected to point 3)—

5. The Age of the Spirit

"The doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ is an integral part of the theology of the New Testament. It expresses the truth that God has set in motion the train of events which will culminate in the final judgment of the world and the salvation of his elect; it is as biblical and as Jewish a doctrine as any belief that can be found in the New Testament. The birth of Christ is an eschatological event inhering in the New Age, and is itself a manifestation of the expected outgoing activity of the Spirit in the latter days." (Richardson, p. 175).

B. "Virgin Birth"=supernatural begetting.


Nothing "supernatural" about the birth proper. Luke 2:6,7

Supernatural begetting: Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:20b

There is a convergence of extraordinary and ordinary factors. Galatians 4:4

III. The Nature of the Incarnation

A. Incarnation - not Kenosis
1. The Kenosis theory

"God became man."—subtracted into becoming human


Murray, Studies in the Person and Work of Christ, pp. 50ff.; Berkhof, pp. 327-9; A. B. Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, Lecture IV.

Lutherans: Thomasius, Delitzsch, Martensen
Anglicans: P.T. Forsyth, Charles Gore, H.R. Macintosh
Arminian: Frederick Godet

Kenosis=the laying aside of the distinctively divine attributes, even perhaps the extinction of his eternal self-consciousness.

2. General theological objections to the Kenosis theory

a. asserts the mutability of God

b. rules out a real Incarnation, God in the flesh
   D. M. Baillie, God Was In Christ, pp. 96,7.

c. William Temple's famous objection, Christus Veritas, pp. 142ff. Did the eternal Trinity become a Biunity during the period of Jesus' earthly career?

d. denies that "the eternal Son of God became man, and so was, and continueth to be God, and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever." Westminster Shorter Catechism, 21. (1 Timothy 2:5; John 1:14; Romans 9:5; Luke 1:35; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 7:24-25) Acts 1:11
3. New Testament teaching

a. John 1:14

Identity of the Logos--vv. 1-3.
(eterally existent, eternally coordinate with God, eternally identified with God)
Revelatory work of the Incarnate Logos--v. 18.
monogenes theos
ekinos exegesato
ho on eis ton kolpon tou patros
John 14:9--only deity can reveal deity

b. Philippians 2:5-11


A pre-Pauline hymn? 5 arguments; no a priori objection, cf. I Tim. 3:16; arguments, however, not conclusive; false use of the pre-Pauline theory--abstracting the interpretation of these vv. from their place in Paul's argument.

The questions in the following notes are to test your understanding of my article in WTJ 41 (1978-79), pp. 247-68.

(1) In v. 5, what verb is to be supplied after the relative pronoun (ho) to fill out the sense?

(a) What verbs have been suggested?
(b) On what grounds do I argue for the insertion of en?
(See para. which begins on 253 and ends on 254.)
(c) Why is the translation of this v. significant? (Read para. which begins on 252 and ends on 253; and the para. which begins on 255 and ends on 256.)

(See Ralph Martin and Gordon Fee. See Silva, pp. 107ff., for argument for inserting phroneite, translating "Be so disposed toward one another as is proper for those who are united in Christ Jesus", and maintaining the ethical interpretation of vv. 6-11.)
(2) On what basis has it been denied that v. 6 has reference to pre-existence or divinity?

(Read first full para. on p. 257. Note well the arguments presented against such views from middle of p. 258 to middle of p. 259.)

(3) What is the force of morphe in v. 6?

(First, note the force of uparchon. The morphe theou was an original, essential position, not a position attained to; and the verb uparchon in no way suggests that Christ ceased to be in the form of God. Cf. Luke 16:14,23; Acts 2:30; 3:2; 2 Corinthians 12:16; Galatians 1:14; 1 Cor. 11:7.)

(a) Greek philosophy: "existence form"="the combination of qualities making something what it is". Murray, Muller, Fee, Beare

(b) Hebraic background; LXX (Judges 8:18; Job 4:16; Isaiah 44:13; Daniel 3:19). Theological Dictionary of the New Testament article on morphe; Ralph Martin

Read my personal conclusion, last para. on 260 through middle of 261. Gordon Fee's misunderstanding of my interpretation. Note Calvin's appeal to John 17:5.

mophen doulou

(4) The meaning of harpagmos in v. 6.

harpagmos="prize," "booty"
(a) res rapta=a prize to be retained
(b) res rapienda=a prize to be grasped

(a) Lightfoot, Warfield
(b) Kennedy in Expositor's Greek Testament

Murray's view does not fit the alla at beginning of v. 7.

What was Werner Jaeger's suggestion regarding the meaning of harpagmos in v. 6?

See discussion beginning on p. 263 of my Westminster Theological Journal article.
Double accusative constructions in which
harpagma=hermaion (goodsend), heurema windfall),
eutuchema (a piece of good luck) appear with such verbs as
with such verbs as hegeisthai (Philippians 2:6), poieisthai,
and tithestai with the meaning "to regard something as a
stroke of luck, a windfall, a piece of good fortune."

How did Roy Hoover revise Jaeger's conclusion?

Resulting translation: "he did not regard being equal with
God as something to take advantage of."

(5) What is the meaning of heauton ekenosen in v. 7?

(a) Kenosis interpretation

(b) Lightfoot, Calvin

(c) Standard Reformed understanding (Murray, Muller,
Silva, Vincent, NEB, NIV)
   *1* heauton
   *2* Ff. clauses=modal clauses of coincident action.
      Murray, pp. 55-56; Muller, New International
      Commentary on Philippians, p. 82.
   *3* The paradox points to metaphor

(d) What was Warren's suggestion in 1911, taken up by
Jeremias and others, regarding the exegesis of
heauton ekenesen? (See 265-67.)

Isaiah 53:12 (‘arah) is the background of
Philippians 2:7.

naphesho...he’arah “he poured out himself”
heauton....ekenosen “he emptied himself”

Ff. aorists are aorists of antecedent action.
H. Wheeler Robinson; F. E. Vokes

‘arah=ekkenoo in Genesis 24:20; 2 Chronicles
24:11, Psalm 136 (137):7 (LXX).

Why doulos instead of pais?
Paul is not using the Septuagint here.
(6) *huperupsosen* = the elevation of Christ Jesus to a new position and a new function as Risen Redeemer (vs. C. F. D. Moule). Acts 2:36; Ephesians 1:18ff.; Romans 1:4; 14:9; Hebrews 12:2.

(7) *to onoma to uper pan onoma* = *kuriōs*

(8) significance of *Iesou*

(9) application of Isaiah 45:23 to Christ; compare Romans 14:11

(10) *eis doxan theou patros*

c. Hebrews 1:2; 5:7,8

B. *Communicatio idiomatum* ("communication of properties")

Introduction

"Christ, in the work of mediation, acts according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself; yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature." Westminster Confession VIII:7

Reformed Christology insists that the Lutheran understanding of the *communicatio idiomatum* compromises the true *humanity* of the Incarnate Christ.

*koinonia idiomaton* (Greek)

*communicatio idiomatum* (Latin)

*communio idiomatum* (Latin)

*idioma* (idiom) = "a property of one nature which cannot be communicated to the other"

Berkhof, p. 324, and Berkouwer, pp. 272-3 vs. Murray, II, p. 140. Berkhof and Berkouwer are correct.

Reformed view here= the classic, orthodox view.
Barth, IV/1, p. 181.
1. The Lutheran view.

Luther: the body and blood of Christ are really and locally present whenever and wherever the Lord's Supper is celebrated.

The body of Christ is ubiquitous.

As a consequence of the incarnation, the properties (idiomata) of the divine nature were communicated to the human, so that wherever the Logos is, there the soul and body of Christ must be.

Formula of Concord: analogy of fire and iron.


Johann Brenz (1499-1570) spoke of "the co-existence, simultaneously in Christ of two ways of being--a local existence here or there in space, and an illocal, omnipresent being in the Logos to which the humanity was united" (A. B. Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, p. 91).

Reformed reply to the Formula of Concord.

Lutherans do not speak of the divine nature sharing in the human attributes.

Melanchthon identified with Reformed view at this point.

2. The Reformed view.

Ursinus, Admonitio Neostadtiensis (pp. 117-133 in Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ).

In the one person there is a twofold substance or nature.

communicatio idiomatum=In virtue of this hypostatic union, whatever is said of Christ is said truly and really of his whole undivided person, sometimes in respect to both natures, sometimes in respect of the one or the other only, "yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature" (W.C.F. VIII:7).

The person of Christ is the koinonos, the partaker, of the attributes of both natures; so that whatever may be affirmed of either nature may be affirmed of the Person.
Liberation Theology
Augustine; Calvin; C. Hodge: analogy of soul and body.
John 8:58; Colossians 1:17
Romans 9:5 (Sanday and Headlam’s *I.C.C.* commentary)

John 19:28
1 Corinthians 2:8; Mark 13:32; Luke 1:43

Calvin, II:xiv:1; W.C.F. VIII:7

3. The *extra Calvinisticum*

Picture the Lutheran and the Calvinist in debate:
Lutheran: "Logos non extra carnem."
Calvinist: "etiam extra carnem."
Lutheran: "illud 'extra' Calvinisticum."

Heidelberg Catechism, questions 47 and 48.

E. David Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology.* *The Function of the So-called Extra Calvinisticum in Calvin's Theology,* p. 1:
"The so-called *extra Calvinisticum* teaches that the Son of God, even after the Incarnation, was united to the human nature to form One Person but was not restricted to the flesh."
Calvin, II:xiii:4; IV:xvii:17, 19, 26, 29, 30.
*totus Christus* vs. *totum Christi,* Peter Lombard; John of Damascus; Aquinas. Augustine.

*extra Calvinisticum=extra Catholicum*

C. The Impeccability of Christ

The testimony of the New Testament to the *sinlessness* of Christ is so clear and so consistent that this is a truth which no Bible-believing Christian would dare deny. He was fully self-conscious of the reality of his *humanity.* There is no support given in the Gospel accounts of any Docetic understanding of Christ. In the Docetic view, of course, a real "becoming flesh" of the eternal Logos would itself be tantamount to God's becoming a sinner. For the basis of Docetic views (e.g., Marcionite, Manichaean) lies in the underlying conviction that the physical and material is itself inherently evil, is itself that which holds man's soul in bondage. Therefore, what man needs is deliverance from the earthly and the physical. This will be salvation for him. Therefore, it would be out of the question for God to enter into this inherently evil situation itself. And therefore, the incarnation was a mere appearance (*dokeo*). Either the humanity of Jesus is denied; or, if a real man (Jesus of Nazareth) is affirmed, he is seen as one whom the Logos used at certain points for his own purposes without ever being truly or fully united with him.
This is a Christological heresy attacked within the New Testament itself (1 John 1:1-4; 4:1-3); and, as already noted, it is a notion which finds no support in the Gospel accounts. The Gospel writers view Jesus as being the son of David, of Abraham, of Adam. (See Luke 3:23-38.) They record his growth—physically, mentally, and spiritually (Luke 2:40,52). And this their appreciation of his true humanity rested upon his own revelation concerning himself. Jesus expressly called himself "a man." John 8:40 - "But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God."

He spoke of his body which was to be broken and of his blood which was to be shed (Matthew 26:26,28). If there was ever a time when the reality of his body might have been questioned, it was after his resurrection. Thus Jesus found it necessary to emphasize this reality at that time. (Read Luke 24:36-43; John 20:20,27 and chapter 21.)

Likewise, the way in which Jesus speaks of his soul, or his spirit, makes his true and full humanity unmistakable. Certainly that language gives no support to an Apollinarian Christology. Jesus knew all the emotions and experienced all the needs that are native to man. He had compassion on the needy when he saw them (Matthew 9:36); he had a human love for friends (John 11:36); he wept (John 11:35); he marveled at the revelation of outstanding faith, or of gross unbelief (Matt. 8:10; Mark 6:6); he prayed (Matthew 14:23)—in fact, he knew that need for prayer growing out of agony of spirit (Luke 22:44). He was tempted (Matthew 4:1); he was hungry (Matt. 4:2); thirsty (John 19:28); weary (John 4:6); he slept (Matthew 8:24); he died (John 19:30).

Jesus was fully self-conscious, then, of the reality of his humanity; but he was conscious of no personal sin. This is not to be explained as the result of a blind idealism, simply blind to sin. He recognized evil in others (Matthew 7:11; 12:34,39), but not in himself. We find Jesus calling on men to repent and ask forgiveness, but we never find him setting an example for them in this. Rather, we find him challenging his enemies: "Which of you convicts me of sin?" - John 8:46, R.S.V. There seems to be no justification for reducing this challenge, as the N.E.B. does, to: "Which of you can prove me in the wrong?" As Westcott says: "The word hamartia is not to be taken for error or falsehood, but for `sin' generally, according to the uniform usage of the New Testament..." 16:8 confirms that meaning, for there the same wording is found in regard to the Paraclete's convicting the world peri hamartias. Leon Morris speaks of Jesus' question in 8:46 as "a staggering assertion of sinlessness," and he adds: "It is impossible to envisage any other figure in history making such a claim."

John 14:30--"I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, kai en emoi ouk exeiouden." Modern interpreters generally agree that Augustine was essentially correct in interpreting this to mean "finds no sin in me." But there is some difference of opinion as to the precise force of the thought in the context. Alford says: "has nothing—i.e., no point of appliance whereon to fasten his attack." There was not the slightest evil inclination in Jesus upon which Satan's temptations could lay hold. Bernard (I.C.C.) seems to be expressing the same thought: "has no point in my personality on which he can fasten." But it seems to me that in the context the force is more likely that expressed by The Interpreter's Bible: "has no claim upon me." Bultmann: "has no right to Jesus, and cannot therefore find anything against him." Westcott: "nothing which falls under his power. There was in Christ nothing which the devil could claim as belonging to his sovereignty. In others he finds that which is his own, and enforces death as his due; but Christ offered himself voluntarily."
Therefore, as Westcott further notes: "The words indirectly and by implication affirm the sinlessness of Christ, and his freedom from the power of death."

Thus, Jesus bore testimony to his sinlessness, or— to put it positively—to his holiness. The witness of the N.T. writers is just as consistent in this regard. Read Luke's record of Gabriel's announcement (1:35), of the demons' recognition of this truth concerning Christ's person (4:34), of Peter's witness against the Jews (Acts 3:14): "But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you..." Compare 4:27 and 30.

Paul adds his inspired testimony in 2 Corinthians 5:21 - "Him who knew no sin God made to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." And the writer to the Hebrews in 4:15—"He was in all things as we are, without sin;" and 7:26—"For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners and exalted above the heavens." Peter describes him in the words of Isaiah's prophecy: "Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth" (1 Peter 2:22). John writes: "He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin."

In a way I think similar to what is true in regard to our doctrine of Scripture, we must recognize the importance of a "deductive" approach based on direct statements (claims) of Scripture regarding Jesus' sinlessness, prior to an "inductive" approach based on the "phenomena" (events in Jesus' life recorded in Scripture). Those who begin with the latter sometimes discover certain "sins" in Jesus' life. Alleged sins have included Jesus' relation to his parents in staying behind at the temple in Jerusalem as a boy, his violent cleansing of the temple, his harshness with the Pharisees, with Peter, and even his changing water into wine! We must remember that Jesus' character, as the Logos Incarnate, defines the good, rather than thinking that we can judge him according to our independent definition.

As we noted at the beginning of this discussion, then, the testimony of the New Testament to the sinlessness of Christ is so clear and so consistent that this is a truth which no Bible—believing Christian would dare deny. This is a historic part of the confession of the church universal. But there is a further question here upon which there has not been quite the same universal agreement. That question is this: on the basis of the New Testament data, must we content ourselves with affirming the factual, empirical sinlessness of Christ— that, as a matter of fact, he never sinned—or are we justified in going a step further and affirming that Christ could not have sinned—that he was indeed impeccable?

(Webster’s New World Dictionary gives two meanings for impeccable: "1. not liable to sin or wrongdoing 2. without defect or error; faultless; flawless." Generally we use the word in the second sense. In the theological debate which concerns us here it has been used in the first sense.)

You can readily see, I believe, why some have been unwilling to take this further step. For some, a basic motive behind the denial of the impeccability of Christ has been the desire to maintain the essential likeness between the man Christ Jesus and ourselves. They would argue that if Christ were impeccable, then he was on such a higher plane than we are that his victory is meaningless for us and his example in overcoming temptation is of no value to us.

This desire to bring Jesus down to our level in order to bring us up to his is, I believe, a dangerous
one. If this were to be carried out consistently, we would have to say that Christ possessed a sinful nature, that he was a sinner just as we are. As we have already stressed, it is evident from the New Testament witness that this was not the case. He was "separate from sinners." We speak of the complete identification of Christ with men; but at the same time, because of this theanthropic nature, and because of the fact that men are now depraved men, he always remained, even in the days of his flesh, "different from them and above them" (Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ*, ch. II).

This absolute uniqueness of the man Christ Jesus cannot be compromised, and the believer should have no desire to do so. Once admit that Jesus faced the onslaught of Satan without the evil predisposition of our sinful natures, and you have denied that there was absolutely no difference between Jesus' temptation experiences and ours. Jesus said: "The prince of this world comes and has nothing in me." Which of us could say that?

It is instructive, perhaps, to note that this motivation to maintain Jesus' total likeness to us sons of Adam has been so strong that there have been some in the history of the church who have been willing to take even this step and to maintain the full identity between Christ in the flesh and sinful men and women by affirming that he did indeed possess a sinful nature. We read of Felix, bishop of the Spanish city of Urgel in the late 8th century, who said that the Logos united with a human nature that was unsanctified, that Christ had a corrupted nature, though he never committed actual transgression. Felix said that this was necessary in order that Christ might be tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. But, of course, Felix could take this position only because he held to a Pelagian concept of sin which denied that a corrupt nature and disposition is itself sin.

To cite another historical example, Edward Irving, in the early 19th century, in England—Irving was a Scot expelled from the Presbyterian church for heresy—in the interests of his perfectionist doctrine, taught that "Christ's humanity was flesh in the fallen state, and liable to all the temptations to which (fallen) flesh is liable; but the soul of Jesus,...anointed with the Holy Ghost, did ever resist the suggestions of evil" (*On the Incarnation*, "Its Method, Pt. l," quoted by Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. 2, p. 302). The orthodox church, he said, argued for an inherent holiness; he argued "for a holiness maintained by the person of the Son through the operation of the Holy Ghost...Christ's human nature was holy in the only way in which holiness under the fall exists or can exist, namely, through inworking or energizing of the Holy Ghost" (*Works*, vol. V, p. 564, quoted by Shedd, *ibid*). And therefore any Christian may entertain the hope of being just as sinlessly perfect as Christ was in the days of his flesh.

Irving's view here was closely related to his view of the Atonement and his rejection of the doctrine of penal substitution. Irving's view has been described as "the theory of REDEMPTION BY SAMPLE" (A. B. Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 254). Christ's vocation as Redeemer was to make "the whole lump" of fallen humanity holy by sanctifying the fragment thereof which he had assumed into connection with himself.

Views of Christ's moral nature similar to those hold by Felix and Irving are, of course, quite common among contemporary theologians; e.g., John Knox, who taught at Union Seminary in New York City, insisted that Jesus was not a man if he was not a sinner; his life was not meritorious if not a victory over sin.

Such teaching is obviously heterodox. I must not leave the impression, however, that only heretical theologians have been unwilling to speak of the impeccability of Christ. No less orthodox a
theologian than Charles Hodge is commonly alleged, at any rate, to deny that Christ was impeccable. This is alleged on the basis of the following statement made by Hodge on p. 457 of vol. II of his *Systematic Theology*:

This sinlessness of our Lord, however, does not amount to absolute impeccability. It was not a *non potest peccare*. If He was a true man He must have been capable of sinning. That He did not sin, under the greatest provocation; that when He was reviled He blessed; when He suffered He threatened not; that He was dumb, as a sheep before its shearsers, is held up to us as an example. Temptation implies the possibility of sin. If from the constitution of his person it was impossible for Christ to sin, then his temptation was unreal and without effect, and He cannot sympathize with His people.

Here Hodge denies that Christ's sinlessness amounted to "absolute impeccability," not because he wishes to obliterate all lines of distinction between Christ and ourselves, of course, but because he feels that an affirmation of the fact that Christ could not sin makes a mockery of Christ's temptations.

Certainly Christ's temptations were very real temptations. There can be no mistaking the Scriptural emphasis on their reality. The Lukan account tells us that the Holy Spirit filled Jesus in preparation for his encounter with Satan in the wilderness, and angels came to minister to him when the exhausting victory had been won. Nor must we imagine that this experience in the wilderness comprised the whole of Jesus' temptations. At the Last Supper Jesus spoke of his disciples as "those who have stood by me in my temptations" (Luke 22:28). His life had been characterized by these *peirasmoi*—tests or trials which may be the occasions to sin; and they were to reach their climax in the Garden and at the Cross.

And, as I say, Hodge feels that the affirmation of Christ's impeccability is a threat to the reality and the value of Christ's struggle against temptation. Can we say that Jesus experienced a real, a serious temptation, unless we admit that in the moment of temptation Jesus faced a definite crossroads, with the possibility of his going down either the pathway of obedience or the pathway of disobedience?

Clearly Jesus did not stand where we do—*non posse non peccare* because of the sin which remains with us. But can we way that his position was any different from that of the first Adam? Positively holy and inclined to righteousness, yes—*posse non peccare*, yes—but *posse peccare* also.

Can we say that Christ was *non posse peccare*? Reformed theologians have ordinarily answered "yes" to that question. Therefore, Hodge can appear to be at serious odds with such theologians at this point. But I wonder whether the disagreement is real, substantive, or whether it is simply a disagreement regarding the best way to express the truth.

What Hodge seems to be denying when he denies "absolute impeccability" and "*non potest peccare*" is the kind of necessity (metaphysical necessity) which would deny that Christ acted as a free agent and, in so far as he was truly man, as a temptable and therefore peccable agent.

The certainty of Christ's acting at all times in obedience, in holiness, without sin, Hodge has no intention of denying. In fact, in vol. II, on p. 298, in a demonstration of the consistency between certainty and free agency, Hodge argues from the certainty of Christ's sinlessness in defense of that
...we may refer to the case of our blessed Lord. He had a true body and a reasonable soul. He had a human will; a mind regulated by the same laws as those which determine the intellectual and voluntary acts of ordinary men. In his case, however, although there may have the metaphysical possibility of evil (though even that is a painful hypothesis), still it was more certain that He would be without sin than that the sun or moon should endure. No conceivable physical law could be more certain in the production of its effects than his will in always deciding for the right.

When Reformed theologians affirm the impeccability of Christ, they are not denying what Hodge seems to be concerned to affirm—that Christ had a temptable, peccable human nature. They are rather concerned to affirm the impeccability of Christ's person. And that, after all, if I might put it this way, is the really important thing. As Dabney puts it:

The human nature never had its separate personality. ¹ It never existed, and never will exist for an instant, save in personal union with the Word. Hence...since the humanity never was, in fact, alone, the question whether, if alone, it would not have been peccable, like Adam, is idle."

(Lectures in Systematic Theology, p. 471)

This type of argument for Christ's impeccability on the ground of the reality of the union of the two natures in the one person, and therefore the genuine deity of the person, has been characteristic of Reformed theology. For example, Herman Hoeksema writes:

In this connection it must be maintained that there was not the slightest possibility that Christ should fall into sin. He could not sin. The first Adam was lapsible; the last Adam was not. And this impossibility was due not to the holiness of His human nature alone; for Adam was also righteous and holy, yet he fell. But this is due objectively to God's decree that in Him all things should be made perfect,² and subjectively to the union of the human nature to the divine in the Person of the Son of God. To maintain that also for Christ there was the possibility of falling into sin is to deny God's immutable decree that He should be made perfect as the Captain of our salvation, and it is tantamount to the statement that the Person of the Son of God

¹ For a helpful discussion of the doctrine of the impersonal (anhypostatic), or inpersonal (enhypostatic), human nature of Christ see ch. XII of Berkouwer, The Person of Christ.

² Although this "objective" line of argument has sometimes been employed by Reformed theologians in defending the impeccability of Christ (compare, for example, Jonathan Edwards, The Freedom of the Will), I do not believe it should be used. It is always important when discussing any "necessity" to be very clear regarding the nature of the necessity in view. When considering the question whether Christ in his earthly ministry was impeccable, it only confuses the issue to introduce the necessity resulting from the certainty of the divine decree. In that sense everything which happens does so "necessarily"! For example, it was decretively certain that Adam would sin; do we therefore speak of the impossibility of his maintaining his holiness in the way in which we affirm that it was impossible for Christ to sin?
could become disobedient to the Father in human flesh; and this is absurd.  
(Reformed Dogmatics, p. 358)

Bavinck's argument is similar:

He is the Son of God, the Logos, who was in the beginning with God and who was himself God; he is one with the Father and always accomplishes his will and work.  
To one who confesses this of Christ the possibility of sinning and falling is an atrocious idea...For then God himself must have been able to sin - which it is blasphemy to think; or the union of the divine and human nature is regarded as severable and practically denied.  
(quoted by Berkouwer, The Person of Christ, p. 259)

This type of argument, however, is commonly criticized today as abstract thinking, drawing logical inferences from a metaphysical proposition, namely that of the deity of Christ.  It is said that we must not conceive of Christ's sinlessness abstractly, in terms of what a God-man could or could not do--but rather concretely in terms of Jesus Christ, a real person, and what he could or could not do.  Such objectors might add that if we think abstractly we are in danger of allowing Christ's divine nature to impinge upon and neutralize his human nature; we are in danger of falling into Monophysitism (only one nature in Christ) or at least Monothelitism (only one will).

Berkouwer answers that the background of the thought of one like Bavinck, who speaks of the "atrocious idea" that Christ could have fallen into sin, is not some abstract idea of the sinlessness of a divine nature; but rather a concrete concern with the person, Jesus Christ.

When he (Bavinck) says this, his mind's eye sees the image of the son of God who became flesh.  Behind the ostensibly theoretical conclusion lies the confession that Christ is the Holy One and that in him we confront the activity of God.  The criticism...is therefore unfair: it is a denial of the profound religious motif in these views.  
(Berkouwer, p. 260)

In other words, Bavinck (and other Christians like him), finds the idea that Christ was peccable an atrocious idea, one from which he must recoil, not because it conflicts with some supposed necessity of logic, but because it conflicts with that which he knows to be true concerning the person of his Savior.

And how important it is that Christ be the omnipotent Savior!  Shedd speaks of the unfortunate tendency to state the doctrine of impeccability in negative terms, to say that Christ could not sin, or in the Latin, non posse peccare.  This negative way of putting it makes it sound like a limitation, in some people's minds perhaps almost a weakness!, when in reality this would be the very opposite.  To have such power over sin and temptation so as never to succumb would be the greatest possible moral strength.

The case is similar to the argument that we must abandon any affirmation of necessity in regard to God in the interests of God's freedom.  The truth, of course, is that God's freedom consists in his power to act always out of himself, in accordance with his own character and perfections.  This is what we refer to when we speak of the aseity of God.  God cannot lie, for example.  This is a Biblical
assertion. God cannot deny himself. If he could, if he could be moved by something outside himself to deny himself, this would not be freedom but bondage, not power but weakness.

Therefore, I like Shedd's definition because it states the doctrine of Christ's impeccability positively:

An impeccable will is one that is so mighty in its self-determination to good that it cannot be conquered by any temptation to evil, however great. A will may be positively holy and able to overcome temptation, and yet not be so omnipotent in its holy energy that it cannot be overcome.

(Dogmatic Theology, vol. II, p. 330)

This is the difference, as Shedd sees it, between Adam before the Fall (and the angels in their original state) and Christ. Adam and the angels could have overcome, but this was not infallibly certain.

Thus there is no dilemma revealed in Scripture between Christ's perfect freedom and his absolute sinlessness, yes even impeccability. It is precisely in his sinlessness, in his overcoming of temptation, that Jesus exercises his free will. This is what he freely wills because his will is perfect in holiness. As Berkouwer puts it (p. 263):

He could not fall, not from a lack of freedom, but precisely because of his freedom before God, the freedom consisting in obedience, which could therefore bring liberation and salvation to men.

We must remember that our Lord suffered not only to set us an example of constancy in obedience and resistance to evil, although he certainly did that. His sufferings were a part of his humiliation and satisfaction for sin. He suffered not only as our Example but as our Savior. And by his almighty and victorious triumph over temptation he has evidenced his power to help those who are tempted and to carry them victoriously through their temptation.

As A. B. Bruce says, in affirming Christ's impeccability (p. 268): "had it been otherwise, what had been gained?...companionship in moral weakness" is no qualifying attribute for "being a succourer to the weak." If fallen and helpless sinners are to trust in him completely, the Second Adam must be mightier to repel temptation than the first Adam ever was.

In conclusion, I believe we must agree with Shedd (p. 333) that

Christ while having a peccable human nature in his constitution, was an impeccable person. Impeccability characterizes the God-man as a totality, while peccability is a property of his humanity.

It might be objected, however, that it is in accord with the doctrine of the communio idiomatum to insist that both impeccability and peccability may be affirmed of the person, Jesus Christ. Is it not true that the union of the two natures in Christ means that the attributes of either nature may be attributed to him, to his person as the God-man? Must we not say that Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Logos, is both infinite and finite, both omnipotent and weak, both omniscient and ignorant? Must we not also say, therefore, that in his redemptive ministry he was both impeccable and peccable?

Here is where I have found Shedd's lengthy treatment of our subject to be especially helpful
(Dogmatic Theology, vol. II, pp. 330-349). Because this argument based on the communio idiomatum has seemed so compelling to many, it may be well to share a rather long portion of Shedd's answer (pp. 333-4). Why cannot both impeccability and peccability be attributed to the person, Jesus Christ? Shedd answers:

Because, in this...instance, the divine nature cannot innocently and righteously leave the human nature to its own finiteness without any support from the divine, as it can in the other instances. When the Logos goes into union with a human nature, so as to constitute a single person with it, he becomes responsible for all that this person does through the instrumentality of this nature. The glory or the shame, the merit or the blame, as the case may be, is attributable to this one person of the God-man. If, therefore, the Logos should make no resistance to the temptation with which Satan assailed the human nature in the wilderness, and should permit the humanity to yield to it and commit sin, he would be implicated in the apostasy and sin. The guilt would not be confined to the human nature. It would attach to the whole theanthropic person. And since the Logos is the root and base of the person, it would attach to him in an eminent manner. Should Jesus Christ sin, incarnate God would sin; as incarnate God suffered, when Jesus Christ suffered.

In reference, therefore, to such a characteristic as sin, the divine nature may not desert the human nature and leave it to itself. In reference to all other characteristics, it may....

Consequently, all the innocent defects and limitations of the finite may be attributed to Jesus Christ, but not its culpable defects and limitations.

To summarize, then: yes, we must affirm not only Christ's sinlessness but his impeccability. We should be careful to make clear, however, that in doing so we are not affirming a decretal necessity (see footnote 2 above), nor a metaphysical necessity (which would deny the truly temptable and peccable character of our Lord's human nature—Hodge's concern); but rather we are affirming an historical hypostatic reality—that the Lord Jesus Christ, our mighty Savior, could not fail to overcome every temptation and perfectly fulfill the will of the Father who sent him.

NOT the necessity of divine decree, or the necessity of metaphysical reality;

BUT RATHER the necessity of historical hypostatic reality.

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3 See footnote 1 above.
THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST

Reading Assignment: Charles Hodge, Part III, ch. IV (7 pp.).

Calvin (Bucer): Three offices of Christ

I. As Prophet

Reading Assignment:


Acts 14:17

History of Redemption
redemptive redemptive
accomplishment revelation

a prophet=a spokesman for God to men

Exodus 7:1 Moses God

AARON PROPHET

Pharaoh men


Luke 9:35; II Corinthians 4:6

Mark 10:45; Luke 4:18 (Isaiah 61); John 18:37

Our God ACTS - and SPEAKS.

II. As Priest

Reading Assignment:

1. Charles Hodge, Part III, ch. VI (16 pp.)
2. Robert Letham, ch. 6 (19 pp.)

a priest=one who acts for men in the presence of God

God

PRIEST
A. The Atonement

Reading Assignment:

2. Hodge, Part III, chs. VII through IX (112 pp.)
3. Letham, ch. 8 (16 pp.)
5. Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, chs. 13 and 14 (19 pp.)
6. Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 4, ch. 6 (21 pp.)
7. Steven M. Baugh, "'Savior of All People': 1 Tim 4:10 in Context," *WTJ* 54 (1992), 331-340. (Photocopy in vertical file on reserve.)

At-one-ment

1. Source
   a. a sovereignly exercised love

   
   b. an electing love

   Ephesians 1:7,4,5; 5:25-27
   
   c. a love that moves God to provide atonement

   Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4-7

   the love of God THE FATHER, John 3:16; 1 John 4:9,10; Romans 8:29,32; Ephesians 1:3


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2. Necessity

Anselm, *Cur deus homo*, i:i, vi (Boso)

a. Hypothetical (relative) necessity

Moral Influence views (Abelard)

Augustine; Aquinas; some 17th cent. Puritans (Twisse, Goodwin, Blake, Ball, Rutherford)

(1) God could have saved men merely by his sovereign good pleasure, or by any means that he sovereignly chose.

(2) But once God decreed to save men by this method, then this was the only method by which salvation could come.

(3) And God chose this method because by this particular means the greatest number of benefits would result and God's grace would be most marvelously displayed.

Thornwell: "the necessity of expediency"


Grotius' "Governmental Theory" of the Atonement

b. Antecedent Absolute Necessity

(1) It was inherently necessary for God to save a certain portion of mankind.

(2) This must be through Christ's atonement.

Anselm? *aut satisfactio aut poena*

Gordon Clark, *The Trinity Review*, no. 28, pp. 2 and 4. (Greg Welty's prize-winning paper)

Liberalism; Karl Barth?

c. Consequent Absolute Necessity

(1) Statement of the view.

(a) There was no necessity inherent in the very nature of God for the
salvation of fallen mankind.

(b) God having chosen to redeem men, there was an absolute necessity arising from the nature of sin and the perfections of God that that redemption should be accomplished in this particular way.

*Heidelberg Catechism*, question 40  
*The Canons of the Synod of Dort*, Second Head of Doctrine, articles I through IV.  
[Calvin? *Institutes* II:xii:1-3 (Syllabus pp. 70-73); Strimple vs. Louis Berkhof and Robert Franks]

(2) Objections

(a) Hebrew 9:22 not a sufficient proof-text.

(b) Speculative

  God's *aseitas; Cur Deus homo*, II:17

(c) Does a good man require satisfaction in order to forgive?

  F. D. Maurice, *Theological Essays*, p. 137; Berkhof, pp. 52-3; Romans 12:19; T. J. Crawford.

(3) Scriptural evidence

(a) Hebrews 2:10, 17

  v. 10--*eprepen*=fitting, suitable; proper, right.  
  v. 17--*opheilo*=one must, one ought.  
  (A. B. Davidson’s commentary)

(b) Hebrews 9:23

  *anagke*="necessity, compulsion of any kind, outer or inner, brought about by the nature of things...etc." (Bauer)

  Levitical sacrifices=antitypes, copies  
  sacrifice of Christ=*alethinos*, genuine, real  
  Hebrews 10:4

(c) the nature of justification

  the imputation of a perfect righteousness--Romans 5:12ff.; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 2:21; 3:21.
(d) the Cross— the supreme exhibition of God's love for sinners

extreme costliness, Romans 8:32 *a fortiori* argument;

(e) the vindicatory justice of God

vs. Thomas Goodwin; Nahum 1:2,3; Romans 1:18; 3:21-26

(f) Jesus' prayers in Gethsemane: Matthew 26:39,42.

3. Nature

Christ died for our sins (Romans 4:25; 8:3; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Galatians 1:4; Hebrews 10:12; 1 Pet. 3:18). Christ died for us (Romans 5:6-8; 8:32; 2 Corinthians 5:14).

Scripture explains the meaning of Christ's death for us in terms of various concepts: expiation, propitiation, reconciliation, redemption.

a. Obedience

(1) a more inclusive concept (Murray)

(2) focuses attention upon the subject in the affirmation: "Christ died for us."

(3) the ground of our justification (Isaiah 53:10,11; Romans 5:9).

(4) a reminder that each of these categories of thought would seem to have both "redemption accomplished" and "redemption applied" aspects. (See 2 Corinthians 5:20 and 1 Corinthians 1:30, e.g.)

(5) active obedience—precepts of the law-righteousness/passive obedience—penalty of the law-forgiveness.

"passive" from *patior* (Latin)=to suffer

See Crawford, p. 59; *Heidelberg Cathecism* 37; Calvin, *Institutes* II:xvi:5; Murray, vol. 2, ch. 14; Turretin, pages assigned to read; Owen, *The Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, ch. XII; Martin Luther.

(6) the *reality* of Jesus' obedient suffering
Focusing attention upon the work of Christ as a work of obedience reminds us that we are dealing here with no mere doctrine but with a work of atonement, a work accomplished through the real life and death experience of a man of flesh and blood who was constituted a perfect savior through suffering. (See Hebrews 2:10-18.) How easy it is to view our Lord's work in an artificial or mechanical manner. To view him in docetic fashion as a deus ex machina, or mechanical man, going through the motions, playing out the charade of satisfaction, with victory always assured and therefore no real struggle or suffering involved.

When the Bible speaks of Christ's obedience, it always does so in realistic, poignant terms, and asks us to look beyond the overt actions of the Savior themselves to the mind, will, and emotions lying behind those actions. As Calvin wrote: "...this is our wisdom: duly to feel how much our salvation cost the Son of God" (Institutes II:xvi:12, p. 519 L.C.C. edition). And focusing upon some of the texts I want to put before you now may help us achieve that "due feeling.”

When we consider that which the New Testament reveals concerning the mind, will, and emotions of the Savior in the anticipation of and in the endurance of his sufferings, we note first that he was a willing sufferer. (See T.J. Crawford, The Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement, second edition, pp. 130ff.)

John 10:17,18--"For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself" (ap' emautou--N.I.V. and R.S.V., "of my own accord;" N.A.S.B., "on my own initiative").

Luke 9:51--"And it came to pass, when the days of his analempsis, being taken up (ascension?, N.A.S.B., N.I.V.; or death?, Bauer) were fulfilled (the number of days allotted on the divine calendar was drawing to a close, the hourglass was being filled up), that he set his face to go to Jerusalem" (a Hebraism implying fixedness, firmness, of purpose; compare, e.g., Jeremiah 21:10 and Isaiah 50:6,7—"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off my hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame").

In Matthew 16:23 there is a perhaps surprising harshness in his words to Peter--"Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumblingblock to me, because you are not intent upon the things of God but rather the things of men"—a harshness which Crawford contrasts with the merciful and forgiving words he spoke in regard to his crucifiers.

John 4:34 "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work." In all things he exemplified the Messianic spirit: "Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:7,8).

Yes, we must remember that at all times our Lord was a willing, which is just to say an obedient sufferer. As we look now at those texts which speak of the intensity of our Lord's internal struggle as he moves to the climax of his commission, we must never think of his being broken by that struggle. As Warfield says in his study of "The Emotional Life of our Lord": "our Lord did not come into the world to be broken by the power of sin and death, but to break it" (The Person and Work of Christ, p. 123). Hebrews 12:2—"for the joy that was set before him, (he) endured the cross, despising the
same, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

We have emphasized, then, that our Lord was a willing sufferer. May we also emphasize that he truly suffered. As he anticipated the climax of his obedience, and so much the more as the hour approached, he was increasingly fully aware of the depth of the sufferings awaiting him.

Luke 12:50 "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it be accomplished!"
Jesus speaks elsewhere, figuratively, of his "baptism." Mark 10:38 "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" There the linking of the baptism with the cup to be drunk points us to its reference to his climactic sacrifice. "His passion is a flood in which he must be plunged" (Plummer, *I.C.C. Commentary on Luke*).

And here in Luke 12:50 we read of the emotion, the mental attitude, which that prospect evokes in him. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it be accomplished!" *sunecho* speaks of being pressed upon, pressed down, oppressed, distressed, of one's bearing a burden. Plummer comments: "The prospect of His sufferings was a perpetual Gethsemane...While He longed to accomplish His Father's will, possibly His human will craved a shortening of the waiting." And perhaps that latter thought is involved here. The words *heos* *hotou* lay a certain stress on the time intervening--"I am oppressed through all the time up to the accomplishment--and perhaps the emotion expressed is similar to the one we sometimes experience when we know that there is a trial ahead (perhaps merely a visit to the dentist!)--and there is no escaping it--and so we are in a way anxious for that time to arrive so that, as we say, we can "get it over with." We are ill at ease with the waiting.

When we turn to the accounts of his agony in Gethsemane we become deeply conscious of the fact that we tread upon sacred ground. Crawford notes (p. 135):

> There is something deeply mysterious in this passage of our Lord's history. It seems scarcely a fit or becoming thing to pry into it. Nor can we speak of it without feeling that we speak inadequately, and fearing that we may speak amiss.

Some degree of orientation is no doubt given to us in that inspired commentary on the Gethsemane experience, Hebrews 5:7-10:

> In the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications to the one able to save him from death, with loud crying and tears, and having been heard for his godly fear, although being a Son, he learned obedience through the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect he became to all those who obey him the source of eternal salvation, being named by God high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

This concept of the incarnate Christ's "learning" obedience has seemed to many a most difficult concept. Ethical development in our experience means moral improvement; we no longer make moral mistakes we used to make. Obedience replaces disobedience. Clearly such an experience would not be in accord with the sinlessness of Christ.
This is not the only kind of developing obedience possible, however. Christ "increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). Thus there must have been throughout his life an ever-increasing knowledge of his Father's will and the demands of that will upon him. With such increasing awareness there had to come corresponding obedient decisions. (See Murray, *Redemption*, pp. 28-30; and *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, pp. 153-157.)

F. W. Grosheide (*Commentaar*, p. 152) comments to the effect that there is development, not in the sense of ethical improvement, but in the sense of a growing capacity for the fulfillment of his office. Christ saw his work ever more clearly before him and proceeded to do it. Clearly the author of Hebrews does not view the transition as "one from rebellion to obedience but rather one of maturing in the task imposed on him" (G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, p. 248).

Berkouwer adds (pp. 248-9):

> In Hebrews...the course of his life is seen under the aspect of absolute obedience. But this obedience is not a static quality. It is rather a dynamic reality in the daily life of the Son of Man who was led from one situation to the other and was called in each new phase of the judgment of God to practical, existential obedience.

In Gethsemane that progressive realization of the Father's will is climaxed; and, as we shall see, the Son comes to will with his entire being that that will might be accomplished. But first, as he looks into the contents of that cup and views the bitter pangs of damnation through which he must pass, there is the natural recoil of all his holy being from it. (See Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, p. 155.)

Matthew 26:37-39 "he began to be sorrowful and troubled" "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death"—"my Father, if it be possible, may this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Why? Why such a prayer as this? Surely we have to try to appreciate fully what death meant for Christ. For any man death is a contradiction of what is natural to man as created by God. For Christ death was the contradiction of all that he was as "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26), because death is the wages of sin; and he knew no sin!

The physical aspects of the suffering of the cross are not to be minimized (nor are they to be insensitively dramatized—the Gospel accounts maintain a dignified reserve in describing them), but we must also keep in mind his position as vicarious sin-bearer upon whom the Lord laid the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). What he was to drink was the judgment of God against sin.4

4 This is Calvin's interpretation of the phrase in the Apostles' Creed, "he descended into hell." Read Institutes II:xvi:8-12. "If Christ had died only a bodily death, it would have been ineffectual. No—it was expedient at the same time for him to undergo the severity of God's vengeance, to appease his wrath and satisfy his just judgment. For this reason, he must also grapple hand to hand with the armies of hell and the dread of everlasting death....Christ was put in place of evildoers as surety and pledge—submitting himself even as the accused—to bear and suffer all the punishments that they ought to have sustained....No wonder, then, if he is said to
Crawford writes (p. 135):

The very position in which He stood, as the conscious sin-bearer burdened with our iniquities, when closely and vividly brought before His mind by the fast approaching hour...might of itself be sufficient to explain the anguish and heaviness of spirit with which He was afflicted. For we may well conceive that to a perfectly pure and holy Being it could not be other than a source of grievous agony to have all the iniquities of a sinful world laid upon Him, and that accursed thing imputed to Himself which He cannot look upon in others without abhorrence.

Yes, as he looks into the contents of that cup and sees all that it contains--death, sin, the power of Satan, the wrath of God—there is this natural, intense revulsion. But it is at that very point that the full measure of his obedience is revealed. Almost immediately he offers a second prayer, significantly altered in form, verse 42: "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

With the increased awareness of the necessity, the inescapable necessity of that destiny, there have come new resources of obedient determination. How eloquently that is expressed in John's account! As the soldiers enter the garden and Peter tries to defend him, Jesus commands (John 18:11): "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" What eloquent testimony to the voluntary obedience of Christ (as Paul puts it so significantly in Phil. 2:8) "even up to (mechri) death." In the terms of our Lord's figure: the Father placed the cup into his hands; but he had to grasp it, put it to his lips, and drink it to its bitterest dregs. (Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, p. 155)

We have spoken of Gethsemane as marking a certain climax in Christ's obedience; but, of course, the cross still lay ahead. And it is in those words from the cross that the final agony is expressed: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

In those words, notice, a believing apprehension of the realities of the situation is revealed. There is no cry addressed to the Roman soldiers nor to the Jewish authorities. Such human agents are "overlooked, or viewed as subordinate instruments in the hand of God, doing to Him" nothing other than that "which the purpose and counsel of heaven had ordained..." (Crawford, p. 136). Jesus traces all his sorrows to the will and appointment of his Father in heaven. "Why have you forsaken me?"

Not that he is in truth no longer the object of the Father's love in that hour. He himself had affirmed: "The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, every man to his home, and will leave me alone; yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me" (John 16:32, emphasis added). But in that hour upon the cross he is bereft of every token of the Father's love.

Still, his obedient faith does not falter. The very cry of agony itself is addressed to "My God, my God." And the last words we hear are: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46)!

have descended into hell, for he suffered the death that God in his wrath had inflicted upon the wicked!" (sec. 10, pp. 515-6 L.C.C. edition)
b. Expiatory Sacrifice

(1) The N.T. writers view Christ’s death as a sacrifice.

*prosphora* Hebrews 10:10,14  
*prosphero* Hebrews 8:3; 9:14, 25, 28  
*thusia* Hebrews 9:23, 26; 10:11, 12  
*thuo* 1 Corinthians 5:7  
both *thusia* and *prosphora* Ephesians 5:2

*amnos* 1 Peter 1:19; John 1:29,36  
*arnion* Revelation

(2) That which was essential and basic in the O.T. sacrifices was basic in Christ’s sacrifice, and *vice versa*. Hebrews 9:23.

(Not that we are to press for crassly literal fulfillment of all details. Compare Hebrews 13:11,12 with Exodus 29:14. The *fulfillment* far transcends the *shadow*, the *type*. Other examples: 1) Isaiah 65:17-25; 2) Seventh Day Adventist scapegoat doctrine, Leviticus 16:7-10, 20-22.)

(3) The O.T. concept of sacrifice: the sacrifice was vicarious and expiatory (pays sin’s penalty). This may be seen from (Crawford, p. 105):

(a) the occasion for presenting the sacrifices—*sin*, either particular or habitual;  
(b) the imposition of hands by the offerer, or his representative, on the victim’s head (signifying communication);  
(c) the slaying of the victim;  
(d) the declared effect of the offering (Leviticus 1:4; 4:20,26,31,35; 6:7).

(4) The efficacy of the O.T. sacrifices:

(a) ceremonial, or covenantal  
(b) typological (pedagogical) and sacramental. See Westminster Confession of Faith, XXVII:2.
c. Propitiation

(1) Closely related to the concept of expiatory sacrifice.

(2) N.T. usage

hilasterion Romans 3:25 (Hebrews 9:5)
hilasmos 1 John 2:2; 4:10
hilaskomai Hebrews 2:17; Luke 18:13


(4) C. H. Dodd's influential conclusion: "Hellenistic Judaism, as represented by the LXX, does not regard the cultus as a means of pacifying the displeasure of the Deity, but as a means of delivering man from sin, and it looks in the last resort to God himself to perform that deliverance, thus evolving a meaning of hilaskethai strange to non-Biblical Greek" (p. 359).

kipper (Hebrew piel)--(ex)ilaskesthai (hilasmos, exilasmos,exilasma, exilasis) Of 155 appearances of the kipper group, 118 are translated by hilaskesthai words.

(a) Other Greek terms translating kipper words in the LXX.

(b) Hebrew words other than kipper translated by hilaskesthai in LXX: chitte\*; salach; nasha; nicham; richam; chillah (piel, Zechariah 7:2; 8:22; Malachi 1:9).

(c) Constructions where (ex)ilaskesthai translates kipper in LXX.

Only Genesis 32:20 and Proverbs 16:14 have the meaning to appease or placate the direct object; but in neither case is that direct object God.

Normally the reference is to doing something to the sin (removing its guilt and defilement) or to the people, the altar, the sanctuary (cleansing them, purifying them).
(d) New Testament texts: Hebrews 2:17, normal LXX construction; 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, hilasmos peri hamarton; Romans 3:25, "the common translation is wrong [Dodd]"; Luke 18:13, "the passive meaning has evaporated [Dodd]".

Geerhardus Vos, The Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 121; Biblical Theology, pp. 183-185.


(a) The accusative is not necessarily the accusative of direct object. Accusative of specification.

(b) The context, not just the syntax, of the texts in which the (ex)ilaskesthai appears must be considered: Exodus 32:30, but note vv. 10, 12, and 35; Numbers 16:46, 47, but read 41ff. and note the whole of v. 46; Numbers 25:13, but start your reading at v. 1, note especially v. 11 (10 LXX), and Psalm 105 (106 English), verse 30.

(c) Who requires expiation? The Biblical concept of sacrifice is that of a propitiatory expiation.


(6) New Testament passages

(a) Luke 18:13

(b) Romans 3:25. In the larger context (1:18ff.) the fact of sinful men being under God's wrath has been prominent.

(c) Hebrews 2:17. ta pros ton theon=a Godward reference.

(d) 1 John 2:2. Christ our advocate with the Father.

(a) differing concepts of the wrath of God.

(b) propitiation as the work of God himself. 1 John 4:10.

(8) Fundamental distinctions (Murray, Redemption, pp. 31-32).

(a) "to love and to be propitious are not convertible (i.e., interchangeable, Strimple) terms."

(b) "propitiation is not a turning of the wrath of God into love."

(c) "propitiation does not detract from the love and mercy of God; it rather enhances the marvel of his love. For it shows the cost that redemptive love entails." Romans 3:25,26

Postscript: See Calvin, Institutes, II:12:3,4; III:4:26,30.
d. Reconciliation

Introduction: Karl Marx; Jean Paul Sartre; Presbyterian Confession of 1967; 1991 “Megashift Conference” at Concordia University Irvine.

(1) Biblical terms

*allos*=other, another, different

*allasso*=to change, exchange

Acts 6:14; Romans 1:22,23

Romans 1:25,26 (*metallasso*)

*katallasso*, *katallage*--Romans 5:10,11; 11:15; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

*apokatallasso*--Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20,22

*diallasso*--Matthew 5:24; 1 Samuel 29:4 LXX

(2) The meaning of reconciliation

Very close to the Biblical concept of propitiation. The sinner is alienated from God and looked upon as God's enemy (Isaiah 59:2). Reconciliation is the divine provision for the removal of that alienation and the reestablishment of harmony, peace, friendship, fellowship.

"Reconciliation is a change of personal relations between human beings (1 Samuel 29:4; Matthew 5:24; 1 Corinthians 7:11); or between God and man (Romans 5:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:18f.; Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 2:5). By this change a state of enmity and estrangement is replaced by one of peace and fellowship." William Childs Robinson, *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, (1960), p. 437.

(3) From what side of the God/man relation does the enmity and the alienation come and need to be removed?

Popular argument: "The Bible never says that God is reconciled to man but always and only that man is reconciled to God." See e.g. Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord*, (1980), p. 483; Scofield Reference Bible p. 1263; Lewis Sperry Chafer, III, pp. 91-93.

But the fact is that *katallasso* and *diallasso* are used in Biblical writings (as well extra-biblical) to signify the removal of enmity, not from the offending party but from the offended party; and one party
is said to be reconciled to another, "the latter and not the former, may be the party whose friendship and favour are conciliated" (T. J. Crawford, *The Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement*, 71).

(4) The meaning of "to be reconciled" in Scripture

(a) In non-soteriological contexts

*1* 1 Samuel 29:4 (LXX) *en tini diallegesetai to kurio autou*

DAVID IS RECONCILED TO HIS LORD(SAUL)

*2* Matthew 5:23,24

THE WORSHIPPER IS RECONCILED TO HIS BROTHER

*3* 1 Corinthians 7:11

THE WIFE IS RECONCILED TO THE HUSBAND

(b) In soteriological contexts

WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD

*1* Romans 5:8-11

*a* Orientation, v. 8

*b* Historical definitiveness, v. 10

*c* *A fortiori* argument, vv. 9,10

*d* Parallels between vv. 9 & 10

*e* A gift received, v. 11

*f* "Enemies", v. 10 Compare 11:28.

*g* Romans 11:15, *katallage kosmou*

*2* 2 Corinthians 5:18-22

(King James Version’s mistranslation of v. 14; Bultmann’s misunderstanding of v. 16)

*a* God's work, v. 18

*b* Non-imputation of sins, v. 19

Making Christ to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him, 21

*c* A command, v. 20b.

Compare Matthew 5:24

*katallagete to theo*

*diallege to adelph sou*
*3* Ephesians 2:11-19

*a* Divine initiative
*b* Jew and Gentile (Dispensationalism’s error; what law is referred to in v. 15?)
*c* "both in one body to God", v. 16
*d* A new order established

*4* Colossians 1:19-22

*a* Divine activity & initiative, 19
*b* The means of reconciliation, 20
*c* Human enmity also removed, 21
*d* Cosmic reconciliation, 20

Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 4, ch. 6.
Romans 8:18-23; Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25; Ephesians 1:10, 23 (*not* 2 Corinthians 5:19).

Man's fall had cosmic consequences, and so does man's reconciliation have cosmic consequences. The establishment of the *shalom* of God.
Redemption

Redemption has in view God's setting the sinner free from the bondage he finds himself in because of his sin, by paying a ransom price.

(1) Suggestion: the classic Old Testament type of redemption (the Exodus) shows us that the basic Biblical concept of redemption is simply that of deliverance by the power of God without any insistence upon the necessity of a ransom being paid. (See, e.g., Abbott on Ephesians. 1:7 in the ICC series.) Deuteronomy 9:26; Exodus 6:6.


(2) New Testament terms

*agorazo* = to buy (by paying a price) in the market, and especially in the slave market

*exagorazo* = to buy back, to buy up

*lutroo* = to set free by paying a ransom

*lutron* = ransom

*lutrosis* = ransoming, redemption

*apolutrosis* = redemption

*antilutron* - emphasizes the substitutionary (*anti* = instead of, in the place of) character of the ransom

Matthew 20:28 (Mark 10:45) *lutron* (LXX *padah* or *kopher*), *anti* = “in the place of”

Acts 20:28 *peripoieo* = to acquire, obtain for oneself; F. F. Bruce: “the blood of his own One”

Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18,19 *lutroo*

1 Tim. 2:6 *antilutron* (vs. Auburn Affirmation of 1924, signed by 1,247 Presbyterian ministers)

Hebrews 9:12 *lutrosis* (used "as a legal and commercial technical term in the papyri," Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich lexicon)

(3) To whom was the ransom paid?

Anselm vs. Origen

The analogy of a ransom is used in the NT only because it serves so well to emphasize 1) the bondage which sin produces, 2) the costliness of our salvation, and 3) our resulting enslavement to our "owner" (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23). But to go beyond this and seek to work out all the details of a literal act of ransom payment is not
worthy of the Biblical concept.

(4) From what has Christ redeemed us?

(See Murray, *Redemption*, pp. 43-50.)

(a) The Law


(b) Sin

*1* From the guilt of sin
Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14

*2* From the enslaving power of sin.
Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18

*3* From the effects of sin even with regard to our body
Romans 8:23; Ephesians 4:30

(c) Satan

Gustav Aulen, *Christus Victor*; Clark Pinnock

Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 4:8; John 12:31; 1 John 3:8;
Genesis 3:15

Colossians 1:13,14 *hruomai*=deliver, save; *apolutrosis*;
Hebrews 2:14,15 *katargeo*; *apallasso*=free, release;
*douleia*=slavery.

Revelation 5:9; 14:3,4

4. The Perfection of the Atonement

(SEE ASSIGNED READING IN MURRAY.)
The Extent of the Atonement

Introduction: Can the doctrine of "particular redemption" be harmonized with a free and earnest offer of the gospel invitation to everyone? Must we become "four point Calvinists" (Amyraldians)?


R. B. Kuiper, *For Whom Did Christ Die?*

The question of the extent of the atonement and the question of the nature of the atonement are inextricably intertwined.

a. The precise point at issue.

(1) Not the intrinsic value of the sacrifice of Christ.

*Canons of the Synod of Dort*, Second Head of Doctrine, Article III; John Owen, *The Death of Death*, IV:1:1

(2) Not whether the blessings of so-called "common grace" are procured for men by the death of Christ.


(3) The point at issue is the purpose, the intention, of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in regard to Christ's atoning death.

Did Christ die in order to make salvation possible, or really to save? To make all men redeemable, or to redeem?

A DEFINITE, PERSONAL atonement (more accurate adjective than "limited")

Clark Pinnock, ed. *Grace Unlimited (Grace Indefinite? Or Grace Impersonal?)*


Murray, *Redemption*, p. 64: "If we universalize the extent we limit the efficacy."

61


*Westminster Confession of Faith*, XI:iii. (Syllabus, p. 68)


Thus our question must be twofold: for whom did Christ die, and what did he do for them?

b. The Biblical basis for the doctrine of definite atonement.

(1) Scripture passages in which the purpose of Christ's death is defined in terms of its relation to the people of God.

(a) John 10:15--hyper ton probaton

(b) Ephesians 5:25-27. Christ's sacrificial death is the effectuating link between Christ's distinguishing love for the church and his goal for that church expressed in the three *hina* clauses.

(2) Scripture passages in which the limited reference of the atonement is required by contextual considerations.


(c) John 3:16. The purpose of the atonement indicated in a *hina* clause. What is the meaning of *kosmos* here? Note v. 17, "saved." *kosmos*=that which is at enmity with God and lost in sin (Arndt & Gingrich). 1 John, 2:15,16; 5:19. Read note on "world" in Leon Morris' *Commentary on John*; B. B. Warfield,
(3) More general Biblical considerations.

(a) The effective character of the positive decretive will of God.

(b) The New Testament speaks of Christ redeeming (propitiating, reconciling), not of his rendering us redeemable (reconcilable). Read Titus 2:14; Revelation 5:9; Hebrews 9:12.

(c) Christ performs his work as Covenant Head of his people, who are in real union with him.

(d) The expiation and the intercession of Christ our Priest are co-extensive. John 17:2,4,6,9,12,20,24; Charles Wesley's hymn, *Trinity Hymnal*, # 305.

c. Objections

(1) More general Biblical considerations.


(2) Scripture passages apparently teaching that Christ atoned for all.


1 Timothy 2:6; John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 4:14 (*Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield*, volume I, chapter 23.)

(3) Scripture passages implying the possibility of some for whom Christ died being finally lost.
(a) 2 Peter 2:1

*despotes*=Christ (Jude 4); *agorazo*=Christ's redemptive work (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; Revelation 5:9; 14:3,4); *apoleia=*"eternal destruction as punishment for the wicked" (Arndt & Gingrich; Matthew 7:13; Revelation 17:8,11; Hebrews 10:39; 2 Peter 3:7. Thus this verse speaks of certain ones redeemed by Christ who are finally lost. They are apostates (*arneomai*; Jude 4; 2 Pet. 2:20-22), a unique category in the NT revelation (Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Pet. 2:20; Hebrews 10:29; Mark 4:16,17).

(b) Romans 14:15 (1 Corinthians 8:11)

a weak *believer*, thus it is not so much the doctrine of definite atonement which is called into question by this text as it is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. See Murray, *Commentary on Romans*.

B. Intercession

**Reading Assignment:**
1. Hodge, Part III, ch. X (4 pp.).

III. As King

**Reading Assignment:** Hodge, Part III, chs. XI, XII, and XIII (43 pp.).
WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

Chapter III, Section VII

The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as he pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.
WESTMINSTER LARGER CATECHISM

Question and Answer 31

Q. 31  *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.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

Chapter VII, Section III

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; wherein he freely offereth 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 eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe.
WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

Chapter VII, Sections V, VI

V. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel: under the law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come; which were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the old Testament.

VI. Under the gospel, when Christ, the substance, was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper: which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity, and less outward glory, yet, in them, it is held forth in more fullness, evidence and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the new Testament. There are not therefore two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same, under various dispensations.
WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

Chapter XI, Section III

Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father’s justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them; and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; and both, freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.
WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

Chapter XIX

I. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which He bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience, promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

II. This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables: the four first commandments containing our duty towards God; and the other six, our duty to man.

III. Beside this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His grace, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly, holding forth divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the new testament.

IV. To them also, as a body politic, He gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the State of that people; not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require.

V. The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that, not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither doth Christ, in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much strength this obligation.

VI. Although true believers be not under the law, as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified, or condemned; yet is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives; so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin, together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of His obedience. It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin: and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve; and what afflictions, in this life, they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law. The promises of it, in like manner, show them God’s approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performing thereof: although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works. So as, a man’s doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law; and, not under grace.

VII. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God revealed in the law, requireth to be done.
WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

CHAPTER III, SECTION VIII

The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, [in order] that men, attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation [calling], be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.
WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

CHAPTER VIII, SECTION VII

Christ, by the work of mediation, acts according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself; yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

47 Q. IS CHRIST, THEN, NOT WITH US EVEN TO THE END OF THE WORLD, AS HE HAS PROMISED?

A. Christ is true man and true God: with respect to His human nature, He is no more on earth; but with respect to His Godhead, majesty, grace, and Spirit, He is at no time absent from us.

48 Q. BUT IF HIS HUMAN NATURE IS NOT PRESENT WHEREVER HIS GODHEAD IS, ARE NOT THEN THESE TWO NATURES IN CHRIST SEPARATED FROM ONE ANOTHER?

A. Not at all; for since the Godhead is illimitable and omnipresent, it must follow that it is beyond the bounds [Latin: extra] of the human nature it has assumed, and yet none the less is in this human nature and remains personally united to it.
FIVE FEATURES OF THE BIBLICAL COVENANTS
ACCORDING TO JOHN MURRAY

1. A biblical covenant is always an administration to MAN.

2. A biblical covenant is always a dispensation of GRACE to man.

3. A biblical covenant is always a SOVEREIGN administration on the part of God.

4. A biblical covenant is always CONFIRMED by God himself.

   Deuteronomy 29:1-14; 1 Chronicles 16:15-16; Genesis 15:7f.
   Hebrews 6:13f; Acts 2:30

5. A biblical covenant always demands the proper HUMAN RESPONSE to covenant promise (faith) and to covenant law (obedience).

   Genesis 15:6; 17:1; Exodus 19:3-6
1. GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

OF SALVATION

ETERNITY

2. OBJECTIVE 3.

WORK OF

CHRIST

FOR US

SUBJECTIVE

APPLICATION

TO US AND

IN US

TIME AND SPACE
Historical Christian Views of the Plan of Salvation

1. Naturalism vs. Supernaturalism

2. Sacrootalism vs. Evangelicalism

3. Universalism vs. Particularism
   a. Lutheranism
   b. Arminianism

4. a. Supralapsarianism
   b. Infralapsarianism
   c. Amrraldianism
Benefits of the Atonement

I. Immediate & Unconditional Benefits

1. The Present Life
2. Gracious Help for All
3. Capacity for Probation
4. Infant Salvation

II. Conditional Benefits

justification
regeneration
final perseverance
The Mosaic Covenant is not viewed as “a covenant of works” in either the Westminster Confession of Faith or the earlier Irish Articles. Study WCF 19 [p. 69 in the Syllabus]. Only the covenant with Adam was “a covenant of works” [sec. I]. The moral law was given at Mt. Sinai “to be a perfect rule of righteousness”; the ceremonial laws were given “containing typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His grace, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly, holding forth divers instructions of moral duties”; and the judicial laws were given to them “as a body politic” [sections. II, III, IV]. “The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof” [sec. V], “although true believers be not under the law, as a covenant of works” [sec. VI]—and, the clear implication is, they never were. And notice how the entire chapter ends in sec. VII: “Neither are the formentioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God revealed in the law, requireth to be done.”

A “covenant of works” implies the possibility of performing works of merit, but fallen man possesses only demerit. The imperatives of Exodus of Deuteronomy are introduced by the indicatives of grace [Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6], so that the pattern of the holy life is “live” [by my justifying grace] and “do” [by my sanctifying grace] and “live” [by my grace]. See Ridderbos, Paul, VII:42, pp. 253-258, “Indicative and Imperative.”

The majority of Reformed commentators have not understood Paul in Romans 10:5 to be announcing the proper understanding of the function of the law [i.e., to give life—remember Paul’s denial of that in Galatians 3:21] but rather to be using these statement from Leviticus 18:5 as “of itself, an adequate and watertight definition of the principle of legalism” [John Murray, Romans commentary, p. 51].

John Murray, Romans commentary, pp. 50-51 [emphasis added], refers to the “erroneous interpretation of this verse, enunciated by several commentators to the effect that the Mosaic law had propounded law as the means of procuring righteousness. It is strange that this notion should be entertained in the face of Paul’s frequent appeal to the Old Testament and even to Moses and the Mosaic law in support of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith (cf. 3:21, 22; 4:6-8, 13; 9:15, 16; 10:6-8; 15:8, 9; Gal. 3:10, 11, 17-22; 4:21-31). There is no suggestion to the effect that in the theocracy works of law had been represented as the basis of salvation [Dispensationalism, RBS] and that now by virtue of Christ’s death this method had been displaced by the righteousness of faith....Paul is speaking of “law” as commandment, not of the Mosaic law in any specific sense but of law as demanding obedience, and therefore in the most general sense of law-righteousness as opposed to faith-righteousness.” 5-8 The antithesis which had been developed in verses 3, 4 the apostle finds enunciated in the books of Moses. That is to say, Moses speaks of the righteousness which is of the law and defines what it is and he also speaks of the righteousness of faith. For the former Leviticus 18:5 is quoted and for the latter Deuteronomy 30:12, 14. The general purpose of this appeal to these passages is apparent. In characteristic manner Paul adduces the Old Testament witness to support his thesis. At least he derives from Scripture illustrations of the antithesis insituted in the preceding verses and thus confirms from
the Jewish Scriptures themselves the argument is conducting. But there are difficulties connected with the particular passages quoted, especially in the application which Paul makes.

The difficulty with the first (Lev. 18:5) is that in the original setting it does not appear to have any reference to legal righteousness as opposed to that of grace. Suffice to say now that the formal statement Paul appropriates as one suited to express the principle of law-righteousness. It cannot be doubted but the proposition, ‘The man that doeth the righteousness of the law shall live thereby’, is, of itself, an adequate and watertight definition of the principle of legalism. (See Appendix B, pp. 249ff., for fuller discussion.)

John Murray, Appendix B--Leviticus 18:5, in the Romans commentary: “He places the principle stated in Lev. 18:5 in opposition to the righteousness which is of faith and calls it ‘the righteousness which is of the law’. The problem that arises from this use of Lev. 18:5 is that the latter text does not appear in a context that deals with legal righteousness as opposed to that of faith. Lev. 18:5 is in a context in which the claims of God upon his redeemed and covenant people are being asserted and urged upon Israel....The whole passage is no more ‘legalistic’ than are the ten commandments. Hence the words “which if a man do, he shall live in them” (vs. 5) refers not to the life accruing from doing in a legalistic framework but to the blessing attendant upon obedience in a redemptive and covenant relationship to God. In this respect Lev. 18:1-5 has numerous parallels in the Pentateuch and elsewhere...It is the principle expressly enunciated in the fifth commandment (cf. Exod. 20:12; Eph. 6:2,3 [Note this appeal to the promise attached to the commandment, in the New Testament, RBS]). Thus the question is: could Paul properly have appealed to Lev. 18:5 as an illustration of works-righteousness in opposition to that of faith? In order to answer the question it is necessary to deal with the three distinct relationships in which the principle “the man that does shall live” has relevance.

1. This principle has the strictest relevance and application in a state of perfect integrity....Wherever there is righteousness to the full extent of God’s demand there must also be the corresponding justification and life. God’s judgment is always according to truth. Perfect righteousness must elicit God’s favour or complacency and with this favour goes the life that is commensurate with it. This would have obtained for Adam in sinless integrity...[And obtains in relation to Christ’s perfect righteousness obedience, RBS.] [But] The only combination operative now in terms of simply equity is sin--condemnation--death. [But in terms of God’s grace the operative combination is obedience [Christ’s!]]--justification--life, Romans 8:12ff., RBS.]

2. The principle “the man who does shall live” must be regarded as totally inoperative within the realm of sin....justification by doing is the contradiction of justification by faith....It is this contrast that Paul institutes in Rom. 10:5, 6. In alluding to Lev. 18:5 at this point he uses the formula “the man that doeth...shall live thereby” as a proper express in itself of the principle of works-righteousness in contrast with the righteousness of faith....

3. It must be understood, therefore, that the principle “this do and thou shalt live” can have no validity in our sinful state as the way of justification and acceptance with God....But we must not suppose that doing the commandments as the way of life has ceased to have any validity or application. To suppose this would be as capital a mistake in its own locus as to propound works-righteousness as the way of justification. We must bear in mind that righteousness and life are never separable. Within the realm of justification by grace through faith there is not only acceptance with God as righteous in the righteousness of Christ but there is also the new life which the believer lives. Paul had unfolded the necessity and character of this new life in chapters
6 to 8....In a word, it [the new life, RBS] is one of obedience (cf. 13:8-10). So Paul can say in the most absolute terms, ‘If ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live (8:13). In the realm of grace, therefore, obedience is the way of life....The witness of Scripture to the necessity and actuality of this in the redeemed, covenant life of believers is pervasive....’Fear the Lord, and depart from evil: it will be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones’ (Prov. 3:7, 8). See p. 15 of the Syllabus for quotations regarding this point from Murray’s lecture on The Covenant of Grace, as well as chapter VIII in Murray’s book, Principles of Conduct.

John Calvin, Romans commentary, on Rom. 10:5: “Paul now compares the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of works in order to make it clear how greatly they are at variance....He is not referring to the writings of the prophets, but to the testimony of Moses, and for this reason alone, that the Jews might understand that the law had not been given by Moses in order to maintain their confidence in their works, but rather to lead them to Christ....he establishes the righteousness of faith by the teaching of the law itself....The duty now to be performed by the people was to consider in how many ways they were accursed, and how far they were from being to earn anything [note that well, RBS] from God by their works. Being thus led to despair of attaining any righteousness of their own they were to flee to the haven of divine goodness--to Christ Himself. This was the purpose of the ministry of Moses.

...Paul reasons thus from the passage in Leviticus: ‘Since no man attains the righteousness prescribed by the law, unless he has exactly fulfilled every part of it, and since all men have always come far short of this perfection, it is in vain for any one to strive for salvation in this way. Israel, therefore, was quite wrong in hoping to be able to obtain the righteousness of the law, for we are all excluded from this this....But at the same time they fail to see that the promise of life was given in order that the sense of their transgressions might strike them all with the fear of death, and that being thus compelled by their own need, they might learn to take refuge in Christ.” Note well that in all such discussions Calvin does not view the Mosaic Covenant as “a covenant of works” in any sense.

Robert Haldane, Romans commentary, re Rom. 10:5: “This illustrates what the Apostle had just before said, that Christ and Christ alone has fulfilled the demands of the law, and therefore in vain shall life be sought by any man’s personal obedience to its commandments. To live by the law requires, as Moses had declared, that the law be perfectly obeyed. But this to fallen man is impossible. The law knows no mercy; it knows no mitigation, it overlooks not even the smallest breach, or the smallest deficiency. One guilty thought or desire would condemn for ever. Whoever, then, looks for life by the law, must keep the whole law in thought, work, and deed, and not be chargeable with the smallest trangression.” [Compare Hendriksen, Barth, Cranfield. Christ fulfills the covenant of works, but for us God’s covenant is a covenant of grace--and likewise for Israel under the old covenant administration. RBS]

Re verses 6-8: “The Gospel is contained in figure in every part of the law. The very manner of giving the law was a shadow of the Gospel, and typified salvation through a great Mediator. And though the New Testament often contrasts the demands of the law with the voice of mercy speaking in the Gospel, yet here the Gospel also speaks through the law. The reference to what Moses observed with respect to the precepts which he delivered from God to Israel,
instead of finding an opposition to the plan of salvation through Christ, finds an illustration which Divine wisdom had prepared to shadow it, in the mission of the Mediator under the law.

Wonderful is the wisdom of God manifested in the harmony of the Old and New Testaments. They who do not understand it, have laboured to show a coincidence merely by accommodation. But the Spirit of God everywhere explains the language of the Old Testament, as in its design appointed by God to be a shadow of things of Christ's kingdom.

But though there is a coincidence, there is also a contrast between the law and the Gospel. While the language of the law is, 'Do and live,' that righteousness which it demands, and man is unable to perform, is, according to the Gospel, gratuitously communicated through faith. This righteousness is in Christ, and He is not a distance, so that we must scale the heavens, or descend below the earth,—in one word, attempt what is impracticable, to come to Him, and derive from Him this benefit. He and this righteousness are brought near unto us, as was long before predicted."


1. ...it is not open to contradiction or misunderstanding that the way of faith for Paul constituted the essence of the Old Testament economy of redemption as well....
2. ...the people of Israel, even under the dispensation of the law, had received a better and deeper principle by which to live than that of "the righteousness which is of the law," and that the "hardening of their thoughts" lay exactly in their failure to appreciate this....
5. ...the identification by Paul of the concept of law with that of the Jewish-synagogical nomism does not mean that Paul attributed this conception to Moses. Paul sometimes seems to appeal to Moses for this conception, for example, when he says, in Romans 10:5, that Moses defines the righteousness of the law thus: 'the man who does [these things] shall live thereby' (cf. Gal. 3:12). But this is no more than appearance. For this cannot mean that Moses himself was the promoter of this righteousness by the law. Without regard to the places where Paul appeals for the opposite principle (the righteousness by faith) to the "the law" (of Moses)—for which see above—such a view is contradicted by the verse that follows Romans 10:5, in which the righteousness that is by faith is defined with a pronouncement likewise derived from Moses.... This is not an appeal to Moses in support of "a false position," but a binding of this position to its own point of departure: he who seeks righteousness in the law faces, as appears from the law itself, the requirement of doing (cf. Gal. 3:10, 12).
Philippians 2:5-11

5. τούτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὁ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,

6. ὡς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων σοι ἀρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ ἐἶναι ἵππα τῇ ἔφῳ,

7. ἄλλα ἑαυτὸν ἔκνωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιωματί ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος

8. καὶ σχήματι εὐθείᾳ ὡς ἀνθρώπος ἐταπελώσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μεχρὶ θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

9. διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἑαυτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ἐνομα τὸ ὑπέρ πάν ὅνομα,

10. ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὄνοματι Ἰησοῦ πάν γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων,

11. καὶ πᾶσα γλώσσα ἐξουμολογησεται δι' κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς.
the free disposing of his graces, and should illuminate such nations as he wills? To evoke the preaching of his Word at such places as he wills? To give progress and success to his doctrine in such way and measure as he wills? To deprive the world, because of its ungratefulness, of the knowledge of his name for such ages as he wills, and according to his mercy to restore it when he again wills? We see these, then, as too disgraceful slanders, used by impious men to trouble the simple-minded and to make them doubt either the righteousness of God or the trustworthiness of Scripture.

CHAPTER XII

CHRIST HAD TO BECOME MAN IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE OFFICE OF MEDIATOR

(Reasons why it was necessary that the Mediator should be God and should become man, 1–3)

1. Only he who was true God and true man could bridge the gulf between God and ourselves

But now it was of the greatest importance for us that he who was to be our Mediator be both true God and true man. If someone asks why this is necessary, there has been no simple (to use the common expression) or absolute necessity. Rather, it has stemmed from a heavenly decree, on which men's salvation depended. Our most merciful Father decreed what was best for us. Since our iniquities, like a cloud cast between us and him, had completely estranged us from the Kingdom of Heaven (cf. Isa. 59:2), no man, unless he belonged to God, could serve as the intermediary to restore peace. But who might reach to him? Any one of Adam's children? No, like their father, all of them were terrified at the sight of God (Gen. 3:8). One of the angels? They also had need of a head,1 through whose bond they might cleave firmly and undividedly to their God (cf. Eph. 1:22; Col. 2:10). What then? The situation would surely have been hopeless had the very majesty of God not descended to us, since it was not in our power to ascend to him. Hence, it was necessary for the Son of God to become for us "Immanuel, that is, God with us" (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23), and in such a way that his divinity and our human nature might by mutual connection grow together.

1 For Calvin's thought of Christ as Head over the angels as well as over man, see his Responsorium ad fratres Polonos (1560), CR IX. 398: "Primatum tenuit etiam super angelos." Cf. Comm. Col. 1:20.
the affinity sufficiently firm, for us to hope that God might dwell with us. "*Great was the disagreement between our uncleanness and God's perfect purity! Even if man had remained free from all stain, his condition would have been too lowly for him to reach God without a Mediator. What, then, of man: plunged by his mortal ruin into death and hell, defiled with so many spots, besouled with his own corruption, and overwhelmed with every curse? *In undertaking to describe the Mediator, Paul then, with good reason, distinctly reminds us that He is man: "One mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ" [I Tim. 2:5]. He could have said "God"; or he could at least have omitted the word "man" just as he did the word "God." But because the Spirit speaking through his mouth knew our weakness, at the right moment he used a most appropriate remedy to meet it: he set the Son of God familiarly among us as one of ourselves. *Therefore, lest anyone be troubled about where to seek the Mediator, or by what path we must come to him, the Spirit calls him "man," thus teaching us that he is near us, indeed touches us, since he is our flesh. Here he surely means the same thing that is explained elsewhere at greater length: "We have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning" [Heb. 4:15].

2. The Mediator must be true God and true man

This will become even clearer if we call to mind that what the Mediator was to accomplish was no common thing. His task was so to restore us to God's grace as to make of the children of men, children of God; of the heirs of Gehenna, heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom. Who could have done this had not the selfsame Son of God become the Son of man, and had not so taken what was ours as to impart what was his to us, and to make what was his by nature ours by grace? Therefore, relying on this pledge, we trust that we are sons of God, for God's natural Son fashioned for himself a body from our body, flesh from our flesh, bones from our bones, that he might be one with us [Gen. 2:23-24; mediated through Eph. 5:29-31]. Ungrudgingly he took our nature upon himself to impart to us what was his, and to become both Son of God and Son of man in common with us. *Hence that holy brotherhood which he commends with his own lips when he says: "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" [John 20:17]. */*In this way we are assured of the inheritance of the Heavenly Kingdom; for the only

Son of God, to whom it wholly belongs, *has adopted us as his brothers.* "For if brothers, then also fellow heirs with him." [Rom. 8:17 P.]

For the same reason it was also imperative that he who was to become our Redeemer be true God and true man. It was his task to swallow up death. Who but the Life could do this? It was his task to conquer sin. Who but very Righteousness could do this? *It was his task to rout the powers of world and air. Who but a power higher than world and air could do this?"* Now where does life or righteousness, or lordship and authority of heaven lie but with God alone? *Therefore our most merciful God, when he willed that we be redeemed, made himself our Redeemer in the person of his only-begotten Son [cf. Rom. 5:8].

3. Only he who was true God and true man could be obedient in our stead

*The second requirement of our reconciliation with God was this: that man, who by his disobedience had become lost, should by way of remedy counter it with obedience, satisfy God's judgment, and pay the penalties for sin. Accordingly, our Lord came forth as true man and took the person and the name of Adam in order to take Adam's place in obeying the Father, to present our flesh as the price of satisfaction to God's righteous judgment, and, in the same flesh, to pay the penalty that we had deserved. *In short, since neither as God alone could he feel death, nor as man alone could he overcome it, he coupled human nature with divine that to atone for sin he might submit the weakness of the one to death; and that, wrestling with death by the power of the other nature, he might win victory for us. *Those who despoil Christ of either his divinity or his humanity diminish his majesty and glory, or obscure his goodness. On the other hand, they do just as much wrong to men whose faith they thus weaken and overthrow, because it cannot stand unless it rests upon this foundation.

*Besides, the hoped-for Redeemer was to be that son of Abraham and David whom God had promised in the Law and the Prophets. From this, godly minds derive another benefit: on the basis of his descent from David and Abraham they are more certain that he is the Anointed One who had been hailed by so many oracles. But we should especially espouse what I have just explained: our common nature with Christ is the pledge of our fellowship with the Son of God; and clothed with our flesh he vanquished death and sin together that the victory and triumph might be ours. He offered as a sacrifice the flesh he received
of knowledge and wisdom” [Col. 2:3], and apart from whom Paul glories that he himself knows nothing [I Cor. 2:2].

5. Would Christ have also become man if Adam had not sinned?

Suppose someone objects that none of these things prevents Christ—who has redeemed condemned men—from being able also to show his love toward those who are saved and safe, by taking on their flesh. My answer is brief: Since the Spirit declares that these two were joined together by God’s eternal decree, it is not lawful to inquire further how Christ became our Redeemer and the partaker of our nature. For he who is tickled with desire to know something more, not content with God’s unchangeable ordinance, also shows that he is not even content with this very Christ who was given to us as the price of our redemption. Paul, indeed, not only recounts for what purpose he was sent, but soars to the lofty mystery of predestination and fitsly restrains all the wantonness and itching curiosity of human nature. “The Father has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world” [Eph. 1:4] to adopt us as sons “according to the purpose of his will” [Eph. 1:5, cf. VG]; . . . and “he has made us accepted in his beloved Son” [Eph. 1:6, cf. KJV], “in whom we have redemption through his blood” [Eph. 1:7, VG]. Here, surely, the fall of Adam is not presupposed as preceding God’s decree in time; but it is what God determined before all ages that is shown, when he willed to heal the misery of mankind. Suppose our adversary again objects that this plan of God depended on the ruin of man, which he foresaw. It is quite enough for me to say that all those who propose to inquire or seek to know more about Christ than God ordained by his secret decree are breaking out in impius boldness to fashion some new sort of Christ. And Paul, having so discussed the true office of Christ, justly prays that the Ephesians be given the spirit of understanding [Eph. 3:14–17], “to comprehend . . . what is the length and height, the breadth and depth . . . ,” that is, “the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge” [Eph. 3:18–19 p.]. It is as if he were purposely setting bars about our minds so that whenever Christ is mentioned we should not in the least depart from the grace of reconciliation. According to Paul’s testimony, therefore,

4 Referring to Osianer’s statement, op. cit., loc. cit.
5 This passage briefly shows Calvin as favoring the supralapsarian as opposed to the infralapsarian view of the decree of God. The issue became controversial in the Netherlands shortly after Calvin’s death. Cf. McNeill, The History and Character of Calvinism, pp. 265 f. For typical source citations on the ordo salutis in Reformed theology, see Heppe RD, pp. 146 ff.
died for men to redeem them, that he might have power to condemn? Nay, do not these two overthrow one another? If he redeemed thee by his death, then he did not aim at the obtaining of any power to condemn thee; if he did the latter, then that former was not in his intention.

II. Nor, secondly, was it his Father's good. I speak now of the proximate and immediate end and product of the death of Christ, not of the ultimate and remote, knowing that the supreme end of Christ's oblation, and all the benefits purchased and procured by it, was "the praise of his glorious grace;" but for this other, it doth not directly tend to the obtaining of any thing unto God, but of all good things from God to us. Arminius, with his followers, with the other Universalists of our days, affirm this to be the end proposed, that God might, his justice being satisfied, save sinners, the hinderance being removed by the satisfaction of Christ. He had by his death obtained a right and liberty of pardoning sin upon what condition he pleased: so that, after the satisfaction of Christ yielded and considered, "integrum Deo fuit" (as his words are), it was wholly in God's free disposal whether he would save any or no; and upon what condition he would, whether of faith or of works. "God," say they, "had a good mind and will to do good to human kind, but could not by reason of sin, his justice lying in the way; whereupon he sent Christ to remove that obstacle, that so he might, upon the prescribing of what condition he pleased, and its being by them fulfilled, have mercy on them." Now, because in this they place the chief, if not the sole, end of the oblation of Christ, I must a little show the falseness and folly of it; which may be done plainly by these following reasons:—

First, The foundation of this whole assertion seems to me to be false and erroneous,—namely, that God could not have mercy on mankind unless satisfaction were made by his Son. It is true, indeed, supposing the decree, purpose, and constitution of God that so it should be, that so he would manifest his glory, by the way of vindicative justice, it was impossible that it should otherwise be; for with the Lord there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning," James i. 17; 1 Sam. xv. 29: but to assert positively, that absolutely and antecedently to his constitution he could not have done it, is to me an unwritten tradition, the Scripture affirming no such thing, neither can it be gathered from thence in any good consequence. If any one shall deny this, we will try what the Lord will enable us to say unto it, and in the meantime rest contented in that of Augustine: "Though other ways of saving us were not wanting to his infinite wisdom, yet certainly the way which he did proceed in was the most convenient, because we find he proceeded therein."

1 The reader may be referred to the treatise by the author at the end of this volume, "De Divini Justitiae," for the full and mature expression of his views on the necessity of the atonement. In the statements above, it is implied that salvation might have been accomplished without the absolute necessity of such a satisfaction to the claims of justice as the death of Christ afforded. Dr Owen, it will be found in the treatise referred to, latterly changed his views on this point, and held the necessity for the satisfaction of divine justice by an atonement, in order to salvation, to be absolute.—En.