ROBERT B. STRIMPLE

Salvation in CHRIST

Systematic Theology, Course 3
CD TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Text Files
   - Course outline
   - Reading assignments
   - Bibliography
   - Scripture texts
   - Printed lectures
2. Introduction 1
   Why is the seminary catalogue
   title for this course
   “The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit”
3. Introduction 2
4. Common Grace 1
5. Common Grace 2
6. Common Grace 3
7. The Ordo Salutis
8. Union With Christ 1
9. Union With Christ 2
10. Calling 1
11. Calling 2
12. Regeneration 1
13. Regeneration 2
14. Regeneration 3
15. Regeneration 4
16. Regeneration 5
17. Regeneration 6
18. Faith and Repentance 1
19. Faith and Repentance 2
20. Faith and Repentance 3
21. Faith and Repentance 4
22. Assurance of Salvation 1
23. Assurance of Salvation 2
24. Assurance of Salvation 3
25. Justification 1
26. Justification 2
27. Justification 3
28. Justification 4
29. Justification 5
30. Justification 6
31. Justification 7
32. Justification 8
33. Sanctification 1
34. Sanctification 2
35. Sanctification 3
36. Sanctification 4
37. Perseverance of the Saints 1
38. Perseverance of the Saints 2
39. Baptism 1
40. Baptism 2
41. Baptism 3
42. Baptism 4
43. The Lord’s Supper 1
44. The Lord’s Supper 2
45. Postmillennialism 1
46. Postmillennialism 2
47. Postmillennialism 3
48. Premillennialism
49. Amillennialism 1
50. Amillennialism 2
ST 701 DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Robert B. Strimple

OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS (2000+ total pages)

Introduction

I. Course Requirements and Procedures

II. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit = Soteriology II

Reading Assignment:

1. Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) 31, 32, 57, 58; Westminster Shorter Catechism (WSC) 29.
   Heidelberg Catechism (HC) 49, 51, 53.
   Canons of Dort (CD) III/IV Art. 6.
2. Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, Part Four, chs. I and II. (17 pp.)
3. Herman Bavinck, Our Reasonable Faith, ch. XIX. (18 pp.)
4. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. Perspectives on Pentecost, ch. II. (30 pp.)

Suggested Reading:

George Smeaton, The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, Second Division, Lecture IV.

Common Grace

Reading Assignment:

2. Cornelius Van Til, Common Grace and the Gospel, ch. 5. (22 pp.)

Suggested Reading:

Cornelius Van Til, Common Grace.
SELECTED READINGS in the first three books of the Institutes
relevant to Calvin's doctrine of Common Grace

I:2:1 God is the cause of all wisdom, righteousness, power, rectitude, and truth.
I:11:12 "sculpture and painting are gifts of God" (quotations are from the LCC Translation)
I:13:14 The Spirit gives all things life.
I:16:7 God's good gifts: children, daily bread.
I:17:7 Restraint of sinners. All prosperity is from God.
II:1:8,9 Depravity is total intensively.
II:1:2 Summary statement of total depravity
II:2:12-17 KEY SECTIONS GIVING CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF COMMON GRACE. See footnote 63 on p. 276, LCC edition.
II:3:3 Restraint.
II:3:4 "Special" (but not saving) grace.
II:7:10 The second function of the law.
II:16:3 God loves what He has made. (cf. III:7:6. We are to love men because they are God's image.)
III:2:32 "no one is loved by God apart from Christ." Compare this statement with II:16:3 above.
III:7,8,9 Emphasis on self-denial, cross-bearing, the vanity of this life. But note III:9:3 and III:10.
III:10:6 Calvin's concept of work as "vocation."
III:14:2,3 The virtues of unbelievers are god-given, but not deserving of reward.
III:25:9 The wicked share in blessings proper to Christ and his members - to render them inexcusable.
I. Introduction: Three Premises

Cornelius Van Til; John Calvin; Robert Bellarmine; William G. T. Shedd

A. God is the source of all good.

James 1:17; Institutes I:2:1; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; Gen. 1:31; Eccles. 7:29

B. The unregenerate are totally depraved, incapable of good, and under God's wrath.

Institutes II:1:5; II:1:8,9

C. The unregenerate receive good gifts from God and display worthwhile accomplishments.


II. Terminology and Definition

A. "Common" ("Earlier," "Non-saving")

Institutes II:3:4; WCF III:4; Van Til, Common Grace, 83, 84; Romans 8; Herman Dooyeweerd "conserving"

B. "Grace" ("Favor," "Gifts," "Goodness")

S. G. DeGraaf

Murray, p. 96: "every favour of whatever kind or degree, falling short of salvation, which this undeserving and sin-cursed world enjoys at the hand of God."

Herman Hoeksema, The Reunion of the Christian Reformed and Protestant Reformed Churches, p. 27.
III. The Recipients


A. Universal Goodness - all creatures

Psalm 104:16-17

B. General Goodness - all men and women

C. Covenant Goodness - all within the sphere of covenant grace

(Both General AND Special in each case.)

IV. The Blessings

A. Restraint

1. Upon human sin

*Institutes* II:3:3; Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*; Gen. 3:22-23; 20:6; Rom. 1:18-32; II Thess. 2:6

2. Upon divine wrath

Rom. 1:18: Gen. 6:5; I Peter 3:20; II Peter 3:9; Revelation 10:6

B. Bestowal of good gifts

1. Upon creation

Psalms 65:5-13; 145:9,15-16

2. Upon the unregenerate

Murray, p. 106; Hoeksema re Isa. 26:10

C. Performance of the formally good

Luke 6:32-33; II Kings 10:28-31; WCF XVI:7; HC 91; *Institutes* III:14:2
V. Means

A. Providence

B. General Revelation

Romans 2:14-15 (Murray vs. Cranfield)

C. Special Revelation

*Institutes* II:7:10; I Timothy 1:9-10

D. Institutions: Family, State, Church

Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:3-4; I Tim. 2:1-2; I Pet. 2:13-14

VI. Basis and Purpose


VII. Conclusion

Abraham Kuyper; Van Til, *Common Grace and the Gospel*, p. 147; "Common Grace," in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, p. 131; Phil. 4:8; II Peter 3:4
I. The Ordo Salutis

Reading Assignment:

2. G. C. Berkouwer, Faith and Justification, ch. II. (14 pp.)

A. The Meaning and History of the Term

salutis = subjective, applied salvation
ordo = order, arrangement
Jacob Carpov, 1737 (Lutheran)
WCF III:6; CD I, art. 7; 39 Articles, XVII

Calvin's Christ-centered, concentric conception:

B. Objections

(I Cor. 1:30; 6:11)
C. Defense of the *Ordo Salutis* concept

Ephesians 1:13?

1. John 3:3,5
2. I John 3:9
3. John 1:12
4. Romans 8:30
   a. purpose-calling
   b. foreknowledge-predestination
   c. foreknowledge-glorification
   d. foreknowledge, predestination-calling, justification, glorification

D. Outline of a Biblical *Ordo Salutis*

1. Bavinck - "GRACE"
   1st - Preparation and introduction
      (calling, regeneration (narrow), faith and repentance)
   2nd - Status (free from guilt)
      (justification, forgiveness, adoption, testimony of the Holy Spirit, freedom
       from the law, spiritual liberty, peace, and joy)
   3rd - Condition
      (regeneration (broader), dying and being raised with Christ, continuous
       conversion, walking in the Spirit, and perseverance)

2. Murray
   Calling
   Regeneration
   Faith and Repentance (Conversion)
   Justification
   Adoption
   Sanctification and Perseverance
   Glorification

(Arminian *ordo* = universal grace, universal call, faith and repentance, justification,
regeneration, sanctification, and glorification)
II. Union with Christ

Reading Assignment:

1. WLC 66, 69, 82, 83; HC 1, 55.
5. Herman Ridderbos, *Paul*, Sections 7 - 10. (20 pp.)

Suggested Reading:


A. The Central and All-embracing Character of This Blessing

1. Election in Christ (Eph. 1:4)

2. We were in Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom. 6:1-7:6; Eph. 2:4-6; Col. 2:11-13,20; 3:1-4; Gal. 2:19,20; I Peter 4:1,2; II Cor. 5:14,15)

   (Robert B. Strimple, *Anselm and the Theology of the Atonement*, pp. 125 ff.)

3. Called in Christ (II Tim. 1:9)

4. Regenerated in Christ (Eph. 2:10)

5. Justified in Christ (Rom. 8:1; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:17; Eph. 1:6,7)

6. Perseverance in Christ (Rom. 6:4; I Cor. 1:4-9; 6:15-17; John 15)

7. Death in Christ (I Thess. 4:14-16; Rev. 14:13)

8. Resurrection and Glorification in Christ (I Cor. 15:22; Rom. 8:16,17)
B. The Nature of That Union with Christ into Which We are Called

Calvin, *Institutes* III:i (Christ, the Holy Spirit, and faith)

1. a mystical personal union

   (Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 511; Bavinck, pp. 399-400)
   Eph. 5:32; Col. 1:26,27
   *Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 1014
   Hodge, vol. II, p. 699
   I Peter 1:8; II Tim. 1:12

2. a spiritual union

   II Cor. 13:14; Rom. 8:9-11; I John 3:24; 4:13; I Cor. 12:13; II Cor. 3:17,18; Rom. 8:9

3. a faith union

   Dabney, p. 615
   Matt. 9:29; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 2:20

4. a legal (covenantal, representational) union

   Dabney, p. 613; Ridderbos, pp. 61-64 re Rom. 5:12ff.

5. an eschatological union

   Ridderbos, pp. 45 and 53
   I Cor. 15:45-49; II Cor. 6:2; 5:17;
   Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10

6. a vital union

   John 15; 14:19; Eph. 1:22,23; 4:12,13; Col. 1:19; 2:9 (Christ in his economic capacity as head of the Church); John 5:26,27; Eph. 3:19; John 1:16; I Cor. 3:21

7. a communal union (communion with the saints)

   Eph. 5:30; 4:25; I Cor. 12

8. a sacramental union (a union signified and sealed by the sacraments)

   Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12; I Cor. 10:16,17

9. an indissoluble union

   John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:38,39

III. Calling
Reading Assignment:
1. Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) X; WLC 59-61, 67, 68; WSC 30-32; HC 84; CD I, Arts. 1-4, 7, Par. 9; Arts. 5-6; III/IV, Arts. 7-9.
2. Murray, Redemption, Part II, ch. 2. (10 pp.)
3. Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, ch. 15. (6 pp.)
4. Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, Part III, ch. XIV. (106 pp.)
5. John Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 4, I:7. (20 pp.)
6. Bavinck, ch. XX. (35 pp.)

A. Scriptural Usage (*qara*, *kaleo*)¹
1. General Call (universal, common)
   Proverbs 1:24,28; 8:4; Isa. 65:12; 66:4
   Matt. 22:14 (Rom. 11:28,29)
   Matt. 9:13 (Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32)?
   (TDNT, vol. III, p. 489)
   Acts 2:39? (J.A. Alexander, p. 86)

2. Effectual Call
   Rev. 17:14; Heb. 9:15; Rom. 1:6; I Cor. 1:24,26; II Pet. 1:10; Rom. 8:29,30
   Isa. 46:11; 48:15

B. General (Universal) Calling
   II Cor. 5:20; Acts 18:9,10

   Hodge, pp. 642,643.
   Herman Hoeksema, Calvin, Berkhof, and H.J. Kuiper; David Engelsma, Hyper-Calvinism and
   the Call of the Gospel.
   William Carey vs. J. C. Ryland - John Gill
   Peter Toon, The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Non-Conformity.

   Murray and Stonehouse, "The Free Offer of the Gospel," pp. 113-132 of Collected Writings,
   vol. 4.

¹ For convenience, because of the limited symbols on my keyboard and printer, I shall transliterate the Hebrew '*Aleph* as * and '*Ayin* as '.

Matt. 5:44-48; Lk. 6:35,36; Deut. 5:29 (26 Hebrew);
Matt. 23:37; Ezek. 18:23,32; 33:11; II Peter 3:9
Engelsma: a serious call but not a well-meant offer

C. Effectual Calling and Regeneration

WCF X:1 and 2; XIII:1; WSC 30, 31
Dabney, Heppe, Bavinck
Murray, Girod, Shedd

D. Calling in the *Ordo Salutis*

Rom. 8:29,30; II Tim. 1:9; I Cor. 1:9; I Peter 2:9; Gal. 1:15; II Peter 1:10

Calling (Regeneration) - Union with Christ

IV. Regeneration

*Reading Assignment:*

1. CD I, Art. 6; II, Par. 6; III/IV, Arts. 3, 10-13, 16, Pars. 4, 6-9.
3. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines*, ch. XII; or *Biblical and Theological Studies*, ch. XIII. (24 pp.)

A. The Presuppositions of Regeneration

1. Goal of Salvation = Holiness
   
   Rom. 8:4; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Heb. 12:14
   Calvin, Book III

2. Total Depravity - Total Inability
   
   John 3:6; Jere. 13:23; Matt. 7:16-20; 23:25
   Matt. 19; John 3

B. Regeneration in the Broader Sense

*anakainow* - II Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:10
C. Regeneration in the Narrower Sense

1. Its Monergism

Rom. 6:13; John 1:13; 5:21; Eph. 2:5; Titus 3:5

John 3:8 mysterious, efficacious, sovereign, manifested

John 3:5 by baptism?

a. Sacerdotalist view
   Trent: baptism=instrumental cause of justification; works ex opere operato

b. Evangelical view
   baptism=sign and seal
   Dean Henry Alford

c. Mediating views
   Bishop Westcott
   Lutheran

Murray's objections

Murray's interpretation (Bavinck, Packer)
   Exod. 29:4; 30:17-21; Lev. 11:32; 15:4ff.; 17:15,16; Deut. 23:11; Ps. 51:2,7; Isa. 1:16; Jere. 33:8; Ezek. 36:25; Zech. 13:1; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22; Titus 3:5; I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26

Strimple response (see also NOTE ON JOHN 3:5 by Edward Pennington, pp. 16-18 of Syllabus)


2. Its Decisiveness

John 1:12,13; 3:1-8; I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1,4,18

gennaw = give birth
   beget I John 3:9; 5:1

anothen = from above
radical - new heart Ezek. 36:25-27
new creation  Gal. 6:15; II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:23,24; Col. 3:10
resurrection  Eph. 2:5

a "physical" work vs. moral suasion (Owen)  *physis*
Horatius Bonar, *God's Way of Holiness*, ch. 7; Anthony Hoekema’s ch. in *Five Views on Sanctification* [assigned].
habitus - "bents" - propensity - character - “dispositional” complex (Murray) - orientation (Strimple)

Ernest White: "Is salvation possible for the unconscious?"

3. Its Manifestation

John 3:8; I John; I Cor. 2:14; Gal. 5:22; Rom. 6:17-22

4. Its Priority

John 3:3,5; I Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7; Acts 16:14; I John 3:9 - 5:18 - 2:29; 4:7; 5:1,4;
Phil. 1:29; James 2:5; Eph 2:8; Acts 5:31; 11:18; II Tim. 2:25


5. Its Relation to the Word


a. James 1:18

    apokuew = to give birth to
    anothen v. 17; bouletheis v. 18
    *logo aletheias* - "by the Word of truth"  Eph. 1:13; II Cor. 6:7; II Tim. 2:15;
    Col. 1:5

b. I Peter 1:23

    anagennao - "born, or begotten, anew"  *dia logo ... theou* - "through the Word of God"
    v. 25:  *toto de esti to hrema to euaggelisthen eis humas* - "that is the Word which has been preached as good news to you."

c. Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 4:15; II Thes. 2:14; Rom. 10:13-15

"SOLUTIONS"
Abraham Kuyper; William Shedd; John Murray and B.B. Warfield; Herman Kuiper; Robert Dabney; Herman Bavinck; John Calvin (IV:xvi:18); Henry Krabbendam

6. "Preparation" for Regeneration?


Pascal, *Pensees* (“Thoughts”)


preparationism=synergism

preparationism-legalism

Witsius (Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 524)

G. C. Berkouwer, *Sin*, chapter 7
In maintaining that genhgo Æx ’datoj is a Johannine reference to Christian baptism, we are not necessarily holding that this was the original import of Jesus’ words and we certainly do not contend that Nicodemus could have understood anything about Christian baptism and the theology of rebirth associated with it. What is being maintained is that when the evangelist put the Gospel in its final form, he intended a reference to Christian baptism and his readers most certainly interpreted it as such.

Bultmann has maintained that the phrase ’datoj kaì is the contribution of the Ecclesiastical Redactor who was attempting to introduce sacramentalism. He is followed by many others who see it as a later addition of one form or another. While it is true that “born of Spirit” would adequately paraphrase “born from above” and that “water” is not mentioned again in the discourse, there is no textual evidence whatsoever against the genuineness of the phrase. As we have noticed in an earlier paper and shall note again presently, the phrase “born of water” could have been understood by Nicodemus on a different level and so the objection that Nicodemus could not have understood the phrase is weak. The telling evidence against Bultmann is the fact that the phrase “of water” is not the only reference to baptism in this scene, and so its presence cannot be explained as an isolated act of censorship. It is Brown’s contention that this whole passage is in a sense “editorial”—and John is the editor. If this is so then Bultmann’s hypothesis is superfluous (cf. Sanders).

The Nicodemus discourse is followed immediately by a story in which it is emphasized that both John the Baptist and Jesus were baptizing [verses 22-23]. This leads into a discussion of the relative importance of the two men John the Baptist and Jesus. It is pointed out that John is from the earth and Jesus is from heaven (31-32). And in its present context verse 34 seems to be affirming that the Spirit that begets comes from above or from the Father, but only through Jesus. Thus again the Spirit is related to the baptismal motif. The position of the pericope seems to be the evangelist’s way of pointing out once again the unique distinction between Christian baptism and the baptism of John the Baptist (cf. Acts 19:2-6). And if Brown is correct in his view that this story is not in real chronological sequence to the Nicodemus discourse (contra Wescott), then its present location probably reflects a desire to bring out the baptismal motif of the Nicodemus story. Another suggestion of a reference to baptism is found in the verb “to be begotten” in verses 3 and 5. The theme of “being born (again)” is a baptismal theme in I Peter 1:23 and Titus 3:5 (Brown).

If ’datoj kaì is not a later editorial addition and if it does not refer to Christian baptism, what are the other possible options? The first alternative to present itself is the baptism of John the Baptist. Marcus Dods presents the most attractive form of this possibility. Noting from Luke 7:30 that the Pharisees were not baptized of John, Dods suggests the following reason for their refusal: “to submit to the same rite as Gentiles (here Dods is referring to proselyte baptism) and acknowledge the insufficiency of their Jewish birth was a humiliation they could not suffer.) Thus what Jesus is telling this “man of the Pharisees” (3:1) is that he needs to repent of his prideful dependence upon the flesh (note verse 6) and be born of the Spirit. To be born of the Spirit involves a dying to the past.

This view is very attractive for two reasons. First, it would explain why only the Spirit is spoken of in the subsequent verses. The two factors water and Spirit would not be co-ordinate, but water would simply represent the negative side of a positive rebirth through the Spirit. It is also interesting to note that we have a thought parallel to this in Ezekiel 36:25-27: “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all you uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new Spirit I will put within you.” Second Jesus is talking to Nicodemus about entrance into the kingdom of God. In the Synoptic Jesus’ message is “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.” John nowhere in his Gospel makes explicit reference to repentance and it is only here in 3:3, 5 that he mentions the kingdom of God. Could it be that in John 3:5 we have a reflection of the Synoptic tradition of Jesus’ preaching which has developed independently? (Incidentally, this same argument could also apply to Jesus’ baptism which he carried on through his disciples, 3:22-26; 4:1-2. In purpose Jesus’ water baptism would simply be an extension of John’s just as Jesus’ message in the Synoptics was an extension of the Baptist’s message.)
The other two options are based on the work of Hugo Odeberg. Odeberg has shown from Rabbinic, Mandaean, and Hermetic sources that the Hebrew Words ḫpyf ("drop") and ṭyym ("water") are sometimes used of male semen. If ḫdatoj has this meaning here then two possibilities present themselves. Being born "of water" may point to natural birth (note 1:13 where it is stated that children of God are "born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but from God"), which must then be followed by being born "of Spirit." Such an interpretation would put verse 5 in parallelism with verse 6: "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." There are two serious objections to this view. First it is very doubtful that two anarthrous nouns governed by one preposition would allow such an interpretation. The form of the expression ( Axiosdatoj kāq̠̄p̠̄̄e-mnatoj) indicates the general inseparability of water and Spirit. Second, many commentators have pointed out that the general thought of the dialogue alternates between the idea of physical and spiritual birth (i.e., 3=spiritual; 4=physical; 5=spiritual; 6=physical; 7 & 8=spiritual). If this is so, then verse 5 would be parallel to verses 3, 7 and 8 instead of verse 6. Thus being born of water and Spirit would be the same as being born from above. Because of these two objections this interpretation is followed by few today.

Odeberg’s work, however, allows for a second non-baptismal interpretation of this phrase. If “water and Spirit” are taken as a hendiadys then Axiosdatoj kāq̠̄p̠̄̄e-mnatoj would mean A̧k̠ sp̠̄r̠̄̄̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̃̅̄

2 The writer found absolutely no support for the popular interpretation which is given expression in the following quote from Fowler: “Now "born of water"... is a proper and apt description of physical birth. The unborn babe is enveloped in a membrane containing a quantity of liquid (water) so its birth is out of water.”
Thus when Nicodemus heard Jesus’ words, “water” probably carried with it a reference to John’s baptism. But the evangelist would not have us limit the words to this first meaning. They look forward to the fullness of the Christian dispensation when after the resurrection the baptism of water was no longer separated from the reception of the Spirit. Peter in his sermon on Pentecost joined the reception of the Holy Spirit with repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38). Paul speaks to the Romans (6:4) of the “new life” in which they walk through baptism into Christ’s death. And in Titus 3:5-6 we have a direct parallel to our passage: “He (God) saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.”

--Edward Pennington
V. Faith and Repentance

Reading Assignment:

1. WCF XIV, XV; WLC 72, 76; WSC 85-87; CD I, Art. 5, Par. 3; II, Arts. 7, 8, Par. 4; III/IV, Art. 14.
2. Murray, Redemption, Part II, ch. 4. (14 pp.)
4. Warfield, Biblical Doctrines, ch. XIII (41 pp.)
5. Dabney, Lecture LV. (9 pp.)
6. Ridderbos, Sec. 41. (16 pp.)

Conversion - epistrepho

A. The Interdependence of Faith and Repentance

"The faith that is unto salvation is a penitent faith and the repentance that is unto life is a believing repentance." (Murray, Repentance, hardback, p. 140)

Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21; 11:21

Lutheran: Repentance (Law)-Faith (Gospel)

historia salutis John 1:17; II Cor. 3; Gal. 3:23-26 (Hab. 2:4; Ps. 125:1


Strimple response:
1) Repentance and its Fruits Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20
2) Neither order (repentance/faith or faith/repentance) is to be chosen. Dabney
3) Justification is by faith alone, but that faith is not alone. WCF XI:2.

B. Repentance

We often hear it said these days that the biblical doctrine of repentance is a neglected doctrine, and it would seem that this is indeed the case. Not only has this been a neglected emphasis in preaching, it has been neglected, it seems to me, in Reformed theology. How common it has been in Reformed textbooks of systematic theology to have the chapter on Regeneration (or Calling) followed by a chapter on Faith, followed by a chapter on Justification, one on sanctification, et al., with no chapter, or even a part of a chapter set aside for the consideration of Repentance specifically. Murray does give brief consideration to repentance in Redemption; but it was his practice in class lectures to consider only faith, and this is reflected in Collected Writings, vol. II, which largely follows the class lectures, and which has no chapter on repentance.

Here then is a biblical theme that is crying out for careful and comprehensive study—a Ph. D. thesis,
perhaps—if you go to Westminster in Philadelphia (most schools would not let you do such study for your doctoral degree—too constructive!).

1. Biblical development of the doctrine.

   a. Old Testament

The English verb "repent" in the A.V. of the O.T. almost always represents a translation of the Hebrew verb nacham, almost always in the niphal (three times hithpael: Num. 23:19; Deut. 32:35; Ps. 135:14). Nacham in the niphal carries the meaning "to regret something, to be sorry about something," and often refers to changing one's course of action because of that regret. And the O.T. references are most often to God's repentance! I think you are familiar with the kind of statement: Gen. 6:6--"It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart" (NIV--"The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain."). Exo. 32:14--"the Lord repented (NIV--"relented") of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." I Sam. 15:11--"It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king." (NIV--"I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." Joel 2:13. Look at Jeremiah 18:8,10--two kinds of "rethinking" on God's part, depending on Israel's action.

As examples of the use of nacham of humans we might note Job 42:6--"Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Jeremiah 8:6--"No one repents of this wickedness, saying, 'What have I done?"

This verb, nacham, translated in the A.V. by "repent," is translated in the LXX by either of the two Greek verbs which the A.V. translates "repent" in the N.T." metanoeo or metamelomai.

The background of the N.T. idea of repentance, however, lies not primarily in the O.T. use of the verb nacham but rather in the use of the various forms of the verb shub. This word means essentially "to turn," or "to return," "to turn about," or "to go back again." And it is never rendered in the LXX by metanoeo but always by epistrepho or apostrepho. Though often used in a literal sense, it is also used with religious and ethical meaning. It is most prominent in this sense in the Prophets, who call on Israel to return to the Lord from whom she has departed. It can also be used of God. Deut. 13:17--"that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy." Joshua 7:26, "So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger." Or of humans: Deut. 4:30--"if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shall be obedient unto his voice;" Ezek. 33:11--"Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel."

Sometimes such conversion is placed in an eschatological setting, being linked to the remission of judgment, return from captivity, and the coming of Messianic salvation. Jere. 31:15-34; Joel 2:12-32; Mal. 4:5,6--"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse;" Isa. 59:20--"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." (Note the preceding and the following context: the Lord brings justice and fulfills his covenant.)

It should be pointed that shub and nacham are often used in parallelism, evidently practically synonymous parallelism. Of God, Exo. 32:12--"Turn from thy fiery wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people."
Of humans, Ezek. 18:30--"Repent, and turn from all your transgressions..."

b. New Testament

In the N.T. three terms are most important: *metanoeo* (noun, *metanoia*), *metamelomai*; *epistrepho* (epistrephomai).

Although both *metanoeo* and *metamelomai* have the basic meaning "to change one's mind," evidently in classical Greek they were rather distinct in meaning. *Metanoeo* meant "a change of heart either generally, or in respect of a specific sin," whereas *metamelomai* meant "to experience remorse" (*TDNT*). *Metanoeo* implied that one had later arrived at a different view of something (*nous*), *metamelomai* that one had a different feeling about it (*melei* = an impersonal verb, "there is a care, it concerns").

But it was very easy for the two ideas to later come together and even merge, since a change of view often carries with it a feeling of regret or sorrow; and it is a debated point whether the N.T. strictly maintains the distinction in meaning between the two words. You can examine the texts in which *metamelomai* appears in order to reach your own judgment. There are not that many of them. In Matt. 27:3 the word may have been chosen because Judas' remorse was not true repentance. The word plays in II Cor. 7:8ff. are especially interesting. In the other texts the force of *metamelomai* seems to me no different from that of *metanoeo*.

Most commonly, then, the N.T. uses *metanoeo* (*metanoia*) to speak of this "change of mind" which is unto salvation. The texts are most common in the Synoptics (especially in Luke) and in Acts. The verb *metanoeo* also appears twelve times in the book of Revelation.

The verb *epistrepho*, usually translated "to turn, to be converted", is obviously very similar in its force. Geerhardus Vos says that the verb "denotes a change in the direction of life, one goal being substituted for another" (*The Teaching of Jesus Concerning the Kingdom and the Church*, p. 92). Acts 3:19 and 26:20 reflect the kind of parallelism we saw in the O.T.: "Repent (*metanoeo*) therefore and return (*epistrepho*), that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." "...I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but kept declaring...that they should repent (*metanoeo*) and turn (*epistrepho*) to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance (*metanoeo*)".

We have noted the prominence of the call for repentance in the message of the Prophets. John the Baptizer comes with the same invitation and command. Although in a sense, perhaps, we should speak of it as a new command, because it comes with a new urgency, the urgency of a final appeal, because the coming of God's lordship is imminent and his judgment is close at hand, the eschatological Day of the Lord. In this last span of time there is but one task for sinners: *metanoia* (*TDNT*, vol. IV, p. 1000). The God of the covenant is about to inaugurate a new covenant, and he calls on the members of the covenant community to repent that they might enter into eschatological blessing rather than eschatological judgment. (See especially Luke 3:7-18.)

John's baptism is a baptism of repentance, and it is accompanied by the confession of sins. Read Mark 1:4,5 (*baptisma metanoias*) and Acts 13:23,24. The phrase is Matt. 3:11 is *en hudati eis metanoian*, "in/by
water for repentance."
"In the teaching of Jesus according to the Synoptists metanoeite is again the imperative which is
indissolubly bound up with the indicative of the message of the basileia" (TDNT, vol. IV, p. 10001). Read
Matt. 4:17 and Mark 1:15. This command has to go hand in hand this announcement. As Vos puts it:
"Because the kingdom is in its very essence a kingdom of righteousness, therefore it is impossible for
anyone to be truly in it without having previously repented" (p. 91).

But it is not simply that Jesus repeats the same message as the Baptizer. His announcement is that "the
time is fulfilled" (Mark 1:15). His coming is the coming of the basileia of God and thus is decisive. That
definitive, final, perfect revelation of God which he is demands final, definitive, and unconditional
commitment.

Repentance as Jesus understands it is not simply negative. (See the discussion in TDNT.) It is more than a
break with past sin in the face of the threat of eschatological judgment. It embraces the whole life of the
one who is claimed by the divine lordship. It calls for the establishment of a new personal relationship of
man to God, and therefore embraces that which the apostle Paul speaks of as pistis ("faith").

It is under the commission of Luke 24:46-48 that the apostles preached.

And he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from
the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in
his name to all the nations--beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

At the heart of the apostolic kerygma is the call for repentance. Read Acts 2:38. The command to repent is
grounded in the reality of God's redemptive activity in the incarnate Christ. Acts 5:30-32

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging him on a
cross. He is the one whom God exalted to his right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant
repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so
is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.

And that command is delivered with a sense of eschatological urgency (Acts 3:17-26); 17:30-31) and with
full awareness of the universal nature of the command (Acts 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). This universal
note was struck in the Lord's own commission, of course (Luke 24:47).

The apostle Paul also speaks of the gift of and the demand for repentance (II Tim. 2:25; Rom. 2:4; II Cor.
7:9ff.). The commission given to Paul by the risen Lord himself was:

But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a
minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in
which I will appear to you; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to
whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn (epistrepho) from
darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive
forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in

And Paul says that he fulfilled that commission (vv. 19-20, which we noted above as employing both
metanoeo and epistrepho in parallelism). Look back at Acts 20:20-21
...how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance (metanoia) toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

It cannot be denied, however, that the scarcity of such references in the Pauline epistles is a rather striking and surprising fact. But it is a fact which Reformed writers rarely reflect upon! For example, I cannot say for sure that Ridderbos in his book on Paul nowhere reflects on the infrequency of references to repentance in Paul's letters; but I can say that "repentance" does not appear in the Index to that volume.

How can we explain this apparent difference in emphasis (or at least in terminology) between Jesus and Paul? I believe that the answer is that even as for Jesus repentance is a rich concept, which includes that response of trust in God which Paul speaks of as pistis (see my comment on the previous page), so likewise Paul's concept of pistis includes that element of turning from self, sin, and Satan to God which is the hallmark of true repentance. (Is this another indication of the interdependence of faith and repentance? See point V.A. above.)
2. True Repentance

II Cor. 7:10; Matt. 27:3; Gen. 4:13,14; Heb. 12:17
Westminster Shorter Catechism 87
Acts 11:18; II Tim. 2:25; Lam. 5:21

a. Intellectual
b. Emotional  II Cor. 7:11; Ps. 51
c. Volitional  I Thess. 1:9; Luke 3:8ff; 19:8.9; II Chron. 7:14
d. Confessional  James 5:16
e. Trusting  Acts 20:21
f. Specific  W.C.F. XV:5
g. Life-long

3. The Necessity of Repentance

W.C.F. XV:3  "Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for
sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in
Christ; yet it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon
without it."
W.C.F. XI:2  "Faith...is the alone instrument of justification..."
W.C.F. XIV:2  "...accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone..." - the extraspective
nature of faith

The necessary evidence of a living faith

4. Repentance and Preaching

W.C.F. XV:1  "Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof
is to be preached by every minister of the Gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ."

Acts 20:21; 14:15
C. Faith

In this course I am increasingly frustrated by the number of ideas which I think it important to set before you in class and the limitations on our time. Here, for example, I want to emphasize point 1 (below), but I realize that many important matters, theological distinctions e.g., cannot be touched upon at all - and if you don't give careful attention to the **readings assigned** you will be theologically ignorant--and someday your presbytery or classis may discover that to my shame! Please study the readings! Especially Warfield.

Spurgeon once wrote: "You may think it is very easy to explain faith, and so it is; but it is easier still to confound people with your explanation!" *(Basic Christian Doctrines, Baker, p. 13).* Perhaps we will do best to concentrate on -

1. Biblical development of the doctrine.

The O.T. terms generally translated in the LXX by the noun *pistis* or the verb *pisteuo* are derived from the root *aman*, the basic meaning of which seems to be: "to be firm, lasting, enduring."

The noun *emunah* first of all carries the meaning "steadfastness, stability." With this meaning it is used of physical things, Exo. 17:12 - Moses' hands, supported by Aaron and Hur, were "steady," *emunah*, until the going down of the sun. It is used somewhat more abstractly in Isa. 33:6, where various subjects (unexpressed) are suggested for the phrase *wehayah emunah 'itheka*, "will be the stability of your times" - "wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times," (A.V.) - "there shall be stability in thy times, abundance of salvation, wisdom and knowledge," (A.S.V.) - "he will be the stability of your times, abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge" (R.S.V., compare N.A.S.B. and N.I.V.).

But *emunah* also takes on the moral sense of steadfastness, i.e., faithfulness. Ps. 33:4. Hosea 2:22 (vs. 20 English) - "I will betroth you in faithfulness; and you will acknowledge the Lord" (N.I.V.). Isa. 11:5.

Many insist that *be*emunatho in Hab. 2:4 must bear this same "passive" meaning - "The just shall live by his faithfulness." The LXX gives the possessive pronoun in the first person, ek pisteus mou. Perhaps they took it "passively," "by My faithfulness."

Warfield, however, argues very forcefully in your reading (p.431, *Biblical and Theological Studies*) for the "active" force ("faith") here. The very point of this passage, Warfield argues,
is the sharp contrast which is drawn between the arrogant self-sufficiency and faithful
dependence on God....The whole drift of the broader context bears out this meaning; for
throughout this prophecy the Chaldean is exhibited as the type of insolent self-assertion
(1:7,11,16), in contrast with which the righteous appear, certainly not as men of integrity
and steadfast faithfulness, but as men who look in faith to God and trustingly depend upon
His arm. The obvious reminiscence of Gen. 15:6 throws its weight into the same scale, to
which may be added the consent of the Jewish expositors of the passage.

It is a strong argument, I believe. It remains striking, however, that this is the only case in the O.T. where
the active force of "faith" seems to be the required rendering of this noun. Warfield writes:

Here only the term occurs in the O.T.; but on this its sole occurrence it rises to the full height of its
most pregnant meaning.

The terms *emun and *emeth bear the same meanings of "steadfastness" and "faithfulness," but are not
used in the physical sense. *emun is rendered by pistis in the LXX in Deut. 32:20 only. (A.V. "faith,"
R.S.V. "faithfulness.") *emeth is rendered by pistis in the LXX six times, and some ninety times by
aletheia, which is also frequently used to translate *emunah. It is interesting, and no doubt significant, that
aletheia and pistis come together in this way as renderings of the same Hebrew term.

Turning to the verb, *amun seems to have the basic meaning of "to stay, to support." In niphal, "to be
supported, to be borne in the arms, as a child." Thus in the qal stem it is translated "to nurse" on occasion
and in the niphal in Isa. 60:4 "to be nursed." More generally, it means "to be founded, to be firm, stable,
lasting, permanent." Ps. 89:29 (28) - "my covenant will stand firm for him." This then gives rise to the
moral sense: "to be faithful, trustworthy, sure." Ps. 78:8 - "a generation...whose spirit was not faithful to
God."

But in the hiphil we do have, with the verb, the active sense of "to believe, to trust." In the LXX it is
rendered forty-five times by pisteuo. TDNT suggests that in its religious use it has the sense: "to say
'Amen' to God."

It can be used simply of believing a statement, or a person making a statement. I Kings 10:7 - "I did not
believe the reports," says the queen of Sheba, "until I came and my own eyes had seen it." Prov. 14:15 -
"The simple believes everything." But even in those many passages which speak of believing a statement,
or the person making the statement, when that person is God, the verb can have the highest possible
religious significance, as in the classic text, Gen. 15:6 - "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him
as righteousness" (N.I.V.). II Chron. 20:20 - Jehoshaphat said: "Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of
Jerusalem. Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will
succeed."
That the verb refers not to a bare assent to the truth of a statement, but to trust, becomes clear in many passages. Ps. 27:13 - "I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Ps. 116:10 - "I believed (kept my faith, R.S.V.) even when I said, 'I am greatly afflicted.'" This absolute use of the verb (intransitive) appears in Isaiah. Isa. 7:9 - "If you will not believe, surely you will not be established." 28:16 - "Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone...He who believes will not be in haste." Not absolute but significant is Isa. 43:10 - "You are my witnesses," says the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me..." (Note the combination with "know." Cf. the New Testament.)

Therefore, although the use of the verb is relatively rare, it expresses a rich concept of trust and confidence in the God who is uniquely trustworthy, a concept fully in line with the later development in the N.T.

In confirmation of the fact of the basic continuity between the O.T. and the N.T. concepts of man's relation to God, remember what Warfield says about the fact that "not only Abraham, but the whole series of O.T. heroes are conceived by (the N.T. writers) to be examples of the same faith which was required of them 'unto the gaining of the soul' (Heb. 11)" (p. 404).

May I remind you also of the truth of Warfield's statement that "In the earlier portions of the O.T....there is little abstract statement of the ideas which ruled the hearts and lives of the servants of God. The essence of patriarchal religion is rather exhibited to us in action" (pp. 405,6). And it is trusting action, believing action, as the book of Hebrews brings out.

And finally I would remind you that the O.T. revelation of the life of faith is not fully surveyed if attention is given only to the uses of the various forms of *aman. On p. 409 Warfield catalogues some of the O.T. synonyms for "faith" or "trust" (especially in the Psalms): seeking and finding refuge in God, committing oneself to God, setting confidence in him, looking to him, relying upon him, staying upon him, fixing the heart upon him, binding our love on him, cleaving to him, hoping in him, waiting on him, longing for him. (Warfield gives the Hebrew root in each case.)

By the aid of such expressions, it becomes possible to form a somewhat clear notion of the attitude towards Him which was required by Jehovah of His believing people, and which is summed up in the term "faith." It is a reverential...and loving faith, which rests on the strong basis of firm and unshaken conviction of the might and grace of the covenant God and of the trustworthiness of all His words, and exhibits itself in confident trust in Jehovah and unwavering expectation of the fulfillment of, no doubt, all His promises, but more especially of His promise of salvation, and in consequent faithful and exclusive adherence to Him. In one word, it consists in an utter commitment of oneself to Jehovah, with confident trust in Him as guide and saviour, and assured expectation of His promised salvation...The reference of faith is accordingly in the O.T. always distinctly soteriological; its end the Messianic salvation...(p. 410).


Coming over to the N.T. we are concerned with the use of the words *pistis* and *pisteuo*; and here their use is so frequent, and the concepts they express so rich and complex, that we hardly know where to begin.

Burton (Commentary on Galatians, pp. 475ff.) says that while "the words are Greek, the roots of the
thought are mainly in the experience and writings of the Hebrew prophets and psalmists" (478). In classical Greek, the noun *pistis* was used in both the active sense of "trust" and in the passive sense of "trustworthiness," and *pisteuo* was used in ways corresponding to the active sense, "to trust, rely on." But "the words...did not become religious terms in classical Greek" (*TDNT*, p. 179).

Their employment in the N.T. is in continuance of the O.T. tradition. However, a marked shift in the significance of *pistis* is immediately noticeable.

(1) *pistis*

We have said that in the O.T. (LXX) the noun *pistis* almost always has the passive meaning ("steadfastness, faithfulness") - Hab. 2:4 being the one exception perhaps. In the N.T. *pistis* only rarely has that meaning, and it is in the large majority of cases active, signifying not "faithfulness" but "faith."

(a) The passive meaning of *pistis* is found in Rom. 3:3, in reference to God. ""Does the *apistia*, the unfaithfulness, of the unbelieving Jews, nullify the *pistis*, the faithfulness, of God? By no means!" This meaning is also suggested for Titus 2:10, Matt. 23:23, and Gal. 5:22; but only the first of those texts, it seems to me, is absolutely beyond question - and the N.A.S.B. even renders that: "showing all good faith"! Even if "faithfulness" ("that which *causes* trust," Bauer) is the meaning in all four texts, it is obviously rare.

(b) In all other cases, *pistis* clearly has the active force and speaks, as Packer puts it, of a "commitment as following from conviction" (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, p. 209), or, in the traditional Latin terms employed in theological discussions of the doctrine, *fiducia* following upon *assensus*.3

Hebrews 11:1 is one of the few N.T. texts which seem to define faith exclusively in terms of conviction, of *assensus*, of the intellectual element - "the evidence of things not seen" - which emphasis comes to expression in v. 6: "he that comes to God must believe that He is..." But the role of the heroes of faith which follows clearly shows that "faith" for the author includes the element of commitment, of trust, of hope. "The nature of faith, according to the N.T., is to live by the truth it receives; faith, resting on God's promise, gives thanks for God's grace by working for God's glory" (Packer).

---

3 Actually, Protestants have seen three elements involved in saving faith: *notitia, assensus, and fiducia*, which we might translate (if we find alliteration helpful to the memory) "cognition, conviction, and commitment."
The object of faith in this active sense in the N.T. is almost always, either explicitly or by implication, God or Christ. Only rarely is its object the truth, or a truth (Burton, 481). Again, we have an example of this latter usage, the more rare one, in Heb. ch. 11, v. 3: "By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God..."

*pistis* in the N.T., then, almost always speaks of trust - in God (or in Christ). The only exceptions which we have not noted would be the following:

(c) *James* alone of the N.T. writers seems to use both the noun and the verb to denote bare intellectual assent to truth. James 2:14-26. That he does so does not imply that this is James' own understanding of the terms. There are indications in the epistle elsewhere that it is not (1:3,6; 2:1,5; 5:15). It is simply that he is adopting in 2:14-26 the usage, the understanding of faith, held by those whom he wishes to correct. "You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder" (2:19). This verse indicates clearly that by "faith" here James has in mind mere intellectual assent, not that faith which is trusting commitment, which is obedience, which is linked with love. "...the demons believe, and shudder." Warfield deals with this issue in the epistle of James on pp. 415,416, and concludes that rather than depreciating faith, James "is rather deepening the idea of faith, and insisting that it includes in its very conception something more than an otiose intellectual assent."

It is commonly maintained that the error James faces had arisen in Jewish-Christian circles as a carry over of the false concept of faith of rabbinic Judaism, a false concept linked to and underlying a false legalism. It is interesting to notice, I believe, how in Roman Catholicism you have had the same combination of a legalism along with a definition of faith limited to *notitia* and *assensus*. (Compare also Zane Hodges in his attack on what he calls “lordship salvation.”)

We shall no doubt want to consider James 2 further when considering Justification, but I think it is clear that the "faith" in view here, the "faith" of 2:19, is not the "faith" of which Paul speaks, a faith that works by love (Gal. 5:6).

(d) Another distinctive use of *pistis* seems to be found in Gal. 1:12 (possibly 3:23-25), I Tim. 4:1,6; 6:10, Jude 3. (Some would include more, some fewer texts in this category.) *pistis* here seems to be used not of the *fides qua creditur* ("the faith by which we believe") but of the *fides quae creditur* ("the faith which is believed"). Bauer speaks of an objectivizing of the *pistis* concept, the body of faith or belief, doctrine.

Gal. 1:23 - "...they kept hearing, 'He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy.'"

Gal. 3:23 - "...before faith came." [N.I.V., "this faith"].

I Tim. 4:1 - ...in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons."

I Tim. 4:6 - "...nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following."

I Tim. 6:10 - "...some by longing for it (money) have wandered away from the faith."

Jude 3 - "...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."
(e) A final group of texts in which it is common to see a distinctive use of *pistis* contains those which speak of the faith which is linked with the working of miracles, either actively or passively.

Here Warfield seems to me to be on good ground, however, in denying the non-soteriological nature of most of these instances of faith. May I refer you to his argument on pp. 412-413 and 443. The reference in I Cor. 12:9, however, *does* seem to be to a "faith" which not every Christian possesses, a special gift which the Spirit gives to whom he will. And in Matt. 7:22 we read of many who will claim to have cast out demons and done mighty works in Christ's name whom the Lord will *disown*, though it must be granted that that text does not specifically mention the "faith" by which such works were done.

(2) *pisteuо*.

The *verb* is used in two senses which, it must be granted, are not always easy to distinguish.

(a) To credit, to believe a person, or his word or statement. (*assensus*)

(b) To trust, to put confidence in, to rely upon. (*fiducia*)

These two senses might be thought to equal *assensus* and *fiducia*, but as Burton says (p. 476): "Since believing one's word and putting confidence in one are in experience closely related, a sharp discrimination cannot always be made between a. and b."

(c) The verb is used in a third sense in both classical and, infrequently, N.T. Greek. In this sense it means to *entrust*, to commit something to someone. This use of the verb in the sense of "entrust" underlines its emphasis on trust.

Luke 16:11 - "If therefore you have not been faithful (*pistoi*) in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust (*pisteusei*) the true riches to you?"

John 2:24 - "But Jesus, on his part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men."

Rom. 3:2 - The Jews "were entrusted with the oracles of God."

Gal. 2:7 - Paul says: "I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised."

It might be said that when we *believe* in Christ we *entrust* ourselves to him.

*Pisteuо* is used in a striking variety of constructions, which reflect the complexity of the N.T. concept of "faith": with the accusative of that which is believed (I Jn. 4:16 - "we know and believe the love God has for us"); with a *hōti* clause (I Jn. 5:1 - "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ..."); v. 5 - "he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God"); with the dative of that which is believed (Acts 24:14 - Paul says that he believes "everything laid down by the law or written in the prophets") or *whom* is believed (Rom.
4:3 - "Abraham believed God"); with the preposition *epi* with the accusative, or the dative; or especially *eis* with the accusative (a construction which appears for the first time in the N.T.); or simply absolutely with the object of faith assumed.

Sometimes the *intellectual element*, the element of *assensus*, is prominent (Lk. 1:20 - to Zecharias, "because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time"; Jn. 5:46 - "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me"). In such texts the elements of *notitia* and *assensus* are clearly evident (Rom. 10:14 - "how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have not heard?"). But most N.T. texts lay the emphasis clearly on that response which the Reformers called *fiducia*. Even in a text like Rom. 10:9, which speaks of believing *that*, rather than believing *him* (believing *that* God raised him from the dead), speaks of believing "in his heart," or "with his heart," which bespeaks the whole-souled character of this faith.

The figures used in the N.T. to speak of faith often stress the *fiducial* aspect: *coming* to Christ (Jn. 6:35; Matt. II:28), fleeing for refuge (Heb. 6:18), *receiving* Christ (Jn. 1:12; Col. 2:6).

For Paul, to *believe* is often equated with to *obey* (Rom. 10:16 - *hupekousan (ou pantes) to euaggelio*). Paul coins the combination *upakoe pisteos* (Rom. 1:5; 16:16). Compare Rom. 1:8 with 16:19; II Cor. 10:5,6 with 10:15.

This fact, that Paul can speak of trusting Christ as obeying the gospel, in no way changes our understanding of the character of faith. It does not mean that we are now to see faith as looking to its own works as its hope rather than looking away to Christ. (We shall be stressing this as the character of faith again at a later point.)

Ridderbos is helpful at this point, I believe. He begins (Paul, p. 237): "Faith as obedience is of central significance for Paul's conception and is repeatedly defined as such in his epistles." But then he goes on to note that speaking of "the obedience which faith is" (not Ridderbos' translation of Rom. 1:5 but mine) is natural because the gospel asks of man "the decision and the act to enter into that way of salvation ordained of God and to abandon every other means of salvation than that which is proclaimed to him in the gospel" (238). That strikes me as a very helpful statement. Faith *is* obedience, but it is a distinctive *kind* of obedience. It is obedience to God's command to turn away from everything in oneself upon which one might propose to stand in God's presence, including one's obedience, and to trust only in Christ.

It has been said that *assensus* is cognition (*notitia*) passed into conviction, and that *fiducia* is conviction passed into confidence (or commitment). But, of course, we use such terms only for the sake of intelligible exposition of that which is a complex human response; and we must not suppose that saving faith is a process of chronologically ordered steps. We are not speaking of an *ordo fidei*! Faith is the movement of our entire personality to Christ. In that movement, intellect, will, and emotions all converge upon the Savior in those ways appropriate to each aspect of our personality. We speak of coming to Christ in "simple" faith, in childlike faith; but even the faith of a child is a richly complex activity after all.

---


Murray notes that we must recognize the diversity of individual temperaments, backgrounds, and felt needs, which result in different experiences of faith. For some the struggle preceding faith had a strongly intellectual complexion. For them the outstanding feature of their experience of saving faith may be the intellectual discernment of the truth of the gospel. For one of strongly emotional nature, the glory, the love, the attraction of the Savior may elicit an apparently deeply emotional response. For some the key struggle may have seemed to be for the domination of the will. For such what stands out in the memory, perhaps, is the critical decision made in the initial act of faith.

We must avoid the temptation to stereotype the conversion experience and to insist that everyone must come to Christ in the same way. We must remember, however, that whatever element apparently dominates in any individual's experience, true saving faith is a whole-souled response of intelligent, confiding, loving trust.6

2. The object of saving faith

Jesus Christ


John 3:16,18; 20:31; Acts 10:43; 16:31; Rom. 3:21,22; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; I John 3:23; 5:9-12; I Peter 1:8

Bultmann (*TDNT*, VI:216,217): in the NT, faith in Christ is acceptance of the *kerygma*, the proclaimed acts of God in Christ.

Rom. 10:9; I Cor. 15:1-5,11; Rom. 4:24,25; Col. 2:12; I Thess. 4:14

"Paul shows faith to be a historical rather than a psychological possibility."

To elicit faith (God's gift) we must preach the *kerygmatic* Christ, not faith. The *instrumental* character of faith. *Christ* saves, through faith. "By faith alone" means "by Christ alone."

---

3. The subject of saving faith

Murray, *Redemption*, p. 133 (106 paper)
Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 485 (Jn. 6:29)
Warfield, p. 399 & 403
Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV:1, p. 617

4. The nature of saving faith

a. Why faith?

   Rom. 4:16 *ek pisteos hiva kara charin*
   Faith is extraspective, self-abandonment
   Rom. 11:6
   Handley Dunelm, *ISBE*, II:1088

b. *fides generalis* and *fides specialis*

   John 5:39 & 46
   W.C.F. XIV:2

5. The efficacy of saving faith

Gal. 2:16 *hina* clause, "in order that"
VI. Assurance of Salvation

Reading Assignment:
1. WCF XVIII; WLC 80, 81; WSC 36; HC 1, 21, 86; CD I, 12; V, Arts. 9-15, Pars. 5-6.
2. Dabney, Lecture LIX. (15 pp.)
4. G. C. Berkouwer, Divine Election, ch. 9. (29 pp.)

Suggested Reading:

A. "The Assurance of Faith" vs. "The Assurance of Hope"

A. A. Hodge, Outlines of Theology, p. 478.
Hebrews 10:22; 11:6 - Hebrews 6:11
Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, pp. 266-7.

B. The Relation Between Faith and Assurance: Three Views
1. Assurance of salvation is unattainable in this life.
   Roman Catholicism - Murray, pp. 268-270. Arminianism and Lutheranism
2. Faith involves assurance of salvation
   Calvin, Institutes, III:ii:7
   Heidelberg Catachism, Q. 21
3. Infallible assurance is not of the essence of saving faith, but it is attainable; and its cultivation is the duty of every believer.
   W.C.F. 18:3,4
   Calvin, Institutes, III:ii:16,17,18
   W.C.F. -- fiducia = active trust in Christ for salvation
   H.C. -- fiducia = confidence that I am saved by Christ
C. Arguments Against the Idea that Assurance of Personal Salvation is Essential to Saving Faith

1. From the nature of saving faith

2. From Biblical exhortations

   Heb. 6:11, I Jn. 5:13
   II Cor. 13:5? (See P. E. Hughes' commentary)
   Dabney, p. 704
   II Peter 1:10 *bebaioo* (Rom. 15:8; Mark 16:20)
   Calvin, Lenski

3. From the experience of God's people

   W.C.F. 18:4
The Heidelberg Catechism

Question 21, *What is true faith?*

True faith is not only a knowledge and conviction that everything God reveals in his Word is true; it is also *a deep-rooted assurance*, created in me by the Holy Spirit through the gospel that, out of sheer grace earned for us by Christ, not only others, but I too, have had my sins forgiven, have been made forever right with God, and have been granted salvation.

The Westminster Confession of Faith

Chapter XVIII *Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation*

III. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure, that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance; so far is it from inclining men to looseness.

IV. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation, by God's withdrawing the light of His countenance, and suffering even such as fear Him to walk in darkness and to have no light: yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may, in due time, be revived; and by the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair.
D. Reasons for a Lack of Full Assurance

1. Spiritual immaturity

2. False teaching

3. Disobedience

   W.C.F. 18:4; Dort V, Art. 5
   Ps. 32:3-5; 51:12; I John. 3:18-22

E. Arguments for the Attainability of Full Assurance in This Life

See texts listed by Murray on p. 268.
I Cor. 11:28; II Cor. 13:5; I Peter 1:8
II Tim. 1:12, 4:7,8

F. Means of Cultivating Full Assurance
(Murray, pp. 270-274)

1. Recognition that salvation is all of God's grace

2. Recognition of the immutability of God's grace

3. Sincere obedience

4. Self-examination

   Berkouwer, *Divine Election*, ch. 9
   *syllogismus practicus*; Heidelberg Catechism 86
   the syllogism of faith
   Calvin on I Jn. 3:14; *Institutes*, III:xiv:18ff; III:xxiv:4ff

5. Faithful use of "the means of grace"

   W.C.F. 18:3

6. Sensitivity to the inward witness of the Holy Spirit

   Rom. 8:15,16; Gal. 4:6
   (Eph. 1:13,14; I Cor. 2:12; II Cor. 1:21,22; 5:5)
VII. Justification

Reading (and Listening) Assignment:
1. WCF XI; WLC 70, 71, 73; WSC 33; Belgic Confession (BC) XXII, XXIII; HC 56, 59-63.
4. John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1, Appendix A. (27 pp.)
5. Bavinck, ch. XXI. (30 pp.)
7. Ridderbos, Secs. 26-30. (19 pp.)
9. Robert B. Strimple and Karl Keating, audiotape of radio debate: "Roman Catholicism vs. Protestantism" (available in the library).

Suggested Reading:
1. G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, chs. III-VII.
2. Hodge, Part III, ch. XVII.

A. Introduction

justification = "just-as-if-I'd-never-sinned"? *Heidelberg Catechism* 60

Packer (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*): "to pronounce, accept, and treat as just, *i.e.* as on the one hand, not penally liable; and, on the other, entitled to all the privileges due to those who have kept the law" (p. 304). "Justification thus means permanent re-instatement to favor and privilege, as well as complete forgiveness of all sins" (p. 305).

*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Q. 33 "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone."
B. The Nature of Justification

John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Appendix A

1. A forensic (judicial) act

   *Catholic Bible Encyclopedia*, p. 370.
   Hans Kung, *Justification*

   a. Old Testament usage

      *tsadaq*

      (1) forensic

         *hiphil*: Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15; Exod. 23:7; I Kings 8:32; Isa. 50:8 (I Tim. 3:16)

         *piel*: Job 32:2 (Luke 7:29); 33:32

         *qal*: Ps. 143:2; Isa. 43:9,26

         *hithpael*: Gen. 44:16

      (2) stative

         *qal*: Ps. 143:2; Gen. 38:26

      (3) demonstrative

         *piel*: Ezek. 16:51,52; Jer. 3:11

      (4) causative

         *niphal*: Daniel 8:14

         *hiphil*: Daniel 12:3

   b. New Testament usage

      *dikaioo*

      (1) stative - none

      (2) causative - I Cor. 6:11?

      (3) demonstrative

         Matt. 11:19 (Luke 7:35); Luke 16:15; Rom. 3:4; I Cor. 4:4 (?); I
Tim. 3:16, James 2 (?)

(4) forensic (declarative)

Luke 7:29; Rom. 8:33,30; 5:16; 3:19,20; 4:3,4,5,6,11,22,23

logidsetai (eis) dikaiosunen
The first Adam; the second Adam

2. A constitutive, imputative act

Rom. 4:5 (Ex. 23:7; Isa. 5:23)
Rom. 4:6.11; 5:19b, 17
Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, pp. 214-5
Luke 18:14; Rom. 3:24; 5:1

C. The Ground of Justification

1. Roman Catholic view

Council Trent, session VI, chapters 5,6,7,10 [in Henry Denzinger, Sources of Catholic Dogma]

a. Preparation for Justification

congruent merit (meritum de congruo)

b. First Justification

"Causes": Final, Efficient, Meritorious, Formal, Instrumental

fides informata - fides caritate formata
(Galatians 5:6)

c. Second Justification

condign merit

d. Final Judgment

2. Arminian view

John Miley, Systematic Theology, v. II, ch. V.

a. Truly evangelical in differentiating sharply between justification and sanctification

b. Insistence on a "free" forgiveness
(see W.C.F. XI:3)
Denial of three biblical imputations
Justification = forgiveness
Governmental theory of the atonement

3. Reformed view

a. The ground of justification is not our own righteousness.

Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16; 3:11; Titus 3:5-7; Phil. 3:9; Rom. 10:3

b. It is the righteousness of God.

Phil. 3:9; Rom. 1:17; 3:21,22; 10:3; II Cor. 5:21

dikaiosune theou - provided by God?
approved by God?
something more?

Rom. 3:25,26 - attribute of God

Ridderbos, p. 163.


Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*.
Jeremiah 23:5-7; 33:15-26

The reality of the hypostatic union.
Isaiah 40:3; Luke 2:26; 2:11; Matthew 1:21

Hebrews 9:15

c. It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1; Gal. 2:17; Eph. 1:7; Isa. 45:24,25; Jer. 23:5,6; Rom. 3:24,25; 5:9; 8:33,34; 5:12ff.; II Cor. 5:21

The righteousness that is the ground of our justification is the righteous obedience of Jesus Christ.
D. The Instrument of Justification

1. The instrumental character of faith.

   a. But what about Gen. 15:6 (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23)?

   b. Remonstrant Arminian understanding:
      faith = not only the *per quam* (“by which”) but the *propter quam* (“because of which”)

   c. I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:22; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 11:7; Rom. 10:10

      John Murray, *Commentary on Romans*, Appendix A, pp. 353-359

2. Faith is the only instrument of justification.


E. Justification and the Forgiveness of Sins

Matt. 6:12; I John 1:9; Rom. 8:1

*Westminster Confession of Faith*, XI:5 - "God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of His countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance."

F. Justification and Good Works

1. Recommended readings on this theme:

   Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, 219-222
   Ridderbos, *Paul*, sec. 31
   Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, 103-1122

2. James 2:14-26
Is *dikaioo* being used in a demonstrative sense in James 2:14ff.?

Does *dikaioo* ever mean "to show to be declared to be just" or "to show to have been declared to be just"?

*dikaioo* in vv. 21ff. seems to refer to what James used the verb *sodso* to refer to in v. 14.

Saving faith is a living faith, which reveals itself by the works which are its inevitable fruit and concomitant.

Machen's comment on Gal. 5:6 in *Notes on Galatians*, ed. by John Skilton, p. 220.

W.C.F. XI:2; Calvin, *Institutes* III:xi:20

John F. MacArthur, Jr., "Faith According to the Apostle James," *JETS* 33/1 (March 1990), 13-34, re v. 24: "I take James' statement as a literary device, a metonymy of effect for cause, where the result of a thing is substituted for the action that produces it" (p. 27).

Quoting Cranfield: "The burden of this section is not (as often supposed) that we are saved through faith plus works, but that we are saved through genuine, as opposed to counterfeit, faith" (p. 22).

Summary re JAMES 2:14-26--

Dead Faith (vv. 17, 26)
Faith without Works (vv. 14, 17, 18, 20, 26)
Faith Alone (vv. 17 "by itself," 24)
CANNOT JUSTIFY (SAVE)

Faith shown by Works (v. 18)
Faith that Works (v. 22)
Works (vv. 21, 24, 25)
DOES JUSTIFY (SAVE)

Zane Hodges' "new" view: *Absolutely Free!*, ch. entitled "The Choice is Yours."
VIII. Adoption

**NO CLASS LECTURE**

*Reading (and Listening) Assignment:*
1. WCF XII; WLC 74; WSC 34.
5. Andrew Cammenga, "Seated As Sons With Christ," (audiotape of sermon on adoption, based on Ephesians 1:5).

IX. Sanctification

*Reading Assignment:*
1. WCF XIII, XVI; WLC 75, 77, 78; WSC 35, 82; BC XXIV; HC 43, 62-64, 86, 91, 114; CD V, Arts. 1-2.
2. Murray, *Collected Writings*, chs. 21-25. (44 pp.)
6. Ridderbos, Secs. 31, 36-40, 42-44. (64 pp.)
7. Bavinck, ch. XXII. (45 pp.)
8. Robert B. Strimple, "Repentance in Romans" (I am not responsible for the erroneous title!), in *Christ the Lord*, ed. Michael Horton, pp. 61-68.

*Suggested Reading:*
2. Hodge, Part III, ch. XVIII.

A. Introduction

B. Definitive Sanctification

1. Typical definitions of "sanctification" consider progressive sanctification only:
   Hodge, p. 213; Heppe, p. 565; W.S.C. q. 35.

2. N.T. texts placing sanctification in the category of acts of God effected once-for-all.
   (See Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, chs. 21 and 22.)

   hagiadso: I Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Eph. 5:25,26; II Tim. 2:21; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Heb. 10:10
   ephapax (cf. verses 14 and 29; 13:12; Denney, Vos, Berkhof: hagiadso=dikaioo).

   hagiasmos: I Thess. 4:7; II Thess. 2:13,14; I Peter 1:2.


3. Romans 6:1-7:6
   a. Exposition

   Romans 5:20,21 - the legalist's objection and the antinomian's distortion. Paul's answer. Keswick "perfectionism". V. 14, indicative: "sin shall not have dominion over you." V. 12, imperative: "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body."

   b. Three important questions:

      (1) What does it mean to be "set free from sin"?


      (2) How has this liberation been produced?

      Murray, p. 293; Ridderbos, p. 207

      (3) When did believers die with Christ and rise with him?

      Rom. 6:10; Eph. 2:1-7
C. Progressive Sanctification

Romans 6; Ephesians 4:22-24

1. Mortification
   a. Rom. 8:13 \textit{thanatoo pneumati soma}
   b. Col. 3:5 \textit{nekrosate}

2. Sanctification (positive)
   II Cor. 7:1
   a. Rom. 12:2 \textit{metamorphoo}
   b. II Cor. 3:18 (Mark 9:2; Matt. 17:2)
      \textit{katopridsomenoi; apo kyriou pneumatos; apo doxas eis doxan}
   c. Phil. 1:9-11; I Thess. 3:12,13; 4:10; I Pet. 2:2; II Pet. 3:18; 1:3-11
   d. not merely a blessing for the individual but for the Body of Christ: Heb. 11:40;
      Rom. 8:21; Eph. 4:1-16; Rom. 12:4-16; I Cor. 12:4-31; Col. 2:18,19

D. The Agent of Sanctification

E. The Means of Sanctification
   Murray, \textit{Redemption}, ch. 7.

F. Total Sanctification
   Hodge, Part III, ch. XVIII, sec. 7, pp. 245ff.
   Warfield, \textit{Studies in Perfectionism}
   Ridderbos, sec. 44.

1. The Biblical doctrine of perfection
   a. Spiritual maturity attributed to believers in this life: I Cor. 2:6; Phil. 3:15.

2. The sin of self-complacency
   a. Triumphantism. Phil. 3:12
   b. Defeatism. Phil. 3:15 (See Phil. 3:12-4:1)

X. Perseverance
Reading Assignment:
1. WCF XVII; WLC 79; WSC 36; CD V, Arts. 3-8, Pars. 1-4, 7-9.
2. Murray, Redemption, Part II, ch. 8. (12 pp.)
3. Dabney, Lecture LVIII. (11 pp.)

Suggested Reading:
G. C. Berkouwer, Faith and Perseverance.

A. Introduction
1. examples of apostasy
2. "No-Lordship" Salvation advocates

B. 1 Peter 1:5 - an especially helpful, carefully balanced statement of the true New Testament doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.
"who are protected" (NASB) "shielded" (NIV)

1. "until the coming of salvation, a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"

soteria: deliverance from danger - wholeness, health, life.

apokaluphthenai en kairo eschato=en apokalupsei iesou christou (vv. 7 & 13)

2. "by the power of God"

Father: Rom. 8:28-30; Phil. 1:6; I Thess. 5:23

Son: his finished work, and his continuing work, Heb. 7:25

Holy Spirit: Eph. 1:14

3. "through faith"

Rejoice and praise God! vv. 3, 6, 8

Be self-controlled; be holy; conduct yourselves in fear. vv. 13-17

Who is a true believer? Who is a true disciple of Jesus? John 8:31 - "if you continue in my word..." Perseverance, going on, continuing.

There is a Biblical (not an Arminian) "if": Col. 1:23; Heb. 3:6, 14.

II Peter 2:20-22
"Abide in me." "Abide in my love." (John 15)

Phil. 2:12,13

We "through faith are guarded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time."
THE MEANS OF GRACE

Reading Assignment:
1. WLC 153, 154; WSC 88; HC 65.

I. The Word of God

NO CLASS LECTURE

Reading Assignment:
1. WLC 155-160; WSC 89, 90.
2. Berkhof, Part Five, ch. II. (4 pp.)
3. Hodge, Part III, ch. XX, par. 1. (19 pp.)

II. Prayer

NO CLASS LECTURE

Reading Assignment:
2. John Dick, *Lectures on Theology*, Lectures XCIII, XCIV. (10 pp.)

Suggested Reading:
Wayne R. Spear, *The Theology of Prayer*.

III. The Sacraments

NO CLASS LECTURE

Reading Assignment:
1. WCF XXVII; WLC 161-164; WSC 91-93; BC XXXIII; HC 66-68.
3. Berkhof, Part Five, ch. III. (4 pp.)
4. Calvin, *Institutes*, Book IV, Ch. XIV (27 pp.)

Suggested Reading:
G. C. Berkouwer, *The Sacraments*. 
A. Baptism

Reading Assignment:
1. WCF XXVIII; WLC 165-167; WSC 94, 95; BC XXXIV; HC 69-74.
2. Murray, Collected Writings, vol. 2, ch. 32. (6 pp.)
3. Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chs. XV and XVI (56 pp.)
4. John Murray, Christian Baptism. (93 pp.)
6. Fred A. Malone, A String of Pearls Unstrung. (55 pp.)

Suggested Reading (and Listening):

INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Murray says that the issues regarding baptism must be approached "organically" ("covenantally"). Marcel says they must be approached "theologically". What do they mean by those terms?

2. Our outline indicates that baptism is to be viewed as one of the two sacraments of the Christian church. What are the essential characteristics of a sacrament?

3. What is the relationship between the sacraments and the Word (written and preached)?

4. What then is the efficacy of a sacrament?

The efficacy of a sign and seal.

Augustine: "The efficacy of the Word which is in the sacrament does not rest in its being pronounced, but in its being believed and received."

The source of the efficacy of both Word and sacrament is the Spirit, who works when and where he wills. Read W.C.F. XXVII:III.

5. What is the nature of the necessity of baptism?

The necessity of precept, not of means. (Explain.)
TEN THESES REGARDING BAPTISM
(Presented at a public debate with Dr. Fred A. Malone, 3/11/99)

1. Reformed Paedobaptists and Reformed Baptists should express visibly our unity in Christ.

2. Baptism and the Lord's Supper have the *efficacy* of a signifying seal. (Likewise circumcision, Rom. 4:11.) The efficacy of the signifying seal does not rest in its being *administered* but in the blessings it signifies being *received by faith*. *Westminster Confession of Faith* 27:3.

3. There is not necessarily a simultaneousness between the reception of baptism and the reception by faith of the blessings signified. (Likewise circumcision, Rom. 4:11-12.)

4. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are signifying seals of the covenant grace of God; i.e., that redemptive grace of God which has been progressively disclosed and covenantally administered from Abraham through Moses and David until it reaches its fulfillment in the New Covenant. In the covenantal administration of God’s redemptive grace, the infant seed of believers are embraced with their parents in the covenant community and receive the covenant sign, which is the sign of the richest blessings of God’s covenant grace.

5. The relationship between the Abrahamic Covenant (and the Mosaic and the Davidic) and the New Covenant is one of Promise and Fulfillment. Luke 1:54,55,72,73; Heb. 9:15; Acts 13:32-34; Rom. 8:4; Acts 2:14-40; 7; 26; Gal. 3-4; Rom. 4; Eph. 2:11-22. Pierre Marcel: "The believer is justified by faith, like Abraham, and he enters into the same covenant and receives the same promises." Rom. 4:13; 2 Pet. 3:13.

6. Circumcision was not the sign of merely national or physical blessings; it was the sign and seal of the highest spiritual blessings God gives to sinners: justification [Rom. 4:11] and regeneration [Rom. 2:29]. (Likewise baptism, Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5; Acts 16:30ff.)

Paul King Jewett: Circumcision signified both physical blessings (properly belonging to all Jews) and spiritual blessings (belonging to believers only); and thus circumcision was properly given to the physical offspring; but baptism to believers only. This argument misunderstands the nature of both the Abrahamic covenant and the New Covenant. 1 Cor. 5:13 [Deut. 17:1-7]; Deut. 29:14-21; Gal. 3:16; Rom. 9:6-7: *There is no objection that can be raised against infant baptism that Abraham could not have raised against infant circumcision.* Rom. 4:9-12. Calvin, *Institutes* IV:16.

7. Circumcision was the sign of judgment-worthiness. Likewise baptism, Col. 2:11,12; Rom. 6:2-11

Justification, Regeneration on the basis of Christ's Christ's redemptive work and the justification and
8. The sign of God's Abrahamic covenant grace (circumcision) was to be given to the infant members of the covenant community.

9. A termination of this 2,000-year practice of believers having the sign of God's covenant grace administered also to their children would have been so revolutionary that it would seem to have called for an explicit repeal of that practice.

10. But there is not merely the silence of the New Testament regarding any command that the covenant sign no longer be administered to the children of believers. There is positive evidence in the New Testament in favor of the continuance of this practice. The "oikos formula"--oikos (LXX, N.T.)="house, household, family.


Hoeksema; Cullmann; Bahnsen; Marcel [Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20]; Malone.
Given our 10 minute limit in the debate, I could not try to resolve every alleged “problem” with the infant baptism position (though noting those “problems” was the thrust of Dr. Malone’s presentation), or answer every peripheral question. I thought I could perhaps do some of that in the q & a time (and I have included below some notes I prepared for myself for that time). But the important thing to do is to bring our minds back to the precise point at issue here. The issue, I believe, is really very simple. I hope you will be encouraged by hearing that!

Previous to the coming of Christ and the New Covenant, the children of believers were embraced along with their parents in the covenant community and received the covenant sign. But Pastor Malone insists that this is no longer to be the case now in the New Covenant. He insists that the “new basis for covenant membership and blessing in the New Covenant, which is different from the basis for membership and blessing in the Old Covenant...is that of heart renewal in each and every member of the New Covenant” community(p. 17). He sincerely believes this is a clear difference between the Old Covenant and the New, so clear as to force us to see why it is that the covenant sign is no longer to be given to the children of believers. But is it? Not when we examine the evidence.

As we have seen, the promise of God’s covenant grace in every covenant dispensation, is summed up in that Immanuel promise that is repeated in every covenant administration: “I shall be your God and you shall be my people.” That fundamental blessing of union and communion with the living God involves the forgiveness of sins, justification, a right standing with God; as well as renewal, regeneration, a new heart--the blessings of which circumcision was the sign (Rom. 4:11 and 2:29) and baptism is now the sign (Titus 3:5-7). That was the blessing, the “proper purpose” (Meredith G. Kline) of God’s covenant.

Now, the writer to the Hebrews points out that the Old Covenant was not perfect [8:7, TURN THERE], not perfect in that it did not completely fulfill its purpose, that purpose expressed again in the New Covenant promise [look at v. 10b]. And so the New and better Covenant was introduced with these three better promises:

1) The most fundamental is the climactic promise [12] of a complete and final forgiveness of sins. Such perfect, final, once-for-all forgiveness--so runs the argument in 10:11-18--can rest only upon a perfect, final, once-for-all atoning sacrifice. Praise God that sacrifice has been offered, and God’s people now have the blessing of a clear conscience beyond anything the Old Testament saints experienced. [Read 9:9; 10:2 and 19-22.]

2) V. 10 speaks of God’s putting his laws in the minds of his people and writing them on their hearts. Surely this speaks of a greater affinity for God’s law and a greater spontaneity in obeying it, which points to a new spiritual dynamic which I can only associate with the new fullness of the Holy Spirit’s post-Pentecost operation in the lives of God’s people.
3) V. 11 then speaks of a **newly universal effectiveness** of God’s covenant, producing a knowledge of God from the least of the people to the greatest. The Postmillennialist, Greg Bahnsen, insisted that this promise has not yet been fulfilled but will be in the millennial golden age before Christ’s Second Coming. I believe it is entirely arbitrary and without exegetical warrant to “pull out” this second of the three promises and insist that it alone has not yet been fulfilled. I believe this is the same error that lies at the root of Dispensational Premillennialism, the inability to believe what the NT says about the “already” aspects of Christ’s fulfillment of God’s OT promises for his church.

But, you see, the Reformed Baptist’s error is the opposite error, the failure to recognize the “not yet” character of this present age. Geerhardus Vos speaks of the “semi” realized eschatological fulfillment now. Malone’s insistence [see also the writings of our alumnus, Greg Welty] that the promise of v. 11 means that the Church on this earth is **now** a pure, totally regenerate body [“each and every member”] and is to be administered as such now, is a jumping of the eschatological gun! And it’s easy enough to test whether or not this is the way the church is to be viewed now [“each and every member” being elect and regenerated—so different in that respect from the OT covenant community] by asking whether this is the way the church is viewed in this same Letter to the Hebrews. Dare I take the time to READ some vv.? 2:1-3; 3:12-15; 4:1; 10:26-29. NOTE THAT. Who are those who now “treat as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them” if there is now in the NT church no longer any external covenant relationship and covenant administration? Esau’s relation to God’s covenant was surely a uniquely OT phenomenon, right? No longer relevant to the NT situation, right? Wrong. Look at 12:15-16.

Now, at least once Malone recognizes that he can’t really carry through the “each and every member regenerate” view of the NT church with absolute consistency; but he thinks that by insisting that “false professors” are addressed as members of the church “on the basis of their profession” and not on the basis of their being born into the covenant community—how he knows that is not clear—but he thinks that in that way he escapes the problem. But, of course, he doesn’t. If only the elect, only the regenerate, are to be recognized as members of the New Covenant community, and only **they** are to be given the sign of membership in that community, then only God can now administer the covenant sign!

Malone writes: “Thus the idea of God’s people takes on a more restricted meaning in the New Covenant.” I ask you: Is the great blessing of the New Covenant mediated by Christ for which the writer to the Hebrews rejoices simply enrichment of blessing by redefinition and exclusion? Is God merely saying through Jeremiah the prophet that one day he will wonderfully bless his people by redefining his covenant people and getting rid of the children?! God could have done that easily enough by a simple edict! “Stop considering your children to be members of the covenant community.” The “blessing” (?) would not have required the Son of God’s atoning death and triumphant resurrection, and the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit to produce!

With regard to this second blessing of the New Covenant [Heb. 8:11], I believe our Lord pointed us to its fulfillment in John 6:45, “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall ALL be taught by God.’ Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.” It is the expansion of God’s covenant grace that is in view, not its retraction but its extension. And we think again of the ministry of the post-Pentecost
Spirit in the New Covenant church, 1 John 2:20-27, “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you ALL know the truth...the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you.” Both the priesthood of all believers now in the New Covenant and the prophethood of all believers. In the New Covenant community all are to be scribes, and all are to know that entrance into the holy of holies of God’s presence reserved previously for the Levite.

And so I ask again: Is the great wonder of the New Covenant promise the exclusion of the children? What does Peter indicate in Acts 2:39? “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Obviously only those effectively called will receive the promised blessings of sins forgiven and the possession of the Holy Spirit. But why does Peter include the third category? Why not simply “the promise is to you Jews and to those Gentiles”? I challenge you: Would the Baptist have put it the way Peter does? Malone’s answer is that “the very mention of children as a separate category indicates that the apostle wanted to emphasize that...they were not to receive baptism unless they repented and believed as v. 38 clearly requires.” Really? Their being specially included by Peter was to emphasize their being excluded?!!

Dennis Johnson was also at one time a Baptist. A good number of the Westminster Seminary in California faculty were. Have you seen his 14 page letter to his older daughter during her first year at university, “How My Mind Has Changed”? If not, ask Dr. Johnson for a copy. Dr. Johnson has rightly seen the very opposite emphasis in Peter’s words in Acts 2:39. On pp. 10-11 of his letter he writes: “Pentecost is the climactic turning point of the transition between Old Testament and New...Peter’s audience were Jews and Gentile converts to Judaism from throughout the Roman world....’All who are far off’ are the pagan Gentiles. (The expression is from Isa. 57:19 and is applied to Gentiles in Acts 22:21; Eph. 2:13, 17.) But not notice this: the children of these people who are at the point of repentance, faith, and baptism are not bypassed as Christ’s promise goes out to the pagans. The promise of forgiveness and renewal by the Spirit is spoken specifically to the children of Peter’s listeners....In expanding his community of grace to the Gentiles, God will not expel the children.”

Malone even goes so far from the force of the text as to say: “It does seem possible that God promises to call His elect out of believers’ children as well as out of the Gentiles...” Just “possible?”!! Has God’s purpose for marriage announced in Malachi 2:15--that there might be “godly offspring”--now been annulled?!

Well, MY TIME IS UP.
ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR Q & A TIME

Re Acts 2:39  Again and again Malone makes unproven assertions: e.g., “Only those children in the crowd who received Peter’s word were baptized.” How does he know that?

Malone: Including children in the New Covenant community “violates the doctrine of particular redemption.” [19--particular redemption = limited, or definite atonement]  19?! Children were included in the OT community. Were the OT sacrifices types of a universal atonement? Was the sacrifice of Christ that atoned for “the sins committed under the first covenant” [Heb. 9:15] not a definite, personal, particular atonement?

Malone: “The Abrahamic Covenant was entered by circumcision; the New Covenant is entered by faith in Christ.” Confused: the Abrahamic Covenant [i.e. receiving the promised blessings of the covenant] was entered by faith [Rom. 4]. Likewise with regard to receiving the promised blessings of the New Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant community was entered by circumcision. The New Covenant community is entered by baptism.

RE the relationship between circumcision and baptism: I already addressed Malone’s confusion here. Malone insists that “the New Covenant counterpart of circumcision is...regeneration.” He then goes on to say that “regeneration (the...antitype) is the sign of entrance into the New Covenant and the seal of the believer’s faith.” But while circumcision was indeed a sacrament (as well as a type), regeneration is not a sacrament! It is the reality, the blessing, signified by circumcision in the OT and by baptism in the New.

Re Jesus’ attitude toward children, Luke 18:15-17 refers to brephe, a Greek word for which the Arndt/Gingrich/Bauer lexicon gives two uses: 1) embryo, unborn child; 2) baby [NIV, babies], infant. Malone uses the translation “infants” [in quotation marks, why?] but insists that v. 16 proves that the children were responding to Jesus’ call on their own--“do not hinder them”--and thus this “defines these ‘infants’ as capable of responding to Jesus’ call”! But read the passage: READ. That’s how the disciples were hindering these babies, by rebuking those who were bringing the babies to Jesus! And, of course, the significant statement that Jesus makes is that “the Kingdom belongs to such,” i.e., to babies, to those of the infant class! The Kingdom is not just for you “big people.” It is for the “little people” as well, for even the littlest.

Obviously, there is no direct argument for infant baptism here. Spurgeon’s famous sermon title was “Little children brought to Jesus, Not to the Font!” But again it is a passage that unites the NT oikos (family) outlook with the OT outlook. Babies are members of God’s kingdom also. Many are regenerated in infancy and develop in their faith just as they develop in their understanding. (I myself am one of the myriad of Christians who have that testimony to God’s grace.) Ps. 22:9-10, “You brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother’s breast. From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother’s womb you have been my God.” Ps. 71:6, “From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother’s womb. I will ever praise you.” And the babies of believers are included with their parents in the covenant community and given the covenant sign.

RE infants at the Passover meal: A tough question. Many Reformed Christians have asked: “Are we being consistent in baptizing our children, but not admitting them to the Lord’s Supper until they can make a credible profession of faith?” The fact is that it is not clear exactly who ate of the meal. When children are mentioned in connection with the Passover, it is in terms of their receiving instruction: Exodus 12:26,
“And when your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to you?’...” Calvin understood this to mean that only those old enough to ask this question were admitted to the meal. Prof. Duguid has called my attention to the ancient Jewish tradition that even the youngest child would ask specific questions, which presupposes that the youngest child was old enough to be able to ask questions. Murray argued that young children did not eat, on the basis of the fact that 1) children eating is not mentioned in the text; and 2) the diet was not suitable for infants.

There seems to be a growing number of Reformed Christians who support admitting the children of believers to the Lord’s Supper [the OPC, PCA, CRC, and other Reformed churches have had study committee reports], and perhaps if one had to choose between accepting infant communion and rejecting infant baptism one would have to choose the former. But when Calvin was presented with this objection by the Anabaptists, he answered by emphasizing the nature and purpose of the Lord’s Supper in contrast with Baptism: Being united to Christ and initiated into his body, the church, vs. ongoing feeding on Christ. The one baptized is fundamentally passive: he/she is washed. The one partaking of the Lord’s Supper is fundamentally active: he/she takes and eats and drinks. It is of the essence of the Supper that it is the repeated appropriation of the blessings of Christ by those who trust in him.

I personally favor very young profession of faith and communion [perhaps analogous to very young Passover participation]. Interestingly, Calvin suggested that the parents of a child who was not prepared to make his/her profession of faith by age 10 should be embarrassed and disgraced for their sloth in the instruction of their child! [The CRC report thought it was being quite radical and revolutionary in suggesting that the appropriate age might be as young as 14!]

RE Malone’s “argument from silence” re why Paul did not refer the Judaizers to baptism (i.e., why didn’t Paul answer the Judaizers by explaining that circumcision had been replaced by baptism?): Malone himself notes the objection “that Paul would not allude to baptism as the reason for not receiving circumcision because that would put baptism in the class of works salvation like the Judaizers claimed for circumcision.” He says “I do not agree,” but that seems a perfectly reasonable explanation. The error of the Judaizers, after all, was not that they still preferred circumcision over baptism! To put it quickly and simply, they were legalists who preached another gospel which was not a gospel at all; and that was the error Paul had to address!
RE the fact that “Jewish proselytes and their children up to age 12 were baptized into Judaism,” and that might seem to be an argument in favor of paedobaptism, Malone answers: “If we appeal to any part of the Judaistic practice, we have to contend with the late age of the household children receiving baptism as well as the prohibition of baptism to unborn children in the womb. Neither of these difficulties lends any support to infant baptism.” ??? This seems to be an exceedingly weak rebuttal.

Re the meaning of oikos, note how it is made clear in the Old Testament that children, down to the youngest infants, are included: Gen. 18:19; 45:17-19; 46:7,27 47:2; 1 Sam. 1:21; 22:16,19; Jere. 38:17,23.

Re 1 Corinthians 7:14, turn to that passage: One thing is certain. This is no proof-text for “believer’s” baptism! I don’t need this text to make my case for believer’s baptism, but I do believe the passage is very significant. Malone writes: “Paul is using the term ‘sanctified’ in the sense of receiving God’s recognition of a legitimate marriage. This is the main point!” He uses an exclamation point, but gives no evidence for such a use of the word “sanctified” in Paul’s letters or elsewhere. The references in this passage to “unclean” vs. “holy” point clearly to the OT background of Christian thinking. [For more on this point see the commentaries: for example, Barrett, Fee, Grosheide, Morris, Hodge, Godet.] The question some were asking evidently was whether the believing spouse had contracted defilement by remaining married to an unbeliever, a heathen? This question of a “mixed” marriage must have come up frequently at this time. Think of the command in Ezra to “put away” foreign wives. Paul answers: “No”--and we are reminded that the power of Christ causes the “contagion” to be reversed, so to speak. Christ touches the lepers, the dead daughter, the woman with an issue of blood [an emphasis is put on the “touch” in the Gospels text]; but they are healed rather than he being contaminated, a reversal of the OT situation--by appealing to a fact that all in the Church readily grant. [This is clear from the Greek construction.] “Otherwise your children would be unclean, and you know that’s not true.” They know that their children are not to be viewed as polluted, heathen children! Perhaps the change from the third person to the second is significant here: “your children”. All your children in the church, Paul reminds them--and he knows they agree--including those born of mixed marriages, are “holy.” “Unclean,” based on its use in the OT, refers to those who are not connected with the people of God. [In the Psalms, to “dwell among the holy” = to live in the covenant community.] Leon Morris: “Until he is old enough to take the responsibility upon himself, the child of a believing parent is to be regarded as Christian.” Recognizing the special status of the believer’s children--however you further delineate the force of “holy” here [and I do believe we capture it best with the word “Christian, a member of the people of God”]--recognizing this special status of the believer’s children certainly coheres better with the paedobaptist perspective than with the believers’ baptism perspective--to put it very mildly indeed! And may I just note that the specific principle Paul invokes here regarding the child of just one believer was long recognized in Israel. Think of Timothy whom Paul had circumcised because his mother was a Jewess, even though his father was a Greek. Hodge: “And it is most instructive to observe how the writers of the New Testament quietly take for granted that the great principles which underlie the old dispensation, are still in force under the new. The children of Jews were treated as Jews; and the children of Christians, Paul assumes as a thing no one would dispute, are to be treated as Christians”.

[Note that the adjective, “holy,” used re the children, and the perfect passive verb, “sanctified,” used re the
unbelieving spouse, are not exactly synonymous. The unbelieving spouse is sanctified, not in Christ but in the believing spouse—consecrated to God's good purposes of marriage, including the birth of a godly seed [Malachi 2:15].

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Marcel's book is also a fine one, except for certain strange statements on pp. 110-111, where he seems to forget his own emphasis that "...we must beware of attributing to baptism any blessings and effects which cannot be attributed to the Word....According to Scripture the grace of baptism exists only as a declaration and a confirmation; it cannot ever be anything else" (pp. 140-141).

Is Kline's emphasis in *By Oath Consigned* helpful to us regarding the efficacy of baptism?

"...consignment under the authority of Christ is the chief thing in Christian baptism" (pp. 79-80).

"When covenant is no longer identified with election and guaranteed blessing, and especially when the baptismal sign of incorporation into the covenant is understood as pointing without prejudice to a judgment ordeal with the potential of both curse and blessing [more clearly perhaps: "either curse or blessing," RBS], certain questions that have long ensnarled the polemics of infant baptism are eliminated from consideration as no longer relevant...Hence there would no need to theorize how the baptism of such might serve as a means of conveying to them the grace supposedly sealed to them by the rite, much less to apologize for the numerous cases in which that grace never is conveyed" (p. 90).

Can Kline meaningfully describe baptism as "a means of grace," or as "a sign and seal" of the blessings of the covenant of grace (see W.C.F. XXVIII:I)?

It is important to emphasize what Kline himself has called the "proper purpose" of baptism. Again it is helpful to compare the sacrament with the preached Word. In II Cor. 2:12-17 Paul says that his preaching ministry is "the smell of death" to "those who are perishing," but his message is nevertheless "good news," not simply "news" ("without prejudice"). (Read the *Institutes* of Calvin, IV:xiv:7.) Likewise, the Lord's Supper brings judgment to those who participate in an unworthy manner; but it is nevertheless a means of grace and "the cup of thanksgiving" to those who are Christ's.
It was not to the heathen that God gave his oath-sign but to his people. To concentrate only on the judgment possibility is to miss the wonderful point of the sign, that the judgment has been borne, by the Covenant Head on behalf of his people!

2. Murray emphasizes that baptism signifies and seals the same thing for children as for adults. What is signified?

   Marcel: "...baptism is the sign and seal of the free grace of God, granted in virtue of the promise, and realized in him who believes" (p. 160).

   Murray sees baptism as signifying what four blessings of the covenant of grace in particular?

3. In the case of a baptism performed on the basis of a profession of faith in Christ, how much evidence of the credibility of the profession is required before proceeding to the baptism?

4. How important is it that the children of believers be baptized?

   Read *Westminster Confession of Faith* XXVIII:V.

   Marcel: "...he who refuses the sign is in danger also of refusing the thing signified. By refusing the sign of the covenant for our children we are not far from believing that they are not in the covenant" (p. 241).
B. The Lord's Supper

*Reading Assignment:*

1. WCF XXIX; WLC 168-177; WSC 96 - 97; BC XXXV; HC 75-82.
3. Calvin, *Institutes*, Book IV, Ch. XVII (69 pp.) and Ch. XIX, sec. 13 (2 pp.)


(I Howard Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper* (1980), examines in detail all N.T. passages dealing with the Lord's Supper, possible allusions, and O.T. backgrounds; generally conservative critical conclusions; theologically remarkably thin.)

**KEY ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED**

1. What is the PURPOSE of the Lord's Supper?
   a) To commemorate the atoning death of Christ
   b) To signify and seal all the blessings of the New Covenant purchased by his broken body and shed blood
   c) And in particular to signify and seal our spiritual communion with Christ who is our spiritual life and nourishment and growth as we feed upon him by faith
   d) As well as our communion with each other and with all the members of Christ's mystical body, the Church
   e) To express our thanksgiving to God as the giver of this New Covenant grace
   f) To attest our faith in the promise of his coming again

2. What is the EFFICACY of the Lord's Supper; or, to put this question another way, what is the relation between the *sign* and that which is *signified*?

The following summaries are provided by Addison Leitch in his 1961 book, *Interpreting Basic Theology* (p. 166):

First, with regard to Tridentine Roman Catholics: "They argue that in the miracle of the Mass the *substance* of Christ crosses over (trans-substance) to become the *substance* of the
bread. The bread, of course, does not change in appearance or in taste, but such qualities, they argue, are accidental and have nothing to do with the substance of the bread....The Reformers sense idolatry at the heart of this view, for idolatry is fundamentally the confusion of the created world with the Creator, and when the priest handles the bread, is he handling the very substance of Christ? This is also what the communicant takes and eats."

Leitch sees Luther as having "a real dilemma. As a Reformer he wanted to protect the Scripture, the literality of Scripture if possible. He refused to accept what he thought was the idolatry of transubstantiation, but he could not let go of the words, "This is my body." He tried to solve the problem with what was called "consubstantiation." No equation is made between the bread and Christ, but the explanation is that in the miracle of the Lord's Supper Christ is present in substance "in, around, and under" the substance of the bread. There is no identification of the bread with Christ but there is no way one can take the bread without taking Christ."

WHAT IS THE REFORMED VIEW, OR AT LEAST CALVIN'S VIEW, OF THE EFFICACY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

*Westminster Confession of Faith* 27:2 "There is, in every sacrament, a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified: whence it comes to pass, that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other."

Calvin IV:xvii:21

Dabney (810): "Calvin...being perhaps somewhat influenced by personal attachments to Melancthon, and by a desire to heal the lamentable dissensions of Reformed and Lutherans, propounded (in his Inst. and elsewhere)..." a 'strange opinion', ("incomprehensible", Hodge (630): "peculiar") namely, "that the humanity, as well as the divinity of Christ, in a word, his whole person, is spiritually, yet really present, not to the bodily mouth, but to the souls of true communicants, so that though the humanity be in heaven only, it is still fed on in some ineffable, yet real and literal way, by the souls of believers" (810).


Certainly, I think, Calvin could not have emphasized more clearly than he does these two fundamental points: 1) That Christ is present with us only by the Spirit, and not bodily. His castigations of the Lutheran doctrine of a bodily presence of Christ at the Table, made possible by the ubiquity of Christ's body as a result of the communicatio idiomatum, are exceedingly vigorous--those of you who took the *Doctrine of Christ* course will probably remember my sharing some of his very sharp criticisms of that doctrine with you--in very biting words which don't seem well calculated to "mend fences" with the Lutherans, if that was his primary concern, as Dabney and Cunningham suggest it perhaps was.

And 2) Calvin repeats again and again that the only communion with Christ he is speaking of, the only "feeding" on him, the only participation in him our living Lord, is that which is
BY FAITH.

IV:xiv:9 "I make such a division between Spirit and sacraments that the power to act rests with the former, and the ministry alone is left to the latter." (Calvin would make the same distinction between the Spirit and *preaching*, of course: "the power to act rests with the former, and the ministry alone is left to the latter." Remember what I stressed earlier, when we were discussing *baptism*: The cause of the efficacy of both Word and sacrament is the Spirit, who works when and where He wills. In sec. 17 Calvin writes: "...let it be regarded as a settled principle that the sacraments have the same office as the Word of God; to offer and set forth Christ to us, and in him the treasures of heavenly grace. But they avail and profit nothing unless received in faith.") The benefits of Christ are applied to us "through the gospel but more clearly through the Sacred Supper, where he offers himself with all his benefits to us, and we receive him by faith. Therefore, the Sacrament does not cause Christ to begin to be the bread of life..." (5) And how clear and important this next sentence is: "Once for all, therefore, he gave his body to be made bread when he yielded himself to be crucified for the redemption of the world; daily he gives it when by the word of the gospel he offers it for us to partake, inasmuch as it was crucified, when he seals such giving of himself by the sacred mystery of the Supper, and when he inwardly fulfills what he outwardly designates" (5). The Lord's Supper does not confer a different grace; it is a different channel. "...he nourishes faith spiritually through the sacraments, whose one function is to set his promises before our eyes to be looked upon, indeed, to be guarantees of them to us" (12). "For nothing ought to be expected from it apart from the promise, but the promise no less threatens wrath to unbelievers than offers grace to believers....assurance of salvation does not depend upon participation in the sacrament, as if justification consisted in it" (14). "...the matter must always be distinguished from the sign, that we may not transfer to the one what belongs to the other....But that you may have not a sign empty of truth but the matter with the sign, you must apprehend in faith the word which is included there" (16).

As Addison Leitch puts it: Calvin "believed in the symbolism of the words but he also believed in the content of the symbols. The elements...are not "nude" signs" (*Interpreting Basic Theology*, 167). In other words, where the sign is present, there the promise signified is present, which is just to say that there *Christ* is present, not physically but really.

Here is the way Calvin begins his criticism of, (extreme?) Zwinglians and (extreme?) Lutherans. "Now here we ought to guard against two faults. First, we should not, by too little regard for the signs, divorce them from their mysteries, to which they are so to speak attached. Secondly, we should not, by extolling them immoderately, seem to obscure somewhat the mysteries themselves" (5).

IV:17:5. (LCC edition p. 1365.) The best I can make of it is that Calvin understands Zwingli to be teaching that the bread and the wine represent the Savior whose flesh and blood we *have* partaken of when we *believed* in him unto salvation ("Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul.")", whereas Calvin wants to emphasize that the bread and the wine...
represent the living Christ on whom we are invited now to feed, by faith, for our ongoing spiritual life and health.

But again there is nothing of superstition or, shall I say, "meaningless mystery" in Calvin's view. Hear again how clearly he speaks: "Christ is the matter or (if you prefer) the substance of all the sacraments...and they do not promise anything apart from him....Therefore, the sacraments have effectiveness among us in proportion as we are helped by their ministry sometimes to foster, confirm, and increase the true knowledge of Christ in ourselves; at other times, to possess him more fully and enjoy his riches. But that happens when we receive in true faith what is offered there" (16).

Granted, Calvin, when he defends himself against the Lutheran charge that Calvin's view is "dictated by reason" (which seems to be the antithesis of Dabney's charge!), does acknowledge that how it can be that the exalted Christ in heaven is for us who serve him on earth our life, our sustenance as we feed on him by faith, is a great mystery. And how it can be that the Christ on whom we "feed"--by faith, and not with our mouths--is the true Christ, that is to say, the Christ who for us and our salvation became man, "and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever" (WSC 21)--and thus the Christ with whom we have communion is not simply divine but is divine and human (vs. Cunningham, e.g.)--how that can be, Calvin confesses, is a great mystery. But when Dabney says that the true interpretation of Christ's presence with us is "free of mystery", does he really mean "free of anything which transcends reason"?

Heppe offers this summary of the REFORMED view (pp. 647 and 651): "The meaning then is: When a believer eats the Lord's bread and drinks the Lords' wine with the bodily mouth, then simultaneously he eats the body and drinks the blood of Christ with the soul's mouth....Christ's body and blood in the Supper are thus offered to all, believers and unbelievers alike. But only believers can receive him."

3. What are the material elements to be used in this sacrament?

Heppe 629

Unleavened bread? Hodge 615: A. A. Hodge 633; Heppe 630

Grape juice? Hodge 616

Are other elements ever permissible? Heppe 630-1 Hodge 616

4. What are the constituent parts of the service?

Calvin IV:xvii:43
Dabney 801: "The sacramental acts...warranted by Christ are, the taking, breaking, and distributing the elements, on the administrator's part, and their manual reception, and eating or drinking, on the recipient's part. The sacramental words are the thanksgiving, the explicatory and promissory, and the mandatory. The whole is then appropriately concluded with another act of praise (not sacramental, but an appendage thereto), either by praying, or singing, or both. And to add anything else is superstition."

(See Hodge 617-618 regarding the introductory prayer, which is to be "appropriate" [giving thanks and invoking God's blessing] and not "long and rambling.")

Is breaking the bread one of the prescribed parts of the service?

M. G. Kline says "no". Dabney 802.

Hodge writes regarding I Cor. 10:16 (619): "'The bread which we break,' says the Apostle, thereby showing that the breaking was a constituent part of the service. So significant is this act that it was used as a designation of the sacrament itself, which was called the 'breaking of bread,' Acts 2:42." Heppe agrees, but then adds (634): "At the same time Church fellowship is not to be refused to those Churches which reject the rite of breaking of bread."

John Murray, *Collected Writings*, vol. 2. p. 379: "The symbolism of one loaf is essential to the ordinance." See Calvin IV:xvii:38 "...Christ, giving himself to us, not only invites us by his own example to pledge and give ourselves to one another, but inasmuch as he makes himself common to all, also makes all of us one in himself."

5. Who are the proper partakers of the sacrament?

Hodge 623:

What is required by way of "fencing" the table?

Murray 382: "The question is whether the session is under obligation to apply this same principle [of excluding "from the Lord's supper those who are guilty of such overt sin as requires exclusion"] to those who are not members of the congregation but desire to partake of the Lord's supper with the congregation. Or must the session leave that question entirely to the conscience of those who may be in that category?" (See his answer on p. 383.)

Orthodox Presbyterian Church/Canadian Reformed Churches debate.
Calvin IV:xvii:43 "Next, he (the minister, rbs) should recite the promises which were left to us in it; at the same time, he should excommunicate all who are debarred from it by the Lord's prohibition."

What about the children of believers?

Read *Institutes* IV:xvi:30, where Calvin takes this question up as an objection Anabaptists raise against paedobaptism. "This permission was indeed commonly given in the ancient church, as is clear from Cyprian and Augustine, but the custom has deservedly fallen into disuse." Remember Hodge's comment (above) regarding "the nature and design of this sacrament." Heppe 653; Dabney 803-4; the subject in Baptism is fundamentally passive; in the Supper the subject is fundamentally an active participant.

Oscar Cullmann, *Baptism in the New Testament*, pp. 29-30: "In another place I have shown that it is of the essence of the Eucharist that it is repeated, whereas Baptism cannot be repeated for the individual....Thus Barth's objection that admission to the Eucharist would have to be administered to infants after their admission to Baptism becomes invalid. The meaning of this repeated appropriation of the death and resurrection of Christ by the community in the Eucharist is defined by its relation to the unique act of Baptism. The meaning is that here there gather, to the exclusion of the unbelieving and the not-yet-believing, those who already believe and who again and again assure themselves of their salvation as a community in the act of the Eucharist."

Study Committee reports to the Presbyterian Church in America general assembly of 1985, the Orthodox Presbyterian general assemblies of 1987 and 1988, the Christian Reformed Synod of 1988.

At approximately what age can a child's profession of faith be considered credible?

Calvin IV:xix:13 "A child of ten would present himself to the church to declare his confession of faith...If this discipline were in effect today, it would certainly arouse some slothful parents, who carelessly neglect the instruction of their children as a matter of no concern to them; for then they could not overlook it without public disgrace."

6. How frequently should the Lord's Supper be observed?

Heppe, 656.

Calvin IV:xvii:43 "Now, to get rid of this great pile of ceremonies, the Supper could have been administered most becomingly if it were set before the church very often, and at least once a week." 44: "Luke relates in *The Acts* (2:42) that...it became the unvarying rule that no meeting of the church should take place without the Word, prayers, partaking of the Supper, and almsgiving." 46 "...the Lord's Table should have been spread at least once a week for the assembly of Christians..." Note that it is Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper
(an important means of the grace of spiritual nourishment, communion with the living Lord Jesus Christ) that leads to his view regarding frequent observance.

Murray, 376 and 380

Westminster Directory for the Public Worship of God: "The communion, or supper of the Lord, is frequently to be celebrated."

On what ground(s) is it observed infrequently?

7. Is the Lord's Supper to be administered "privately"?

Dabney, 816
THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE END OF THE AGE

Reading Assignment:
1. WCF XXXII, XXXIII; WLC 56, 84-90; WSC 37-38; BC XXXVII; HC 42, 45, 52, 57, 58, 123.
2. Bavinck, ch. XXIV. (24 pp.)
4. Geerhardus Vos, Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation, chs. II and XXIV. (54 pp.)
5. Murray, Redemption, Part II, ch. 10. (10 pp.)
6. Darrell L. Bock, ed., Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond, Craig A. Blaising, Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., and Robert B. Strimple co-authors (1999). (309 pp.)

Suggested Reading:
2. Archibald Hughes, A New Heaven and a New Earth.
4. O. Palmer Robertson, "Is There a Distinctive Future for Ethnic Israel in Romans 11?", ch. 16 in Perspectives on Evangelical Theology, ed. by K. S. Kantzer and S. N. Gundry.

Much (but not all) of what follows in the Syllabus now appears in my chapter in Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond [Zondervan 1999]. What I want to do in the remaining class hours is to lead a discussion of each of the three sections of the book in class, based on your having read all of the book ahead of time.

I. How Is Old Testament Prophecy To Be Interpreted?

   A. Introduction: pre, post, and amillennialism

   "The essential presuppositions of the three systems are similar....Each of the systems is...consistently evangelical, and each has been held by many able and sincere men. The differences arise, not because of any conscious or intended disloyalty to Scripture, but primarily because of the distinctive method employed by each system in its interpretation of Scripture, and they relate primarily to the time and purpose of Christ's coming and to the kind of kingdom that is to be set up at His coming."

   (Loraine Boettner, The Millennium, p. 3, 1984 ed.)
B. Passages in the Old Testament which speak of a coming time of worldwide peace and righteousness, when Israel will be restored to her land, when the temple will be rebuilt, when the priesthood will be restored, and the sacrifices again offered.

E.g., Ps. 72:7-11; Isa. 60:10-14; Ezek. 37:24ff.; 39:25ff.

C. Premillennial interpretation of such passages.

D. Amillennial interpretation

1. The N.T. must be allowed to explain the O.T.

2. The O.T. prophets spoke of the glories of the Messianic Age to come in terms of the types and figures of their own age: the people of Israel, the land of Palestine, the city of Jerusalem, the temple, the sacrifices, the throne of David.

3. We are to interpret such figures in the light of the N.T. revelation of their significance.

   a. Israel: Isa. 41:8,9; 42:1,6; 44:1-5,21; 45:4; Matt. 2:15; Gal. 3:7,29; Phil. 3:2,3

   b. Canaan: Matt. 5:5; Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:10,13-16; Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3; Rev. 21

   c. Jerusalem: Heb. 12:22; Gal. 4:26; Rev. 14:1; John 4:23-26 (Ezek. 47:9)


   e. Temple: Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:1-3; Isa. 56:6-8; Zech. 14:16-19; Isa. 66:21; Matt. 12:6; John 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:17; 1 Peter 2:5; Rev. 21:22

4. But what, then, of the hope of Israel? Have we robbed Israel of her hope? Not at all--the hope of Israel is that which the elect of Israel has obtained! Romans 11:7. It is nothing less than the fullness of God's presence in Jesus Christ, in whom the Immanuel promise of the covenant is preeminently and finally fulfilled: "I will be your God and you will be my people."
**Postmillennialism**

Return of Christ

“Millennium:” Gospel Present and Church Triumphant Eternal State

(“Kingdom of God” I Cor. 15:50)

**Premillennialism**

Return of Christ

Resurrection of Unjust Church Age Reign of Christ on Earth

Final Judgment New Heavens and New Earth Eternal State

(“Kingdom of God”)

**Dispensational (Pretribulational) Premillennialism**

Return of Christ for Saints Return of Christ with Saints

Church Age Tribulation 7 years “Millennium” - Etc.
**Amillennialism**

Return of Christ

- Resurrection ("Change") of Believers
- Resurrection of the Unjust
- Judgment for All
- "The End"
- New Heavens and New Earth
- "Kingdom of God" - Eternal State

**Church Age**

**PROPHETS >> BLESSINGS OF MESSIANIC AGE**

Israel

Palestine

Jerusalem

Temple

Sacrifices

Throne of David
II. The Unity of the Complex of Events Associated with the Coming of Christ

A. Introduction: While the O.T. does not teach a future millennial kingdom of Christ, the N.T. revelation rules out an earthly millennium of the pre-millennialist type, because the N.T. reveals that the following events are concomitant and are all part of the one grand eschatological finale: the coming of Christ, the resurrection of believers (and the "change" of living believers), the resurrection of the unjust, judgment for all, "The End," the new heavens and new earth, and the final "kingdom of God" (the eternal state).

B. John 5:28,29 (compare Acts 24:15; Daniel 12:2)

C. 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10

1. vv. 5-9: a two-fold judgment (affliction to the ungodly; rest to believers) at the visible coming of Christ (v. 7)
   a. Two problems for the Dispensationalist
      (1) Is not the believer's rest secured at the secret rapture?
      (2) Is not final punishment meted out to the ungodly after the millennium?

2. The time when this two-fold judgment will be executed:
   a. v. 7--"apocalypse...with the angels...in flaming fire"
   b. v. 10--"when Christ comes to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all them that believe"
   c. v. 10--"in that day"

3. v. 5--"the Kingdom of God" (Luke 20:35; Rev. 3:4) Compare Luke 21:31; 1 Cor. 15:50.

D. 2 Peter 3:3-15

Here Peter speaks of scoffers, mockers, coming in the last days - men like Rudolf Bultmann, who wrote in his most famous essay:

*Man's knowledge and mastery of the world* have advanced to such an extent through science and technology that it is no longer possible for anyone seriously to hold the New Testament view of the world--in fact, there is no one who does.

*The mythical eschatology* [of the New Testament] is untenable for the simple reason that the *parousia* of Christ never took place as the New Testament expected. History did not come to an end, and, as every schoolboy knows, it will continue to run its course. Even if we believe that the world as we know it will come to an end in time, we expect the end to

(Interestingly, Peter himself uses the word "myth" (\textit{mythos}) in 1:16 and \textit{denies} that what he makes known by the Spirit of God are "myths.")

Well, v. 4 gives the nature of their scoffing.

They will say, 'Where is this coming he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.' (N.I.V.)

In vv. 5-7 Peter tells the scoffers that they are wrong in both their \textit{premise} and their \textit{conclusion}; and he rebukes their ignorance of the flood which brought total destruction to mankind, save eight souls. It is not true that all things have continued the same from the beginning of creation. And it not true with respect to the future.

This is a wonderfully instructive passage with so much to teach us, but what we are particularly concerned to notice now are the \textit{identifications} and/or \textit{concurrences} which occur in this passage.

1. The identification of the Coming of Christ (\textit{parousia}, v. 4) and the coming of the Day of the Lord (v. 10). Commonly, the \textit{Parousia} is seen as the pre-tribulation Rapture by pretribulationists, and the Day of the Lord, according to pretribulationism, is always a day of judgment and has reference to the Apocalypse of Christ at the end of the Tribulation to bring judgment upon the wicked.

But the two are identified in this passage, as we see from the following:

a. Unless they are identified, v. 10 would be irrelevant as a refutation of the skepticism expressed in v. 4. There would be a \textit{non sequitur} in Peter's argument, for quite obviously v. 10 is meant to affirm the certainty of that which the scoffers call into question, namely, the \textit{Parousia}. It "will come," that Day of the Lord. This is the emphasis in v. 10; and it points back to the unbelief expressed in v. 4. If Peter were not referring to the same event, his answer in v. 10 would be irrelevant.

b. The coming of the Day of the Lord is said to be as a thief (v. 10). In Matt. 24:42-44 it is the \textit{Parousia} that is represented as coming as a thief. And in I Thess. 5:2,4 Paul has been speaking of the \textit{Parousia}, and he says:
But of the times and the seasons you have no need of anything to be written to you, for you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

Thus the *Parousia* and the coming of the Day of the Lord are both described in the same way, as similar to the coming of a thief.

2. The identity of the event spoken of in vv. 7, 10, 11, 12, and 13. This is too obvious to require argument. For convenience sake we shall call this event the Cosmic Renewal.

3. The concurrence of the day of the judgment of the wicked and the Cosmic Renewal. This is quite clear from v. 7. The day of judgment of the ungodly is represented as the *terminus ad quem* of the preserving of the present elements. That day of judgment, and the world being burned with fire, are coincident as far as the day when they will happen is concerned.

The premillenialist, of course, has no problem with this. He puts both at the end of the millennium. But stay with me!

4. The Day of the Lord and this Cosmic Renewal must concur, because the Cosmic Renewal is said to occur *in* that Day of the Lord (v. 10--"in which"). Therefore, there is no denying that the renewal falls within that day.

5. But it is not simply that the Cosmic Renewal is placed *within* the Day of the Lord. It is concurrent with the *coming* of the Day of the Lord, for in v. 10 the stress falls not upon the Day of the Lord but upon its *coming*. And it is that *coming* that is characterized by the passing away of the present heavens and earth. The *coming* of the Day of the Lord is defined in such terms. (We shall soon find this interpretation of v. 10 confirmed by v. 12. See point 7 below.)

6. The identification of the *Parousia* (v. 4), the coming of the Day of the Lord (v. 10), and the *coming* (*parousia*) of the Day of God (v. 12). These three must be identified for the following reasons:

   a. The attitude to be held with reference to the coming (*parousia*) of the Day of God ("looking for and earnestly desiring," v. 12) is the same as the attitude which is uniformly commanded elsewhere with reference to the coming (*Parousia*) of Christ.

   b. That same attitude is to be maintained with reference to the new heavens and new earth ("looking for," v. 13). This Cosmic Renewal is thus brought into coordination with the believer's *hope*. 


looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will melt with intense heat.

Thus v. 12 makes the same point as v. 10 (though it speaks in terms of the coming of the Day of *God* instead of the coming of the Day of the *Lord*) and thus confirms our interpretation of v. 10. (See points 4 and 5 above.)

Now, except for those rare premillennialists who put the Cosmic Renewal before the millennium and interpret Revelation 21 as a description of the *millennium* rather than as a description of the eternal state (and that view raises its own set of problems which we shall note when considering Romans 8), the Cosmic Renewal in the premillennial scheme is to *follow* the millennium. It is argued, however, that the Day of the Lord will be when Christ comes visibly. But if that Day is coordinated with the Cosmic Renewal, what are we to say? Does premillennialism have an answer?

The answer usually given is that the Day of the Lord is a long period of time; and although the Cosmic Renewal falls *within* the Day of the Lord, nevertheless it is at the *end* of the Day of the Lord. It is therefore *separated* from the *Parousia* of Christ (v. 4), from the coming of the Day of the Lord (v. 10), and from the coming of the Day of God (v. 12) by a thousand years! We have, however, in 3 Peter 3, according to the majority of premillennialists, an example of "prophetic foreshortening" which somewhat obscures this fact. (The common illustration given of this phenomenon of "prophetic foreshortening" is that of someone standing on a mountain top looking off into the distance and seeing only the tops of other mountains rather than the valleys in between.)

I want to suggest that this answer is untenable. I already said this under point 5 with reference to v. 10. It is the *coming* of the Day of the Lord according to v. 10, not simply the Day of the Lord, that is characterized by the passing away of the present heavens and earth. Let us look more closely now at v. 12.
a. The natural interpretation of *di' hen* ("on account of which") is that the Cosmic Renewal is put into effect by the *parousia* of the Day of God, and the "*parousia*" always has in the forefront the idea of *advent*. The *arrival* referred to in the term *parousia* is to be marked by a Cosmic Renewal. Read in the N.A.S.B. (Note that Peter's reference to the *coming* (*parousia*) of the Day of God as the antecedent of *di' hen* is entirely lost in the N.I.V.)

b. As we have seen already, the same plea for watchfulness, sobriety, and holiness of life is given in connection with the dissolution of the present heavens as is given elsewhere in connection with the *Parousia* of Christ itself. Read vv. 11, 13, and 14.

c. With reference to v. 8, do not fall into the naive assumption that Peter is there defining the *length* of the Day of the Lord! Peter is not saying anything about the length of the Day of the Lord in v. 8. He is simply expressing the thought of Psalm 90:4. The time elapsing between Christ's *promising* to return and his actual return may seem very, very long to us--so long as to indicate to us that the promise has failed of fulfillment. In God's eyes, however, the period does not seem long at all. The eternal God's perspective on time is different from that of temporal man. Everything will be fulfilled in God's good time, and any apparent "delay" is simply due to God's *grace*, to his long-suffering, to his love for his church that makes him delay his bringing to an end the age of grace until all have come to repentance. For make no mistake. The coming of Christ will not be the means of converting great masses of men, nor will it mark the initiation of a great new evangelistic program, as premillennialism often teaches. It will mark the advent of God's two-fold judgment. (Remember 2 Thessalonians 1.)

From this third chapter of 2 Peter, then, we must see as concurrent the *Parousia* (v. 4), the coming of the Day of the Lord (v. 10), the judgment of the wicked (v. 7), the Cosmic Renewal (vv. 7, 10, 11), the *parousia* of the Day of God (v. 12).

---

8 See George Eldon Ladd, *The Blessed Hope* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), pp. 64-65, for example, for a brief refutation of the argument that *parousia* may be a reference to "presence" rather than to "arrival."
E. Romans 8:17-23

1. The expectation of believers. v. 18

2. The expectation of creation. vv. 19-22
   Matt. 19:28; Acts 3:21; II Peter 3:13; Rev. 21:1
   a. Parallel with the flood, II Pet. 3:6,7
   b. Compare the "new man" = the "old man" made new
   c. Compare with the Resurrection of the body

3. The deliverance of believers.
   a. vv. 17,18,19,21,23.
   b. The point at which this deliverance will be achieved, v. 23 (the Resurrection)

4. The deliverance of creation.
   a. v. 21 "deliverance from the bondage to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God"
   b. The point at which this deliverance will be achieved, vv. 19,21,23.

5. The implications of this passage.
   a. The Cosmic Renewal and the Resurrection of believers are concurrent.
   b. "Revised" Premillennialism (Zahn, Sanderson, Culver)
   c. Answer to "Revised" Premillennialism

   It is into "the freedom of the glory of the children of God" that creation is to be delivered, and thus creation's deliverance must be as permanent and irrevocable as the freedom of the glory of the children of God. The victory which Paul describes here is final, total, absolute, and everlasting victory for both creation and believers--at the coming of Christ.
1. The scope of the resurrection. V. 22
   a. "Inclusive" interpretation, reference to a general resurrection, of the unjust as well as the just.
   b. Reasons why that exegesis of v. 22 is untenable
      (1) Analogy of Romans 5:18
      (2) The uniformly soteric implications of "in Christ" in N.T. usage
      (3) Rich soteric import of zoopoiew ("made alive") in Paul (as well as in John). Rom. 8:11; 2 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:45.

2. Concurrences on which both premillennialists and non-premillennialists agree.
   a. The resurrection of believers and the Coming of Christ, v. 23.
   b. The End (telos), the subjugation of all enemies, and the terminus of Christ's reign, vv. 24,25.

3. The Premillennialist Interpretation
   a. tagmati (v. 23)="troop," or "group" (a military term)
   b. epeita ("then", v. 23)=after a long period
eita ("then", v. 24) =after a long period

4. Evaluation of the premillennialist interpretation and positive (non-premillennialist) exposition
   a. tagma (v. 23)="order"
   b. Either epeita and eita can mark a protracted period, but either can also be used simply in the sense of immediate sequence (Luke. 16:7; John. 20:27). Not the adverb itself but only the context determines the length of the interval.
   c. In Pauline usage (and in N.T. usage in general), the Telos cannot be separated from the Parousia. 1 Cor. 1:7,8; Matt. 24:3,6,13,14; I Pet. 4:7
d. Compare vv. 54,55 with 24-26. Victory over Death occurs at the Resurrection of believers (54) which occurs at Christ's coming (23), and it occurs at The End (24 & 26). Thus, again, The End cannot be separated from Christ's coming.

Possible objection: 54,55 = victory over death for the just; 26 = final destruction of death in the perdition of the wicked.

1) "Death" is not qualified in either portion.
2) katapino (54) is every bit as strong as katargeo (26).
3) It is not in the resurrection of the wicked that Death is destroyed. Death is never truly destroyed as far as the wicked are concerned!

e. The Resurrection of believers (54,55)=the destruction of the last enemy = the end of Christ's mediatorial reign.

f. The Resurrection prepares believers for the eschatological kingdom of God (v. 50).

g. The last (eschatos) trumpet signals the Resurrection of believers (v. 52).


i. The "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:11).
III. Two Passages Often Cited As Crucial

A. Romans 11

1. Importance to premillennialists and to postmillennialists, especially to the latter.

2. Interpretation of amillennialists like Vos and Stonehouse.

3. Another interpretation of Romans 11 (see especially O. Palmer Robertson in Perspectives on Evangelical Theology, ed. by Kantzer and Gundry, but also Ridderbos (translation by Gaffin of his comments on vv. 25-32 is on reserve), Hendriksen, Israel in Prophecy, and Hoekema, The Bible and the Future).
   a. The question Paul faces in Rom. 9-11: "Either God is unfaithful to His promises (in regard to the Jews, RBS), or Jesus whom Paul preaches is not the Lord's Christ particularly promised to that people." (Calvin)
   b. 9:1-29
      (1) vv. 1-5, Israel = God's specially chosen people
      (2) vv. 6-29, election and nationally are not equally inclusive
   c. 9:30-10:21, the focus shifts from the electing grace of God to the response of men.
   d. Ch. 11--popular outline: "Did God reject his people?" (v. 1); not totally (vv. 1-10), nor finally (vv. 11ff.)
   e. Ch. 11
      (1) Evidence that Rom. 11 deals with God's present intention for ethnic Israel.
         (a) v. 1, Paul himself is a present example which clarifies the intent of the question
         (b) v. 5, en to nun kairo ("at the present time")
         (c) vvs. 13,14, Paul's ministry is in view
         (d) v. 15, ei gar ("for if...") connects the proslempsis ("acceptance") of the Jews with the present ministry of the gospel era by Paul described in vv. 13,14. This "acceptance", v. 15=their "fullness" (pleroma), v. 12.
         (e) vvs. 11-16, indeed 11-24=a unit
         (f) vvs. 30,31, three-fold nun ("now")
(g) v. 11, summary of the entire chapter (compare 10:19)

(2) Alleged references in Rom. 11 to a future expectation for ethnic Israel.

(a) vv. 1,2, not "Has God canceled ethnic Israel's special future?" but rather "Has God cut off ethnic Israel altogether?" (cf. v. 11)

(1) Note Paul's answer in 1b.

(2) Note Paul's answer in v. 5.

(b) vv. 12,15

paraptoma & hettema ("transgression" & "failure") vs. pleroma ("fullness")

apobole ("rejection") vs. proslempsis ("acceptance")

What will this "acceptance" mean for the world? zoe ek nekron ("life from the dead")--not "the millennium" but rather "the Resurrection"! How can an age of unprecedented quickening for the world in the expansion and success of the gospel follow after both the fullness of Israel (v. 12, v. 26 "all Israel") and the fullness of the Gentiles (v. 25) have come in? With the bringing in of the pleroma of both Israel and the Gentiles, God's redemptive purposes are accomplished; and it is difficult to see how another period of history can then delay the consummation of the blessings of redemption. (See Ridderbos.)

(c) vv. 17-24, what suggests that this "ingrafting" is to be consigned to the future?

(d) vv. 25-27

*1* v. 25, apo merous ("in part")=partial

*2* v. 25, achrhis hou ("until")="right up until"

*3* v. 26, kai houtos="and thus, in this way"

"all Israel"=all of the elect within ethnic Israel
(3) Conclusion: the argument at the end of ch. 11 is identical with the argument at the beginning of ch. 9. This is confirmed by 11:30-32.

(4) Application: the continuing survival of ethnic Israel should not be a stimulus to speculation regarding the future but rather an urgent stimulus to evangelism in the present.

B. Revelation 20:1-10.

1. Premillennial interpretation.

The premillennial interpretation of Revelation 20:1-10 must be seen against the background of the premillennial interpretation of the Old Testament. No commentator comes to this chapter with just a tabula rasa, a blank mind. Every Christian comes to this chapter with a certain hermeneutical background.

As we said at the start of this section on eschatology, in the Old Testament we find many passages which speak of a coming time when there will be worldwide peace and righteousness, a time when Israel will be restored to her land, when the Jewish temple will be rebuilt, when the priesthood will be restored, and sacrifices once again will be offered. These passages speak of all these blessed results as coming as the result of the great and glorious reign of the Messiah, David's seed, or, according to the prophet Ezekiel, David himself.9

Premillennialists have insisted that all of these passages are to be taken "literally," and as yet to be fulfilled in this world's history. All will take place on this earth, in history, at a time which is yet future.

Now, we come over to the New Testament, and we find very little reference to such a coming age. Perhaps the premillennialist will feel surprisingly little reference. But Revelation 20 is thought by the premillennialist to be very important because it adds greatly to our knowledge of this future age. According to premillennialism it tells us three things:

1. When this "golden age" will come, when it will begin; 2. How long it will last; and 3. How that age will come to an end.

---

9 J. Dwight Pentecost is one dispensationalist who insists that consistent literalism requires that we look for the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy in a resurrected David! See Things to Come (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Co., 1958).
So, while the *Old Testament* tells about the *nature* of this coming kingdom, Revelation 20 gives us the *chronological* details.¹⁰

The premillennialist says that in Revelation 19 we are given a picture of Christ's return. Read vv. 11-13. Compare John 1:1. Read Rev. 19:16 - "And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Certainly that person can be no one else but our Lord Jesus Christ. These verses picture the second coming of Jesus Christ. Then, the premillennialist says, Revelation 20 tells us what will happen *then.*

For most premillennialists it has been an important point, fundamental to their interpretation of chapter 20, to insist that all the visions of the book of Revelation are *chronologically successive.*¹¹ By that is meant that an event pictured in chapter 15, for example, will occur later in time than an event pictured in chapter 14. The premillennialist often assumes that to be true. On the basis of that assumption it is insisted that since chapter 19 has spoken of the second coming of Christ, chapter 20 must refer to that which will occur *after* his second coming.

Then the premillennialist claims to understand Revelation 20 in a simple, straightforward manner. It teaches that following Christ's return Satan will be bound. Believers will be resurrected. They will reign with Christ for one thousand years *on this earth.* Then Satan will be loosed for a little season (v. 7) and will make war on the saints. God will then destroy Satan permanently.

Believers are resurrected and reigning with Christ on the earth for one thousand years. The rest of the dead will be resurrected *after* Satan has been destroyed at the end of the little season. The Great White Throne judgment will then take place, followed (chapter 21) by the new heavens and new earth, the Eternal State.

The premillennial interpretation can seem to be very clear and straightforward. George Ladd has written:

> ...even if the rest of the Bible were entirely silent on this point, this fact would not militate against the belief in a millennium if the

¹⁰ There is one problem here, of course. While it is often said that Revelation 20 fills in the chronological details that the Old Testament passages had not given, the fact of the matter is that those Old Testament passages are not silent as to the duration of the Messianic Kingdom. They speak of that matter very often, and they consistently speak of that kingdom as "everlasting," as "eternal."

¹¹ At our week long "debate" at the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada pastors' conference at Muskoka, Ontario, June 10-14, 1974, John Walvoord, then president of Dallas Theological Seminary, rejected this notion and affirmed that "the visions of the book of Revelation are not necessarily in chronological order."
exegesis of the Apocalypse required it....It might well be that in the Apocalypse, elements of a new revelation were imparted to John by the Lord, to the effect that there should be a millennial interregnum.  

Many Christians agree with Ladd. Some develop into "one text" premillennialists.

We should quickly correct one serious misunderstanding which the quotation from Ladd might leave. It might be thought that non-premillennialists insist that Revelation 20 cannot teach such an earthly millennial kingdom because the rest of the Scriptures is silent on this point. This seems to be what he says. But this is not true. Non-premillennialists would agree that if a truth is taught unmistakably in Scripture it is to be accepted, even if it is part of just one verse! If it is there, if it is Scriptural, it is to be accepted. But the point is that the non-premillennialist believes that Scripture is not merely silent on this point. Scripture speaks, and it rules out such an earthly interregnum between Christ's coming and final judgment and the Eternal State. And it is my insistence that Scripture does not contradict Scripture.

Yes, it is true. I want to interpret this chapter in Revelation in a way that is consistent with the rest of the Scriptures. Ladd insists this is a false approach to this chapter. To quote him again:

The exegetical approach must always precede the theological....One cannot come to the Scriptures with a system of eschatology and fit the records into one's system.

By that Ladd means: do not come to Revelation 20 with certain preconceptions in mind. Interpret it first; then worry about how it fits in with the rest of Scriptural teaching. Certainly we would have to agree with Ladd that this is essentially the proper approach to any Biblical passage. But I would ask just two questions:

(1) Are premillennialists themselves true to that principle? B. B. Warfield wrote this:

...it is to be feared that there has been much less tendency-interpretation ("biased interpretation," RBS) of Rev. xx in the

12 George Eldon Ladd, Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), pp. 181-182.

13 Study section II. above concerning "The Unity of the Complex of Events Associated with the Coming of Christ."

14 Ladd, Crucial Questions, p. 135.
interest of preconceived theory, than there has been tendency-
interpretation of the rest of the Scripture in the interest of
questions derived from misunderstandings of this obscure
passage.\textsuperscript{15}

I think Warfield is right. Among evangelicals there has been far less of an attempt
to interpret Rev. 20 in the light of the rest of the Scripture than there has been the
attempt to interpret the rest of Scripture in the light of this one passage!

(2) Is it not a valid principle of Biblical interpretation that less clear, more difficult
portions are to be interpreted in the light of the more clear portions of the word of
God--the poetical passages in the light of the prose passages, for example? Is that
not a correct principle of Biblical interpretation, that you go to the straight-forward
narratives, perhaps, and then when you come to the figurative and poetical
passages you interpret them in the light of the knowledge that you have gained
from the clearer portions of Scriptures? Warfield said:

\ldots we must not permit ourselves to forget that there is a sense in
which it is proper to permit our understanding of so obscure a
portion of Scripture to be affected by the clearer teaching of its
more didactic parts. We must guard, no doubt, against carrying
this too far and doing violence to the text before us in the interests
of Bible-harmony. But within due limits, surely, the order of
investigation should be from the clearer to the more obscure.\textsuperscript{16}

Now, I am not admitting by any means that the premillennial interpretation of Rev.
20 has no problems, but I am saying that I am not willing to set aside the rest of the
N.T. or force it into artificial interpretations on the basis of one brief passage in an
apocalypse which is admittedly highly figurative, rather cryptic, and therefore
difficult.

The very last paragraph in Ladd's book, \textit{Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of
God}, is this (p. 183):

The basic question remains: What does the exegesis of Revelation 20 require? All other considerations must be subservient to the
exegesis of this passage.

Surely that is an astonishing statement: "all other considerations must be
subservient" to the interpretation of this chapter. Are we to do that, to bring all the
rest of the Bible to Rev. 20, make it fit in, push it, squeeze it? To me that is a very
false approach to the interpretation of Biblical prophecy. Archibald Hughes has
written:


\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid}. 
It is a very precarious foundation, in a book of symbolical visions, to take such a phrase as "a thousand years" and make it a foundation to carry the superstructure of a complete system of interpretation.17

2. Another possible interpretation.

I am simply calling this "another" interpretation. It would not be accurate to label this "the amillennial interpretation" because you could find many who call themselves amillennialists who would not take this approach to this chapter. (A very popular interpretation, the "Augustinian" interpretation, takes the reference to the first resurrection as a reference to spiritual regeneration.) And, of course, you would find many postmillennialists (like Warfield) who would follow the main lines of the interpretation which I shall present.

The basic outline of the interpretation which I want to present here can be found in Calvin (Psychopannychia), Kliefoth (Lutheran, 1874), Warfield ("The Millennium and the Apocalypse," in Biblical Doctrines, weakened somewhat by postmillennial presuppositions), Ned Stonehouse (my N.T. professor at Westminster), Archibald Hughes, and William Hendriksen (More Than Conquerors). I would like to present it by putting forward seven points for your consideration.

a. There is nothing in this passage, thinking especially now of 20:1-10, to give any hint that it is to be connected with those O.T. prophecies that we spoke of earlier that tell of a coming era of national glory for Israel. There is nothing in this chapter itself to connect it with those O.T. prophecies. That this chapter is to be linked with those passages is strictly speculation. Those passages talk about glory for earthly Jerusalem, earthly Canaan. There is nothing about that in Rev. 20. Rev. 20 talks about a one thousand year kingdom. The O.T. prophecies talk about an everlasting kingdom. On the surface it would seem that perhaps that they are not talking about the same thing. At the very least there is nothing in the passage to make us see clearly that they are talking about the same period.

b. The order of the visions in the book of Revelation, the order in which they appear in the book, is not necessarily the order of fulfillment. Here we are challenging the common premillenial assumption that you must interpret every chapter in this book as speaking of events which will occur in time later than the events spoken of in the chapter earlier.

It does seem that the end of chapter 19 takes us right down to the end of the age, takes us right down to the coming of Christ, the battle of Armageddon, judgment upon the beast and the false prophet.18 But it does not follow that chapter 20 tells of what will happen next. Its visions may take us back to the first coming of Christ and the beginning of the present Gospel age.


18 But see under point e. below my comments on Loraine Boettner's "revised" view in his 1984 edition of The Millennium.
If so, this would not be a unique phenomenon here in the book of Revelation. It seems to me that the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowls of wrath that you have in the book of Revelation are each a series of seven visions that begin with the first coming of Christ and take us right down to the end of the age. You begin with the seven seals at the beginning of the church age and go right down to the end of it at the second coming of Christ. Then you come to the seven trumpets and you are taken back to the beginning and are right down to the end again. The same with the seven bowls of wrath, with increasing detail, increasing vividness toward the end of the age in each case. Hendrikson in *More Than Conquerors* goes into great detail to make the case for such "recapitulation." That seems to be the structure of the book. Call it a kind of reiterative parallelism, if you will; it seems to be the structure of the book, to cover the same ground, but giving new detail in each series of visions.

Perhaps the clearest example of an abrupt return to the beginning of the church age is found in chapter 12. There are many ways in which the relationship of chapter 11 to chapter 12 is remarkably similar to the relationship of chapter 19 to chapter 20. (See Hendriksen for details.) In 11:18 we read that “the time has come for judging the dead.” We have been brought down to the end of the age there at the end of chapter 11. With chapter 12, however, we return to the beginning of the N.T. period. Read 12:5. You have the description of the birth of a man child and his ascension to the throne of God. You have the vision of a woman; she gives birth to a son. The dragon, Satan, tries to destroy the son. The son is taken up out of his reach. The dragon turns to the woman and her seed, and so on. You have a description, in figurative terms, of the birth of Christ and of the ascension of Christ. The premillennialist would agree with me on that.

But think about it. Chapter 11 takes you right down to the end of the age. Chapter 12 takes you right back to the first coming of Christ. If it can happen in chapters 11 and 12, how can we rule it out, for investigation at least, for chapters 19 and 20? It would not be strange. It would not be unique.

In chapter 19 you come down to the end of the age, and in chapter 20 you are taken back to the ministry of Christ on earth. Do not jump to the conclusion too quickly that chapter 20 has to tell about events which occur after the second coming of Christ.

c. There are two visions in Revelation 20:1-10, two "scenes."

---

The two visions are linked together, linked by the phrase "one thousand years"; and therefore we may very well conclude that these two events are contemporaneous. Nevertheless, they are still separate, separate visions. Verses 1 to 3 and verses 7 through 10 go together. They speak about Satan: Verses 1-3, Satan bound; verses 7-10, Satan loosed. The three verses in the middle, 4 through 6, are somewhat parenthetical, a separate vision, this vision about souls and thrones and reigning. We have two visions here, one concerned with the binding and loosing of Satan and the other one concerned with the reign of the saints. I shall be suggesting that the one vision is given to explain certain events on earth, and the other is a door opened on the situation in heaven.

d. The vision of the binding of Satan.

How are we to interpret the symbol? Chapter 12 has already spoken of a certain restraint upon the dragon after Christ's ascension. Satan is not able to accomplish his purpose. Satan wants to destroy the woman and her seed, but he cannot do it. He is restrained by God.

Now, does chapter 20 have in view another phase of Satan's being restrained, something independent of that spoken of in chapter 12? Or, is this again reiteration in different terms? Is chapter 20 talking about another aspect of that restraint upon Satan resulting from Christ’s redemptive work and his ascension?

We must keep in mind the teaching of the N.T. as a whole. In the N.T. generally we have eschatology set forth in terms of not one but two great climactic points, the first coming of Christ and the second coming of Christ. With the second coming of Christ there will be full and complete consummation. But already at the first coming of Christ, according to the N.T., we do have what we might call anticipatory consummation. We have the decisive battle fought, the great victory won. In a real sense the kingdom of God has come. And Christ has dealt decisively with Satan.

There are many passages we could look at, of course. How is the work of Christ at his first coming described in the N.T., that is, in relation to Satan? Read Matthew 12:28,29. Our Lord says: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." This is a great eschatological event! The kingdom has come. "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house and carry off his possessions, unless he first binds the strong man? Then he can rob his house." Our Lord gives a brief parable. How does one go about despoiling a strong man's house, taking away the spoils that he has gained, that he has gained no doubt through robbery, through illegal means? The way to do it is to bind the
John 12:31 - "Now is the time for judgment on this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Judgment time has arrived. The prince of this world shall be driven out. (Note that this is the same Greek root, ballo, as found in Rev. 20:3.) Now, through my work, Jesus says. Read vv. 31-33 in the context of vv. 20-34.

In Colossians 2:14, 15 we have Paul using this kind of language. He speaks of Christ at the cross "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us. He took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; having spoiled principalities and powers (R.S.V., "disarming principalities and powers") he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Christ disarms Satan's host. What a great victory!

Hebrews 2:14 and 15 speak of Christ's coming in the flesh, to die in the flesh "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Do you see how strong the wording is? Satan "destroyed" (katargeo). I can hear someone saying, "Satan destroyed? Why, he is described in this same N.T. as active, going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour! (1 Peter 5:8)" That is right. That is true. This is the kind of language, however, that the writer to the Hebrews can use to describe Christ's victory over Satan at the cross, so eternally significant does he see that victory to be.

I John 3:8 - "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy (luo) the works of the devil." This appears in a context where John is saying that if you are working the works of the devil, then you are giving indication that you are on the side of a defeated enemy. Christ is the conqueror. If you are really Christ's, you will not be engaged in Satan's works.

And so we have these two climactic points in Christ's victory over Satan. Victory at the cross; victory at his second coming.

We must ask then: in the book of Revelation, is that two climax construction preserved, or do we have introduced here in chapter 20 a feature that calls for a significant revision of that basic New Testament perspective? Is the outlook now:

1) victory at the cross;
2) victory at Christ's second coming and the beginning of his millennial reign;
As we examine the passage, we good reason to suggest that Revelation 20 does not present that kind of modification.

What we have is a figurative representation of the victory of Christ over Satan at each of the two climactic points. At the cross Satan is bound. The angel who binds Satan could be interpreted, perhaps, as Christ himself, or as Christ's messenger. But the important point is that Satan is bound.

But not absolutely. This is a point many people overlook. It does not say that Satan is bound, period. He is bound in one respect; namely, that he should deceive the Gentiles (τα έθνη, the nations) no more.

What does this mean? I suggest that it announces that the age of universal salvation has opened up. By that I do not mean universalism in the absolute sense, obviously, which teaches that every person living is going to be saved. What I am referring to is the fact that prior to Christ's ministry we had one nation called from all nations of the world to know God's blessing and to serve him.

There were a few exceptions, those who came to know the grace of God who were not of the children of Abraham after the flesh. But basically all the nations of this globe were in darkness, deceived by Satan. What happens now? Christ comes. He performs his redemptive work. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit is poured out on all people (Acts 2:17) as this sign gives witness to the fact that the Gospel is a gospel for all the nations of the earth, not just the Jewish people. Men speak in the various human tongues, a wonderful sign that the age of universal Gospel proclamation has come. The age of a great, unprecedented influx of all peoples to the kingdom of Christ has come. And Satan's work of deceiving them and keeping them in darkness has come to an end. Missions have really begun. We as Christ's ambassadors still seem to need to really grasp, or, better, to be grasped by that fact and really get about this missionary activity. We know that is God's purpose for this age, and here we read that God in Christ has done that which was necessary at the beginning of that age. Satan's deceptive work on that grand scale, deceiving the nations, has come to an end. Read Acts 26:15-18.20

Let me point you to one other text. If you are still not convinced. If you feel, as many Christians do, that to say that Christ bound Satan at the cross would be inconsistent with Satan's present and very real activity, look at the sixth verse of Jude. (Compare 2 Peter 2:4.) Here is a verse often overlooked in this connection, but it is very significant. Notice the figure that is used here. This is symbolical language again. Figures drawn from our experience must always be used to speak of that which we have never experienced.

---

20 Hendriksen is very eloquent at this point, pp. 223ff.
And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

What does that mean? Does it mean that all Paul's language about our wrestling against principalities and powers, the forces of demonic darkness, is so much "window dressing"? They are in chains; there is no real struggle that the Christian knows here. Right? No, it does not mean that at all. It does not mean that these fallen angels are not active. It means that they are active within the scope of God's permission. And it means that their final destiny is assured. They are in "everlasting chains."\(^{21}\)

If Jude by the Holy Spirit’s inspiration can describe all of these demonic beings as being in everlasting chains now, why should it be thought that to interpret Rev. 20, the binding of Satan, as a present binding is somehow inconsistent with Satan’s present activity? It is Scriptural language, no more contradictory of Satan's present activity than Jude 6 is contradictory of the present activity of the whole host of fallen angels. Rev. 20:1-3 teaches that Satan is definitely restrained as to the sphere of his activity.

e. The loosing of Satan.

V. 8 refers to "the battle." In v. 7 we read that Satan shall be loosed and, v. 8, "shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, God and Magog, to gather them together to battle." That is the King James translation (compare the NIV, “for battle”), but it is not a precisely literal one. It helps at this point to translate more literally: "to gather them together to the battle," "the war" (N.A.S.B.). In the best Greek text the wording is eis ton polemon. We have our English word "polemic" from this Greek word, "battle."

\(^{21}\) In that pastors conference in Muskoka, Ontario, in June 1974, Dr. Walvoord mentioned Hendriksen's illustration of a dog on a chain. The dog can be very active within the sphere of movement he has. But the sphere is limited. He called that "a ridiculous interpretation," and he had the pastors laughing with him as he made fun of it. But does not Jude speak of the fallen angels in exactly that figure, speaking of them, though quite active, as in eternal chains? Is Jude making a ridiculous statement? We should be extremely careful about laughing at a figure used by the Holy Spirit himself!
Here is a reference to "the battle," definite article. Satan is going to gather them together to the battle. I stress this because we meet that language earlier in the book of Revelation. We read about “the battle” at other points. Look at 16:14 -

For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle (eis ton polemon) of that great day of God Almighty.

Look at 19:19. At times you could wish that a translation like the King James would stick to one translation for one phrase like this, because you cannot see the pattern when the translation keeps changing. Here is what you have in 19:19 -

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army.

Even the N.A.S.B. and the N.I.V. omit the definite article here. But the preferred Greek text is the same as in these other places, "gathered together to make, to fight the battle (poiesai ton polemon) against him that sat on the horse and against his army."

Here is another indication of the kind of reiteration which appears in this book. 16:14 - kings are called forth to the battle. 19:19 - Christ comes and certain ones come forth to the battle against him who rides upon the horse. 20:8, Satan leads up his host to the battle.

It seems clear that these three verses describe not three battles but one. And the new point (because the book never repeats itself just for the sake of repetition; something new is revealed each time) revealed in 20:8 is what happens to Satan as a result of this battle. In ch. 19 we were told what would happen to the beast and the false prophet as a result of their defeat in this battle. And here in ch. 20 we are told what happens in the case of Satan.
Ch. 19 talks about this great battle. 20:7-10 talks about the battle again. And it is the same one! Therefore the verses intervening speak of Christ's first coming, the binding of Satan, and then vv. 7-10 speak of the climactic unleashing of the forces of evil at the end of the age and of Christ's coming in judgment upon Satan.

Ch. 19 brings us right up to the end of the age and this great battle. Ch. 20 takes us back to the coming of Christ, the binding of Satan, and then vv. 7-10 bring us right up to the end time again, describe Satan being loosed, describe the battle and the end. Up there at ch. 19, back to the beginning, and finally with vv. 7-10 back to the end once again.

If you do not see that, this is the kind of thing you get into: Scofield, for example, has two battles of God and Magog, one before the millennium and one after it. (See his note on Ezekiel 38:2.) You have to, because those two battles are described in precisely the same terms. You have to have two of them. You have to

22 It is most natural for John when he thinks of Christ's final victory over Satan to think back to the decisive victory won through the cross and the Resurrection.

23 In the 1984 edition of his book, The Millennium, (Presbyterian and Reformed) Loraine Boettner completely rewrote chapter 22, "The Millennium of Revelation 20." The one new suggestion that he makes there which I find quite interesting, and which I would like to consider further, is that "the battle scene described" in both ch. 19 and in ch. 20 "extends between the two advents, and embraces the entire Church Age" (p. 388). He notes that "Christ has been given two ministries to execute during His Kingship: to save the world, and to fulfill the terms of the world's condemnation...Christ executes this office continually, through the Church Age..." (p. 391). "In our day the prophecy is in process of fulfillment as Christ destroys ungodly governments and false religions in His own good time" (p. 394). Thus, he suggests, we are not to see a prophecy in 20:7-10 of some great end-time apostasy but rather of a warfare which "continues throughout the Church Age" and ends only with the end of this age (p. 395).

But how, then, it might be asked, does he explain the references in 20:3 & 7 to this battle taking place after the 1,000 years? His answer is that what we have in the "1,000 years" and in the "little time" (v. 3) are "two time symbols of varying length:" but they "are not to be thought of as consecutive in terms of worldly chronology, but rather in regard to different spheres" (p. 397). "...time here on earth is the little season. But since two time symbols are used, they are not overlapped, but are set against each other in chronological sequence, as before and after. But that indicates only a change in symbol, not an actual progression of events. This verse merely says that the sphere of Satan's assaults is restricted to the little season...that is, the time on earth--the little time in the life of each individual as that individual is on earth. He has no power regarding the saints gathered in paradise" (p. 398).

Boettner summarizes his point on p. 402: "The two spheres operate concurrently. Satan's little season has reference to time on earth, that is, to the Church Age, in which he is not active. It is the time of trial and tribulation in which the militant Church is in battle with the wicked one and his hosts....The little season in which Satan is loosed is recapitulation of the battle described in Revelation 19:11-21....As the Church Age comes to an end, Satan and his hosts are brought to naught."

It is an intriguing suggestion, and one which certainly seems to fit the Amillennial outlook much better than it does Boettner's Postmillennial one. In spite of what Boettner says about Satan and his forces being brought to naught only at the end of the "little season," Boettner insists (without any textual indication of this, it seems to me) that actually Satan's evil workings will be fully overthrown before the end of the Church Age and that "in time, and before the end of history, we shall see a fully Christianized world" (p. 388). "...there must come a time in history when...all that will remain is a world populated by elect believers" (p. 394). As I say, Boettner insists on this Postmillennial vision in spite of his suggestion that "the battle scene...embraces the entire Church Age" (p. 388, emphasis added).
have one when Christ comes again in judgment, then another one at the end of the millennium - unless you see those passages as describing the same battle, which is what I suggest is actually the case.

f. The reign of the saints.

We come now to the parenthesis of vv. 4-6, where the veil separating heaven from earth is drawn back; and we are given a glimpse of the saints of God reigning with Christ. Note well that there is no reference in vv. 4-6, direct or indirect, to earthly things or earthly affairs. The premillennial interpretation sees this reign of the saints as taking place on this earth. But there is nothing in the verses themselves to indicate that it takes place on this earth. As a matter of fact, in terms of vocabulary and style, this vision is most similar to the other heavenly visions in the book. Indeed, speaking of "similarity" here is putting it too mildly!

In v. 4 there is a reference to "the souls." John sees "the souls." True enough, that word, psyche, can be used in the N.T. to refer simply to "people." Three thousand "souls" were saved on the day of Pentecost. That simply means that three thousand individuals were saved. There is no emphasis there on soul as opposed to body. In the context in Rev. 20, however, a contrast between soul and body is clearly in view, I think. When John says that he sees the souls "of those that had been beheaded," that kind of soul is in contrast with the body!

There is also a reference here to thrones. They reign upon thrones. Throughout the book of Revelation the throne of Christ and his people is always in heaven. Rev. 3:21 contains this specific promise: "To him who overcomes I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame, and sat down with my Father on his throne." And Rev. 20:4 pictures the fulfillment of that promise: to the one who overcomes I will grant to sit on my throne and reign with me.

The language here is so clearly parallel to 6:9 and 14:13 that I conclude that vv. 4-6 picture the reign of Christians

between their death and Christ's second coming and their resurrection. Vv. 4-6 are a picture of the reign of Christians after they depart this life and as they await Christ's coming, the Resurrection, and the establishment of the Eternal State in which they will know eternal bliss.

---


25 The saints are here pictured as martyrs for their Lord. Perhaps this picture represents all believers. William J. Dey in an interesting little book on The Message of the Book of Revelation, published in 1924, notes that in the visions of Revelation "all are either ideal saints or ideal sinners" (p. 10). Note that the martyrs are contrasted with "the rest of the dead" (v. 5) who have their part in the second death (v. 6); i.e., they are contrasted with all unbelievers.
In v. 5 we read: "But the rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended." Premillennialists argue that “came to life” must mean the same thing in 20:5 as it does in 20:4; and thus since it refers to bodily resurrection in v. 5, it must refer to bodily resurrection in v. 4. But do they apply the same principle to John’s references to “death”? The reference to “the rest of the dead” in v. 5 refers to psycho-physical death, but the reference to “the second death” in v. 6 clearly does not.

In vv. 5 and 6 John speaks of “the first resurrection.” Clearly this phrase implies a second resurrection. But does this mean that premillennialism is correct after all, that there will be two resurrections, the resurrection of believers at Christ’s coming and the resurrection of unbelievers a millennium later? Not at all. The reference to the first resurrection implies a second, yes--a second resurrection for the same people! Just as “the second death” (v. 6) implies a first death--for somebody else? No, for the same people.

We might put it this way: the one trusting in Christ will experience one death (unless the Lord returns before then) but two resurrections. That one death (psycho-physical) of the believer John reveals to be in truth a resurrection into the very presence of the Savior in heaven to reign with him. The second resurrection will be bodily at Christ’s second coming, when the believer is made ready for the eternal state (1 Corinthians 15:50).

But in stark contrast to that glorious hope, John sees the unbelieving as having before them one resurrection--and that a resurrection unto condemnation so that it hardly warrants the name--but two deaths. The first death is psycho-physical on this earth. The second death will be eternal following the judgment. John does not deny that the unbelieving will be resurrected bodily to face the judgment. (See v. 13.) But he never describes them as “the living.” Their names are simply not written in “the book of life” (v. 15). Even as they stand before the great white throne judgment they are described as “the dead” (v. 12)--again, never as “the living.”

On the other hand, John does not speak of the believer knowing death at all! As Meredith G. Kline notes:

Just as the resurrection of the unjust is paradoxically identified as "the second death" so the death of the Christian is paradoxically identified as "the first resurrection."...What for others is the first death is for the Christian a veritable resurrection.26

g. One thousand years.

Revelation 20, then, presents a broad panorama view of the Gospel age, God's purposes on earth and the blessing of his people in heaven, followed by a vivid account of the last judgment and the consummation.

But what is the significance of the number "one thousand"?
We might readily assume that the number is symbolic. Numbers are used symbolically throughout Revelation. In the first chapter, for example, there is the trinitarian blessing in v. 4: from the Father and from Jesus Christ and "from the seven Spirits who are before His throne." Rather strange language that! Are there seven Holy Spirits? No, seven is the number of perfection, of completeness. The reference is to the Spirit doing his complete and perfect work.

We read of the "two witnesses" in chapter 11. Why? Because we are to think literally of two individuals? Why two witnesses? Why, because according to the Mosaic law there had to be two witnesses for the witness to be received as true. Everything must be confirmed in the mouths of at least two witnesses. The purpose of the number two in ch. 11 is to show that it is a full and complete and valid witness that is borne.

So here in ch. 20 you have the figure one thousand, ten times ten times ten, one thousand, perfection, fullness, abundance. It is the perfect number in the thought pattern of the book of Revelation. It appears more than twenty times in the book.

To say that, of course, would not mark a person as being not a premillennialist. Such a leading premillennialist of an earlier generation as Arno Gaebelein, for example, was quite willing to say that the thousand years may be figurative, and he would not assert how long the millennium will last.

It is impossible to be dogmatic on such a matter, but the suggestion of Geerhardus Vos is certainly an interesting one:

The symbolism of the one thousand years consists in this, that it contrasts the glorious state of the martyrs on the one hand with the brief season of tribulation passed here on earth, and on the other hand with the eternal life of the consummation.27

---

John's vision in Revelation 20 is given by the Spirit for the edification and strengthening of God's people in all ages. By it Christians are encouraged to fight the good fight (2 Timothy 4:7), having every assurance that in Christ they will overcome the evil one, to reign with their Savior.