

Notice how chapter 6 described the human condition? How does this point to the present chapter? Why not, say chapter 11?

C9,s3: Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

Ephesians 2:1-6 is the source of the Assembly's description concerning our condition as one of "dead in sin." Where, specifically, in Ephesians 2, is this affirmed? Related this to 1 Cor. 2:7-16

What then does this imply about the "order of Salvation" (E.g. Where does Salvation begin for us? When does our "will" come into play in order to be saved? What must happen to us for our will to "will" salvation?) Notice then the order of chapters in the WCF.

See Romans 8:28. (note also 2 Tim.1:9; 2 Thess. 2:13-14, Rom. 11:7)

The "problem" and "solution" historically illustrated:

Historically, great contention has centered upon several particular elements of the "order of salvation." One element we will reserve for a later discussion pertaining to sanctification in relation to justification, a Rome vs. Protestant controversy. Another element of contention has centered upon "regeneration and conversion" (repentance and faith). The two viewpoints have been historically labeled in 19th century America as "new school vs. old school theology" but is more generally known as the Armenian vs. Reformed positions. The 19th century "new school" theology was also characterized as "Yale theology" over against "Princeton theology" in the early 19th century. (Yale "new school" men included Albert Barnes, Nathaniel William Taylor, George Duffield, Lyman Beecher and Joseph Bellamy. and Princeton "old school" men included Samuel. Miller, Charles. Hodge, J.A. Alexander, James Wood, Ashbel Green, and most of the Southern Presbyterian leaders such as Robert Lewis Dabney, James Thornwell, etc) However, the most popular advocate of "New school" theology was Charles Finney.

The Problem Historically Illustrated:

What it is NOT:

Charles Finney:

"All sin consists in voluntary acts, no innate, inherent or derived corruption in human nature... Here are two systems, the one maintains that infants have no moral character at all, until they have committed actual transgression; that their first moral actions are universally sinful, but that previous to moral action, they are neither sinful nor holy... the other system maintains that infants have a sinful nature which they have inherited from Adam." (Brown, p.296-7)

"Children universally adopt the principle of selfishness, because they possess human nature, but not because human nature is itself sinful." (Sermons quoted by Isaac Brown, p.295)

"All depravity is voluntary-- consisting in voluntary transgression... O! the darkness of that view of depravity which exhibits it, as something lying back, and the cause of all actual transgression." (Sermons of Important Subjects,p. 139)

What is IS:

John Henley Thornwell:

"Adam was our federal head or representative of his race. He was on probation for them, as well as for himself, in the Covenant of Works. He was not a private individual-- he was the type of universal humanity... If Adam were the agent of us all, his act was legally and morally ours....

Hence, the Scriptures teach explicitly that we are first charged with the guilt of Adam's sin, and then, as the legal consequence, are born with natures totally corrupt. (Writings Vol. I, p.344-5)

The Solution Historically Illustrated:

What it is NOT:

Charles Finney:

The Spirit pours the expostulation home with such power that the sinner turns... the Spirit turned him, just as you

would say of a man who had persuaded another to change his mind on the subject of politics, that he had converted him and brought him over... He does not act by direct physical contact upon the mind, but he uses the truth as his sword to pierce the sinner; and the motives presented in the gospel are the instruments he uses to change the sinner's heart... Did not the serpent change Adam's heart by motives? and cannot the Spirit of God with infinitely higher motives exert as great power over mind as he can?... The power which God exerts in the conversion of a soul is moral power; it is that kind of power by which a statesman sways the mind of a senate; or by which an advocate moves and bows the heart of a jury."

A change of heart, then, consists in changing the controlling preference of the mind in regard to the end of pursuit. The selfish heart is a preference of self-interest... A new heart consists in a preference of the glory of God and the interests of His Kingdom... It is a change in the choice of a Supreme Ruler." (Woods, p.163-4 from Finney's *Sermons on Important Subjects*)

### What it IS:

Jonathan Edwards:

The scriptural representations of conversion strongly imply and signify a change of nature; such as being "born again", becoming "new creatures"; "rising from the dead"... He (God) gives his Spirit to be united to the faculties of the soul and to dwell there as a principle of spiritual life and activity. He not only actuates the soul, but he abides in it. The mind thus undued with grace is possessed on a new nature. (Edwards on *Religious Affections*)

A.A. Hodge

The infusion of such a disposition must therefore precede any act of true spiritual obedience... The Holy Spirit, in the act of effectual calling, causes the soul to become regenerate by implanting a new governing principle or habit of spiritual affection and action. The soul itself, in conversion, immediately acts under the guidance of this new principle in turning from sin unto God through Christ.

Now read Section 1-2, chapter 10 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.

In general, describe the *Confession's* understanding of "effectual calling."

The word "regeneration" is not used in the confession. But where is it described in this section? What passages would you turn to in scripture regarding regeneration?

John 3:8, 1 Cor.2:14; Rom.8:7, Eph.2:5

Read Section 3. What hope do infants who die have in the Reformed view? How does this relate to our view of infant baptism?

What are the "means" or "instruments" that God uses to "call" a person into saving faith? What might this have to do with our use of these instruments? What are the implications for Baptism for instance? (Read WCF 28.6)

Titus 3:5he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

1Pet. 3:21And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,  
(c.f. 1Cor. 12:13, Mark 16:10, Acts 22:16, Rom. 6:3)

There is clearly an "association" between baptism and effectual calling in these passages. The question then is what exactly is the relationship between the two. As those who hold in a sacramental view of the ordinance of baptism (like the Lord's supper), we believe that the relationship is real, albeit conditioned upon God's sovereign grace. So then, our confession basically teaches (WCF 28:5-6) that regeneration and salvation is not "inseparably annexed unto" the baptism rite (section 5), and yet, "the grace promises is not only offered but really exhibited and conferred," albeit not necessarily tied to the moment of administration or such as to be a necessary consequence of the administration. In short, regeneration/effectual calling is tied to the sovereign will of God acting through election (see above and order of salvation). And yet, we administer baptism as a "means of grace" not merely as a sign of grace. The proper recipients being all those who are rightly qualified to be members of the household of God—as noted in Acts 2:38—both you (believers), your children even those of every nation who are "far off." The point being that we believe in effectual calling acting through the means of grace, no less baptism as preaching, etc.