
Hyo-Nam Kim

Calvin Theological Seminary

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.calvin.edu/cts_dissertations

Part of the Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.calvin.edu/cts_dissertations/28

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Calvin Theological Seminary at Calvin Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Calvin Theological Seminary Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Calvin Digital Commons.
CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS vii

ABSTRACT viii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1. Statement of Thesis 1
1.2. Statement of the Problem 2
1.3. Present State of the Problem 7
1.4. The Scope of the Study 14

CHAPTER TWO: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT 18

Introduction 18
2.1. Goodwin’s Spiritual Pilgrimage 20
   2.1.1. His Birth and Early Religious Experience 20
   2.1.2. Cambridge Experience: Conversion 22
   2.1.3. Exposure to Millenarianism and Independency 27
   2.1.4. At the Westminster Assembly 29
   2.1.5. A Reformed Congregationalist Statesman 30
   2.1.6. After the Great Ejection 34
2.2. Goodwin and His Works 37
   2.2.1. Fourfold State of Humanity 40
   2.2.2. Trinitarian Perspective 47
   2.2.3. Covenant Theology 55
   2.2.4. Christian Life 61
   2.2.5. Emphasis on Faith 63
   2.2.6. Exposition on Scripture 67
2.3. The Objects and Acts of Justifying Faith: An Introduction to Goodwin’s Theology 70
Conclusion 74

PART I: FAITH AND COVENANT 77

CHAPTER THREE: FAITH AND RELATIONSHIP BROKEN 78

Introduction 78
3.1. Conflicting Understanding of Conditionality in the Divine Covenants 79
   3.1.1. Modern Interpretations of Reformed Covenant Theology 80
   3.1.2. Controversies Concerning the Conditionality of the Covenants in the Seventeenth Century 82
3.2. Breaking the Covenant Relationship with God: Unbelief 96
   3.2.1. The Covenant of Works Defined: Jus Creationis 97
   3.2.2. Rewards and Punishments Promised in the Covenant of Works 105
### 3.2.3. The Image of God: Adam’s Nature

- Page 109

### 3.2.4. Natural Faith and Its Natural Effect

- Page 114

### 3.2.5. The Fall and Adam’s Unbelief

- Page 123

---

**CHAPTER FOUR: FAITH AND RELATIONSHIP RECOVERED**

- Page 126

**Introduction**

- Page 126

**4.1. Faith Appointed as an Instrument for Salvation in the Covenant of Redemption**

- 4.1.1. Covenant of Redemption Defined
- Page 128
- 4.1.2. Conditions for the Covenant of Grace Determined
- Page 137

**4.2. Two Roles of Faith in the Covenant of Grace**

- 4.2.1. Covenantal Relationship Restored by Supernatural Grace
- Page 143
- 4.2.2. Faith: A Condition and an Instrument
- Page 148
- 4.2.3. Christ As a Judge, a Surety, and a Mediator: the Object of Faith Found in the Covenant of Grace
- Page 161

**Conclusion of Part I**

- Page 168

---

**PART II: FAITH AND THE ORDER OF SALVATION**

- Page 173

**CHAPTER FIVE: GOODWIN’S ORDO SALUTIS**

- Page 174

**Introduction**

- Page 174

**5.1. Divine Causality and the Sequential Understanding of the Application of Salvation**

- Page 175

**5.2. Goodwin and the Order of Salvation**

- 5.2.1. Threefold Division of Divine Works for Salvation
- Page 182
- 5.2.2. Twofold Division of Divine Works for Salvation
- Page 185
- 5.2.3. Reconstruction of Goodwin’s Own Version of an Ordo Salutis
- Page 188
- 5.2.4. Unio Cum Christo
- Page 193

---

**CHAPTER SIX: GOD’S WORK UPON US**

- Page 205

**Introduction**

- Page 205

**6.1. Regeneration**

- 6.1.1. Preparation for Faith
- Page 207
- 6.1.2. Importance and Necessity of Regeneration
- Page 216
- 6.1.3. Regeneration, Conversion, and Effectual Calling
- Page 218
- 6.1.4. Threefold Meaning of Regeneration
- Page 223
- 6.1.5. Faith and Regeneration
- Page 228

**6.2. Justification**

- 6.2.1. Background and Context of Goodwin’s Doctrine of Justification
- Page 232
- 6.2.2. Controversy over Justification in the Seventeenth Century
- Page 233
- 6.2.3. Goodwin and Justification
- Page 243
- 6.2.4. Justification and Faith
- Page 250

**6.3. Adoption**

- Page 261
6.3.1. Doctrine of Adoption in Reformed Orthodoxy 261
6.3.2. Goodwin’s Doctrine of Adoption 272
6.3.3. Faith and Adoption 284

CHAPTER SEVEN: FAITH AND GOD’S WORK IN US 290

Introduction 290
7.1. Sanctification 291
  7.1.1. Doctrine of Sanctification and the Issues 291
  7.1.2. Sanctification in the Context of Seventeenth-Century England 294
  7.1.3. Goodwin on Sanctification 297
    7.1.3.1. Nature of Sanctification 300
    7.1.3.2. Sanctification and Regeneration 307
    7.1.3.3. Sanctification and Justification 312
  7.1.4. Sanctification, Good Works, and Faith 317
7.2. Perseverance of the Saints 326
  7.2.1. Reformed Orthodoxy and the Doctrine of Perseverance of Saints 326
  7.2.2. God’s Preservation of All True Believers 332
  7.2.3. Means of Preservation: Faith 341
7.3. Glorification 348
  7.3.1. Latter-Day Glory 349
  7.3.2. Goodwin’s Doctrine of Glorification 355
  7.3.3. Glorification and Faith 364
Conclusion of Part II 369

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION: NATURE OF SAVING FAITH AND CONCLUDING REMARKS 373

8.1. Nature of Justifying Faith 373
8.2. Seat of Faith 380
8.3. Law of Faith 387
Concluding Remarks 392

THESES 401

BIBLIOGRAPHY 405
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

What a privilege it was to stay in Grand Rapids for a student studying Reformation and Post-Reformation Reformed theology. Calvin Theological Seminary has provided me with the best, if not perfect in a literal sense, resources and facilities. Among them the most thankful grace was to have written a dissertation with Dr. Richard Muller. He has always been encouraging and insightful as he supervised my dissertation. Such extensive knowledge and rich experience combined with warm heart helped me not to lost myself on the way to the completion of this study and would not be found in any other places in the world. I also thankful to Dr. Lyle Bierma for his careful reading of this study. As I started writing this dissertation, God gave me a wonderful chance to attend his class of the dissertation seminar where I could benefit a lot from his valuable suggestions and advices both on details and some general issues. I would also like to give thanks to Dr. Carl Trueman for his encouraging, thoughtful comments on my dissertation. It was another wonderful privilege for me to have him both as one of the recommenders for the Ph. D program and as one of the readers for my Ph. D dissertation. I cannot but express my thankfulness to the professors of Calvin seminary (especially, Dr. John Cooper, Dr. George Marsden, Dr. Lee Hardy, Dr. Calvin van Reken, and Ronald Feenstra). I also would like to express my special thanks both to Rev. Richard Sytsma for proofreading my dissertation and to his wife, Sandy Sytsma, for being a generous mentor and a motherlike friend to my wife throughout all the years at Calvin Theological Seminary.

Dr. Joel Beeke is definitely worthy to receive my gratitude. He was a good model for my life in many ways. He is a sincere Christian, an excellent Puritan-lover, a faithful
husband and father, a great preacher, and lastly, but most importantly, a wonderful pastor-scholar. As my Th.M thesis supervisor, he helped me not only to lay down a foundation for the further study, but even to choose Thomas Goodwin and his theology as the topic of my dissertation. My grateful heart should also go to Dr. Lawrence Bilkes, Dr. Gerald Bilkes, and Mr. Henk Kleyn for helping me to feel at home at PRTS both academically and emotionally. I would also like to thank The Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids for accepting our family as members and for being our spiritual home in the USA.

I would like to extend thanks to my friends and colleagues at Calvin: Dr. Jae-Eun Park, Dr. Jeong-Mo Yoo, Dr. Byung-Soo Han, Dr. Byung-Hoon Woo, Dong-Yeol Tae, Antoine Theron, Dr. Reita Yazawa, and Keisuke Yoshioka.

I am especially thankful to the Puritan Farm of Kimpo Hyerym Church and Rev. Jae-Jong Kim, the Kalamazoo Korean CRC, Han-bit CRC church and Rev. Christian Oh, and many brothers and sisters in Korea for their continual prayers and the generous financial support. Worthy of my special mention are my parents, Tae-Il Kim and Hyun-Sook Hwang, and in-laws, To-Goo Lee and Jeong-Ae Cho who have all been the great fountain of love, support and encouragement for many years. I cannot but acknowledge that their prayers and love were one of the most important elements that sustained me until I finish this program.

I confess that the greatest thanks must be given to my wife, Yu-Mi Lee, who have endured many difficulties and challenges faithfully, raised my three children wonderfully in Christ, and showed me unceasing love and patience. Without her, it could have been totally impossible for me to arrive at this last stage of the Ph.D program.
ABSTRACT

The doctrines of covenant, faith, and the order of salvation are crucial components of early modern Reformed soteriology. In seventeenth-century England, these three major doctrines of Reformed theology, which had been taken over undeveloped from the Reformers, took a mature shape, but aroused controversies among diverse Protestant groups. Modern historical scholarship on Reformed orthodoxy has produced little significant research that deals with these doctrines synthetically. The object of this dissertation is to explore the broader role of faith in relation to these two significant doctrines for salvation in the early modern Reformed theology, with specific reference to the thought of Thomas Goodwin.

To this end, this study examines Goodwin’s life to review his religious experience and to understand his socio-theological context. Goodwin’s soteriology was sharpened by his battles on two fronts: The first is the threat of Arminian, Neonomian, and Socinian soteriologies that tended to place meritorious value on faith and on human acts. The second is the Antinomian errors that undervalued faith and human responsibility.

Goodwin regarded faith as a key concept for his soteriology. Faith plays a central role in the covenant theology not only because a lack of faith was the immediate cause of breaking the covenant of works, but because saving faith was ordained in the covenant of redemption, and actually functions in the covenant of grace, as the instrument and a condition for the recovery of the relationship of mankind with God.

Examination of Goodwin’s *ordo salutis* provides specific insight into the place and function of faith in the covenant of grace since each element of an *ordo salutis* refers
to the blessings prepared for the elect to be finally saved. Together with the role of faith in Goodwin’s covenant theology, therefore, the reconstruction of Goodwin’s *ordo salutis* and the close examination of the role of faith in each blessing confirm that although faith may be said to be both an instrument and a condition for salvation, faith is the perfect instrument both for making salvation totally God’s gracious work, and for showing that the elect are not passive objects in the covenant.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of Thesis

By providing a contextual examination of the nature and function of faith in the theology of a representative Puritan and Reformed theologian, Thomas Goodwin, this dissertation will show how faith could serve as a unifying concept in the soteriology of the confessionally Reformed strand of the English Puritans.¹ In their doctrine of faith, Puritans like Goodwin drew together their themes of covenant and the order of salvation and reconciled God’s sovereignty with human responsibility in salvation. Contrary to the line of scholarship that argues that the Reformed orthodox understanding of faith as a condition compromised God’s sovereignty and was one of the elements which spurred them to depart from the emphasis on grace alone that characterized the thought of their theological forefathers in the early sixteenth century,² I will argue that Goodwin’s understanding of faith offers a foundation upon which he built up his whole theological


project, that in the theology of Goodwin, faith plays a significant role for salvation both in the covenant of grace and throughout the various steps of the order of salvation. Moreover, the study will show that since Goodwin understood faith not only as a condition, but also as an instrument, that his view of faith serves to maintain both God’s sovereignty and human responsibility in the process of salvation. The study will, therefore, also demonstrate that the claims of previous scholarship concerning strict temporal arrangements of the various aspects of the Reformed ordo salutis have neglected the central function of the doctrine of faith.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

From the beginning of the Reformation onward, the doctrine of faith occupied a significant place in Protestant theology, specifically in relation to justification. With the rise of interest in covenant that led to the development of a Reformed “covenant theology” and early worries, particularly among the Lutherans over the antinomian implications of justification by faith alone, various Reformed theologians paid closer attention to the relationship of faith and salvation extending from initial calling to final glorification. In the seventeenth century, English Reformed writers needed to formulate their understanding of faith, not only in terms of these earlier issues and pressures, but also with a view to problems raised by Antinomianism in Puritan circles: Arminianism and Socinianism.3

---

3 Joel R. Beeke, *The Quest for Full Assurance: The Legacy of Calvin and His Successors* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1999), 274. Beeke writes here that the Reformers’ emphasis on God’s free grace has brought about among subsequent generations a pretext for cheap grace as a side-effect, and that this led the Puritans to look more deeply into the nature and acts of faith. See also Richard Lovelace, “Evangelicalism: Recovering a Tradition of Spiritual Depth,” *The Reformed Journal* 40, no.7 (September 1990): 21.
In this situation, the Reformed Puritans in the seventeenth century, such as Richard Sibbes, John Rogers, John Ball, John Preston, John Downe, and Jeremiah Burroughs, wrote many works dealing mainly, or as an important element, with the doctrine of faith since such problems, they thought, were the results of the ignorance of a biblical understanding of faith. Additionally, new controversies relating to faith in the Reformed circles, particularly in England, developed. Among them were controversies over eternal justification and preparation for faith. This aroused the Reformed Puritans to investigate how Scripture explained the nature and acts of saving faith.

Rather than focusing directly on the nature of faith itself, however, their main attention was given to faith in relation to its role in the course of salvation. They took notice of the functions of faith both in the covenant relationship with God and throughout God’s application of salvation to the elect as it unfolded in time; in other words, the order of salvation.

The concept of the covenant of grace, adopted by them to explain the relationship between God and the elect, is already found in the theology of the early Reformers such as Zwingli, Bullinger, and Calvin. It was, however, among the Reformed orthodox, including the Reformed Puritans, that the covenant concept came to prominence playing

---

4 John Rogers, *The Doctrine of Faith Wherein are Practically Handled Ten Principal Points, which Explain the Nature of Vse of It* (London: Printed for N.N. and William Sheffard, 1627); John Ball, *A treatise of Faith Divided into Two Parts the First Shewing the Nature, the Second, the Life of Faith: Both Tending to Direct the Weak Christian* (London: Printed for Edward Brewster, 1657); John Downe, *A Treatise of the True Nature and Definition of Justifying Faith: Together with a Defence of the Same, against the Answere of N. Baxter* (Oxford: Printed by John Lichfield for Edward Forrest, 1635); John Preston, *The breast-plate of Faith and Love a Treatise Wherein the Ground and Exercise of Faith and Love, as They are Set upon Christ Their Object, and as They are Expressed in Good Works, is Explained* (London: Printed by George Purslow, 1651); Jeremiah Burroughs, *The ninth, tenth, and eleventh books of Mr Jeremiah Burroughs: containing three treatises: I. Of precious faith. II. Of hope. III. The saints walk by faith on earth: by sight in heaven. Being the last sermons that the author preached at Stepney, neer London* (London: Printed by Peter Cole, 1655); Thomas Goodwin, *The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith* (Edinburgh; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1985).
a key role in Reformed soteriology.\(^5\) Contrary to the claim that there were two different approaches to the covenant of grace among the Reformed, one viewing it as absolute and the other viewing it as conditional, Reformed theologians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries commonly held that, although bestowed unconditionally or absolutely, the covenant of grace required conditions, one of which is faith. In England in the early seventeenth century, William Perkins, who laid the theological foundation for the following Puritans, and John Preston, whom Thomas Goodwin succeeded as Lecturer at Holy Trinity Church,\(^6\) developed their covenant concept which included conditions required of the elect and mutual obligation from both God and the elect. Moreover, in the early seventeenth century, a group of the Reformed Puritans who had moved to New England also developed a concept of preparation for conversion based on the strong conditionality and mutuality of the covenant of grace. Faith plays a key role in all of this because faith is a condition required of humanity, and it is also faith which leads the elect to fulfill the obligation for the consummation of the covenant.

As far as the order of salvation is concerned, the phrase *ordo salutis*, though found in works written in the sixteenth century,\(^7\) was not yet confirmed as a technical term in the seventeenth century; however, the concept of the application of Christ’s work to the elect “belonging to the decree that establishes and constitutes the temporal order of


\(^7\) Heinrich Bullinger, *In divinum Iesu Christi domini nostri evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Zurich: Apud Frosch, 1543), 4. 8; Pietro Martire Vermigli, *In primum librum Mosis, qui vulgo Genesis dicitur* (1569; Zurich: Excudebat Christophorus Froschouerus, 1579), 31-32; Hieronymi Zanchii, *De tribus Elohim, aeterno Patre, Pilio, et Spiritu Sancto, uno eodemque Jehova* (Neustadt an der Weinstrasse: Typis Matthaei Harnisii, 1589), 4.3.4.
salvation” had already appeared in the Reformed tradition as a result of the exegesis of such biblical passages as Romans 8:28-30 “as early as 1527 by Zwingli.”

Not only the word, *ordo salutis*, but also the language of *gradus* (grades), *gradationes* (degrees), or *ordo* (order), which implies a series of steps, or a sequence, logically or causally interconnected with each other, was also used by the Reformers and their Reformed successors so as “exegetically to distinguish Protestant expressions from Roman Catholic ones” particularly in the doctrine of redemption.

Therefore, unlike some modern scholars who argue that the Reformed orthodox so undermined the doctrine of the union with Christ central to Calvin and replaced it with “the imposition of federalism” and “the *ordo salutis*” that they chronologically separated justification from sanctification, by examining the broad use of faith throughout his works, and its relation to other doctrines, the dissertation will show, as illustrated by the thought of Goodwin and various of his contemporaries, that Reformed theologians in the seventeenth century, including the Reformed Puritans, also regarded both the covenant of grace and believer’s union with Christ as the sources of God’s application of redemption to His elect in time which is often expressed as the *ordo salutis*. We will see that the Reformed made a distinction between justification and sanctification and that logical priority should be given to the former over the latter in that sanctification is the fruit of justification.

---


9 John V. Fesko, *Beyond Calvin: Union with Christ and Justification in Early Modern Reformed Theology (1517-1700)* (Bristol, CT: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2012), 82.


11 Fesko, *Beyond Calvin*, 287.
only for the beginning of the salvation process, but also that faith was considered to play a key role throughout the whole order of salvation.

Despite such an importance of faith in Reformed soteriology, however, it is striking to see the paucity of research which uncovers the Reformed understanding of the relationship between faith and God’s whole economy of salvation applied to the elect, expressed as divine covenants and the order of salvation. Rather than focusing on the Puritan understanding of faith, which covers the whole series of the order of salvation, scholars have mostly paid attention to some specific topics relating to faith. Besides the scarcity of studies on the Puritan doctrine of faith, which are examined in relation to both the covenant of grace and the whole series of the order of salvation, previous scholarship’s interpretations of the Reformed understanding of faith are problematic. In their treatment of this theme, some scholars have set Calvin “against the Calvinists.” Arguably, they have not considered Reformed teaching on faith in its own intellectual context, and they have relied too much on secondary literature to criticize the Reformed orthodox understanding of faith. Consequently, the older scholarship separates the teachings of the Reformers on soteriology too sharply from that of their theological successors in the seventeenth century.

Notably, Thomas Goodwin stands out as one of the leading Puritans, as evidenced in intellectual ability, religious piety, and voluminous literary output on the topic.

---


13 Specific scholars belonging to this line will be presented and briefly discussed in the next section.
Goodwin contributed to drawing up two important Reformed confessions in the seventeenth century, the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration of Faith, and was widely admired by many other contemporary Puritans, together with John Owen, as one of “the two Atlases and Patriarchs” of independency.14 Praising Goodwin’s piety and intellectual ability, J. I. Packer writes, “John Owen saw into the mind of Paul as clearly as Goodwin – sometimes, on points of detail, more clearly – but not even Owen ever saw so deep into Paul’s heart.”15

When it comes to the doctrine of faith, no other Puritan showed more comprehensive interest in the functions of faith than Goodwin. Not only is Goodwin’s idea of faith embedded in most of his works, but he also penned a book of almost six hundred pages focused solely on the doctrine of faith.16 Moreover, his great interest in soteriology led him to write several books on topics closely related to the doctrine of faith.17

1.3. Present State of the Problem

There are three issues belonging to the present state of the problem. First, the role of faith in seventeenth-century Puritan and Reformed theology has not been studied in detail, and


the few extant studies that touch on Puritan and Reformed views of faith belong to the older “Calvin against the Calvinists” school of thought. Second, the fairly large body of scholarship on Reformed and Puritan covenant thought has not typically looked at either the role of faith in covenant or the relationship of covenant thought to the order of salvation. Third, the thought of representative Puritan theologians like Thomas Goodwin has only recently been the subject of intensive examination and neither with reference to his understanding of faith nor to the relation of faith to other aspects of doctrine in the broader soteriological complex of Puritan and Reformed theology.

Thus, first, besides the scarcity of studies of the doctrine of faith, its relation to the covenant of grace, and its place in the order of salvation, a large part of the previous scholarship on the subject has continued to set Calvin “against the Calvinists.” According to this argument, beginning with the works of Norman Pettit and R. T. Kendall, the Reformed orthodox, particularly the Puritans, departed from Calvin’s view of faith. Pettit regarded the Puritan preparationism as a deviation from Calvin’s doctrine of faith, because he assumed that any act of faith on the human side must be considered as diminishing God’s sovereignty, which Calvin never compromised. Kendall took his argument still further, claiming that Perkins taught a “crypto-Arminian doctrine of faith” grounded on human willing. In Kendall’s view, this occurred because of the influence of Theodore Beza, who was wrongly considered to be “an extension of Calvin” by Perkins. Similarly, M. C. Bell sets Calvin’s view of faith against that of his Scottish

---


theological successors by arguing that the federal theology they accepted in the
seventeenth-century caused them to replace Calvin’s passive faith with active faith and to
find assurance not “extra nos,” as Calvin did, but “intra nos.” 20 Kendall’s understanding
of Calvin’s and of Arminians’ doctrines of faith has been contested by Muller,21 but he
does not address the larger question of the place of faith in the seventeenth-century
Puritan thought.

Second, many scholars have written books or articles dealing with the Reformed
covenant theology, but few have elaborated on the nature and the role of faith in the
covenant relationship between God and the elect. One of the most controversial issues, in
regard to the Reformed covenant theology, was the question of continuity or
discontinuity between the covenant concept of the Reformers and their successors. Such
scholars as Perry Miller, Basil Hall, Holmes Rolston III, R. T. Kendall, and J. B.
Torrance22 argue for the so-called “Calvin against the Calvinists” thesis, which claims


20 M. C. Bell, Calvin and Scottish Theology, 8.


22 Perry Miller, Errand into the Wilderness (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard
University Press, 1956; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1964); Basil Hall, “Calvin against the
Calvinists” and “The Calvin Legend,” in John Calvin, ed. G. E. Duffield (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans
Publishing Co., 1966); R. T. Kendall, “The Puritan Modification of Calvin’s Theology,” in John Calvin:
His Influence in the Western World, ed. W. Standford Reid (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House,
1982); idem, Calvin and English Calvinism; Holmes Rolston III, “Responsible Man in Reformed Theology:
Calvin versus the Westminster Confession,” Scottish Journal of Theology 23 (1970): 129-156; idem, John
Calvin versus the Westminster Confession (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1972); James B. Torrance,
“Strengths and Weaknesses of the Westminster Theology,” in The Westminster Confession in the Church
Today, ed. Alasdair I. C. Heron (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1982), 48-50; idem, “Covenant or
Contract? A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland,” Scottish
Basic Concepts in the Development of ‘Federal Theology,’” in Calvinus Reformator (Potchefstroom:
Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1982), 269-277; idem, “The Concept of Federal
Theology – Was Calvin a Federal Theologian?,” in Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor, ed. Wilhelm H.
that the seventeenth-century Reformed orthodox, or the Reformed Puritans, significantly
deviated from Calvin’s understanding of divine covenant. There is another group of
scholars who assume two different covenant traditions in the covenant theology of the
Greaves, J. Wayne Baker, and Charles S. McCoy may all be considered members of this
third group. Over against these positions, there are some other scholars who not only
uphold the unity of Reformed covenant theology, but argue for the continuity between the
theologies of the Reformers and the Reformed orthodox theologians. To this group
belong Everett H. Emerson, John von Rohr, Anthony A. Hoekema, George M. Marsden,
Richard A. Muller, Lyle Bierma, Andrew A. Woolsey, and Won Taek Lim. In
particular, Woolsey’s book successfully examines covenant thought in the Reformed
tradition emphasizing its unity and continuity “between the early Reformers and their


Although Reformed covenant theology has been actively researched by a number of scholars and the concept of covenant has been crucial in Reformed orthodox theology, particularly in soteriology, there are few scholars who focus on the role of faith, not only as an antecedent condition for the covenant of grace, but also as an instrument through which other conditions of the covenant, namely, evangelical obedience and good works, are made possible. As described above, most of the studies on Reformed covenant theology are conducted in terms of continuity and discontinuity, or unity and diversity, within the Reformed covenant tradition. The one exception in the scholarship is Van Asselt’s study of Johannes Cocceius, where he argues that Cocceius conjoined two patterns in covenant theology, one relating covenant to the *ordo temporum*, the other using covenant as a foundation of an *ordo salutis*, into a more comprehensive whole. This study of Goodwin’s doctrine of faith will find an approach to these issues that has significant parallels in Cocceius.

Third, Goodwin has recently received a bit more attention by modern scholarship in the twenty-first century than before, but considering his prominence in seventeenth-century Puritan theology, there is still lacking secondary literature on Goodwin’s theology. Early Goodwin scholarship focused on two particular areas, ecclesiology and...

---


soteriology, but scholars have recently paid attention to more variegated areas such as pneumatology, eschatology, Christology, and biblical hermeneutics, though each area is inevitably interwoven with another. In addition, there is also significant research done in a primarily historical perspective by Michael T. Lawrence. Among these studies, we can particularly choose two works that are closely related to Goodwin’s doctrine of faith. Michael Horton looks into Goodwin’s doctrine of assurance in light of the “Calvin against the Calvinists” debate. He devotes three chapters to dealing with Goodwin’s doctrine of faith, but much of his treatment simply summarizes what Goodwin teaches concerning the object and acts of faith. As the title, “Thomas Goodwin on the Christian life,” of his dissertation intimates, Ling-Ji Chang approaches Goodwin’s understanding of Christian life according to the order of salvation. In so doing, however, he devotes just one chapter to the doctrine of faith. In other words, his main concern is not to explain comprehensively how faith works for salvation, but, as Jones notes, he seeks to “look at the ordo salutis in the context of Goodwin’s eschatological


30 Blackham, “Pneumatology of Thomas Goodwin.”


32 Jones, Why Heaven Kissed Earth.


34 Michael T. Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation: Thomas Goodwin and the Puritan Project” (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 2002).
implications” so that he may prove that Goodwin’s eschatology played a decisive role in his soteriology. Likewise, as briefly mentioned above, there is also a significant lack of scholarship on the doctrine of faith in other Reformed Puritans, since the Reformed Puritan doctrine of faith itself has not attracted scholars’ attention as a main topic, but has been studied as an auxiliary element of some specific doctrines. Rather than focusing on the Puritan Reformed understanding of faith in relation to the whole order of salvation, scholars have mostly paid attention to some specific topics related to faith, such as the assurance of faith, Puritan preparationism, or the nature and the role of faith in particular relation to certain doctrines, typically the doctrine of justification.

---


38 Joel R. Beeke, The Quest for Full Assurance: The Legacy of Calvin and His Successors (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2000); M. Charles Bell, Calvin and Scottish Theology: The Doctrine of Assurance (Edinburgh: Handsel, 1985); Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology.


In general agreement with scholars who emphasize the continuity in the Reformed understanding of faith, by examining Thomas Goodwin who is a Puritan, Reformed orthodox theologian, I intend first to present the Puritan understanding of faith which works in the covenant relationship between God and the elect; second, to show how, according to the Puritans, faith plays its role in each stage of the order of salvation for the completion of salvation initiated by the Holy Spirit; and third, thereby to prove that faith is a key means by which God manifests His grace and sovereignty in human salvation without getting rid of the role and responsibility of humanity. Accordingly, the primary contribution provided by this dissertation, by way of the study of Goodwin’s doctrine of faith, is a case study of the Reformed understanding of the soteriological role of faith.

1.4. Scope of Study

In order to reconstruct Goodwin’s understanding of the relationship between faith, covenant, and the order of salvation, I will investigate the writings of Thomas Goodwin - not only the book *Object and Acts of Justifying Faith*, which is exclusively concerned with faith, but also his other writings dealing with topics that pertain to soteriology. In so doing, we will understand his ideas of the functions of faith in all steps of salvation.

We will also examine the writings of his contemporary Reformed orthodox theologians on the doctrines of faith, covenants, and the order of salvation to show that there had been diverse understandings of faith among the Reformed Puritans, though within the bounds of Reformed theology, and present the contribution Goodwin could make in relation to our topic. This comparative study will help contextualize Goodwin’s view of faith, and thereby will lead me to discern the *loci* of faith, covenant, and the order
of salvation and the soteriological function of faith in the theology of the late seventeenth-century English Reformed orthodox theologians.

The uniqueness of this study lies in dealing with the two main frameworks of salvation and their relation to faith. Salvation is the work of God to deliver His elect sinners from the fallen state under the wrath and judgment of God. However, Reformed theology explored the principle lying behind this simple expression of salvation and has explained salvation in two ways: by covenant theology and by the *ordo salutis*. These are the frameworks. Covenant theology comprehends all about salvation from the eternal decree of salvation to the personal application of the decree, while the *ordo salutis* mainly describes the blessings flowing out of the covenant of grace and thus is deeply related to the application of salvation ranging from the first moment of the saving work of God on the elect to the last moment of life. Of the requirements for humanity both in the covenant of grace and in the *ordo salutis*, faith is the only one that is required in every moment of salvation. Goodwin is one of the Reformed theologians whose theology most clearly reflects these elements. Although in the seventeenth century the term “*ordo salutis*” was not a technically fixed term, Goodwin had a similar concept of a sequential causality of salvation, and Goodwin’s whole theology was firmly rooted in the covenantal structure. This study will be done on this conceptual ground.

The main task of chapter 2 is to introduce a Reformed Puritan, Thomas Goodwin. For this purpose, we will first take a look at Goodwin’s life with a focus on his spiritual experiences. We will also explore all of Goodwin’s works so that we may draw some significant characteristics of his theology.
The third and fourth chapters will deal with Goodwin’s covenant theology. Goodwin seems to divide God’s covenant with us into three kinds: the covenant of works, the covenant of redemption, and the covenant of grace. Each covenant will be analyzed in terms of its relationship with faith. In so doing, we will first see the nature of the first relationship between God and Adam based on the covenant of works and the cause which broke this covenant. Second, we will turn our eyes to the eternal covenant of redemption between the three Persons of the Trinity in which all the stipulations, including faith as a means and the condition of the covenant of grace, and blessings were agreed upon by them. Third and last, the covenant of grace will be examined and the conditionality and instrumentality of faith will be discussed.

The following three chapters will explore the order of salvation as the series of blessings of the covenant of grace. In chapter five, we will try reconstructing Goodwin’s version of an *ordo salutis* because neither did many seventeenth-century Reformed theologians have a definite order of salvation in mind nor was the term *ordo salutis* a technically fixed term. In so doing, the blessings included in his *ordo salutis* will be distinguished as of two kinds: whether each blessing is the result of God’s work upon us or in us. In addition, we are also going to examine the doctrine of the *unio cum Christi* as a source of all blessing in his *ordo*.

The sixth chapter will deal with the relationship between each of the blessings belonging to God’s work upon us and faith. The general description of Goodwin’s doctrines of regeneration, justification, and adoption will first be offered, and the role of faith for each blessing will also be demonstrated in detail.
The seventh and last chapter of this study will follow the same pattern as the sixth chapter. In this chapter, we will examine the other three divine blessings of the covenant of grace, that is, God’s work in us: sanctification, the perseverance of the saints, and glorification. Unlike the former three blessings that change the believer’s status or title once-and-for-all, these blessings signify a gradual and real change in us. Therefore, we will first look into Goodwin’s general understanding of each doctrine and then demonstrate how faith helps the regenerate to conform to Christ’s image, to persevere in grace, and finally to be glorified.
CHAPTER TWO
GOODWIN IN CONTEXT

Introduction

Among the Puritans who are as a whole regarded as worldly saints, compared to giant Redwoods in Christian history overtopping other trees, and called “godly ministers” in a “godly community,” Thomas Goodwin, whose autobiography, according to Haller, is “worthy to be compared to the most notable self-revelation of the Puritan soul,” may be called the Puritan of the Puritans who “represents the cream of Puritanism, capturing the intellect, will, and heart of his readers.” Joel R. Beeke goes on to introduce him as an author whose treatises “join the vigor of the earlier Puritans such as William Perkins and Richard Sibbes,” who laid the theological, spiritual foundation for the later Puritan movement to “the matured thought of later Puritans” such as John Owen. This means that his sermons and treatises may best delineate the heart of Puritanism as Alexander Whyte considers his sermons to be “noble examples of the height to which the Puritan pulpit could rise.” Whyte thought that “not even Luther on the Galatians is such an

1 Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990). As the title of this book shows, Ryken called the Puritans “Worldly Saints.”


expositor of Paul’s *mind and heart* as is Goodwin on the Ephesians”\(^7\) (Italics mine) and, as J. I. Packer writes, his “Biblical expositions are quite unique, even among the Puritans, in the degree to which they combine theological breadth with experimental depth.”\(^8\)

All ideas and academic achievements, including one’s theology, have not been made in a vacuum, but rather they are the products of all that surrounds the person combined with his own intellectual, spiritual activities. This is also true of Thomas Goodwin. Considering his unusual longevity in his time and his public prominence in the church and politics of England in the second half of the seventeenth century, he may be regarded as one of the few figures who can offer “an opportunity to view nearly the entire Stuart age,” one of the most important periods in the history of England in which there happened many theologically, ecclesiastically, and politically significant events.\(^9\) In this sense Lawrence introduces Goodwin as providing “an apt lens through which to view the religious history of seventeenth-century Britain.”\(^10\) There is no doubt, therefore, that his theology and faith were more or less influenced by his historical context as well as his personal experiences, particularly his conversion experience and the many political, social, ecclesiastical upheavals in the British isles in the seventeenth century. In order to appreciate Goodwin’s theology properly, therefore, we need to know his life first, especially his spiritual life, and then need to appreciate both how his writings are organized and on what basis they are built.


\(^10\) Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 2.
2.1. Goodwin’s Spiritual Pilgrimage

2.1.1. His Birth and Early Religious Experience

Thomas Goodwin was born as the eldest son to Richard and Catherine Goodwin in Rollesby, Norfolk, on 5 October 1600. Robert Halley sheds light on several elements that might have influenced Goodwin’s religious consciousness in his early years. One of them which Halley reports is related to the many Dutch Protestant exiles “in the city and neighbourhood of Norwich.” They formed a Presbyterian community that actually influenced and caused some English people such as Robert Brown and Barrow to take action against the established Church of England.

Goodwin does not give much information about the religious life of his parents but in his reference to his mother on his deathbed, he said, “[M]y mother was a holy woman; she spake nothing diminishing of it (the covenant of grace).” His father, Richard, seems to have been a devoted Christian, seeing that he was a churchwarden of St. Nicholas. However, his nonconformist tendency was manifested when he allowed nonconformist preachers to deliver the Word of God on the pulpit without the surplice.

Although there is no affirmative information that Goodwin’s parents avowedly confessed Reformed faith and belonged to the Puritan party, it seems quite sure that they were influenced by the evangelical principles which so generally prevailed in their neighborhood. Thus, Halley calls them “pious” parents who “piously educated their son,

---


13 Jones, Why Heaven Kissed Earth, 38.
after the manner of the Puritans of that age, dedicating him in his early boyhood to the work of the ministry.”\textsuperscript{14}

In his early years, Goodwin had a sickly constitution and was “a source of anxiety to his pious parents.”\textsuperscript{15} But his soul was neither weak nor senseless. When he was six years old, he underwent a mysterious religious experience. Goodwin confesses that the Holy Spirit began to work slightly upon him at that time.\textsuperscript{16} He wept for his sin, while his thoughts on godly things brought to him flashes of joy. He goes on to say that when the love of God and Christ was revealed to him, he could see within himself love to God and Christ working together with sincere grief for sin as displeasing them.\textsuperscript{17} In his seventh year, when rebuked by a godly servant of his grandfather, he wept for his sins, and afterwards frequently wept for them. As Halley testifies, this clear consciousness of his sinfulness and the deep sorrow for sins became an important subject to deal with in later life. Goodwin considered this experience to be a true conversion at the moment because he did not give any doubt to the sincerity of his experience and concluded that it was far from hypocrisy.\textsuperscript{18} However, he later came to confess that these early religious emotions of grief for sin, joy of salvation, and confidence and love were not the evidence of “true godliness implanted in his heart by the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{19} He regarded this as an evidence that showed how similar could goodness of those who had never received true

\textsuperscript{14} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xi.
\textsuperscript{15} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xi.
\textsuperscript{16} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xi.
\textsuperscript{17} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xi
\textsuperscript{18} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xii.
\textsuperscript{19} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xii.
sanctifying grace be to that of those who are under that grace.\textsuperscript{20} Goodwin likens this experience to God’s visiting him “as a wayfaring man, who came and dwelt for a night, and made me religious for a fit, but then departed from me.” But it was such a shocking event for a young child that it made him presumptuous thinking himself not only to have grace, but more grace than my relations.\textsuperscript{21} As Halley remarks, regardless of its true nature, it is anticipated that this experience might have influenced Goodwin’s view on the relationship between true faith, regeneration, and conversion.

\textbf{2.1.2. Cambridge Experience: Conversion}

Goodwin’s pious, Puritan-minded parents hoped to give their son the best theological education. Goodwin, living up to their expectation, entered into Christ’s College, Cambridge, “as a junior sophister, ‘a year before the usual time,’” at age toward thirteen on August 25, 1613. At the time, Cambridge, particularly Christ’s College, was called “a nest of Puritans,” and “was filled with the discourse of the power of Mr Perkins.”\textsuperscript{22} Together with Perkins, William Ames was also “still fresh in most Men’s Memories.”\textsuperscript{23} In addition, Paul Baines (1573-1617), Perkin’s successor, was also a fellow of Christ’s College and Richard Sibbes (1577-1635), who had been converted by Baines’s preaching, was at that time lecturing at Trinity Church. John Preston (1587-1628) was also teaching at Queens’ College. Goodwin was placed in the midst of the well-known

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{20} Goodwin Jr., “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” lli.
\textsuperscript{21} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xii
\textsuperscript{22} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xiii.
\textsuperscript{23} Halley, “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xiii.
\end{flushright}
Puritans and had a special privilege both to feel the vivid vestige of Perkins and Ames that still remained and to hear the preaching of such great men of God as Sibbes and Preston. There is no doubt, therefore, that Goodwin was actually influenced by them spiritually as well as theologically. In addition, he thoroughly read Zacharias Ursinus’s *Heidelberg Catechism* and was acquainted with the Arminian-Reformed debates at the Synod of Dort.²⁴

For these reasons, he was becoming more and more a Puritan-minded man at first. Halley’s report on his early years at Cambridge, however, differs a lot from our expectation:

> The religious privileges of Cambridge did not at first produce so favourable an impression as might have been expected on the mind of the young scholar. His early fears and anxieties respecting his salvation seem to have subsided as he devoted himself thoroughly and earnestly to his collegiate studies. . . . The Puritan theology, as well as the plain and earnest manner of the Puritan preachers of Cambridge, became distasteful to him. His views, as he intimates, were at that time inclining to Arminianism, and the preaching which he admired was that of Dr. Senhouse, distinguished rather for its ostentatious display of rhetoric than for its clear statement of evangelical truth. Though preserved from gross immorality, he was living to himself, laying up stores of information for his own glory, labouring in you that he might obtain high preferment in coming years, and especially ambitious of becoming an eloquent and popular, rather than an evangelical and useful preacher.²⁵

Halley describes Goodwin’s distaste for Puritan theology as the first fruit at Cambridge and seems to attribute it to Goodwin’s being excessively immersed in his study. But Goodwin’s own remarks in the biography written by his son demonstrate that before he

---


was rejected by his tutor, Mr. Power, from the sacrament, Goodwin had been deeply inclined to Reformed, Puritan theology.\(^{26}\)

When he was fourteen years old, he was going to receive the first sacrament at Easter. He prepared himself as he was able by setting himself to examine whether he had grace or not. He was then convinced that “by all the signs in Ursinus’s Catechism, which was in use among the Puritans in the College, I found them all, as I thought, in me.”\(^{27}\) Goodwin prepared himself for the sacrament by faithfully following a Puritan way that had been established by the great Puritans we mentioned above. He finally received the sacrament, confessing “with what inward joy and comfort did I sing with the rest the 103d Psalm, which was usually sung during the administration.”\(^{28}\) His first experience of the sacrament seems to have successfully played its given role, seeing that after the sacrament, Goodwin felt his “heart cheered after a wonderful manner,” thinking himself “sure of heaven, and judging all these workings to be infallible token of God’s love to” him, and “of grace in” him.\(^{29}\) However, on the ensuing Whitsunday when he was not only forbidden by Mr. Power to receive the sacrament before the whole college due to his little stature, but was also forced to leave his seat in the college chapel, he was so disappointed and humiliated both psychologically and spiritually that he “left off praying … (and) knew not how to go to God.” He stopped going to “hear Sibbs any more . . . no more studied sound divinity.” Rather, he pursued a new model of preaching, which is “of

\(^{26}\) See Lawrence, “Transmission and transformation,” 74,75.

\(^{27}\) Goodwin Jr., “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” lii.

\(^{28}\) Goodwin Jr., “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” lii.

\(^{29}\) Goodwin, Jr. “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” lii.
high applause in the University . . . brought up by Dr. Senhouse.”

Since then, Goodwin seems to have been attracted to and acquainted with Arminian theology, which fit with his own experience because he still thought that his early experience was a true conversion. He admitted that any true converts could fall totally away from grace and that his own early experience was exactly the case. However, the fact that several godly youths in Christ’s College, who underwent true conversion, steadfastly continued their profession steadfast, and did not fall away made him doubt Arminianism. This led him to judge that Arminianism was not true and caused him to view his spiritual condition negatively. Thus, on every sacrament Goodwin set himself to examine himself, “to repent, and to turn to God,” but he soon returned to the former “unregenerate principles and practices, and to live in hardness of heart and profaneness.”

Meanwhile, he was granted his B. A. with a high reputation and commenced his M. A. and was elected a fellow at Catherine Hall in 1620. It was in that year that he experienced an unexpected conversion. On October 2, on his way “to be merry with his companions at Christ’s College,” Goodwin said, he heard a bell toll at St. Edmund’s for a funeral. He was pressed to hear a funeral sermon by Thomas Bainbridge. While listening to his preaching on “deferring repentance, and the danger of doing so,” Goodwin “was so far affected,” that he “hoped to be the better for this sermon as long as” he lived. He cancelled his plan to go to the party at Christ’s college and returned to his room. He describes his conversion experience in the following way:

I thought myself to be as one struck down by a mighty power. The grosser sins of my conversation came in upon me, which I wondered at, as being unseasonable at first; and so the working began, but was prosecuted still more and more, higher and higher: and Iendeavouring not to think the least thought of my sins, was passively held under the remembrance of them, and affected, so as I was rather passive all the while in it than active, and my thoughts held under, whilst that work went on.33

His true conversion occurred with his sudden realization that it was not merely his great sins, nor even his sinful behaviors at all, “but his sinful condition, that was at the root of his guilt and judgment.”34 Although his conversion experience happened at the funeral held at St. Edmund’s funeral, Goodwin’s spiritual struggle continued for seven years after his conversion because of lack of assurance. It was Nicholas Price who helped Goodwin to find rest in Christ. Goodwin considered him as the holiest man that he ever knew. By letters and discourse, Goodwin “maintained a great intimacy of Christian friendship”35 with him.

Halley presents three important lessons from the conversion of Goodwin. Particularly, the second lesson deserves our attention in relation to his doctrine of regeneration or conversion. He holds that “the experience of his conversion had considerable influence in forming or modifying his theological system.”36 According to Halley, Goodwin experienced both an Arminian way of conversion and a Calvinist conversion. His early experience of conversion belonged to the former, while the conversion experience at St. Edmund’s to the latter. Although the former seemed to him to be a true conversion at that time, yet, as he later confessed, the true conversion was the

34 Horton, “Puritan Doctrine of Assurance,” 2.
latter when he was suddenly, unexpectedly stricken with a sense of guilt without any preparation.

2.1.3. Exposure to Millenarianism and Independency

Goodwin was well known for his Congregationalism and was one of the representative Independents in England in the seventeenth century. According to Chang and Jones his Congregationalist conviction was not confined to the area of church polity, but seems to have influenced his eschatology and soteriology, particularly the doctrine of glorification. As Jones asserts, therefore, his view on church government can be rightly understood in the context of his eschatology.

Chang assumes that Goodwin would have “started to research things relating to millenarianism as early as 1621, not long after his conversion.” When we take into account the fact that Joseph Mede, one of the two representative theologians known for eschatology in England in the seventeenth century, was in the same college, it is not hard to infer that Goodwin would have been influenced by Mede in forming his millenarianism. This is evidenced by the clear similarity between Mede and Goodwin in millenarianism. Chang relates Goodwin’s deep concern with the last things first with

“the latter-day glory” and then with his personal experience of “the sealing of the Spirit” as “the earnest of the full and ultimate latter-day glory.”

In addition to Goodwin’s millennialism, there is another point that provides a better understanding of his spiritual, theological formation. It is Goodwin’s deep devotion to independent church polity. Goodwin seems to have accepted independency as the purest church polity in 1633.

Upon Preston’s death in 1628, his position, which had been taken over from Richard Sibbes and William Perkins, was succeeded by Goodwin. However, when William Laud, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, supervised and oppressed more strictly Reformed preaching at the college, Goodwin and many other Puritans chose to flee either to New England or to the Netherlands, which provided a better environment for freedom of conscience. Goodwin’s choice was the latter. His convictions concerning independent church polity were strengthened during the time because he could have deep fellowship with other independents such as those who were later called with Goodwin “Five Dissenting Brothers” in the Westminster Assembly.

For Goodwin, independency is not simply one of the diverse forms of church polity, but implies more than that. According to Goodwin’s eschatology, the prevalence of independent church polity, as the purest form that the New Testament teaches, together

41 Chang, “Christian Life,” 15-16. Chang explains the relationship between Goodwin’s eschatology and his experience of the sealing of the Spirit in the following way: “His study of the new chiliasm came to interplay with his struggling search for the assurance of salvation. His experience of the immediacy of the sealing of the Spirit in 1627 has a double meaning. He must have evaluated this experience in the light of his newly-understood apocalyptic literatures. What he experienced was but the dawn of the glory as a merit of the resurrection of Christ. The immediacy of the sealing of the Spirit is but the inception of the coming brighter glory in the future millennium.”
with that of pure doctrine, signifies the recovery of the church which ushers in the millennium, the consummation of “the world to come” lasting until the last judgment.\footnote{Anthony Dallison, “The Latter-day Glory,” 59.}

\textbf{2.1.4. At the Westminster Assembly}

Goodwin returned and started preaching to the congregation of the independent church in London in 1641, as William Laud stepped down from his Archbishoicric. Goodwin’s theological maturity since his conversion soon became known to many people in London. In the next year, the House of Commons invited him to preach the Word of God to the members of the Parliament, and Goodwin preached a sermon on Zechariah 4:6-9, titled “Zerubabel’s Encouragement to Finish the Temple,” in which he urged them to initiate a further church reform with a view to “the world to come”.

When the Westminster Assembly was convened by the Long Parliament in 1643, he was elected to be a member of the Assembly together with four other Independents. Jones points out that despite Goodwin’s significant role in the Assembly, he has received little attention from Goodwin scholarship, except for his view on church government. Drawing on the \textit{Minutes} of the Westminster Assembly, Jones argues that Goodwin’s role was more eminent in the debates on doctrinal issues, such as Christology and justification by faith, than in the debates on ecclesiology.\footnote{Jones, \textit{Why Heaven Kissed Earth}, 45. See also Van Dixhoorn, “Reforming the Reformation: Theological Debate at the Westminster Assembly 1643-1652,” 7 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 2004), 1:348.} As to the issue of ecclesiology, however, despite Goodwin’s efforts, including the submission to the Assembly of two documents, \textit{Apollogetical Narration} (1644) and \textit{A Copy of a Remonstrance Lately Delivered in the}
Assembly, which reflect Goodwin’s persuasion, his dream of the ecclesiological reform of the church in the end was not realized.

2.1.5. A Reformed Congregationalist Statesman

Although the Westminster Assembly did not accept Goodwin’s Congregational propositions concerning church polity and liturgy, Goodwin had another opportunity to work for his dream. After the execution of Charles I in 1649, both Goodwin and Owen were offered an opportunity to preach before Oliver Cromwell and the House of Commons. Cromwell and the House then appointed Goodwin to the presidency of Magdalen College, Oxford, together with the appointment of Owen to the dean of Christ Church and vice-president of the University in 1650. Halley evaluates this appointment of Goodwin to the presidency of a college as his appropriate reward, seeing that “the hopes and endeavours of other colleges to obtain the honour and advantage of his government.”

In addition, Goodwin’s personal character, academic ability, his career as a tutor and lecturer at Cambridge, “piety, and habits of business” were widely acknowledged by those who “are acquainted with his life and writings.”

It is not difficult to answer the question, “what was he most focused on as the president of the college?” because Halley describes the reason why Goodwin accepted the office as follows:

On leaving Cambridge he had resigned, ‘for his whole life, all ecclesiastical preferment.’ He never sought, he never expected to recover it; but he loved to assist godly young men in their studies for the ministry. This was his favourite employment in Cambridge, and in it he had been eminently successful. After his return from Holland, he had for some years, well-nigh every month, serious and

---


hearty acknowledgments from several young men who had received ‘the light of their conversion’ by his ministrations in the University. His great motive in accepting the presidency of Magdalene was, not love of academical distinction, but the desire ‘to bring in young men that were godly, both Fellows and scholars, that should serve God in the ministry in after-times.’ His chief encouragement, in dependence upon God, was the remarkable success of his labours in his former university life.46

Goodwin’s first concern was the souls of his students. He taught them to be acquainted with spiritual things. Goodwin’s two conversion experiences, the earlier one false and the later one true, rather might have inflamed him to help his students to discern important truths such as the nature of true faith or the relationship between saving faith and religious experience. Thus, Chang writes that he scrutinized whether they were in the state of grace, “inquired of further works of the Spirit in their hearts and reminded them whether they had prepared to die.”47 In the same vein, Jones notes that “Goodwin’s labors at Oxford during the 1650s marked a time of blessing for students who would later become Protestant nonconformists.” In fact, in the biography of his father, Philip Henry, Matthew Henry wrote what his father spoke of his own experience under Goodwin and Owen at Oxford:

How would often mention it with thankful to God, what great Helps and Advantages he had then in the University, not only for Learning, but for Religion and Piety. Serious Godliness was in Reputation, and besides the Publick Opportunities they had. there were many of the scholars that us’d to meet for Prayer, and Christian Conference, to the great confirming of one anothers Hearts in the Fear and Love of God, and the preparing of them for the Service of the Church in their Generation.48


During the period with Goodwin and Owen, Oxford enjoyed “a harvest of extraordinary good and sound knowledge in all parts of learning.” In 1653, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was granted to him at Oxford.

As his successful ministry at Oxford shows, during the Interregnum period, Goodwin could expand his religious and political influence with the support of Cromwell and became one of the most eminent Christian leaders. Goodwin wanted to contribute to the reformation of the English church and did his best for this dream. He was particularly concerned with protecting God’s church from heretical errors. He participated in making two documents, *The Humble Proposals of Mr. Owen, Mr. Tho. Goodwin, Mr. Nye, Mr. Sympson, and other Ministers* and the *Principles of Christian religion* (1652). The former was followed by the latter in that year, and both documents were drafted to counter the Socinian document *Catechism Ecclesiarum*. According to Lawrence, although these two documents were charged by Baxter with “narrow party politics and extreme factionalism,” they are in fact moderate documents in any sense. Therefore, the goal of the documents was not to suppress all religious groups but Independents; rather Goodwin and his independent colleagues drew up the documents to “safeguard the orthodoxy of the Christian faith” by excluding the Socinians, Quakers, Levellers, Arminians, Pantheists, and Antinomians. However, because of the opposition and the dissolution of the Rump Parliament, the proposals of these documents could not be implemented.

Goodwin also participated in the ministry of edifying good preachers as a commissioner.

---


50 Lawrence, “Transmission and transformation,” 147, 150.

of “Triers” that was “the Commission for the Approbation of Publique Preachers.”

With the establishment of the Protectorate, Cromwell held a parliamentary conference, which was composed of some Independents including Goodwin and some Presbyterians including Baxter, to draw up a confession of faith for the Cromwellian church. The result of the cooperative work of the two different religious groups was A New Confession of Faith, or the first Principles of the Christian Religion necessary to bee laid as a Foundation by all such as desire to build on unto Perfection (1654). Jones points out that while this confession follows the outline of the Apostle’s Creed, there are also some significant differences. He continues to argue that the confession made it more difficult not only for Arminians but also for Neonomians like Baxter to subscribe. However, A New Confession was not implemented once again, as in 1652, because of the dissolution of the parliament.

God gave Goodwin another opportunity to draft a confession as one of the main authors. The Savoy Declaration (1658) was made at the request of the Independents. With the ascendance of the Protector, the Independents also could enjoy no less degree of religious freedom and political right than the Presbyterians. As mentioned before, Goodwin and Owen were the pastors with whom Cromwell most often consulted. As their influence increased, their desire to make their own confession also grew accordingly. In addition, they felt a need to identify their faith as clearly as possible so that they might distinguish themselves from other sectarians who “frequently sheltered

53 For more information, see Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 166-182.
54 Jones, Why Heaven Kissed Earth, 48.
themselves under the name of independency.”\textsuperscript{55} Although Cromwell was reluctant to convene a meeting to draft the confession, the Independents persuaded him and finally gained Cromwell’s permission, albeit only formal. Goodwin, Owen, Nye, Bridge, Joseph Caryl and William Greenhill all gathered together and drew up the Savoy Declaration (hereafter the Declaration), which was also almost identical with the Westminster Confession of Faith (hereafter WCF). One of the reasons the Declaration is similar to the WCF is because except for Owen the other five divines were members of the Westminster Assembly. It seems to be obvious that of these six theologians, Owen and Goodwin played the main roles in this work. Joel Beeke and Randall Peterson assume that “Goodwin is probably responsible for most of the first draft.”\textsuperscript{56} However, if the Declaration were exactly the same as the WCF, there would have been no reason to make a new confession of faith. The difference of course lay mostly in the area of ecclesiology.\textsuperscript{57} All the confessions and documents he drafted with other Independents and the offices he bore during that period show how intensely he lived for God’s glory religiously as well as politically.

\begin{center}
\textbf{2.1.6. After the Great Ejection}
\end{center}

With the accession of Charles II in 1660, Goodwin’s public career ended. Contrary to the expectation of the Presbyterians, who cooperated with the Anglicans in restoring Charles

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{55} Chang, “Christian Life,” 30.
\item \textsuperscript{56} Joel R. Beeke and Randall J. Peterson, \textit{Meet the Puritans: with a Guide to Modern Reprints} (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), 272.
\item \textsuperscript{57} For more detailed differences between the two confessions, see Peter Toon, “The Westminster and Savoy Confessions: a Brief Comparison”, \textit{Evangelical Theological Society} 15 (1972): 153-160.
\end{itemize}
II to the throne, the new King was not tolerant toward the Puritans like Goodwin and enacted The Act of Uniformity (1662). According to this law, more than two thousand nonconforming ministers were ejected from their parishes and livings. This persecution lasted almost thirty years following the great Ejection. The persecution was increased by enacting additional acts of the Clarendon Code that substantially limited the religious activities of the nonconformists. This persecution caused many of the nonconformists to sail to New England, but Goodwin decided to remain in London.

Unlike such nonconformists, however, although he was not allowed to have any public position, Goodwin was able to continue to preach to his congregation in London. As to the reason the government did not eject Goodwin, Jones conjectures that “Goodwin, like Owen, because of his former ecclesiastical and political prominence and various social connections, does not appear to have suffered to the same degree under the Clarendon Code as other nonconformists.” Halley describes Goodwin’s life after the resignation from Magdalen in this way:

From this time the life of Goodwin passed quietly, as, submissive to the powers that be, he no longer interfered with politics, but gave himself wholly to his theological studies and pastoral duties.

The remarks of his son, Goodwin Jr., on the life of his father after the resignation are the same. Goodwin “lived a retired life, spent in prayer, reading, and meditation, between which he divided his time.” Goodwin read the books of various writers, but “the

---


60 Goodwin Jr., “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” xxxix.
Scriptures were what he most studied.”61 However, it is far from clear that he enjoyed “the tranquil world of the pastor’s study.”62 As Lawrence rightly points out, Goodwin “was forced into quietly furtive life of the nonconformist minister.”63 But, on the other hand, it may also be said that God with His providential hand detached him from the public affairs of the world that he had gone through the period of the Interregnum so that he might realize the condition of the world under the power of sin and of Satan and see the things unseen by faith. This was not the end of his affliction, however. The great plague swept through London in 1665-66 and resulted in nearly 7,000 deaths. Before the terror of the plague disappeared, the Great Fire of London destroyed almost four-fifths of the city, during which Goodwin “lost above half of his library, to the value of five hundred pounds.”64 Considering Goodwin’s love for books, his disappointment would have been greater than we would expect today. He must not have regarded all these calamities as a series of accidental events, but they pushed him more into a private life searching God’s hidden will. It was during this period that Goodwin published his last work, *Patience and its Perfect Work* (1666), in which was contained the gem of faith of an old believer who experienced both the glory of the world and the loss of it in the midst of afflictions. Goodwin died on February 23, 1680. But his deathbed was not a mourning place, but a place of victory in faith. Saving faith, which he had been deeply concerned with throughout his life since his true conversion, had walked together with him to the

---

63 Lawrence, “Transmission and transformation,” 11.
64 Goodwin Jr., “Memoir of Thomas Goodwin,” lxxiv.
end of his life and successfully performed its last role by helping him to confront death victoriously and cheerfully. He breathed his last breath with the following words:

All these (the great examples of faith in Heb. 11) died in faith. I could not have imagined I should ever have had such a measure of faith in this hour; no, I could never have imagined it. My bow abides in strength. Is Christ divided? No, I have the whole of his righteousness; I am found in him, not in my own righteousness, which is of the law, but in the righteousness which is of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Christ cannot love me better than he doth; I think I cannot love Christ better than I do; I am swallowed up in God. (Italics mine).

2.2. Goodwin and His Works

Thomas Goodwin was one of the most prolific Puritan authors in the seventeenth century. His works mostly comprise sermons and treatises. When considering his treatises that deal with specific themes, we may readily learn that Goodwin was occupied generally with soteriological concerns, but the themes of his works also touch on some other doctrines such as eschatology and ecclesiology. When taking a closer look at his works, however, we may also find that his soteriological works are not strictly limited to soteriology itself, but actually range over other areas of theology, adumbrating “a body of divinity” though not published in a systematically organized form. In all of his writings, did he have any specific project to which many of his works contributed, or were his works just the occasional products of the various contexts he encountered? If Goodwin did have a certain project for his theological work, is it possible to find out the scope? Do all or only some of his works belong to it?

---


66 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 16-18. Based on John Thurloe’s letter to Henry Cromwell, Lawrence asserts that Goodwin would have had a plan to “synthesise and summarise his thought in to a whole body of divinity” considering himself not simply a preacher, but a theologian.
Unfortunately, for that purpose, most of his works were edited and published posthumously by his son, Thomas Goodwin Jr., together with Thankful Owen and James Barron, in particular, who edited the first volume of five volumes of Goodwin’s folio. Thus, it is difficult to directly discern Goodwin’s own project from the content of the folio volumes. This earlier collection of Goodwin’s works was initially published in 1681, and was completed in 1704. The editors, particularly the younger Goodwin, who edited four of them, failed in exposing the original intention of Goodwin in the *Works*, in that as he edited, he either could not perceive or ignored his father’s plan, and so arranged them as to make use of them for his own purposes.  

As primary editor, Goodwin’s son had the opportunity and the ability to gather and publish his father’s treatises according to an organized and coherent plan. But as we shall see, he failed so to do, and for at least three reasons. At the outset he seems not to have known of or understood his father’s original architectonic principle. … Later, as the editorial project proceeded, he appears to have discovered and then to have lost once again, his father’s plan. The result was reactive editing in which organizing schemes were put forward piecemeal, only to disappear in subsequent volumes to be replaced by new ones. Finally, in at least one instance, the younger Goodwin abandoned any attempt at presenting a coherent project, and instead enlisted his father’s posthumous support in a Restoration theological dispute. By the end the *Works* had been hijacked by the needs of contemporary theological polemic.  

Lawrence suggests three main characteristics that are related to this twisting of Goodwin’s original project by his son. According to Lawrence, the editors of the first volume of the *Works*, Thankful Owen and James Barron, may have been aware of the grand project of Goodwin and accordingly published his sermons on Ephesians first. But since both of them died soon after the publication of this first volume, the younger Goodwin had to take over the remaining work. As noted above, Goodwin Jr. had

---

different ideas from that of his father; as such in volume two, he seems to have edited his father’s treatises “as a systematic theology” that would deal “in logical order the major doctrinal loci,” starting with prolegomena, that is, divine epistemology. This principle of organization, however, was not continued in the later volumes. Goodwin’s son so frequently changed his editorial principle when he made new discoveries that Lawrence writes that his approach was quite haphazard and ad hoc.

The biggest reason why Goodwin Jr. came to distort his father’s grand project, as Lawrence believes, would be due to the context in which he edited them, as is clearly manifested in the fourth volume. In the fourth volume of the Works are Goodwin’s major treatise on faith, Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith and his discourse on church polity, Of the Constitution, Right, Order and Government of the Churches of Christ. This volume was edited and published in 1696 while an intense debate between Presbyterians and Congregationalists on the doctrine of justification and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness was reaching its culmination. This suggests that the younger Goodwin published this volume for the purpose of supporting his Congregational persuasions ecclesiastically as well as theologically.

---

69 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 198.

70 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 201.

71 In the late 17th century, Presbyterians and Congregationalists took a decisive step toward union by adopting the Heads of Agreement (1691) with the subscription of nearly 100 ministers from both camps. This union, however, was immediately broken due to the different views on justification, particularly its conditionality. Daniel Williams of the Presbyterians upheld Baxter’s view of conditional justification, whereas Congregationalists such as Thomas Goodwin Jr. and Stephen Lobb wanted to put emphasis on God’s free grace in the doctrine of justification. This theological debate continued to rage in the press and came to the point that Lobb accused both Williams and Baxter of having made Socinian mistakes. For more detailed information about the theological context of the fourth volume, see Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 206-214.
The five folio volumes of the Works are the main source of another important edition of the collected works of Goodwin published in 1861-66. John C. Miller, the editor of this edition, newly reorganized Goodwin’s writings, omitting a few letters and treatises as well as containing some other treatises and sermons that were missing in the earlier Works, and published them in twelve volumes. This new edition also seems to have been organized in a different way from Goodwin’s project. Thus, even with Joel R. Beeke praising this twelve-volume edition as “far superior” to the original folio edition,72 Lawrence argues that the twelve-volume edition still obscured Goodwin’s grand project.73 With this information, the opening questions should be considered: Did Goodwin have any grand project to which his many other works contribute? If a positive answer is possible, what then is the project and what, if any, its architectonic theme?

2.2.1. Fourfold State of Humanity

Among many secondary sources for Goodwin’s works, Lawrence’s dissertation takes quite a unique place. He tries to remove a misunderstanding, made by many Goodwin scholars, about Goodwin’s works by placing them in the given context in which Goodwin wrote them. He maintains that the secondary literature has been useful in outlining aspects of Goodwin’s thought, but that it has also suffered from a significant weakness,


73 For this reason, this dissertation will try to use both editions, but the later edition will be the text with which this study first consults in that it involves more writings than the earlier one does in relation to the topic of this study.
that is, a lack of historical contextualization, “accepting without question the basic framework and assumptions provided by the memoir of Goodwin’s life.”  

As Lawrence points out, most of Goodwin’s works were traditionally regarded as theological reflections written by a dissenter who saw the Puritan movement ruined and withdrew himself from the public scene because of the Restoration. Calling this opinion “the illusion of defeat,” he argues that Goodwin’s works were not the result of the Restoration, and that he already had “some sort of writing project in mind, and probably in hand, by the late 1650s” before he retired from the presidency of Magdalene College, Oxford. Lawrence calls this specific undertaking Goodwin’s “Puritan project.”

As mentioned above, however, it was Goodwin’s son who played a significant role in obscuring the intent of this project.

What then was this Puritan project that Goodwin had? In search of the “Puritan project,” Lawrence first situates Goodwin within his proper context. Hartlib testifies that in 1634 Goodwin already had a writing project focusing both on the sinful state of humanity and on God’s divine grace as an antidote. According to Goodwin’s own outline, this project suggested “a methodical and redemptive-historical treatment of redemption” which began with original sin and its progress, proceeded to “the State of

---

74 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 3. Lawrence presumes that according to his original plan of editing his father’s works, Goodwin Jr. would have put in the fourth volume two treatises dealing with the Holy Spirit and the state of glory instead of treatises on justification and church polity unless he participated in a debate relating to the doctrine of justification between Presbyterians and Congregationalists. While Presbyterians represented by Daniel Williams held Baxter’s neonomian view of justification that attributed the believer’s righteousness not to Christ’s imputed righteousness but to his/her own fulfillment of the condition of the gospel, Congregationalists such as Goodwin Jr. and Stephen Lobb accused them even of Socinianism. Although both parties had been in agreement against Antinomian and Socinian challenges in the days of Thomas Goodwin, they came to have conflicting views on this crucial doctrine in the end of seventeenth century. In this context, Lawrence adds, Goodwin Jr. edited the fourth volume of his father’s Works and was probably tempted to make it clear which party was the one that belonged to the old faith by pairing “with it his father’s defense of congregational government.”

75 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 16.
 Grace in General of the excellency of the mighty power of God to convert men” and ended up turning to the merciful works of each Person of the Trinity.” 76 Goodwin called this project “The History of Truths,” which Lawrence argues later “became a body of divinity designed to magnify the electing grace of God.” 77

Lawrence also found a private correspondence written in 1657 between John Thurloe, Cromwell’s principal secretary of state, and Henry Cromwell, soon to be appointed Lord President of Ireland, in which Thurloe insinuated Goodwin’s project was writing “a body of divinity.” 78 This project does not seem simply like a plan that might not be finished, rather Goodwin, according to Thurloe, considered this project as his mission that “without doeing of which … he cannot dye in peace.” 79 This project is briefly mentioned in a bit more substantial form in Goodwin’s treatise on the prelapsarian state of the first men, Of the Creatures and the Condition of their State by Creation. In this work, he reveals his plan to write “other Discourses” which will treat “Mans sinful and Corrupt Estate and the misery thereof;” “the State of Salvation by Christ, which the Elect are brought and raised up into, by the Grace and work of all three Persons;” and “the last, and best Condition of the Elect, which is the State of Glory.” 80 It is obvious here that Goodwin intends to deal with four human conditions. The first state he deals

76 See Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 135-36.

77 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 223.

78 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 17.

79 John Thurloe, A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Esq.; secretary, first, to the Council of State, and afterwards to the two Protectors, Oliver and Richard Cromwell. … To Which is prefixed, the life of Mr Thurloe. ed. by Thomas Birch, 7 vols. (1742), 6: 539. For more information about Goodwin’s theological project, see also Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 16-23.

80 Goodwin, Works, 2: 31-32.
with is the natural state in which Adam and Eve had been created, which he describes in this book. Secondly, he plans to explain the fallen state of humanity, due to sin, and the misery from which sinners are suffering in consequence of their sin. Moreover, his third concern is to vividly show how sinners can be restored by the gracious work of the triune God. Lastly, Goodwin would complete his project by displaying the glorious state, which the elect will enjoy forever after death. Of course, these four states of humanity were not created anew by him and not strange to the Reformed orthodox theologians in the seventeenth century. This view of the human condition has its roots in Scripture and is found in the famous theory of Augustine of Hippo on the four states of humanity in relation to sin: (a) *posse peccare, posse non peccare*; (b) *non posse non peccare*; (c) *posse non peccare*; and (d) *non posse peccare*. Each condition of Augustine’s view corresponds to each of Goodwin’s four states of humanity. Ever since Augustine, this fourfold understanding of the human condition carried through the works of later theologians, particularly the Augustinians, of the medieval era over into the theology of the Reformers. The successors of the Reformers in the seventeenth century, therefore, did not hesitate to take over this concept from their predecessors as the foundation of their theological works. However, whereas this fourfold state of human nature was common, and offered an implicit theological base, to the Reformed orthodox theologians in the seventeenth century, Goodwin seems to have explicitly set forth this fourfold state of human nature as the framework of his theology and theological work. From this, it is appropriate to anticipate a strong soteriological emphasis throughout his works.

81 One good example is a Scottish theologian in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, Thomas Boston. His treatise on this view, *Human Nature in Its Fourfold State*, was written on the same ground.
As the constituting works for the Puritan project, Lawrence presents just four treatises on these states: one treatise for each state. He writes:

As outlined above, the project was to consist of four discernible discourses that would trace God’s redemptive work from creation through the fall to Christ’s redemptive work on the cross, and finally to the believer’s glorification.\(^{82}\)

According to him, Goodwin wrote the treatise, *Of the Creatures*, as an initial work for the first human state; his understanding of the fallen state of humanity is described in his book, *A Discourse of an Unregenerate Man’s Guiltiness before God in respect of Sin and Punishment*. Concerning the state of salvation in which the elect are enjoying God’s presence, he wrote a short discourse, *Man’s Restauration by Grace*; and *A Discourse of the Blessed State of Glory which the Saints posses after Death* is for the last state, as the title shows.

Lawrence’s assumption about the relation between each human state and each treatise appears coherent and seems to be supported by quite solid internal evidences.\(^{83}\) Nonetheless, here arises a question regarding the assumption: Does Goodwin’s “Puritan project” consist of these four treatises only? To this question, Lawrence seems to answer affirmatively because right after identifying those four discourses as “Goodwin’s four-part theological work,” he asks:

First, can this body of divinity even tentatively be identified with that to which Thurloe referred in his letter of September 1657? … Second, if Goodwin intended these four treatises as a coherent unity, what was the motivation for their original composition and arrangement? Finally, if they (the four treatises) did constitute a single theological project, why weren’t the treatises published together?\(^{84}\)

---

\(^{82}\) Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 19.

\(^{83}\) For more details, see Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 16-53.

\(^{84}\) Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 22. Italics added for emphasis.
Lawrence refers to the four treatises as “this body of divinity” and later cautiously answers the first question, concluding that “Goodwin’s self-described project could potentially be identical with the project Thurloe reported he had in hand in September 1657.” As mentioned in the above passage, Lawrence also assumes that the four treatises work together both as a coherent unity and as a single theological project, all of which refer to “the Puritan project,” to answer the second question. It is clear, therefore, that Lawrence considers the four treatises that he identified to be the Puritan project that is mentioned both in Thurloe’s letter and in Goodwin’s book, *Of the Creatures*.

Lawrence’s identification of the Puritan project and his limitation of it to the four treatises is a thoroughly researched position and it provides a good foundation for the contextualization of Goodwin’s many works. Nevertheless, three of Godwin’s four books correspond exactly to the three states of human beings respectively; but the third state, the state of salvation, is so important and essential to the readers of Goodwin that twenty pages of a short discourse does not seem able to contain all the necessary truths that Goodwin wants to show. As these truths relate to this state, we may call it “soteriology,” which Goodwin mainly focused on throughout his entire life.

As such, there is little surprise that Goodwin penned more treatises on the third state, using *Man’s Restauration by Grace* as an introduction for further study on this theme. In this discourse, Goodwin focuses on the Trinitarian work for salvation. In other words, he intends to explain how the Persons of the triune God cooperated with each other to save elect sinners through divine grace. Because this theme is his main concern,

---

85 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 50.
he deals with salvation in a trinitarian perspective throughout his other works. The topic of Goodwin’s trinitarian emphasis will be dealt with in more detail at a later point.

There is more evidence for the possibility that Goodwin wrote additional works accounting for the third state of humanity. Among the four human states, the shortest period, in terms of chronological length, would be the first state, “the Estate of holiness Man was Created in.” Additionally, this period might be said to be relatively less important, if not the least among the four states, especially considering the third state, which includes the transition from the fallen condition to the state of grace, all in a soteriological sense. But the treatise, *Of the Creatures*, which corresponds to Goodwin’s first state of humanity running one hundred nineteen pages, is far longer than the nineteen pages of the discourse, *Man’s Restauration by Grace*, which Lawrence believes corresponds solely to the third state. This view becomes clearer when it is compared with the treatise corresponding to the second state, *A Discourse of an Unregenerate*, having six hundred twenty pages. Given Goodwin’s soteriological concerns, it is reasonable to think that the only treatise dealing with most soteriological truths, such as the covenant of grace and the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the order of salvation, should be longer than any of the works on the other three human states. In fact, however, Goodwin wrote many other treatises in which he looked into various soteriological truths, which should be regarded as belonging to the third state. These works delve specifically into the truths about the works of the Holy Trinity, both in the covenantal perspective, and throughout the order of salvation as the blessings of the covenant of grace.

Therefore, Lawrence’s view of Goodwin’s Puritan project is a significant discovery in relation to the contextualization of Goodwin’s works, because it seems
admittable that Goodwin’s whole body of divinity was built on the substructure of the four human states. Instead of reducing this project simply to the four treatises as Lawrence does, we should consider the treatise, *Man’s Restauration by Grace*, as the introduction to the third state of his theological project. This suggests that Goodwin’s project is broader than Lawrence thought it to be, and that it includes most of his works. Therefore, this theological project was not merely for Goodwin to write four treatises on the four states of humanity, but he intended to set the four treatises on the four states of humanity as the foundation of the project and developed his project with particular focus on the third state throughout his entire life. In addition, given that not only these four works dealing with soteriology and anthropology, but also books dealing with theology proper, Christology, ecclesiology, pneumatology, eschatology are included in the list of Goodwin’s works, his theological project needs to be considered to be establishing his own theological system.

2.2.2. **Trinitarian Perspective**

If the four human states provided the fundamental frame of Goodwin’s Puritan project, then this project took a concrete shape, and was embellished, even picking up some other elements. One of the unique characteristics of Goodwin’s works may be his emphasis on the cooperative, but distinctive, works of each Person of the Holy Trinity. In other words, these four states of humanity were not simply a natural result of human behaviors, but they are somehow related to the decree of the triune God. In his dealing with man’s restoration after expounding on the holy original state of humanity and its fall from this estate through sin, Goodwin writes in *Man’s Restoration by Grace* that he would divide
this state into “three parts, according to three distinct works of the three Persons for the accomplishment of it.” Goodwin tenaciously calls attention to the distinct role of the three Persons of the Godhead, particularly in his understanding of soteriology.

Whereas the four states of humanity are the underlying structure of his theology, at least concerning his soteriology, the covenant of redemption is the root from which all the fruits of salvation are derived in God’s perspective, in that this eternal covenant, as Jones remarks, “provides the foundation for the temporal covenant” of grace, out of which all soterial blessings in the order of salvation flow. Taking a look at his approach to the pactum salutis, we can readily find Goodwin consciously focused on the distinctive work of the Holy Trinity. Unlike the understandings held by many of his contemporary Reformed orthodox theologians, who often excluded, or at least neglected, the role of the Holy Spirit, Goodwin explains the eternal covenant as a covenant made among the three Persons of the Trinity. His confidence in the Spirit’s involvement in the pactum

---

86 Goodwin, Works, 7:521. Goodwin’s deep concern with a trinitarian frame of salvation is particularly highlighted in his work Man’s Restoration by Grace.

87 Cf. Horton, Thomas Goodwin and the Puritan Doctrine of Assurance, 108. In his dealing with Goodwin’s view of the covenant of redemption, Horton writes that Goodwin’s interest was “not in developing highly rationalistic, speculative, and metaphysical philosophical pattern of redemption, but in unfolding the trinitarian pattern of redemption, with Christ at the center of triune activity and self-revelation, an approach identical to that taken by Calvin.”


89 Jones, Why Heaven Kissed Earth, 127.

90 Richard A. Muller, “The Spirit and the Covenant,” Foundations 24 (1981): 5-6. Muller argues that while the theologians of the early orthodox period such as William Perkins, Amandus Polanus, James Ussher, and Johannes Scharpius upheld “the dictum of Christian doctrine that all active of God ad extra is the common work of the entire Trinity” and “paid strict attention to the necessarily Trinitarian structures at the ground of all doctrine,” their successors in the high orthodox period “sometimes obscured the interrelationships of doctrines” in particular relation to the “trinitarian motif” in the “treatment of the eternal counsel.”

91 For more detailed discussion of the role of the Holy Spirit in the pactum salutis in Goodwin’s
*salutis* as an active party carries over into his understanding of the entire process of human salvation – which may be expressed in both terms of the order of salvation, as well as in terms of the covenant of grace. Because Goodwin’s trinitarian view of the *pactum salutis* will be dealt with in a later chapter concerning the relationship between faith and divine covenants, this is the extent to which this topic will be discussed here.

That Goodwin sees the *pactum salutis* as a covenant, in which the three Persons participated in common in eternity, insinuates that attention, as he develops his soteriology, would also be paid to each Person of the Trinity. As such, we will turn now to how Goodwin’s works are constructed in a trinitarian way. His works may be divided into two categories in regard to this issue. There are some treatises in which he synthetically expounds on the roles of each Person of the Trinity; and some works are exclusively focused on one of the three Persons of the Godhead.

First, it is necessary to look at the treatises that deal with all three Persons of the Trinity. *The Encouragements to Faith* is a short discourse published in 1650 for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening the faith of the elect on their pilgrimage to heaven. In this work, Goodwin introduces all three Persons of the Godhead as the object for which faith “hath to deal withal in seeking forgiveness and laying hold of salvation,” i.e., God the Father and God the Son, and the one who sets the hearts to work to seek out salvation, and reveals the love of them, is the Holy Spirit. In *A Discourse of the Glory of Gospel*, consisting of eight chapters, he shows the riches of the mysterious glory of the

---

works, see Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 139-144. Jones states that Goodwin consistently emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit throughout the whole work of salvation as well as in the *pactum salutis* and a bit more clearly expresses the Holy Spirit’s participation in the covenant of redemption than Owen does. Jones seems to think that Goodwin regards the Holy Spirit as a participating party, not simply a party playing a significant role in the *pactum*. 
gospel by proving the far more excellent glory of God Himself, who is the source and originator of truth. God the Father is the one who wanted to make known His infinite riches of glory to “some reasonable intelligent creatures,” and render them partakers of this glory, having “their bosoms filled with all His riches,” by this knowledge; it is God the Son as the subject of the Gospel in whom “all God’s riches and glory” shine forth; and God the Spirit plays a role as “a looking-glass” who passes this glory vividly to believers, otherwise it is “but as pictures, or as dead words used to set forth any other narration.”

The treatise, The Knowledge of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, consisting of three books, explores, as the title shows, the nature of God as Holy Trinity and Christ, the second Person of the Trinity. Although the title of the treatise suggests that this work deals with two Persons of the Trinity, God the Father and the Son, his focus in the second and the third volumes is mainly on God the Son, “not as a Redeemer, but as the eternal second Person of the Trinity.” Where then does he deal with the three Persons of the Trinity simultaneously? It is the first book of the treatise that deals with the nature of the triune God, which Goodwin uses to show the relationship between the three Persons and he gives prominence to the worthiness of the triune God to be honored and praised by His people.

---

92 Goodwin, Works, 4: 260.
93 Goodwin, Works, 4: 265.
94 Goodwin, Works, 4: 266.
95 Lawrence, “Transmission and Transformation,” 200. Goodwin’s discussion of the Son as a Redeemer is widely dealt with in his many works such as Christ the Mediator, Of the Supereminence of Christ above Moses, Of the Reconciliation of All the People of God design’d, and effect’d by Christ’s Death, The One Sacrifice, Reconciliation by the Blood of Christ, Man’s Restauration by Grace, Of the Objects and Acts of Justifying Faith.
One of the clearest trinitarian approaches can be found in the treatise *Christ the Mediator*, which includes an excellent discussion of the *pactum salvationis*. As noted above, Goodwin’s understanding of the *pactum salvationis* is clearly trinitarian, attributing a significant role to the third Person of the Trinity. In addition, *Man’s Restauration by Grace* as an introduction to his grand works concerning the third human state (salvation) is primarily about the roles of each Person as its subtitle suggests, *A Discourse of the Several Parts which the Three Persons of the Godhead, Bear in the Accomplishment of our Salvation*. Furthermore, one of the most superb treatises that Reformed orthodoxy ever produced concerning the doctrine of faith, *Of the Objects and Acts of Justifying Faith*, is also a good example which discusses the distinctive roles of each Person of the Trinity. Concerning the objects of faith, Goodwin writes, “There are two grand objects our faith doth act upon, God the Father and Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit being the Person who anoints us, generally teaching us all things.”96 As a more specific object of justifying faith, he argues, God’s mercy is not just mercy belonging to one of the three Persons, but to all three Persons in this way: “The Father had the decreeing part of all mercy, the Son the purchasing part, and the Holy Ghost the operative part, which requires power and strength.”97 When it comes to the assurance of faith produced as a result of the act of faith, he reserves a chapter in which he describes the distinctive roles of the three Persons and “the different nature of the testimony which they give.”98 Besides these examples, there are many other evidences in this treatise for his trinitarian approach

---

to the doctrine of faith, but it is sufficient to say that Goodwin considers the objects and act of justifying faith not only to be the works of God ad extra, which are often attributed to the common work of all three Persons, but he also vividly sets forth how each Person is distinctively related to both of the themes of the objects and of the act of justifying faith.

Secondly, there is another group of Goodwin’s works focusing particularly on the work of one of the three Persons of the Trinity. Although we already addressed some treatises dealing with the topics in a trinitarian perspective, this does not mean that each Person receives the same attention in that work. Likewise, just because a treatise in this group is focused on one particular Person does not necessarily imply that there is not found any investigation of the other two Persons in it. Rather, it means that Goodwin generally tried to see the topic he was dealing with in a trinitarian perspective according to his conviction, Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa. And yet, he could focus on just one Person in that he also accepts the concept that Opera Trinitatis ad extra undivisum frequently manifests one of the three Persons as its terminus operationis.

When it comes to the Father, although there is no treatise focused mainly on Him alone, He is often, throughout Goodwin’s works, referred to as the common noun, “God,” implying the one who is representative of the Trinity, the author of everything concerning salvation. In A Discourse of Election, for example, even if at a glance the title suggests that this treatise will mainly view God as the Father who plays the central role in electing His people, God the Father does not receive much attention as the first person of the

---

99 Goodwin, Work, 1:401. Goodwin convincingly regards this as a rule, saying that “[I]t is a certain Rule, that Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa, all their works to us-ward of Creation and Redemption, and whatsoever else, they are all works of each Person concurring to them.”
Trinity, rather most of the attention seems to be directed to the second person, Jesus Christ. But Goodwin develops this treatise on the basis of the conviction that the Father is the one who elected his people in Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ, the second person, is the one who “was predestined God-man” and “absolutely first decreed” by the Father who is often expressed as God.  

Given this, is it fair to say that the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, is given more attention in Goodwin’s important works than is God the Father? Jesus Christ actually seems to draw more attention from Goodwin than the Father. There are several treatises expounding truths about Jesus Christ and His role. As mentioned above, in *A Discourse of The Knowledge of the God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ*, after dealing with the nature of “the God-head and the three Persons within it self,” Goodwin goes on to explain many truths about “the Son of God, the Second Person in the Trinity” and His taking of “the man Jesus into personal Union with himself” in book II, further discussing the glory of Jesus Christ as God-Man, “one Lord over all,” and “the Head of the Elect,” all of which were appointed by God the Father in book III.  

There are still more treatises devoted primarily to the second Person of the Trinity as an object of true faith, the preserver of His people, the mediator of the covenant of grace who

---

reconciles between God and the elect,\textsuperscript{106} and the one who will return in the latter-day glory.\textsuperscript{107}

Finally, it must be pointed out that Goodwin penned a massive discourse on the work of the Holy Spirit consisting of ten books. Although Goodwin’s approach to many divine truths was made in a trinitarian way, it is also true that the third Person often seems to be neglected and Goodwin’s attention is mostly given to the first and the second Persons of the Godhead as is proved by the treatise, \textit{The Knowledge of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ}, which was written partly for the purpose of examining the nature of the Trinity. It could be assumed that the Holy Spirit does not receive as much attention as the other two Persons, particularly the second Person, since Goodwin considers God the Father and God the Son as the objects of justifying faith.\textsuperscript{108} However, it cannot be said that Goodwin neglected the importance and necessity of the third Person. Even though the Spirit is not regarded by Goodwin as the object of true faith, he considers the Spirit as the one who applies the object of faith to the elect by raising faith in the hearts of the elect, by way of opening and directing their eyes to see the object of faith and by leading and protecting them from evils unto the completion of salvation. This idea of the Holy Spirit’s work is expounded in detail in the treatise, \textit{Of the Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation}. This treatise, composed of ten volumes with more than five hundreds pages, is devoted to the Holy Spirit, revealing not only truths directly


\textsuperscript{107} Goodwin, \textit{A Discourse of the Supereminence of Christ above Moses}, Works, 5: 439-462.

\textsuperscript{108} Goodwin presents mercies in God’s nature, Jesus Christ, and God’s grace as the objects of justifying faith in the first part of his treatise on faith, \textit{Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith}, Works, 8: 3-255.
related to the work of the Spirit in regenerating, converting, and justifying the elect, but also the role of the Spirit in the life of the regenerate.

Goodwin first deals with the sinful condition of the elect and the necessity of regeneration through reconciliation with God and then shows very specifically how divine grace works in the hearts of the elect by the Holy Spirit. Meanwhile, Goodwin also helps to discern a “genuine saving work of grace specifically distinct from that which is in a temporary believer.”\textsuperscript{109} He closes the treatise with an explanation of “the two essential properties of inherent holiness and sanctification”: “That a regenerate man makes God his chiefest good, and [t]hat he also sets up God and his glory as his chiefest end.”\textsuperscript{110}

Thus far, it has been proved that one of the characteristics of Goodwin’s theology is his trinitarian approach to divine truths. The work of both God the Father as the one who decrees and the Son as the one who achieves the decree is spread throughout all of his treatises, often being dealt with as a prominent subject; and the Holy Spirit, though not addressed as extensively, still appears as the one who applies what the Son has achieved.

\subsection*{2.2.3. Covenant Theology}

Goodwin’s covenant theology is firmly rooted in his doctrine of the Trinity. The fall was the effect of Adam’s breaking the covenant of works, which was caused by Adam’s disobedience rooted in his unbelief, and therein God’s salvific plan, made in eternity,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{109}] Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 6: xiii.
\item[\textsuperscript{110}] Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 6: xiv.
\end{footnotes}
started operating in time through another covenant based on divine grace. It is these two covenants for human salvation that are based on the cooperation of all the persons of the Trinity. The eternal covenant among the Trinity shows the roles given to each Person of the Trinity; the covenant of grace is the specific application of the roles assigned to the Persons in the eternal covenant.

Distinguishing covenant theology from the idea of covenant, which has been universally used and has served its purpose in many ways, Paul E. Brown defines covenant theology as a theology “which makes the idea of the covenant central in its development” and thus “in its developed form expresses the entire system of theology in relation to” the two covenants: one made with Adam and the other established subsequently with Christ on behalf of the elect.\(^{111}\) Even if Brown’s description of covenant theology seems exaggerated in the sense that not every doctrine of one’s theology can be covered by nor derived from covenant theology, it is clear that covenant theology not only played an integral role as a architectonic principle in Reformed soteriology, but it was also related either directly or indirectly to the development of, if not all, many other doctrines in seventeenth-century Reformed theology. In this sense, Mark Jones remarks that “Reformed theology is essentially synonymous with covenant theology.”\(^{112}\) Brown further argues that “in the technical sense of the word covenant theology came into being with English Puritanism,” prior to that of Cocceius on the Continent, and introduces Goodwin’s writings as an example to prove this assertion,

\(^{111}\) Brown, “Principle of the Covenant,” 70-71. Chang distinguishes the covenant as a theology from the covenant as an idea because unlike covenant idea, we call covenant theology when a theological system is framed and construed by covenant theology.

\(^{112}\) Jones, Why Heaven Kissed Earth, 76.
because Goodwin himself bases his covenant theology upon that of his predecessors.\footnote{Brown, “The Principle of the Covenant,” 78.}

In support of Brown’s view, Jones also holds that although the formulation of Goodwin’s covenant theology was made in “slightly different ways than his predecessors,” “the basic elements of federalism are shared by most of the Reformed orthodox in an attempt to understand the central message of the Bible.”\footnote{Jones, \textit{Why Heaven Kissed Earth}, 76.}

According to Jones, for Goodwin the “dichotomous understanding of redemptive history,” included in covenant theology, seems to have had “decisive implications for Goodwin’s law-gospel hermeneutic.”\footnote{Jones, \textit{Why Heaven Kissed Earth}, 77.}

According to Brown and Jones, the \textit{Westminster Confession} and \textit{Savoy Declaration}, in both of which Goodwin participated actively, are good examples proving Goodwin to be a covenant theologian.\footnote{Brown, “The Principle of the Covenant,” 79; Jones, \textit{Why Heaven Kissed Earth}, 77.}

At this point, it is necessary to take a look at Goodwin’s works, themselves, to see the importance of covenant theology within his theological system. To Thomas Goodwin, what were the divine covenants? In summary, they were the means for the ultimate end God gave to His people. Goodwin teaches that the “supreme end of all” is God’s glory itself, and the ultimate end that “God designed to bring his elect into is the fullness of glory.”\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 9: 84-85.}

Thus God chose the covenants as a means for this ultimate end.

Goodwin’s covenant theology has its roots in his doctrine of the Trinity,\footnote{Brown, “The Principle of the Covenant,” 88.} particularly in his idea of the \textit{pactum salutis}. This pre-temporal covenant among the three
persons of the Godhead is “the foundation for” the temporally applied covenant of grace.\textsuperscript{119} Jones goes on to argue that “Goodwin’s Christology, both in terms of Christ’s person and work, are essentially the outworking of, and contingent upon, the \textit{pactum salutis}.”\textsuperscript{120} Accordingly, this simply means that the covenant of redemption is all about salvation since it was decreed after the decree of the fall had been made, although Goodwin’s position on the order of the decrees of election and fall is somewhat obscure.\textsuperscript{121}

This covenant appears in his treatises, \textit{Christ the Mediator, Encouragements to Faith, An Exposition of the First Chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, Of the Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation}, and \textit{Mans Restauration by Grace}, in all of which can be seen the three persons, though it is mostly between the Father and the Son, of the Trinity, who transact for salvation through the covenant of grace. The specifics and nature of covenant will be dealt with in more detail later.

Because Goodwin considers the pre-temporal, intra-trinitarian covenant of redemption to be the foundation of the temporal covenant of grace,\textsuperscript{122} he establishes his soteriology based naturally on the works of the three persons of the Trinity within the covenantal relationship with the elect through the mediation of Jesus Christ. As a prerequisite of the covenant of grace, Goodwin argues, there was a covenant between


\textsuperscript{120} Jones, \textit{Why Heaven Kissed Earth}, 127.


\textsuperscript{122} Cf. Muller, “Towards the \textit{Pactum Salutis},” 15. Muller points out that the use of the \textit{pactum salutis} “as a doctrinal argument for the \textit{ad intra} trinitarian grounding of the \textit{ad extra} work of salvation” was widely accepted by the Reformed orthodox such as David Dickson, Peter Bulkeley, Johannes Cocceius, and Herman Witsius.
God and Adam, which is based on Adam’s behavior. The treatise, *Of the Creatures, and Condition of Their State by Creation*, is the main work in which Goodwin expounds the nature of the covenant of works. Although interchangeably using the terms “covenant of works,” “foeus naturae,” and “the creation law,” Goodwin says he prefers to call this covenant “the creation law, *Jus Creationis*” because he finds this first condition of Adam, “the estate of pure nature by creation-law,” and holds that this law is the law “of what was equitable between” God the Creator and His intelligent creatures such as angels or men and “the measure of this law, in general, lay in an equitable *transaction* between God and them, a congruity, dueness, meetness on either part.”

It is important to note that this covenant was not derived from the covenant of redemption, since God decreed this covenant prior to the *pactum salutis*. In other words, given that the covenant of redemption presupposes the fall, this covenant of nature was decreed necessarily prior to the covenant of redemption. Not only in *Of the Creatures, and Condition of Their State by Creation*, but also in many other works, the covenant of works, the creation law, or the covenant of nature, are primarily mentioned by Goodwin, as being contrasted with the covenant of grace, all in order to expose the superiority of the gospel, or of the covenant of grace, over works. Secondly, this covenant also often appears as the cause that put all of humanity in its miserable condition and brought forth the necessity of God’s grace to reconcile sinners to God. Thirdly, Goodwin uses the covenant of works as a means by which God has made known His riches of glory, though he manages to explain this

---


less clearly than by the covenant of grace. And finally, Goodwin mentions the covenant of works as a condition in which the unregenerate stays. As this analysis shows, Goodwin uses the covenant of works in relation to the covenant of grace either explicitly or implicitly.

What then is the covenant of grace to him? It may be within the bounds to say that the theology found in his works nearly hinges on the covenant of grace except a few treatises, such as his treatise manifesting his confidence in independent church polity, *The Constitution, Right Order and Government of the Churches of Christ.* It seems to be because Goodwin had a deep concern with and placed a strong emphasis on human salvation, which is reflected in the topics he primarily deals with in his works. Accordingly, the covenant of grace is frequently mentioned in most of Goodwin’s work. It is thus of no significance to innumerate all the cases in which the covenant of grace is used. Even in the treatise in which the covenant of grace is not explicitly mentioned, Goodwin develops his idea rooted in the covenant of grace. For example, in the treatise running 435 pages, *Of the Christ the Mediator,* he makes mention of the covenant of grace just five times, but his entire treatment of Christ’s mediatorship in the context of the covenant of redemption supposes Christ as the Mediator of the covenant in light of the covenant of grace.

In his theology, therefore, the covenant of grace plays an architectonic role in close relationship with both the covenant of redemption and the covenant of works, since


128 Even in this work, we find Goodwin mentioning “the covenant of grace” seven times.
all God’s entire salvation plan started from the pre-temporal, intra-trinitarian covenant of redemption, temporally appeared as the covenant of grace, and is completed by faith in the life of the elect.

**2.2.4. Christian Life**

Brown writes that “[t]he Puritans were men of one book in that they endeavored to judge all of life by one book; they were not literally men of one book, because they must be acquainted with all of life if all of life was to be brought to the judgment bar of the Bible.”¹²⁹ For Goodwin, the covenant of grace is not only the divine way by which the sinner may be able to be regenerated, converted, and justified, but it also provides them with a strong motivation to live as a member of the covenant people. Without the conditions for the promises in the covenant of grace, faith and holiness, Goodwin argues, “no man shall see or be accepted of God.”¹³⁰

Entering into the covenant of grace makes a believer look forward to living according to God’s will because of gratitude and thanksgiving for the grace manifested in the covenant. God never says, “I will suffer such an one to sin, and yet keep him blameless according to the covenant of grace,” rather he forbids believers even to “presume upon it” because “it is indeed utterly against the ingenuity of grace.”¹³¹ In other words, Goodwin’s emphasis on covenant theology, especially on the covenant of grace, leads to his deep interest in Christian life, since belonging to God’s covenant

---


people is not the final end of the covenant, but the beginning of life as a covenant people in the covenant relationship with God.

Christian life given as a result of the covenant of grace may be often regarded as equivalent to, or called, the order of salvation, or *ordo salutis*. This life includes the moment of the conception of the life all the way to the time of glorification. This order of salvation can be divided into two groups: one refers to events happening simultaneously in terms of time; the other to occasions following the earlier.\(^{132}\)

Goodwin deals most comprehensively with the entire Christian life in the treatise, *Of the Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation*. His main treatise on the doctrine of justification, *Of the Objects and Act of Justifying Faith*, also expounds the characteristics of the whole Christian life with a focus on faith, but this treatise sheds much light on the nature of justification. When it comes to events of the first group, there is no treatise focused solely on one of them because they were fully treated in the abovementioned treatises. But Goodwin wrote many books concerning the Christian life that follows the events of the first group.

The treatises belonging to the second group are *Patience and Its Perfect Work under Sudden and Sore Trials*, *The Vanity of Thoughts*, *The Heart of Christ in Heaven*, *Aggravation of Sin and Sinning against Knowledge*, *Mercie, Encouragement to Faith*, *Gospel Holiness*, *Three Several Ages of Christians*, *Repentance*, *A Discourse of Thankfulness which is Due to God for His Benefits and Blessings*, and three works concerning casuistry: *Child of Light Walking in the Darkness*, *The Return of Prayers*, and *The Trial of Christian’s Growth*. More than thirty-two percent of his entire works solely

\(^{132}\) We do not specify here what events are belonging to each group because we will identify Goodwin’s version of order of salvation later at the chapter dealing with the order of salvation.
focus on various facets of Christian life. All of these treatises were written for those who had already entered into the covenant of grace by going through the events of the first group.

**2.2.5. Emphasis on Faith**

The next characteristic of Goodwin’s works to be discussed is his emphasis on the role of faith throughout the entire process of salvation. Goodwin once said:

> Accordingly faith doth all in us, till it hath brought us to salvation. It carries along this great venture of a man’s soul safe to heaven, and leaves it not till it hath put it into Christ’s hands in heaven, till itself ends in sight. It begins and it ends with us, and stands by us, when else all would fail.\(^{133}\)

As shown thus far, Goodwin constructed his theological work on the framework of the fourfold state of humanity, and fleshed out his theology, within the covenantal relationship between God and the elect, by referring to the nature of the triune God and by exposing the specific works of each Person of the Trinity done in the life of the Christian. All these, however, are the objective truths from without until one should apprehend and apply them to him/herself by faith. Without faith, nothing in the world can lead sinners to turn their eyes and see the triune God. Apart from belief in Christ, there is no other mighty person who can deliver sinners with his own power from the guilty state in which they are deserving of eternal punishment. Even if they are moved from outside the covenant of grace into the covenant, there is nothing that can keep them from being removed from that gracious relationship with God if they do not keep putting their trust

in Christ. It is only by faith alone that elect sinners can enjoy all the blessings prepared in the covenant of grace through the Mediator, Jesus Christ.

When it comes to the condition of the covenant of grace, Goodwin holds that promises in the covenant of grace “may be called absolute as in opposition to our works and merit,” but given that God requires faith for the promises, he, considering this covenant conditional, presents faith, repentance, and sanctification or holiness as the condition, but he argues that faith “is the most suitable condition for the covenant of grace” because repentance and sanctification “are all seminally included in faith.” Therefore, faith including holiness is in necessity required to enjoy the promises given in the covenant of grace. In other words, faith makes the elect enter into and stay in the covenant of grace, so that they may enjoy the blessings promised in the covenant.

Concerning the enjoyment of the blessings, particularly those of the first group in the order of salvation mentioned above, Goodwin maintains that God justifies the ungodly only by faith alone without works. It is also the faith that “ye are converted by.” As justification is given by faith alone, “so adoption and sonship, being made heirs of life, which you may in some sense make a part of justification, and so the Scripture doth, yet notwithstanding we are said to receive it by faith.” He then goes on to confirm, “[t]ake both in, remission of sins, and being heirs of life, you receive them

---

134 Goodwin, Works, 5: 38.
135 Goodwin, Works, 8:326-327.
137 Goodwin, Works, 3:304.
138 Goodwin, Works, 2: 318.
both through faith, and through faith alone.\textsuperscript{139} In all these covenant blessings, Goodwin shows, faith plays a significant role by giving an essential place to faith.

In Goodwin’s works, it is striking that more emphasis on faith is found in his dealing with the covenant blessings belonging to the second group of the order of salvation. As mentioned above, Goodwin is very interested in the life of the Christian following justification as was simply proved by the number of pages devoted to those related topics. He also explains the importance of faith in the life of the Christian by distinguishing two kinds of divine acts:

Now if you take in the whole work of calling, God doth not call us by faith, not by faith alone, for calling includes sanctification and regeneration; we are saints by calling as well as believers by calling; yet we see that he distinguisheth salvation which is the work of God upon us, from calling which is the work of God in us.\textsuperscript{140}

In order to account for his distinction between the works of God on us and in us, Goodwin first argues that “salvation which is applied here in this world, for we exclude heaven, is not through faith, not through faith alone,”\textsuperscript{141} and that “we are chosen to salvation through faith and sanctification both: it is a medium through which he carries us.”\textsuperscript{142} Both faith and sanctification are the medium God chose to lead us to salvation, not faith alone. He notes that there are “two sorts of degrees of the application of” salvation, both of which are called salvation. One is to have a right, title, or tenure, with which the elect are qualified to have all benefits of salvation; the other is actual possession of them. The full title is already given at once by faith alone, whereas if the

\textsuperscript{139} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2: 318.


\textsuperscript{141} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2: 315.

\textsuperscript{142} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2: 315.
elect are not perfectly sanctified, they “have not that part of salvation completed and accomplished as it shall be in heaven.”\textsuperscript{143} In other words, they could have a full right to enjoy salvation at once by faith alone, which means they received “the remission of sin, and being heirs of life,”\textsuperscript{144} but the actual possession, or enjoyment, of salvation is made possible by degree according to both faith and the degree of sanctification. Accordingly, the complete sense of salvation is composed of the act of God on us by faith alone and the act of God in us, that is, sanctification, by faith and sanctification. But Goodwin adds that although faith is not the sole hand that sanctifies us, he asserts:

\begin{quote}
[H]ow it causeth repentance, how it is the spring of all good works, of all obedience, how it is that which goeth out unto Christ to fetch in holiness and strength, how it sanctifieth and purifieth the heart, how it brings in assurance of salvation, which is called salvation: all this might be shewn that faith doth; how you are kept by the power of God unto salvation, and that through faith\textsuperscript{145}
\end{quote}

Faith is at least conducive to holiness in the life of a Christian as well as the only hand that justifies him/her. He also notes at another place that justifying faith “should be operative and working of holiness.”\textsuperscript{146}

Besides holiness, another important element in the life of a Christian after justification is to persevere to the end in walking in the covenant relationship with God. As Chang writes, “the certainty of this doctrine comes from the certainty of the ultimate glory, which Christ is to achieve in the heaven.” Thus, perseverance to the end is not the work of believers, but of Christ in heaven through the Holy Spirit. In the treatise, Christ

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{143} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2: 315.
\textsuperscript{144} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2: 315.
\textsuperscript{145} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2: 318.
\textsuperscript{146} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:184.
\end{flushright}
Set forth, Goodwin expresses this truth in this way, “if you could suppose there were anything which none of all the former three could do or effect for us, yet his intercession could do it to the utmost, for itself is the uttermost and highest.”

By what means then can Christ keep His people to the end of their lives? In *Patience and Its Perfect Work*, he presents two principles that work patience: faith and faith working by love. Faith and love toward God given as a result of faith play an important role for the believers in sustaining their relationship with God. Thus far, how faith essentially works in Goodwin’s soteriology has been only briefly discussed because these issues will be dealt with throughout the rest of this dissertation.

### 2.2.6. Exposition on Scripture

Although his works are constructed with the framework of the four states of humanity and his emphasis on faith is eminently manifested throughout his entire works, the erroneous assumption that his theology is established and draws on a central dogma, a certain doctrine, or an important theme should be avoided, since nearly all his works are the products of careful exposition of texts in Scripture as found also in other works of Reformed orthodoxy, particularly the Reformed Puritans. When making mention of the framework of his theology, that is, the four human conditions, this does not mean that Goodwin’s other doctrines were logically drawn from such a basic understanding of humanity. Rather, that framework was the conclusion of his long, intense exegetical efforts, especially with the Pauline letters. In addition, his doctrine of faith, and even covenant theology, was also neither such a central idea that he used it as a source from

---

which other doctrines were deducted, nor did he regard this idea as a driving force by which to construct his whole theology.

Nearly all of Goodwin’s treatises, and many chapters of each treatise, begin with Scripture. This simply indicates that his ideas were not solely the fruit of theological speculation based on some central theme or doctrine, but basically demonstrates that his exegetical efforts of the texts are firmly rooted in the exegesis on Scripture. As such, his treatises are very pastoral and heart-targeting rather than speculative and mind-targeting. Goodwin built up his theology on the basis of his own exegesis of the scriptural texts. This may prove useful when considering the fact that many of his treatises consist of his homiletical work.

Besides his sermons, among his major expositional works on Scriptural texts are

*An Exposition of the First Chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians*, *An Exposition of the Second Chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians*, and *An Exposition of the Revelation*. As the titles show, the first two works are an exposition on Paul’s letters regarding the first and second chapters of Ephesians respectively; and the latter is on the Book of Revelation by the Apostle John. Goodwin also wrote some major doctrinal works based on one or

---

148 See Alexander Whyte, *Thirteen Appreciations*, 169-170, where Whyte writes: “Goodwin is always an interpreter, and one of a thousand. So much is this the case that he is still an interpreter even when he lays out and executes his most elaborate, most confessional and most dogmatical works. … Even when he plans out a great scheme of a book on the elaborate, constructive, and dogmatic method of his day, Goodwin no sooner commences the execution of his plan than he falls back immediately on his own favourite method of exegesis and exposition and homiletic. As a matter of fact, he heads every successive chapter, even of his most formal and logical works, with some great Scripture that he forthwith sets himself to expound and to apply. And thus it comes about that book after book, and chapter after chapter, is but another example and illustration of that endlessly interesting method of his. It cannot be too much signalised, for it is his outstanding and honorable distinction over all the great divines of his own and every other day, that every head of doctrine, every proposition of divinity, every chapter and every sentence and every clause of creed or catechism is taken up and is discussed down to the bottom by Goodwin, not as so many abstract, dogmatical propositions, but as so many fountainhead passages of Holy Scripture. All his work, throughout all his twelve volumes, is just so much pulpit exposition and pulpit application of the Word of God.
more scriptural texts. His two treatises on Christology, *Christ the Mediator*, and *Christ Set Forth, The Heart of Christ in Heaven Towards Sinners on Earth*, are respectively based on 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 and Romans 8:34. An excellent book on the doctrine of sanctification, *Gospel Holiness in Heart and Life*, is rooted in Philippians 2:9. There are also two treatises on the glory the elect must see, *The Glory of the Gospel* and *The Blessed State of Glory Which the Saints Possess After Death*, which are respectively based on Colossians 1:26-27 and Revelation 14:13. Additionally, though not based on a single text, his work on the sinfulness of humanity, *An Regenerate Man’s Guiltiness Before God in Respect of Sin and Punishment*, is based on various scriptural texts both in the Old and New Testaments, particularly the Pauline letters, such as Romans and Ephesians. *The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith* is also the fruit of his exposition on multiple texts of Scripture including Exodus 34:6, 7, John 6:44-65 and the fifth chapter of 1 John. There are still other important treatises expounding doctrinal themes on the basis of multiple texts: *A Discourse of Election, The Creatures and the Condition of Their State by Creation, The Knowledge of God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, The Work of the Holy Spirit, The Heart of Christ in Heaven Towards Sinners on Earth*.

Of all these expositional works of Goodwin, the exposition on Ephesians is worth receiving special attention. Many soteriological gems can be found in this volume, which are scattered throughout other works as well. Interestingly, all the characteristics of Goodwin’s works that were discussed earlier, are also found in his exposition on Ephesians. Although he could not complete the exegesis on the whole letter to the Ephesians, this work provides the exegetical foundations for many topics Goodwin treats in his various works, though they may not be dealt with specifically.
His doctrine of God is dealt with in his long exposition of Ephesians 1:3, and the work of the three Persons in relation to salvation is clearly expounded in verses 3-14. Furthermore, Goodwin argues that God elected believers in Christ so that He, as their representative, may save them by means of the covenant of grace. Given that one of the goals of Ephesians was to expound how the sinful elect can be restored to their proper state under grace, it is obvious that this work mainly deals with the third state of Goodwin’s project. He also expounds on each of the other three conditions of humanity, quite specifically in the exposition on 1:10 (the innocent state of Adam and Eve), 2:1-3 (the sinful state of humanity), and 1:20 (the glorious state).

Goodwin’s doctrine of faith, in relation to justification and the gracious nature of salvation, is also clearly dealt with in his exposition on the texts of Paul, in Ephesians 2:8-9 and, in relation to Christ indwelling by faith, 3:14. Goodwin explains the relationship between faith and works, regarding good works as the fruit of faith in his comments on 2:10. Taken all together, it may be said that Goodwin’s works dealing with various theological topics were harvested by his ceaseless reflection on Scripture, and particularly, all the major characteristics of his works are embedded in his exposition on Ephesians in the seminal state.

2.3. *The Objects and Acts of Justifying Faith: An Introduction to Goodwin’s Theology*

Attention should now be given to Goodwin’s work on faith, which is the main topic of this study. This work of Goodwin’s surpasses in quantity any writing focused solely on the doctrine of faith by other Reformed orthodox theologians. Its long discussion of the object of justifying faith is well connected with some important doctrines of God.
Moreover, as Horton writes, unlike the Reformed orthodox theologians on the Continent, Goodwin certainly separated faith and assurance “more radically than most Puritans” in this work.\textsuperscript{149} This treatise is also unique among Goodwin’s works because faith plays a key role in his theology. Whereas Goodwin’s emphasis on faith as one of the characteristics of his works has been examined, the characteristics that are incorporated into a treatise under the title of faith will now be considered.

As mentioned above, Goodwin seems to have the Puritan project in his mind before the Restoration. It has been proved that his project was not simply to write four treatises corresponding to each of the four states of humanity, but that he was planning to flesh out his theology by writing many other works so that his system might build upon the foundation of the fourfold human state. Although Goodwin did not have any central dogma from which he drew other doctrines by logical deduction, for him it was faith that played a key role in both explaining the translation of an elect sinner to the next state and in binding his entire doctrinal findings obtained through the exegesis of the Scriptures. As briefly mentioned above, faith plays a key role in translating sinful humanity into the state of grace and in keeping them from returning to the state of guiltiness.

His soteriology does not start from the sinful state, but from the state of innocence. Why did innocent Adam and Eve fall into the guilty state? Goodwin answers this question by simply attributing the reason to Adam’s unbelief. If doubt of God Himself made Adam and his offspring degenerate into the guilty state, how can the elect sinner be moved to the state of grace, which is the third state? Goodwin maintains that faith restores elect sinners, who, by unbelief, fell into the guilty state, to the state of

grace. During the life of a Christian, faith sanctifies and strengthens one to the end of life. In addition, faith is also needed when those who are restored to the state of grace move to the final glorious state, because the blessed state will be given to those who die in faith, i.e., those who keep their faith to the moment of their death. In this manner, faith is introduced as the very key to the doors between each of the four states of humanity in this work.

Goodwin approaches this faith, which is working for the third state, in a trinitarian perspective as found in his other treatises. The first part of this treatise, titled, *Of the Object of Faith*, is about God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ and presents a good deal of theology proper. In dealing with the issues in the work, he thoroughly draws on his exposition on the corresponding texts of Scripture as a foundation of his arguments. Moreover, it is clearly observed in this treatise that faith does not work apart from the covenant of grace; it can only work and have value within the covenant relationship with God and thus faith does and should work in all areas of Christian life, from justification through sanctification to glorification. All taken together, Goodwin’s treatise on faith includes all the main characteristics embedded in his entire body of work, so this treatise can be considered as either a summary or a blueprint of his Puritan project, depending on the date when he wrote it as well as the content.

Goodwin’s major work on faith is composed of three parts. The first part, *Of the Object of Faith*, deals with three objects of justifying faith: God’s mercy, Christ, and God’s grace. The second part, *Of the Acts of Faith*, shows the acts of faith as a sight of God and the necessity of the acts of the will and examines the nature of true assurance of
faith and “the actings of faith in prayer.”¹⁵⁰ The last part of the treatise, *Of the Properties of Faith*, is about the relationship between faith and good works, the difficulty of faith, and the duty to endeavor to believe. Among the three parts, according to the younger Goodwin, a chapter belonging to the second part was written in Latin, being written when Goodwin commenced his Bachelor of Divinity in Cambridge in 1630. A sermon on Hebrews 3:10, preached by Goodwin in Ely in 1622, was also incorporated into the second part of the treatise. Furthermore, Chang assumes that:

TG 8:562 reveals Part III is a work done by Goodwin at his ministry of the early 1630s when Cambridge was still in a status of spiritual revival. His conversion into congregationalism in 1633 prevented him from a ministry like the one he described here. The spiritual decline in Oxford in 1650s does not match the situation shown in TG 8:562. … Love of using Ex. 34:6-7 in his other early works (e.g. TG 3:25-30 is a short form of Chapters 3-11 of Book I, Part I, upon the names of God, Jehovah and etc., in Ex 34:6-7; see TG 8:11-108) reinforces the possibility that Part I is also a work in 1630 or so.¹⁵¹

What Chang means here is that Goodwin Jr. insinuates that Goodwin was ministering to a given parish in Part III, and thus that this part had to be written before his conversion into congregationalism in 1633, since he left Cambridge in the next year for that reason. If Chang’s assumption is correct, and considering the first two evidences, it may be presumed that most of Goodwin’s work on faith was written in the 1620s and early 1630s, at the latest, before 1640. Therefore, this work may possibly be considered to be an introduction to the Puritan project, which is first mentioned in Thurloe’s letter in 1657, if not as a blueprint itself.

Conclusion

Goodwin’s work on faith, Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith, seems to have been written earlier than most of his other works, in particular, the four treatises Lawrence mentions as corresponding to Goodwin’s Puritan project. It may be because he thought of faith, as a hand which would receive what God has done and the blessings reserved in the covenant of grace, and thus that faith may could play a role as a theme under which the doctrines of soteriology can best be expressed. In other words, for him, faith was a key concept that helped him to build up his own theology on the basis of the fourfold human state.

However, his theology was not founded on the central dogma, the doctrine of faith, by a logical deductive approach. Unlike the doctrines of predestination or the divine decrees from which one can logically draw other doctrines, faith is not a doctrine that has in itself a certain fixed theological meaning, but its theological implication draws on the object which faith embraces, so the doctrine of faith cannot be used as a central dogma as was evidenced by how some modern theologians have dealt with Reformed orthodox theology.152 In establishing his theology, Goodwin elicited the topics from Scripture, and the topics “echoed centuries-old assumptions concerning the basic topics in theology and were given their content on the basis of rather painstaking reflection on Scripture and tradition.”153 Faith was simply used by him as a means that holds and expresses those topics of his theological system efficiently. His exposition on the letter to the Ephesians

---

152 Muller argues that any forms of central dogma, whether they indicate a continuity or disjunction between Calvin and Reformed orthodoxy, must be precluded. For more detail, see Muller, After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 94-98.

153 Muller, After Calvin, 95.
is a good example of his “painstaking reflection on Scripture.” As shown above, it provides him with a firm Scriptural foundation, or an exegetical base, for his soteriology, and his soteriology was, in turn, expanded to his whole theology. Accordingly, Goodwin’s work on faith may be considered as playing an introductory role to his entire theological project.

Three facts demonstrate why it is that faith was so important to him that he focused this much effort in writing a treatise on faith and using it as the introduction to his life’s project. First, attention should be given to his conversion experience. It is common to all people that one’s experience somehow plays a certain role in shaping one’s view of the world. There is no exception in the formation of one’s theology. Rather, theological ideas are more deeply influenced by one’s own personal experience. We can clearly see how much Goodwin was spiritually impacted by his conversion in his own memoirs, which were later included in his biography, written by his son. From that time on, when Goodwin came to know that his early assurance of his salvation was false, he paid special attention to the nature, assurance, and fruit of true faith.

Second, the framework of his Puritan project, the fourfold state of humanity, must be explained by faith because the link that connects each state is faith. The elect sinner, who fell into the sinful, guilty state by *unbelief* and *doubt* of God’s Word, could be restored *by faith* in the Word, Jesus Christ, given graciously in a covenant relationship with God. Although all the work of salvation is the work of the triune God, faith applies the work to the elect individual through the Holy Ghost. It is also *by faith* that the

---

restored sinner can stay in the covenant and can go through all the blessings of the order of salvation promised in the covenant of grace. The blessed state of glory will finally be given to those who die in faith as an “exceeding great reward” to their walking before God in this life by faith. Goodwin also argues that the faith that justifies in this life is “a pre-requisite to glory” and that holiness worked by faith is “a preparation to this glory.”

Third, all the major characteristics described above and their soteriological emphases that can be found in his entire collection of work can also be found in this work on faith as proved above. The trinitarian approach, the framework of the fourfold human state, and covenant theology are all included, or at least supposed, in this work as a result of his painstaking reflections on Scripture.

In summary, Goodwin’s major treatise on faith, *Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith*, may be regarded as an introduction to his theological project because his conversion experience from false faith to true faith played an essential role in shaping his theology. In addition, the theme of faith seems to function in the framework of the project both as the key element and as the interconnector for the four human states, and this work includes the same major characteristics of the project, which are also found in his other works. Additionally, faith should not be regarded as the central dogma from which he established his own system by a purely deductive approach, but his theology is the fruit of his exegetical efforts in Scripture, and he chose faith as a means through which he expresses the Puritan project most clearly.

---


PART I: FAITH AND COVENANT
CHAPTER THREE

FAITH AND RELATIONSHIP BROKEN

Introduction

Thus far, we have shown that in Goodwin’s theology the doctrine of faith is a doctrine penetrating his theological project as a connecting link. For him, faith should not be simply considered to be a *locus* in a theological system. Although diverse theological topics are interwoven throughout his system, his doctrine of faith is a key concept in his entire soteriology. In other words, Goodwin not only understands faith to be a vital element for our justification, but he also deals with faith in various soteriological *loci*. In this manner, Goodwin treats faith as a key concept in building up his soteriology, but what should be noted is that it is not because faith has such a high value in itself before God. There is no internal power, or value in faith to save sinners. For Goodwin, faith is just an instrument that God ordained to use for the salvation of his elect. This faith, however, is not used alone in a vacuum as a means of salvation without any relationship with other factors, but it was designed by God in eternity past to play its given role in the framework of the covenant God made with humanity. In the following two chapters, we will examine how Goodwin understands faith’s role in the covenantal relationship with God. In the covenant of works, faith was not required as a condition for the reward promised in the covenant. Rather, Adam’s unbelief in God and his word caused Adam to break the covenant. However, as an antidote to the fall triggered by Adam’s unbelief and his breaking of the covenant of works, God established another covenant mediated by the God-man, Jesus Christ, and chose faith in Christ as a means by which the sinful elect
could enter the covenant. Therefore, Goodwin maintains that what was destroyed by unbelief in God in the one covenant is restored by means of belief in Christ in the framework of the other covenant.

3.1. **Conflicting Understanding of Conditionality in the Divine Covenants**

Ever since the nineteenth century, many topics pertaining to the sixteenth and seventeenth-century covenant theology have been actively discussed. Both historians and theologians have also presented various views on Reformed covenant theology.¹ There are, therefore, various taxonomies applied to the history of the Reformed covenant tradition, since, as Beach states, there is no consensus within historical scholarship regarding “the rise, development, significance, and meaning of Reformed covenant theology.”² One of the important taxonomies of the covenant theology is about whether there is a continuity or discontinuity in the development of the Reformed covenant theology. Although the scholarship of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century covenant, or federal, theology was already introduced in the first chapter, for the purpose of this chapter we will take a look again at modern scholarship on covenant theology with a focus on the various interpretations of the conditionality of the covenant of grace.

---

¹ For more information on the names of such scholars and on their interpretations of covenant theology, see Woolsey, *Unity and Continuity*, 80-158; J. Mark Beach, *Christ and the Covenant: Francis Turretin’s Federal Theology as a Defense of the Doctrine of Grace* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co., 2007), 22-64. Both authors present a long list of scholars who researched the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Reformed covenant theology. Woolsey provides a thorough historiography of covenant thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in an orderly manner with a brief summary of each scholar’s argument. Beach’s presentation is also quite unique in its classification of the diverse interpretations of “Federal theology” in terms of historical research and theological assessment on this topic.

² Beach, *Christ and the Covenant*, 61.
3.1.1. Modern Interpretations of Reformed Covenant Theology

In reviewing covenant theology in light of modern interpretation, what first should be done is to examine the arguments that stress difference and discontinuity within the Reformed covenant tradition throughout the post-Reformation era. These arguments fall into two categories. One theory focuses on the discontinuity between the covenant concepts of the sixteenth-century Reformers and the federal theology of the Reformed orthodox in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In particular, the theory arguing the significant discontinuity between Calvin and the seventeenth-century covenant theologians is often called “Calvin against Calvinists” theory. Karl Barth, a leading proponent of this theory, maintains that Reformed covenant theology was influenced by Melanchton’s thought on natural law, and particularly that the covenant of works contained in seventeenth-century federal theology turned divine covenant in Scripture into a legal relationship between God and his people. Many theologians, who were influenced by Barth, also have stood on similar ground.  

The other theory belonging to the discontinuity argument is the so-called “two traditions theory,” which teaches that when Reformed theology first emerged, it was formed into two distinct covenant traditions that developed throughout the seventeenth century. Supposing that Reformed theology was partly influenced by Melanchton, Heppe, who laid the foundation of this theory, maintains that in the Reformed tradition there was a German tradition, which was centered on a biblical covenant concept, and a Genevan tradition that was based on the doctrine of double predestination.  

---

3 Among those scholars are Karl Barth, Perry Miller, F. W. Dillistone, Kendall, D. Poole, James B. Torrance, Rolston Holmes III, and David A. Weir.

4 Heinrich Heppe, *Dogmatik des deutschen Protestantismus im sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols.
scholars argue that in the course of the development of the Reformed covenant theology, we can find two contrary traditions: one is the Rhineland tradition initiated and developed mainly by Zwingli and Bullinger, who taught that covenant has a bilateral character; the other is the Genevan tradition of Calvin and Beza with an emphasis on the unilateral character of the covenant. This theory differs slightly from the former insofar as the former connects covenant theology to the development of the German tradition, and the doctrine of predestination to that of the Genevan tradition, whereas the latter explains both traditions in terms of their covenant concepts, though with different emphases. Among those belonging to this two-tradition-interpretation of Reformed covenant theology is also a body of scholars who limit their interests to the origin and/or development of these two distinct covenant traditions as found in Puritan thought.

Opposing those theories that focus on the difference and discontinuity in the Reformed covenant tradition, some scholars hold that although there could be certain minor differences, yet in essence there is only one covenant tradition within Reformed theology.

Despite these various theories concerning the Reformed covenant tradition, one significant issue underlying each of them is the problem of whether the covenant of grace is bilateral or unilateral, or whether it is conditional or absolute. Those who uphold the

---

(Gotha, 1857), I, 139ff, quoted in Beach, *Christ and the Covenant*, 23.


7 Among them are Anthony Hoekema, John von Rohr, Lyle Bierma, Richard Muller, C. Venema, Andrew Woolsey, and Mark Beach.
“Calvin against Calvinists” theory argue that as the covenant of works, which is not found in Calvin’s covenant concept, appeared and was emphasized in the seventeenth century, the responsibility of humanity became overly emphasized in the covenant of grace. As a result God’s sovereignty was compromised, and finally the covenant of grace was understood as conditional. Moreover, those, who proposed two different traditions in Reformed covenant theology, also argued their theory in close relation to the conditionality and/or mutuality of the covenants. They attempted to place value on the human role and responsibility by stressing the mutual elements in the biblical covenant concept-distinguishing and contrasting the Rhineland understanding of the conditional covenant of grace with the unconditional, absolute covenant of grace understood by the Genevan tradition. In contrast, scholars who find an essential unity and continuity in the Reformed covenant tradition pay close and consistent attention to the fact that Reformed covenant theology was always interested in showing conditionality in the covenant of grace without any weakening of the absoluteness of the covenant. They, of course, never forget to say that the conditions of the covenant of grace, faith and obedience, cannot be understood as meritorious. Accordingly, it may be said that one of the biggest issues concerning Reformed covenant theology is the issue of the mutuality, or conditionality, of the covenant of grace.

3.1.2. Controversies Concerning the Conditionality of the Covenants in the Seventeenth Century

The conflicting understandings of modern scholarship on the issue of the conditionality, or mutuality, of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century theology of the covenant of grace are rooted in the diverse interpretations of the divine covenants in that era. In his book,
Planelogia, John Flavel opens the section dealing with the conditionality of the new covenant by noting that:

This Question, Whether the Covenant of Grace be conditionate or absolute, was moved (as a learned Man observes) in the former Age, by occasion of the Controversy about Justification, betwixt the Protestants and Papists. Among the protestants, some denied, and others affirmed the Conditionality of the Gospel covenant.\(^8\)

It was on seventeenth-century English soil that this issue was brought to the fore of public notice. There were roughly four groups of people with differing ideas concerning the conditionality of the covenant of grace: Antinomians, Neonomians, Arminians and the Reformed orthodox.

First, there were the Antinomians who denied conditions for the covenant of grace. For them, any conditions for the covenant of grace removed the gracious character of the covenant and thus turned it back into a covenant of works. Tobias Crisp, though often regarded as a moderate Antinomian,\(^9\) sharply distinguishes “this new covenant” from “all other covenants that God made with men” because “[a]ll other covenants of God besides this, runne upon a stipulation, and the promise runs altogether upon condition on both sides.”\(^10\) He then goes on to declare that “there is not any condition in this covenant. … I say, the New Covenant is without any conditions whatsoever on mans part.”\(^11\) While being aware that he goes “against the strain of some,” he is convinced that

---


\(^10\) Tobias Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted in Fourteen Sermons Preached in and neere London* (London: [s.n.], Printed in the year, 1644), 123.

his argument shall “be firmly proved from Scripture.” Based on Scripture, therefore, Crisp sets forth three reasons why he strongly opposes the conditionality of the covenant of grace. The first reason is because the covenant of grace is called the *everlasting covenant*. Given that Adam as the representative of humanity was so weak that he could not keep the first covenant, if this new covenant in which the fallen elect “stands on any conditions to be performed on mans part,” it is even more obvious, he argues, that “it cannot be a everlasting covenant except man were so confirmed in righteousness, that he should never fail in that which is his part,”\(^{12}\) which is stated in the second covenant. The second reason he presents is that there is no obligation on man to perform any conditions in the covenant relationship with God. According to Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hebrews, he argues, “all the ties are on God himselfe, and nothing at all upon man.”\(^ {13}\) The last reason by which he refutes the existence of any conditions for the covenant is significant, since it is deeply related to another important controversy taking place in seventeenth-century England: the controversy over so-called “eternal justification.” Crisp clearly argues that “the covenant in the actuall substance of it, is made good to a person before he can doe anything” in that “the covenant is nothing but Gods love to man, Gods love to give himselfe to man, Gods love to take man to himself,” and this love is bestowed upon man before he can do anything.\(^ {14}\) He expands his argument to the relationship between faith and justification. Not only human works, but also even faith should not be considered to be a condition of the covenant of grace. Viewing “our act of believing” as a work, he,

\(^{12}\) Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted*, 124.

\(^{13}\) Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted*, 125.

\(^{14}\) Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted*, 128.
referring to Rom. 4:5, confirms that the covenant does not depend upon a work at all. In addition, he maintains that it is not faith, but Christ alone who justifies the ungodly. He even denies that Christ justifies them with faith. Rather, he affirms that “Christ doth justify a person before he doth believe: For, he that believes is justified, before he believes.” If faith is not any condition in any sense and justification precedes faith in a chronological order, what then does faith serve? Referring to Hebrews 11:1, Crisp answers this question with no hesitation;

I answer, it serves for the manifestation of that justification which Christ puts upon a person by himself alone, that you by believing on him, may have the declaration, and manifestation of your justification. Mark what the Apostle saith, whereby you shall find the true use of faith, that it is not the condition, without which we receive no benefit from Christ, but rather it is the manifestation of that which is already done and received.  

Tobias Crisp not only rejects any idea of works on the part of humanity as a condition, but he even denies that faith can be a prerequisite condition for the covenant of grace in any sense, because considering faith as an act on humanity’s part, he argues that a sinner would be able to enter the covenant of grace by Christ, who alone justifies the ungodly, before the sinner believes in Him, and faith simply shows that the justified sinner is presently in the covenant relationship with God. In other words, faith is the believer’s awareness of his justification in foro conscientia. Moreover, Crisp does not even admit faith’s instrumental role for entrance into the covenant of grace, since he thinks faith is the fruit that follows and flows from “Christ the root, being united beforehand to the persons that do believe.”

Despite all his rejection of any element coming, as a condition of the covenant of grace, from the human side, however, Crisp maintains that

---

15 Crisp, Christ Alone Exalted, 131.

16 Crisp, Christ Alone Exalted, 597.
good works, or obedience, “necessarily follow the free Grace of Christ,” 17 “not causally, but consequently.” 18 This does not mean that Crisp changed his mind regarding the conditionality of the covenant of grace so that he came to consider human works and obedience as a necessary condition for salvation. He does not “claim Salvation as a debt due for the works and obedience, neither our Works of Righteousness necessary Attendents on Grace as co-assistents.” 19 What he intends to say is that “God in Christ hath engaged himself to establish and set up Obedience, in Heart and Life of such on whom he entails Salvation by Grace” so that “God himself hath inseparably joined Salvation, and a holy Life.” 20 Taken all together, Crisp never accepts any form of conditional elements performed by humanity in the covenant relationship with God, but he acknowledges the necessity of good works, or obedience to the Law, as a consequence of the unconditional grace given in the covenant of grace. 21

There was also a slightly different group of people who wanted to give no room for any role of law in the life of the converted. In his book Blown by the Spirit, David R. Como devotes a chapter to the idea of “an overt rejection of the Mosaic Law,” which he calls “Ultra-Antinomianism.” 22 Como notes that as a result of their dislike of the

17 Tobias Crisp, Christ Alone Exalted: Being the Complete Works of Tobias Crisp D.D. Containing XLII Sermons on Several Texts of Scripture, 4 Vols. (London: 1690), IV: 34. This is an expanded edition of Crisp’s Christ Alone Exalted(1643), to which Samuel Crisp added his father’s unpublished sermons in 1690.

18 Crisp, Works, IV: 35.

19 Crisp, Works, IV: 34.

20 Crisp, Works, IV: 35.


22 David R. Como, Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2004), 381.
“legalistic bent of mainstream puritan piety,” some Antinomians detached themselves further and further away from it and accordingly produced a mutant, which overtly caused the rejection of the Mosaic Law in all its uses and/or the refusal of use of the “many forms through which puritan piety manifested itself,” such as the institutional means of grace like “hearing the word, taking communion, and public prayer,” as well as non-institutional practices like “private prayer, Bible-reading, repetition of sermons, fasting, catechizing one’s family, and most of all, dutiful observance of the Sabbath.”

Unlike moderate Antinomians like Tobias Crisp, who, though rejecting the conditionality of the covenant of grace, acknowledged the necessity of good works and obedience to the law, those who rejected any use of the Mosaic Law in the life of a Christian held the view that the entire Mosaic Law had been supplanted with the new distinctive “Law of Syon” so that those who entered the covenant of grace no longer need to keep the laws belonging to the Law of Moses. Therefore, no Christian ministers, they argued, “had a commission to preach it, either.” Como then concludes that taking the argument of two distinct laws, they pushed “into territory that more reputable figures such as Brearly, Eaton, and Towne had clearly wanted to avoid.”

As for those who emphasized the inward mystical illumination by the Spirit, but rejected all Puritan forms of piety, although there is no written text by such Ultra-Antinomians, Como writes, based on the words both of Thomas Shepard, a leading Anti-Antinomian in New England and of John Everarde, an Antinomian, there is a good reason to believe that “there were clusters of

---

23 Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, 381.


people” 26 in New England as well as in London who “had shaken off all ordinances” and chosen instead to pursue the indwelling of the Spirit for immediate revelation.27

There were also some theologians standing on the other side who strongly criticized the Antinomian idea of an absolute unconditional, unilateral covenant relationship between God and His people and thus placed so much emphasis on human obedience in the covenant of grace that they believed the ultimate justification of the believer is the result both of Christ’s merit and of the “believer’s own good works in obedience to the new Law.”28 These theologians are often called the Neonomians. Over against the Antinomian persuasion of the unconditional, unilateral covenant of grace, Richard Baxter, a leading Presbyterian of the seventeenth century, strongly upheld the conditional, bilateral covenant of grace in his writings. In his Confession, Baxter confesses as follows:

I do fully believe, that when a true Believer is actually Justified, from all his sins past, yet that all the continuance or non-amission of that Justified state, and also the pardon of all following sins and also his final Absolution in Judgement, are all still Conditional. Though I believe that they are certainly and infallibly future, and the event foretold in Scripture, and God, as it were, engaged to accomplish it, and that God has actually and absolutely decreed it, (I mean, there is no Condition of the act of Decree, and also that he hath Decreed immutably the infallible futurition of the event) …; Yet still I am certain, the Promise doth give us personally our Right to these benefits on condition. The same God that saw it meet to Decree the event absolutely, did also see it meet to accomplish that Decree, by making a conditional Grant or Promise of the blessing, and to enable his elect to perform the Condition, that so he might lead men to heaven under his Government by a Law, and the force of its motives, and not as bruits, nor as masterless, and Lawless.29

26 Como, Blown by the Spirit, 387.
27 Como, Blown by the Spirit, 390.
28 Kevan, Grace of the Law, 205.
Although all future blessings of the elect promised in the covenant of grace are certain and infallible because God decreed and will accomplish them, this does not change another decree of God to grant all these blessings to those who perform the given conditions.

Baxter more clearly explains his understanding of the conditionality of the covenant of grace in his *Aphorismes of Justification*, arguing that because there are two covenants “with their distinct conditions,” and neither of the covenants have been repealed yet, we must have “twofold righteousness.” Each of the two kinds of righteousness is “absolutely necessary to salvation” and comes from each covenant respectively. The former is a legal righteousness that is from perfect obedience to the law, that is, the covenant of works, whereas the latter is an evangelical righteousness, or “the righteousness from the new Covenant,” that is, the covenant of grace. Legal righteousness does not consist “in any qualifications of our own persons, or action performed by us,” he writes, “but it is wholly without us in Christ.” On the contrary, the evangelical righteousness, or the righteousness of the new covenant, cannot be gained simply by way of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Rather, Baxter maintains that “our evangelicall Righteousness is not without us in Christ, as our legal Righteousness is: but consisteth in our own actions of Faith and Gospel obedience.” In other words, taking faith as our “meritorious” action, Baxter argues that those who “do believe, and obey the

---


Gospel” not “only shall have part in Christ’s satisfaction and so in him be legally righteousness,” but they are “in themselves Evangelically Righteousness.” He then concludes that to affirm that “our Evangelical or new Covenant-Righteousness is in Christ, and not in our selves, or performed by Christ, and not by our selves, is such a monstrous piece of Antinomian doctrine.”

Daniel Williams, who took over the lead from Richard Baxter in opposition to Antinomianism, defines the covenant of grace as “the way that God hath ordained to apply to sinners that salvation which is prepared by Christ, and which he will enable the Elect to comply with.” Citing John Flavel’s definition of an antecedent condition of the covenant of grace, that is, faith, he presents eight characteristics of the covenant of grace:

1. The Conditions do not merit the blessings promised. 2. The conditions are not uncertain; for Christ hath undertaken that the elect shall perform them. 3. They are performed by Grace, and not by Natural power. 4. They are performed by Men, and not by Christ, though it is by Christ that any are enabled to perform them … 5. It’s from God’s will in the Promise, that they are made to be Conditions, he connected the Benefit and the Duty … 6. These Conditions are our Duty by God’s Command … 7. The Covenant, though conditional, is a Disposition of Grace: There’s Grace in giving Ability to perform the Condition, as well as in bestowing the Benefits … 8. The reason why we use the word Condition, is, because it best fits with Man’s relation to God, in his Dealings with us, as his Subject in Tryal for Eternity. Christ, … as a King or a Priest upon his

32 Baxter, Aphorismes of Justification, 108.

33 Baxter, Aphorismes of Justification, 111.

34 Daniel Williams, Gospel-Truth Stated and Vindicated: Wherein Some of Dr. Crisp’s Opinions Are Considered; And the Opposite Truth Are Plainly Stated and Confirmed (London: Printed for John Dunton, at the Raven in the Poultry, 1692), 45.

35 Flavel, Planelogia, 248-49. Flavel defines the valid antecedent condition of the covenant of grace as follows: “An Antecedent Condition signifying no more than an Act of ours, which thought it be neither perfect in every degree, nor in the least meritorious of the benefit conferred; nor performed in our own natural strength; yet according to the constitution of the Covenant, is required of us in order to the blessings consequent thereupon by virtue of the Promise: and consequently the benefits and mercies granted in the Promise in this order are, and must be suspended by the Donor or Disposer of them, until it be performed. Such a Condition we affirm Faith to be.”
Throne, he dispenseth all: he enjoyns the Conditions in order to the Benefits; and makes the Benefits Motives to our Compliance with the Conditions. ... Now what word is so proper to express the Duties as enjoyned Means of Benefits, like this word Conditions?  

Williams makes sure that the covenant of grace involves conditions and that these conditions must be performed by human beings, though grace enables them to do so. In addition, he relates the conditions to the benefits promised in the covenant of grace. In other words, God determined to bestow these covenant blessings on His people on the condition that they perform the conditions, so that they may be motivated by the blessings to meet the conditions. Therefore, in order to enjoy the benefits promised in the covenant, anyone, who enters the covenant by satisfying the conditions, such as faith and repentance, must perform the duties “as enjoyned Means of Benefits.”

It is the Arminians who place more emphasis than the Neonomians on faith and obedience as an act of a human party in the covenant of grace. Muller finds Arminius employing “three sets of terms” in his teaching of doctrines relating to the covenants. Arminius’s idea of foedus primaevum, a covenant made with God and Adam, is close in similarity to the Reformed doctrine of foedus operum, or foedus naturale, but he, unlike his contemporary and other typical Reformed orthodox theologians, excludes the Mosaic covenant from his concept of the Gospel, Evangelion, or “the new covenant confirmed in Christ,” and places it in contrast both to the foedus primaevum and to the promise or Religio alterius given to the faithful from Abraham to Christ as preparation for the Gospel as well as to the Gospel itself. Nevertheless, the Law of Moses is almost

---

36 Williams, Gospel-Truth, 45-46.

identical with the prelapsarian *foedus primaevum* in the sense that human obedience is strictly required for the promised blessings, whereas both the *foedus primaevum* and the new covenant share “in the obedience required and in possibility of performance,” though both must be aided by prevenient supernatural grace from God. However, Arminius’s view on a strong distinction between the Mosaic covenant and the soteriological elements of covenant present as promise to the people of God, argues Muller, stands in opposition to the Reformed orthodox view of the Mosaic covenant and produces “a tension in Arminius’s teaching between the emphasis on … the *tertius usus legis* and the adumbration in his doctrine of Christian liberty and its application in love, fear, trust and honor toward God of a new rationale for obedience, transcending the law, which derives from the new covenant and its gracious reconstitution of man as a free moral agent.”38 It is in Lamborch’s *Theologia Christiana* that the Arminian view of the conditionality of the covenant of grace is clearly manifest.

A final perspective regarding the conditionality of the covenant of grace that should be considered is that of the Reformed orthodox. Between both extremes, one overly emphasizing the unilateral, unconditional aspect of the covenant, and the other focusing too much on the duty human beings must bear for consummating the covenant, Reformed orthodox theologians sought to balance these two characteristics by teaching the covenant as both “one-sided” (*monopleuron*) and “two-sided” (*depleuron*).39 Von

---


39 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 305. See also Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 120-22; “Covenant and Conscience in English Reformed Theology: Three Variations on a 17th Century Theme,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 42(1980): 310. Muller also points out in this article that two important Puritan thinkers, William Perkins and William Ames, who laid a foundation for the later Puritan movement, already “incorporated into their systems concepts of *foedus depleuron* and *foedus monopleuron*.”
Rohr also affirms that the Puritans regarded the covenant of grace both as conditional and absolute.⁴⁰ The Reformed orthodox were in general agreement on the seemingly contradictory argument that the covenant of grace is unconditional, unilateral, and absolute on the one hand, but on the other hand conditional, bilateral, and hypothetical in its nature. Their views of covenant condition were not monolithic, but they were nuanced. Some of the Reformed orthodox such as Patrick Gillespie, Francis Roberts, and Francis Turretin, rejected any antecedent conditions as “the meritorious and impulsive cause to obtain the benefits of the covenant,” and argued that the covenant of grace might be said to be conditional since God required consequent conditions for “the instrumental cause, receptive of the promises of the covenant . . . admitted into the fellowship of the covenant (which flows from grace itself).”⁴¹ Flavel also refuses “such antecedent conditions which have the force of a meritorious and impulsive cause,” but he adds that “[a]n Antecedent Condition signifying no more than an Act of ours, . . . is required of us in order to the blessings consequent thereupon by vertue of the Promise. . . . Such a Condition we affirm Faith to be.”⁴² Although Turretin denies antecedent conditions that play a meritorious role for the covenant, he does not reject all antecedent conditions because he also notes that, in the sense that the condition is antecedent to the acceptance of the covenant, “faith is the sole condition of the covenant because it alone embraces Christ with his

---

⁴⁰ Von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 53.


benefits.”\textsuperscript{43} In other words, unlike the Antinomians, some Reformed orthodox such as Turretin and Flavel commonly admit that faith as the conditio sine qua non can neither causally nor meritoriously precede the covenant of grace,\textsuperscript{44} but instrumentally does precede the covenant of grace in timely order. John Downame, who was under the influence of his Puritan predecessors,\textsuperscript{45} also confirms this view by holding that “[t]he means to make the Covenant effectuall unto us, is Faith, the condition of the Covenant.”\textsuperscript{46} Moreover, Turretin goes on to note that holiness and obedience are not a causal condition for justification, but they are a subsequent condition as “the means and the way by which we arrive at the full possession of the blessings of the covenant,” because they pertain to the covenant of grace “as inseparable attendants of true and sincere faith.”\textsuperscript{47} Therefore, these Reformed orthodox theologians did not keep themselves from calling faith a condition.

There were also some Reformed orthodox thinkers who hesitated to use the term “condition” in their explication of the covenant of grace. In his magnum opus, De Redelijke Godsdienst (English title is Christian’s Reasonable Service), a Dutch Nadere Reformatie theologian, Wilhelmus à Brakel, sometimes interchangeably uses the term “conditions” with “the promises” offered by God in the covenant of grace. In this case,

\textsuperscript{43} Turretin, Institutes, 2: 189.

\textsuperscript{44} Cf. John Ball, A Treatise of the Covenant of Grace …(London: Printed by G. Miller, 1645), 18-19. In this treatise, John Ball writes that “faith alone is the cause of Justification and Salvation,” but he immediately adds that “faith is a necessary and lively instrument of Justification,” that is, an instrumental cause, not “efficient” cause, of the covenant of grace.

\textsuperscript{45} Muller, “Covenant and Conscience,” 314.


\textsuperscript{47} Turretin, Institutes, 2: 189.
covenant conditions are not something that “man promises to fulfill,” but they are “benefits and promises which are offered and presented from God’s side”\(^{48}\) by which God motivates and allures “man to enter into covenant with Him.”\(^{49}\) Brakel deals next with conditions God requires of us. He writes that “God places no conditions upon man at all” and that to believe, or to have faith, is not an act that is a “prerequisite quality in someone who enters into this covenant.”\(^{50}\) He then goes a step further, saying that a prerequisite quality is not a condition, but only qualities for a person to enter into a covenant.\(^{51}\) Therefore, he concludes that “all conditions to be met from the side of man are absolutely excluded,”\(^{52}\) and that the act of believing at best “could be called \textit{conditio, sine qua non},” but also that this condition “does not pertain to the essence of the matter itself.”\(^{53}\) Moreover, he is also reluctant to regard good works and obedience as conditions required in the covenant of grace. Rather he is willing to see them as obligations of all covenant members who find “delight in sanctification, … wishing to live a godly life.”\(^{54}\) Those who enter the covenant must have “both a true delight in, and a true love for” sanctification and thus stay in the covenant pursuing a sanctified life.

Accordingly, à Brakel confirms that good works and obedience are not the conditions of


\(^{50}\) Brakel, \textit{Christian’s Reasonable Service}, 1: 441.


the covenant, but the effects rooted in the love-relationship with God, which constitutes the covenant of grace.\textsuperscript{55}

As examined thus far, although there are some nuanced positions concerning the conditionality of the covenant of grace among Reformed orthodox theologians in the seventeenth century, there is no significant discrepancy on it among them. They all reject any meritorious, efficiently causal conditions of the covenant in any sense, but they acknowledge the necessity of faith as \textit{an instrument or means} for receiving God’s grace, and that obedience and good works are \textit{subsequent} conditions of the covenant or at the very least necessary obligations of covenant members based on the love-relationship between God and His covenant people.

3.2. Breaking the Covenant Relationship with God: Unbelief

Among these various interpretations of the conditionality of the covenant of grace, Goodwin’s view coincides with the tenor of the Reformed orthodox. In fact, his view has some unique points as well. At this point, the nature of his understanding of this issue with emphasis on the role of faith will be examined. Before directly jumping into the role of faith in the covenant of grace, we must deal with the covenant of works first because Goodwin develops his idea concerning the role of faith in the covenants of works and grace in a parallel structure. In the former, the lack of faith brought about Adam’s fall; whereas, in the latter, faith in God is used as a means both to reconcile the sinful offenders and God the offended through the covenant of grace and to keep this reconciled relationship by leading sinners to obey God’s law voluntarily in the covenant of grace.

3.2.1. The Covenant of Works Defined: Jus Creationis

*Of Creatures, and the Condition of Their State by Creation* is composed of two books, which are among Goodwin’s works that deal mainly with the prelapsarian covenant between God and Adam. As Lawrence points out, this work was written as a response to the pantheistic claims in his day, though he does not specifically name those who spread this heterodox opinion concerning God.

Over against this claim, therefore, Goodwin in the first book of this work intends to show a clear distinction, and an infinite distance, between God the creator and all his intelligent creatures. The second book of this work addresses mainly the original relationship in the first creation between God and his intelligent creatures, in particular Adam and his posterity, so that Goodwin might “set out the right and true measure of our state and condition … as we came forth out of God’s hands first with the dues and privileges belonging to it.” However, Goodwin’s purpose in writing this discourse is neither simply to describe the first state of human beings as represented by Adam, nor to show why they were put in their miserable situation, but ultimately to emphasize “the supercreation grace of God in election, and the glory of Christ as our head and a Saviour,” and he believes that his explanation of the first estate of humanity by creation would be “greatly conducible to this end.” For this purpose, he first introduces the covenant of works by which the relationship between God and his intelligent creatures was prescribed, and which was regulated by the obligation placed on both covenant parties.

---


Goodwin notes that the covenant of works is also called by his contemporary divines *foedus naturae*, which implies here that “man’s condition which from and by” God’s creation “was natural to him.” However, Goodwin prefers to “call it creation law, *jus creationis,*” which is focused on “what was *equitable* between God considered merely as a Creator on one part, and his intelligent creatures that were endued with understanding and will on the other.” *Jus creationis*, therefore, points to the law, which lays “in an equitable transaction between God and them, a congruity, dueness, meetness on either part.” Therefore, this creation law, or the covenant of works, as an equitable transaction between the two parties, is “due and congruous” on each part and is rooted in and was brought naturally about by the relationship between God the Creator and the creature “endowed with his image of holiness.” Thus for Goodwin, Adam was neither created *for* the covenant of works nor was the covenant of works added to creation, but he was created *in* or “under the covenant of works,” which was co-extensive with the law written in Adam’s heart upon his being created.

The identification of the *jus creationis* with the covenant of works introduces the issue of the identification of the covenant parities. Because the *jus creationis* as the covenant of works was rooted in the difference between the ontological status of God the Creator and that of his intelligent creatures, Goodwin notes, the covenant of works was not applicable exclusively to Adam only, but it was set up for both intelligent creatures,

---


62 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 222.
Adam and angels, who have understanding and will. To put it another way, the covenant was made between God and his intelligent creatures--Adam, as the public representative of all humankind, and all angels. The covenant of works was most frequently explained as a relationship between God and man in the seventeenth century,\(^{63}\) whereas Goodwin describes it as a relationship between God and his intelligent creatures, such as Adam and angels, inasmuch as this covenant was not made with Adam as the federal head of all human beings after he was created, but it is derived from the creator-creature relationship as a form of law according to the dueness on both parties.\(^{64}\) Thus the substance of the covenant of works, or creation law, is the same for both Adam and angels though they differed “in respect of their mere creation-holiness, their strength, and their habitation proper to each.”\(^{65}\) In other words, this difference between Adam and angels as creatures is not a difference of substance, but that of degree, so both Adam and angels have “the same common law of creation-perfections, and the rules thereof do take hold of both alike in their several ranks, and with their several degrees.”\(^{66}\) To prove this, he attempts to show how some commandments of the Decalogue as the expression of creation law are commonly applicable to both angels and men. He then concludes that “their (angels) covenant by creation ran upon the same terms that ours of works does; the tenor or terms

---

\(^{63}\) Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 217.

\(^{64}\) Chang argues in his dissertation that Goodwin’s “common covenant,” which includes all angels, both good and fallen angels, and “Adam with all mankind in him,” differs from the covenant of works, since “its objects were wider then that of the latter” (“Thomas Goodwin on Christian Life,” 109). However, Goodwin identifies the common knitting of them to God with the covenant of works in which God and all intelligible creatures including Adam and all angels (*Works*, 1:175). We will deal more specifically with this issue later.


of the law is the same,” and additionally that the same punishments were imposed upon them: “we were both alike cast off from God; we were expelled paradise, they were thrown down out of heaven into hell.”67 Accordingly, the covenant of works is the law, which was concreated with the creation of intelligible creatures, Adam and the angels, and which also prescribes the relationship between God the Creator and the creatures, imposing obligations upon both parties.

According to creation law, therefore, both parties had to fulfill certain obligations in the covenant of works on account of the different statuses of God and the intelligent creatures. Goodwin notes some obligations due of man by creation law and affirms that the intelligent creatures as a covenant party “should live in keeping his commandments.”68 As mentioned above, both Adam and the angels were under the common duty to obey God’s law to keep themselves holy, and the substance of the law was the same for both Adam and the angels and was basically identical with the Decalogue.69

Although God was not obliged to do something in an absolute sense because he “works all according to the counsel of his own will freely,” yet he would give “such faculties and powers as the creature itself could any way judge requisite to his performing the work of a creature of an intelligent nature,” since God’s “will regulated itself by what that same counsel judged most becoming him to do.”70 According to what was due on

67 Goodwin, Works, 7: 27.
68 Goodwin, Works, 7:25.
70 Goodwin, Works, 7:24.
God’s part, therefore, he endowed them with his own image of holiness, which is “due” for the nature of such creatures, so that they might “be able to know, to love, and to enjoy a communion with him.” Moreover, this enjoyment of communion with God can also be made possible by “agreeing with every law God has, as a creator, commanded.”

There is another thing due on God’s part according to creation law. Goodwin maintains that God as Creator is required “to continue his favour and goodness” to the intelligent creatures and “that happy estate he had set them in,” insofar as they stay in their duty and obedience. In other words, it points to the condition and promise of the covenant of works, “if thou do these things, thou shalt live.” Nevertheless, God’s favor is also derived from God’s grace because as Goodwin affirms, although in God’s own heights of holiness and sovereignty their low creature-services may be regarded “as anyway coming up to the immense desires and aims of his great holiness,” yet he would continually love and favour them “at the same height which he prosecuted them withal at their first creation.” From this, argues Goodwin, arises their duty to “live in keeping his commandments.” Therefore, it is given as a result of God’s bearing his role according to the creation law that Adam could stand in holiness on the condition of his perfect obedience: first God endued Adam with innate holiness by writing the law, reflecting the imago Dei in his heart, and this image of God, through the work of the

---

72 Goodwin, Works, 7:25.
73 Goodwin, Works, 7:25, 22.
74 Goodwin, Works, 7:25.
75 Goodwin, Works, 7:25.
76 Goodwin, Works, 7:25.
Holy Spirit possessed by Adam, made him able to continue in his first holy condition
granted in creation. Secondly, God was obliged to continue their first happy communion
with God as long as “they keep their first estate of holiness.”

The identification of the covenant of works with creation law is not uniquely
found in Goodwin’s theology, but Calvin had already posited that the prelapsarian state
of the world was governed by law if not explicitly speaking of it as tied by covenant.

Among the English Reformed theologians in the seventeenth century were also those who
identified the covenant of works with the law of creation. In an attempt to prove the
scriptural ground of God entering into a covenant with Adam before the fall, Francis
Roberts suggests three evidences, one of which is the fact that the covenant of works was
inscribed in Adam’s heart and that the covenant of works is “the Moral Law.” This
identification of the covenant of works with the moral law written on Adam’s heart is
manifest and biblically supported because “the Moral Law is styled by the apostle Paul as
“the Law of works” and “is set in opposition to the Law of Faith.”

According to Rowland Ward, however, Fisher made a careful distinction between the law
written in Adam’s heart, the “matter of the covenant of works, and the specific agreement

---


78 John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, II. Viii. 1; IV. Xx. 16. See also Muller, “The
Covenant of Works,” 182.

79 Francis Roberts, *The Mysterie and Marrow of the Bible: viz. God’s Covenants with Man, in the
first Adam, Before the Fall: and in the Last Adam Jesus Christ, After the Fall From the Beginning to the

in Genesis 2:16-17, the “form of a covenant.”  

John Owen also sees the covenant of works as the law arising from the creator-creature relationship between God and Adam. Dealing with divine covenants in his exposition of Hebrews, he presents two ways of viewing “the original covenant made with Adam”: as “a law only” and as “a covenant.” Owen also holds that the covenant of works as a law “proceeded from, and was consequent of the nature of God and man, with their mutual obligation unto one another” and therefore that this law was necessary, and is eternally indispensable.”

All laws derived from the creator-creature relationship, however, cannot always be called a covenant “as is the law of creation unto all other creatures,” since there are “no rewards nor punishments annexed unto it.” Only the law of creation to Adam is the covenant of works, since it contains “the express nature of a covenant.” To complete this covenant, Owen asserts, God was required to annex unto it promises and threatenings of rewards and punishments and to express them “in external signs,” whereas Adam had to accept this law with its annexed promise and threat “as the rule of the covenant which God made with him.” In this manner, the Reformed Puritans agreed that the covenant of works must contain the law naturally arising from the creator-creature relationship between God and his creatures, but they were not fully in agreement with the opinion that this law

---


82 See also Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 223. They write in this book that “The presence of the law was an ontological necessity bound up in the creator-creature relationship, whereas the covenantal aspect depended upon the will and good pleasure of God, who instituted promises and threats, rewards and punishments; the promise speaks of grace, the punishment speaks of justice.”


written in the heart was identical with the covenant of works itself, because of some lacking elements and because this law mostly pointed to a moral law written on Adam’s heart. Goodwin’s *jus creationis*, however, does apply not only to intelligent creatures, including angels, but also to God as the Creator because as he argues, according to this law, the measure lies “in an equitable transaction between God and them.”

God was pleased to oblige himself to give “all that was due, or convenient and meet for the natures of such creatures, to attain their end of happiness in a proportioned communion with himself.”

Moreover, given that he explicitly mentions the reward and punishment, which would be given to the angels as well according to their obedience or disobedience, Goodwin considers *jus creationis* applicable to both Adam and the angels to be the covenant of works in all aspects. This is also supported by the fact that throughout all his works he does not specifically refer to the agreement in Genesis 2:16-17 in relation to the nature of the covenant of works.

Furthermore, concerning the nature of the covenant of works, Goodwin makes sure, first, that “these two sorts of creatures, angels and men, might fall from their original state of perfect holiness”; second, that although creation law obliged God to stay in communion with them as long as they kept their original holiness, yet he was “not at all obliged, as Creator, to preserve his creatures in that first condition of effectually by his grace”; and lastly, that we must not “lay upon God any influence of this, into either of their falls.”

In other words, unlike God, the creatures were mutable and *de facto* fell

---

from their original state, and God is free from the responsibility of this fall because God “carried himself in that matter precisely according to the exact dues of creation.”

This mutable character of the intelligent creatures in the covenant of works brings us to the problem of the promises of rewards and the threats of punishments.

**3.2.2. Rewards and Punishments Promised in the Covenant of Works**

Given Goodwin’s understanding of the covenant of works, he emphasizes that this covenant was established between God and both Adam with his posterity in him and angels, good and evil, and that this creation law was applicable to the angels as well as Adam. He confirms it by writing, “[t]his condition of angels by the law of their creation, and of man, for substance, is common to them both.” But he additionally points out certain differences between the angels and Adam according to their ontological states. They not only “differ in degrees of excellencies in respect of their mere creation-holiness,” but “also in their strength” and even “in their habitation proper to each.”

This difference, however, is simply “of rank or degree,” not of substance. He does not forget here to make a clear distinction in the enjoyment of God between the higher creature, the angels, “created in one of the heavens,” and Christ as creator being in the same place. He then concludes that “[t]he law was the same for substance that ours [is]” and that given that both Adam and some of the angels fell, it is evident that they were

---


made under a law according to which their sin was determined. After all, because “their covenant by creation ran upon the same terms that ours of works does; the tenor or terms of the law is the same,” although they had not altogether the same law because of the difference of their condition:

yet they were under the same fundamental sanction of punishment and reward. Upon one sin, all their happiness was to be forfeited, as upon ours it was. Their estate was changed by sinning, as ours also was.

The same punishment take hold upon them, though not the same bodily, as death, unto which the angels are not obnoxious, for they can never die. But what death spirits are capable of, we and they undergo the same. We were both alike cast off from God; we were expelled paradise, they were thrown down out of heaven into hell; and at the last day, the same sentence shall be pronounced against both, ‘Go, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,’ Mat. Xxv. 41.

The punishment and reward appointed by the covenant of works between God and his intelligent creatures as well as the law written in Adam’s heart were naturally known to him. The promise, or reward, was that “by doing he should live”; whereas the threatening, or punishment, was that “by transgression of the law, or any part of it, he should die the death.” These were neither given to Adam after he had been created as recorded Genesis 2, nor was this covenant of works initiated with the announcement of them. Rather, Goodwin holds that if God would create such a reasonable creature as Adam, it was meet that then he should, “at and by virtue of his first creating him,” create him in a holy state and “furnish him with” an ability to keep his holiness, “especially giving him withal promises of life and threatenings of death according to his holy actings,

---


94 Goodwin, Works, 7:27.

95 Goodwin, Works, 7:27.

96 Goodwin, Works, 7:47.
Accordingly, the promises and threats were given with the creation of Adam, known then to him by “principles written in his heart,” and lastly “confirmed to him by two sacraments, the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

Taken all together, given both that the promise and threat had already existed in the covenant of works made between God and his intelligent creatures according to “the due on either part,” and that the tree of life and that of the knowledge of good and evil were regarded as the confirmation of the existing promises and threats of the covenant of works, for Goodwin, the positive law, prohibiting Adam from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the promise and threat following upon Adam’s act, is a way of strengthening and enlarging the knowledge of this covenant, since Goodwin maintains that apart from the natural knowledge of God and his law acquired by the image of God written in his heart, Adam’s knowledge was strengthened and enlarged by both “God’s speaking to him, and revealing his will unto him by word of his mouth… at his giving him those precepts about the tree of knowledge and of life.” Moreover, “of all laws” written in his heart, argues Goodwin, this positive command of God was the greatest, since, first, it had been “given only as a trial and testimony of his obedience in all the rest”; and second, the will of the lawgiver, God, was most strongly manifested in this law.

---

When it comes to the nature of the reward and punishment of the covenant, Goodwin speaks of the reward promised in the covenant works with strong emphasis on the distinction between natural and supernatural realms. Although emphasizing both as the same “substance” of the covenant of works, or *jus creationis*, and the same nature of the punishments threatened in the covenant, i.e., death or being cast off from God, as we already pointed out, yet Goodwin also mentions a difference between the punishments of Adam who fell with his posterity in him and of the fallen angels who received it as a result of their breaking the covenant of works. Both Adam and the angels were “alike cast off from God,” but because of their bodily difference “we were expelled” from the earthly paradise where Adam had been created, whereas they were thrown down into hell out of heaven where they had been created.\(^{101}\) The punishment, which took hold upon Adam, was death which basically belonged to the life of Adam on earth though this death signifies spiritual death, or spiritual separation from God.

In like manner, Goodwin claims that the reward promised in the covenant should be natural to him and therefore that “the promised life and happiness that should have had for doing and obeying, was but the continuance of the same happy life which he enjoyed in paradise, together with God’s favour toward him.”\(^{102}\) He sharply distinguishes Christ as a heavenly man from Adam, “when at the best,” as “an earthly man.”\(^{103}\) The reason why Christ will carry us into heaven is not because of the merit of his death; rather, we

\(^{101}\) See Goodwin, *Works*, 7:27.


\(^{103}\) Goodwin, *Works*, 7:49.
are carried to heaven because he is “the Lord from heaven” and “heaven was his natural
due and he is not gone thither himself, as unto his natural place.”

Drawing on John 3:13, Goodwin concludes that only he who came from heaven, and whose natural due is heaven, can ascend up there “with others by virtue of him,” and that thus Christ is the only one who can carry us to heaven. On the contrary, according to the same principle, Adam who came not from heaven, but was of earth, has earth as his natural place, so the reward he could receive in the covenant of works should not be eternal life in heaven, but that on earth. Moreover, the moral law itself does not offer such promise “as of going to heaven,” but the meaning of the promise of the law, “Do this, and thou shalt live,” points to the life “in God’s favour, but yet still as on earth enjoyed.”

3.2.3. The Image of God: Adam’s Nature

Goodwin’s sharp distinction between natural and supernatural domains even more clearly appears in his concept of the image of God. If the positive precepts spoken directly to Adam in Eden were confirmation of the existing knowledge of the promise and threat contained in the covenant of works, how could he have had the knowledge of them without God’s revelation through the “word of his mouth”? Goodwin answers this question by holding that “the knowledge of this covenant, and of the promise and threatening annexed to it, was natural.”

We already pointed out that the end for which Goodwin wrote his work, *Of Creatures, and the Condition of Their State by Creation*, was “to magnify the supercreation grace of God.” But he adds that the supercreation grace of God toward humanity may not be discovered only by focusing on the sinful and fallen state, but on “our first original and best estate that preceded it,” which could also afford “matter and occasion to exalt supernatural grace.” Calling this first estate “the estate of pure nature by creation-law,” Goodwin affirms that humanity was by creation brought into *foedus naturae*, the covenant of nature. This covenant of nature, identified by “our divines” with the covenant of works, is of man’s condition, which from and by his creation was natural to him. He defines *foedus naturae* as a covenant,

which is founded upon an equitable intercourse set up betwixt God the Creator and his intelligent unfallen creatures, by virtue of the law of his creating them, and as by their creation they came forth of his hands; God dealing with the creation singly and simply upon the terms thereof, and the creature being bound to deal with God according to that bond and obligation which God’s having created him in his image, with sufficient power to stand, and having raised him up thereunto out of pure nothing, lays upon him.\(^{107}\)

Here Goodwin presents all the necessary elements of a covenant involved in the covenant of nature and emphasizes that all the elements are basically the natural results of the creation law which is rooted in the creator-creature relationship. Therefore, as Goodwin says, *foedus naturae* and *jus creationis* are identical: the former focuses more on the natural character of the relationship and its results, whereas the latter on the law as a result of the relationship.

Goodwin argues that everything Adam received in his original state was natural and belonged to his nature even though it was given to him supernaturally. The image of God, which consisted of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and in which Adam was at first created, was also natural to him. Over against Roman Catholic arguments that what is natural cannot be lost; and that what was, by a supernatural act of God’s, given the angels and us, must be supernatural, he first describes holiness as “adjuncts, accidents, and endowments” given by creation, but it perfected the well-being of the intelligent creatures, and was bestowed upon them to perfect their nature. In other words, holiness is not an ingredient “constitutive of the natures of them, or any part or ingredient into the essence of them, and yet natural to them, as perfectives of their nature” (italics mine). Therefore, this holiness “was and is but a perfection in the soul or angel, which may, abesse vel adesse sine subjecti interitu, be lost, and cease without the ceasing of the subject they belong unto.” His answer to the second question is this: although holiness was concreated with the soul by a supernatural operation of God, because of the creation law consisting in the due of both God the creator and the intelligent creatures and because “man came forth of God’s hands,” “it was meet and requisite, yes, necessary, that those his rational creatures should have this image, as an

---

108 Goodwin, Works, 7: 48. Concerning Adam’s natural condition, Goodwin writes that “[A]s the way of his knowing God, and the image of God in him, were thus natural, and no higher than was due unto nature, and suited unto man as man, so were all things else which any way concerned him; they were of the same elevation also and reached no higher than the sphere of nature, in the sense explained; namely, they were such as were due unto man’s nature, or were founded upon the law of nature.”


110 Goodwin, Works, 7:33.

111 Goodwin, Works, 7:33.
endowment which was to enter into the composition of their nature.”

Goodwin emphasizes here that Adam in his original condition was able to continue in his holiness not by virtue of God’s supernatural addition of grace to the existing *imago Dei* apart from human nature, but because of the image of God, including faculties inclined to know, serve, and enjoy God, which was supernaturally given to Adam according to the *jus creationis* and thus constituted human nature. Goodwin once more clearly rejects the Roman Catholic concept of “*donum superadditum.*” Nevertheless, this does not remove God’s grace from Adam ability to stand, but Goodwin’s understanding of the covenant of works is “constructed for the sake of undergirding the Reformation principle of salvation by grace alone.”

When it comes to the righteousness Adam possessed in his original condition, Goodwin confirms the same principle confirmed in relation to Adam’s holiness in his original estate. This issue is dealt with in relation to the justification of Adam and the reward of his obedience by comparison with both the justification and reward the elect will receive under the covenant of grace. Contrary to justification under the covenant of grace, he maintains, the righteousness by which Adam was justified “was no other than that natural righteousness in which he was created, and which was conserved and preserved by continuing to act holily, and by doing good according to the principles of holiness at first implanted in him.” This natural righteousness of Adam was natural

---

112 Goodwin, *Works*, 7:34.


due to him who is so obedient that “God should pronounce him just upon it.”

Goodwin holds that in viewing Adam, God pronounced him good also in holiness and righteousness, which was the proper goodness of his creation. Thus this righteousness and the pronouncement of justification on Adam was not the effect of the scholastic *donum supperadditum*, which was not part of his original constitution, but it was “natural, and according to a rule of nature common to other creatures, and so a due.” In this sense, interpreting Paul’s reference to the justification as under the “debt” of the covenant of works, Goodwin calls it “a *debitum naturale*,” not “a debt of retribution in a mercenary way” because “in a way of natural justice, or rather comeliness and dueness, such as is by the law of creation to be between a just creator and an holy creature, there is an approbation due unto him from God whilst that creature obeys him.”

Lastly, Adam’s knowledge of God also belongs to his natural due. Goodwin notes that if the image of God was natural to Adam and his knowledge of God was also accordingly natural, his nature was to know other natural things in the same channel and way that he was to take in the knowing of God. The process of knowing other things is this: first, the seed of knowledge is sown in the mind by nature; this seed of the natural knowledge is to be tilled and watered by the act of reason and observation; then lastly, “a full knowledge arising from both is as the crop or harvest that springs from both, and is reaped by us.” In exactly the same manner, Goodwin argues, Adam also came to have

---


a full knowledge of God that is due unto his nature. Adam’s knowledge of God was first sown in his mind as a sanctifying notion and principle and then so cultivated, enlarged, and made clear by his own reason and observation of God’s vestiges embedded in his created world that it reaches a full, clear, and distinct knowledge of God. The knowledge of God that Adam reached was composed of two types of understanding: the attributes of God and “the principles of God’s whole mind and will towards” humanity. The former was to be mainly enlarged by the observation of the creation of the world; whereas, the latter, rooted in the former, had been sown in his heart as “the seeds of all that moral law” and grew up naturally through the process of “occasions when he was to practice any part of it” so that “the whole law was to him even a law of nature written in his heart, naturally known to him by common dictates inbred in him.” In like manner, the promises and threats of the covenant of works were naturally known to him by “principles written in his heart” and were “further confirmed to him by two sacraments, the tree of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil.” Accordingly, Goodwin once more confirms that Adam’s knowledge of the covenant of works, that is, the knowledge of the law and that of the promise and threat annexed to it, was natural.

3.2.4. Natural Faith and Its Natural Effect

Thus far these points have been examined: the nature of the covenant of works made between God and his intelligent creatures as described by Goodwin, the objects of the

119 Goodwin, Works, 7:46.
120 Goodwin, Works, 7:47.
121 Goodwin, Works, 7:47.
covention, the meaning of the reward and punishment given in the covenant, and Adam’s natural condition in the covenant. In particular, it has been demonstrated that Goodwin thought that the image of God engraved in Adam’s heart belonged to his nature, and that the specific elements of the image of God, that is, the holiness, the righteousness, and the knowledge of God, were also due unto his nature according to the *jus creationis*. For Goodwin, however, this does not necessarily mean that everything constituting Adam’s nature had nothing to do with the supernatural grace of God. Although something was offered to him through God’s supernatural grace, creation law allowed him a certain obligation, and God, according to the obligation, engraved his image in Adam’s soul so that he would be able to continue in his happiness through communion with God as long as he kept the law. Therefore, though the image of God in Adam was given by God’s supernatural grace, yet according to creation law, all its faculties should be regarded as belonging to human nature.

At this juncture, it is the right time to deal with the primary issue Goodwin deals with in his discussion of the covenant of works. Adam, though having all his natural knowledge of God and a natural ability to keep God’s will, broke the covenant of works. Why and how did he break it? Here is the point where Goodwin explores the nature of faith that Adam had before his fall. In his exposition on the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, Goodwin asks, “where was it that the temptation entered in?” and immediately answers that the temptation “certainly” entered “in a way of unbelief.”\footnote{Goodwin, *Works*, 2:343.} To entice Adam to break the covenant of works, adds Goodwin, what the Devil did first
was to “destroy Adam’s faith.” In other words, the covenant of works was broken by Adam because he in his innocent condition did not believe his own natural knowledge of God in his heart nor the word God had spoken to him. For example, Goodwin argues that Adam’s faith belonged to his natural condition, and that the lack of this natural faith led him to break the covenant and put himself and all his posterity into a miserable condition. This understanding of Adam’s prelapsarian faith as natural, however, was not always commonly accepted by the seventeenth-century Reformed orthodox theologians.

In dealing with the covenant of works, one of the main issues the Reformed Puritans focused on was the difference in the nature of the two covenants. Obadiah Sedgwick, in his treatment of the difference between the two covenants, presents the nature of Adam’s faith and acknowledges the necessity of faith in the covenant of works. He holds that Adam believed that God is “the only Authour of being and blessing for his dependence on God,” that God promised “that good of life” on the condition of Adam’s “reliance upon God,” and that if he continued to be “upright with God,” God would love him and accept his obedience. This faith “looked on God as a creator,” whereas the faith required in the covenant of grace “looks on God as a Redeemer, and merciful Father.” The faith of Adam “was natural, concreated with Adam,” but our faith is “now promised, and infused in a supernatural way, by the Spirit of Christ, through the dispensation of the Gospel.”

---

123 Goodwin, Works, 2:343.


125 Sedgwick, Bowels of Tender Mercy, 11.
covenant of grace. He first presents the reason why God does not expressly require faith in the covenant of works, saying that “there was not the least probable cause or suspition why man should doubt of Gods love, for sinne had not yet entered into the world.”\textsuperscript{126} He points out that the difference between the two kinds of faith exists in the foundation of each covenant. Adam’s faith was presupposed by “the exact righteousness of man in the Covenant of Nature,” and thus this faith “leaneth on the intire nature.”\textsuperscript{127} Therefore, the fall deprived faith of its place in the covenant of nature because given the righteousness of the nature that presupposed his faith, Adam could not believe that God would love him if corrupted with sin. Furthermore, although both are of God, Adam’s faith was of God “\textit{per modum natura},” whereas the other was of God “\textit{per modum gratiae supernaturalis}.”\textsuperscript{128} These are the arguments of Reformed orthodox theologians who assert that Adam’s faith belonged to his natural condition given from God in creation according to creation law. However, as Goodwin points out, there were also some divines who regarded Adam’s faith as supernatural. David Dickson separates the law of creation, which was written in Adam’s heart, from both the creation of the world and the covenant of works because he considers the covenant to have been added in Gen. 2:16, 17. Contrary to Goodwin’s idea that by creation law the reward of happy life given from God “was in a just sense due (of debt) unto the creature,” Dickson maintains, God was free from the obligation of giving that reward to Adam although he perfectly obeys the law written in his heart. Upon making the covenant, God obliged himself “to preserve him in

\textsuperscript{126} Ball, \textit{Treatise of the Covenant of Works}, 12.

\textsuperscript{127} Ball, \textit{Treatise of the Covenant of Works}, 12.

\textsuperscript{128} Ball, \textit{Treatise of the Covenant of Works}, 13.
a happy Life” on the condition that he must “go on in obedience to His Law and
Commands, according to the Tennor of the Covenant, Do this and live.”129 This may
imply that according to the law of nature and his natural due, Adam could not have had
knowledge of the reward promised in the added covenant of works, and that in order for
Adam to believe the reward and punishment of the covenant of works they had to be
somehow revealed to him. This revelation and the faith in it produced by this revelation,
therefore, was not a natural due unto Adam, which was simultaneously given to him with
his creation, but as a superadded grace of God that did not belong to Adam’s nature.
Thus, Dickson seems to argue that Adam believed there to be a reward and punishment
promised in the covenant of works apart from both his knowledge of God and the law of
nature concreated with the creation.

In like manner, Francis Junius also distinguishes the creation law written in
Adam’s heart by nature from the covenant of works by teaching that the covenant was
made “with our first parents by God the Father in the Son in the Garden of Eden.” It was
not concreated with the creation of Adam. As Mark W. Karlberg notes, abstracting a
natural order from a supernatural, covenantal order, Junius seems to view the covenantal
order as “superimposed upon the natural.”130 Accordingly, the grace “offered in the way

129 David Dickson, Therapeutica Sacra (Second edition: Edinburgh, 1697), 105.

130 Francisci Junius, Opuscula Theologica Selecta, ed. A. Kuyper (Amstelodami: F. Muller and J.
H. Krupt, 1882), Locus 25, These 1-5. See also Mark W. Karlberg, “The Original State of Adam: Tensions
within Reformed Theology,” in Covenant Theology in Reformed Perspective (Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock
Publishers, 2000), 98. In this article, Karlberg argues that Calvin avoided the scholastic dichotomy between
two states of creation, whereas the seventeenth-century Reformed orthodox theologians significantly
revised Calvin’s view by both understanding the covenant of works to be “virtually equivalent to the
medieval scholastic notion of donum superadditum” of God to Adam which promises supernatural grace
and reward and by abstracting a natural order from a supernatural, covenantal order. However, not all the
Reformed orthodox understood the prelapsarian state of Adam in this way, since there were many
Reformed orthodox writers who followed on the Calvinistic doctrine regarding creation and God’s
covenant with Adam, and particularly Goodwin’s view clearly rejects the scholastic dichotomy in relation
to the original human condition.
of covenant” was supernatural grace and thus Adam’s faith in the reward and punishment annexed to the covenant should be regarded as supernatural. Johannes T. Cloppenburg argues more clearly in a similar fashion. He claims that the covenantal relationship between God and Adam was not natural due to Adam’s original state in creation, but rather was offered by God’s special act of condescension. Therefore, although God reveals himself to Adam in both natural and supernatural, or covenantal, ways, Adam’s ability to know and to trust him demanded the supernatural communication of grace. 131 This idea is also rooted in the separation of Adam’s prelapsarian condition both from the natural order in which Adam was a servant of the Creator and from the covenantal order in which he was elevated to the status of sonship.132 Turretin offers only partial support of this separation concept. By holding that Adam “received sufficient strength from God to believe every word revealed or to be revealed,”133 he indicates, on the one hand, Adam’s natural ability to believe God’s word granted from God and the natural origin of Adam’s faith in God’s word; on the other hand, given that he considers eternal heavenly kingdom to be the reward, which belongs to the supernatural realm, he seems to open the possibility of acknowledging that the knowledge of the rewards and punishments was bestowed upon him supernaturally.134 Goodwin acknowledges that not only popish divines but some of “our” Reformed divines also teach Adam’s faith as belonging to a “supernatural principle of faith.” Their


133 Turretin, Institutes, 1:572.

134 Turretin, Institutes, 1:583-6.
view on Adam’s faith was deeply related to their idea of the reward of the covenant of works. While the “popish divines, who contend for a natural way of knowing God, and a natural righteousness in Adam, yet with a superadded supernatural one also,” came up with that supernatural addition for him to merit heaven as the reward, some of the Reformed divines ascribe this supernatural faith “to him to fit him to know God, so as to long after heaven (as faith does), which they make the reward of his obedience.”\textsuperscript{135} To put it another way, those who uphold the idea of the supernatural faith of Adam thought that supernatural faith is given either to merit heavenly life as the reward of the covenant (for the popish divines), or “to prepare for heaven and to supply sight or vision, till we come thither, to support us whilst absent from the Lord” (for some of the Reformed divines). Therefore, it seems that the nature of faith determines that of the effect in the covenant relationship with God.

As demonstrated already, Goodwin identifies \textit{jus creationis} with the covenant of works and regards the positive precepts of God “about the tree of knowledge and of life,” spoken to Adam in Genesis 2:16,17, as the sacraments, confirmation, and the “testimony of his obedience in all the rest,” the laws written in his heart by creation. Therefore, there was no other supernatural knowledge and revelation of God added to Adam’s natural knowledge of him. When Goodwin considers something to be natural in relation to Adam’s condition, this must be “due to the nature of man” and “suitable also unto that his nature.”\textsuperscript{136} Over and against the argument of his contemporary divines that Adam’s faith was supernatural, he denies that “Adam had a supernatural knowledge of God by

\textsuperscript{135} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:57.

\textsuperscript{136} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:54.
revelation, or by the same light and principle of faith by which we take God in, under the
gospel.” Goodwin confirms that Adam’s faith before the fall was within the limits he already “set to bound the natural knowledge of God with” and thus “was neither above the due to nature, nor the way and sphere of it.” He sets forth five reasons Adam could believe in God:

For, first, in the nature of man there is such an act to believe and to trust on that is faithful, as well as there is to think, and to be. … secondly, that man in his first creation should have a principle in him to converse with that God who he knew to be God out of natural light, and to have made heaven and earth, whencesoever that God should speak and communicate anything to him that might express his will to him, … was also natural in this sense, that it was a due to the nature of man. For man being a sociable creature … was meet he should be able to converse with that great God by mutual speech, … thirdly, when God did thus speak, that man should believe, and receive the testimony of God as true, whatever it was that was revealed, was not above the due of nature, nor the way of nature. … For he knew, out of the same principles and dictates of nature, that God was true, faithful, and just in his word, as well as he knew he was powerful in his works. … Therefore, now to believe God when he speaks to him, and to receive his testimony, was but from the power of an inbred light. …And then, fourthly, … By what light he should know it was God that spake, when God did speak? I take it, In the way God used to speak, it was but the natural light of sanctified reason, which might discern that also. …And then, fifthly, the objects propounded to him to believe were of themselves no way supernatural. … besides the revelation, they were realized to him by instinct or sanctified reason, though revealed and confirmed by divine testimony. Such were the precepts about the two trees, which were two sacraments.

Goodwin reaffirms here that the knowledge of the objects of faith and the principles out of which one believes God, both of which are the ingredients determining


whether faith is natural or supernatural, were natural. He then concludes that “all the faith which Adam had may well be resolved into natural light, as the first principle and foundation of it.”

Goodwin’s view of Adam’s faith as natural may become clearer upon examining his comparison of the two kinds of faith. After explaining the natural characteristics, in his *Of the Creatures, and the Condition of Their State by Creation*, Goodwin goes on to contrast the natural faith of Adam in his innocent state with the supernatural faith the elect have under the covenant of grace. Referring to Cameron’s way of distinguishing the two kinds of faith according to whether faith is given by way of nature or supernatural grace, he goes further by presenting three differences between the two kinds of faith. First, the object of Adam’s faith could be grasped by his natural reason, whereas the objects revealed are so mysterious for a natural person that they are “utterly above the due and right of pure nature in Adam.” Second, the light Adam had was the inbred light by which he only knew things in nature, but the light for today is a heavenly light and is so glorious and marvelous that “our minds are acted and elevated to those supernatural objects.” Third and last, Adam gained knowledge in a discursive manner “by way of gathering one thing from another, which is more imperfect and

---


141 John Cameron, *De triplci Dei cum hominefoedere theses* (Heidelberg, 1608), XIV. “Fides in foedere naturae est a Deo, ut loquuntur in scholis, per modum naturae: at fides quae requiritur in foedere gratiae, a Deo est, sed per modum gratiae supernaturalis.” Samuel Bolton (1606-1654) provides an English translation of Cameron’s work at the end of his *The true bounds of Christian freedome. Or a treatise wherein the rights of the law are vindicated, the liberties of grace maintained; and the several late opinions against the law are examined and confuted. Whereunto is annexed a discourse of the learned John Camerons, touching the three-fold covenant of God with man, faithfully translated* (London, 1656), 362. “the faith which exact justice in the covenant of Nature presupposes, is from God (as the Schooles speaks) by way of Nature: whereas the faith which is required in the Covenant of grace, is from God too; but so as by way of supernatural grace.”


further about, and more at second hand,” while our faith is “more intuitive” and more comprehensive in the knowledge of God, not by simple observation out of the work of God, but “as he is in himself, though in the face of Christ, and the glass of the gospel.” Goodwin concludes that our supernatural “faith brings us into another world, and “the things of it infinitely” transcend Adam’s natural faith.

3.2.5. The Fall and Adam’s Unbelief

What then does Goodwin’s emphasis on Adam’s natural faith mean in relation to his theological system manifested in his Puritan plan? Goodwin teaches that Adam fell because of his unbelief in God. In An Regenerate Man’s Guiltiness Before God, &C., Goodwin attempts to explain the greatness of Adam’s first sin so that “we may be humbled under it.” For this, two things must be considered: “the substance” of this sin and “the circumstance of the act.” The substance of Adam’s sin, Goodwin claims, falls into “inwards and outwards,” or “an outward act committed, and inward acts as the principles of it.” Although “the law of men” does not examine “the inwards of an action,” what makes sin most offensive is the dishonoring of God in one’s heart. He then presents four implications of Adam’s sin. First, he writes, the first man

---

144 Goodwin, Works, 7:66.
146 Goodwin, Works, 10:27.
147 Goodwin, Works, 10:27.
148 Goodwin, Works, 10:27.
149 Goodwin, Works, 10:29.
“undervalued” God in his heart, no longer considering him to be “the chiefest good.” Goodwin describes this as “the main motive” in breaking the covenant, because Adam thought he could improve his condition both without God and “with that means, by the virtue of an apple, whereby he should come better to know what was good and evil, than by keeping God’s command, which is only true wisdom.” Second, he had an ill opinion of God that “God was not faithful and true.” When the devil, through a snake, said “no” against what God had said to Adam concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Goodwin writes, Adam “thought there might be something in it, and this staggered” his faith. Goodwin even holds that Adam, by putting more trust in the devil’s word than in God’s, believed the devil, “contradicting the Lord merely by his own authority.” Third, in his heart arose jealousies “of unworthy designs and ends that God had in prohibiting him.” Adam doubted God’s purpose for prohibiting them from eating from the tree, assuming that “God knowing what virtue there is in the apple, hath purposely forbidden it, because he would not have you be so happy.” Adam’s doubt of God’s love toward himself led him both to hate God and to imagine that God envied his happiness because God feared Adam’s being equal with himself by having as much knowledge of good and evil as God had. Lastly, Adam “sinned against the sovereignty

150 Goodwin, Works, 10:29.
151 Goodwin, Works, 10:29.
152 Goodwin, Works, 10:30.
153 Goodwin, Works, 10:30.
154 Goodwin, Works, 10:30.
155 Goodwin, Works, 10:30.
of God” by attempting to be independent from God. Goodwin regards this as desiring “to be as gods.” Accordingly, Adam no longer wanted to be under God.

The undervaluing of God, the ill opinion of God’s faithfulness and truth, the doubt of God’s loving kindness toward him, and the attempt to be independent from God, all these behaviors of Adam were rooted in and brought about by a lack of faith in God and his word. These dishonorable thoughts of God were “low and mean under-conceits of God that first crept into Adam’s heart, and are necessarily to be supposed to have been the foundation of this sin in his heart.” Therefore, Adam’s fall occurred primarily by his failure in believing God. This can be reaffirmed by Eve’s same sin. Goodwin claims that when Satan tempted and deceived Eve by “discourse to the outward ear,” she fell and finally ruined us “through unbelief listening to his temptation.”

What then is the conclusion of our discussion of Goodwin’s understanding of the covenant of works? According to his sharp distinction between natural and supernatural realms, the reward promised in the covenant of works was Adam’s eternal life on earth, but he failed in keeping himself holy because of his unbelief. There is now no possibility for humankind to be restored in their natural relationship with God because the failure of their natural faith removed any possibility for them to enjoy eternal life on earth, which could be possessed only by obedience to the law of creation through the natural faith. In order for the elect to participate in eternal heavenly life, Goodwin asserts, there should be something beyond the natural, belonging to the supernatural realm, i.e., heaven. This basic structure leads us to the next covenant made by the holy Trinity in eternity.

156 Goodwin, Works, 10:30.
157 Goodwin, Works, 9:481.
CHAPTER FOUR

FAITH AND RELATIONSHIP RECOVERED

Introduction

The covenant relationship between the Creator and humanity represented by Adam was broken by Adam’s sin. From a human perspective, eating the forbidden fruit itself might have not been such a serious behavior as to sever humanity from God and to put all humanity under the eternal curse. But Goodwin teaches that this sin was rooted in unbelief in God and explains how serious and abominable this unbelief was to God’s eyes. Unbelief is such a comprehensive sin that it distorts all about God and thus may be called the spring of all sin.

Building on the material covered in the first three chapters, this chapter begins dealing with what Goodwin really wants to manifest in his talk about covenant theology. It is the two gracious covenants made respectively among the Trinity and between God and His elect people. All his previous discussions about the covenant of works may be said to be the work of setting up a background for these covenants so that all God’s attributes defaced by Adam’s unbelief may manifest themselves more splendidly. Both covenants are, of course, gracious and supernatural because there has been removed all natural human ability to escape from the miserable condition in which humanity was confined. But there still remains a problem because neither supernature nor grace would necessarily make the reasonable creature a programmed machine working by the control of the maker without its own responsibility. Moreover, the responsibility of humanity should not undermine God’s sovereignty in that the misery was caused by Adam’s sin of
undermining God’s sovereignty. How then should all blessings reserved in the covenant of grace be delivered to the elect? Goodwin is convinced that God ordained faith to be the best instrument and a condition fitting for all these requirements for our salvation. We will examine in this chapter how Goodwin explains faith was appointed and works in the framework of divine covenants.

4.1. Faith Appointed as an Instrument for Salvation in the Covenant of Redemption

In his dealing with the prelapsarian covenant, or *jus creationis*, Goodwin emphasizes the natural condition of the world in which Adam was created in the image of God. He further affirms that the image of God, on the basis of which the knowledge of God exists, and his belief in the knowledge of God pertain to the realm of nature. Accordingly, the fall caused by his unbelief was basically an event that happened in the natural domain. As demonstrated earlier, Goodwin contrasts Adam’s natural faith to the supernatural faith under the covenant of grace and concludes that the latter exceeds Adam’s natural faith “as the second Adam, Christ, doth him, who was the epitome of his world, as Christ is of ours.”\(^1\) Goodwin’s sharp distinction between Adam’s natural faith and our supernatural faith leads to another clear distinction between Adam’s representation of the natural order in *the covenant of works* and Christ’s representation of the supernatural order in *the covenant of grace*. This contrast between Adam and Christ is a key parallel, penetrating throughout Goodwin’s soteriology. The broken relationship between God and humankind by way of the first Adam’s failure in believing God in his natural condition would be restored by a different kind of faith as required in the new covenant, which was made on

\(^1\) Goodwin, *Works*, 7:69.
the basis of the mediatorship of the second Adam, Christ, between God and His fallen people. All things were destroyed by the disobedience and the unbelief of the first Adam in his natural state, but all was to be recovered by the obedience of the second Adam and the supernatural faith of those who would believe in Him. As a result, instead of an earthly eternal life, which was lost by the failure of Adam’s natural faith, a heavenly eternal life, could be offered by way of the second Adam who is of heaven through supernatural faith. This heavenly eternal life could not be offered the first earthly Adam in the natural condition even if his natural faith had not been lost. A look now into the heart of Goodwin’s soteriology will show how God restored, is restoring, and will restore the broken relationship between his sinful people and himself. If the first Adam failed in fulfilling the covenant of works on account of his disobedience caused by his unbelief, the second Adam fulfilled the requirement with some parallels, that is, the covenant of grace, Christ’s obedience, and our faith. This salvific plan of God through the mediator of the covenant of grace and the faith in Him as an instrument starts with a pre-temporal covenant between God the Father and the Son Jesus Christ.

4.1.1. Covenant of Redemption Defined

As discussed earlier, among the important features of Goodwin’s works is his strong emphasis on the trinitarian perspective. It is in his dealing with a covenant made in eternity between the contracting parties, God the Father and God the Son, with the active participation of God the Spirit, that his trinitarian perspective most brilliantly shines.²

² Concerning the question of the parties of the covenant of redemption, there was no agreement among Reformed orthodox theologians. Most of them considered God the Father and God the Son as contracting parties, whereas some such as James Durham argued for the Holy Spirit’s role as a contracting party. According to Jones, Goodwin’s view of the covenant of redemption pays such attention to the role of
Given that for Goodwin the covenant of redemption is “an argument for the *ad intra* trinitarian” foundation for the *ad extra* trinitarian work of salvation, i.e., the covenant of grace, the covenant of redemption should also be regarded as the sole foundation of both the distinctive role of each Person of the Trinity in the actualization of the covenant, namely, “the covenant of grace,” and of the spiritual blessings to be given in the covenant, often called the *ordo salutis*.

Goodwin’s understanding of the covenant of redemption is most specifically described in *Christ the Mediator*. Based on the exposition on 2 Cor. 5:18, 19, he opens this treatise with his own interpretation on the doctrine of reconciliation as “the subject of the gospel” and traces back to its origin in eternity, that is, “the everlasting transaction which the Father had with his Son, in calling him to the work of redemption of us men, considered as sinners.” Whereas, people easily focus on the work of Christ in dealing with the doctrine of reconciliation, he pays special attention to the relationship between the doctrine of reconciliation and the eternal transaction. He holds that the eternal transaction, i.e., the covenant of redemption, was made as “a groundwork of all in the gospel” for the reconciliation between the Father the offended and sinners, which will be performed through Christ in time. He thereby emphasizes that one of the great

---


mysteries of which we need to take notice is the fact that God the Father, who among the three Persons was mainly offended by our sin, is the author of our salvation and took the initiative in making this transaction neither temporally “when Christ died” nor at the time of conversion, but “from all eternity.” The moving cause of this reconciliation was in the Father, in “his will and good pleasure.” Goodwin argues, therefore, that there were many other options God could have pursued for sinners instead of reconciling them to Himself, and that there was no necessity forcing Him to act in this way, “but his good pleasure, which was in himself.” What then made God inclined to be pleased to reconcile with sinners? Goodwin’s answer to this question is very simple: “Our God being love, love itself.” This love delights in mercy, and this mercy in turn caused the Trinity to make this merciful transaction in eternity for the salvation of sinners. His good pleasure rooted in love is the motive which led God to make the covenant of redemption.

At this point, it is necessary to discuss what the transaction actually deals with. As mentioned above, this covenant was made between the Father and the Son for the reconciliation of fallen humanity with God, primarily the Father who was offended by them. Therefore, the issue of the covenant was about the salvation of fallen sinners. This brings up two questions. For whom was this covenant made? All sinners? Or only some

---

7 Goodwin, *Works*, 5:11. By taking the different implications of two particles, *in* and *by*, Goodwin distinguishes the actual reconciliation performed by Christ and applied to those who were not believers, from the reconciliation designed from this eternal transaction. The former is usually expressed with the phrase, reconciliation “in Christ,” and “implies the immanent acts of God in Christ” such as “the preparation of all mercies and benefits we have by Christ” and “laying them up in him really for us in Christ, as in our head, in whom God looked upon us when we had no subsistence but in him,” while the latter is often expressed in the phrase of the reconciliation “by Christ” which “imports the actual performance of all this by Christ, and application of it to us.”

of them? And, in what way in the context of the covenant of redemption will the three Persons of the Trinity plan to save them?

Like many other Reformed orthodox theologians, Goodwin also holds that the object for which the covenant of redemption was made between the Father and the Son was not all fallen humanity in Adam, but that the covenant was made for the elect only. Thomas Brooks describes this covenant as a “compact, bargain and agreement between God the father, and God the son, designed Mediator; concerning the conversion, sanctification and salvation of the Elect.”

David Dickson also clearly describes this covenant as a “Bargain, agreed upon between the Father and the Son designed a Mediator, concerning the Elect.” Goodwin also writes that God the Father “took up a strong purpose and resolution to reconcile some of the sons of men to him.”

In his A Discourse of Election, Goodwin calls them the elect and stresses the fact that this election of God was made “from everlasting.” Although both the covenant of redemption and the divine act of election happened in eternity, election precedes the covenant of redemption in logical sense because election, as “the first foundation of our salvation,” “is the first act of God’s going forth in intentions to save us.”

Therefore, supposing his election and the elect, God the Father made the eternal covenant with the Son along with the Spirit

---

9 Thomas Brooks, Paradise Opened, Or the secrets, Mysteries, Rarities of Divine Love, of Infinite Wisdom, and of Wonderful Counsel, Laid Open to Public View … (London, 1675), 68.

10 Dickson, Therapeutica Sacra, 38.

11 Goodwin, Works, 5:11.

12 Goodwin, Works, 1:67.

13 Goodwin, Works, 7:533. Regarding the order of both election and the redemption of the elect, Goodwin first attributes election to the Father, and then the redemption of the elect is ascribed to the Son: “There is redemption, which is the next and second work in this, which supposeth election, depends on it, and flows from God’s decree and speaking to his Son; and this is appropriated to the Son, which work bears the impress and likeness of his subsistence, and the order of it, as also of his working with the Father; for as
to save them. Expositing on a sentence in 2 Cor. 2:19, “in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself,” Goodwin interprets reconciliation as the goal of the eternal covenant, particularly reconciliation “in Christ” as “the immanent acts of God in Christ” in preparing for “the actual performance of all by Christ” in time. Therefore, reconciliation in Christ is an act of God looking upon the elect in Christ when God and Christ “were alone plotting of all, framing of all that was after to be done by Christ for” the elect, and applied to the elect. To put it another way, Goodwin identifies God’s immanent act of “plotting” and “framing” all for “looking upon the elect in Christ” with the covenant of redemption, and the covenant of redemption with “a groundwork of all in the gospel,” or in the covenant of grace. In one of his expository sermons on the first chapter of Ephesians, Goodwin once again deals with the concept of “in Christ.” Goodwin argues that being chosen in Christ means that the elect were chosen in Christ who is “the Head of the elect,” as “Common person” representing them. He claims that both the elect and Christ as mediator were chosen at the same time in eternity, but that “for the priority of nature, … he as a Common Person and a Head was first elected, and we in him.” Accordingly, the covenant of redemption is a covenant made between two contracting parties, the Father and the Son who had been chosen by the Father as a mediator, for the redemption of those who also were chosen in Christ. Therefore, those,

---

14 Goodwin, Works, 5:11.
15 Goodwin, Works, 5:11.
16 Goodwin, Works, 5:11.
17 Goodwin, Works, 1:70.
who were ordained to be saved in this covenant, are the elect, who had been chosen before the establishment of the covenant of redemption according to the logical order.

This naturally leads to the answer for the second question, “in what way do the three Persons of the Trinity plan to save the elect in the covenant of redemption?” Goodwin writes that in pursuance of God’s “gracious design to save sinners” God determined not only to show his mercy, but also to satisfy his justice because God is the lawgiver, the judge, and the executor of the punishment sin naturally deserves according to the law. But the problem is that fallen humanity as well as anything in the world is not able to make a full and complete satisfaction for divine justice. He maintains at this point that God’s wisdom as “a middle attribute,” out of its infinite depth, showed “a way and means of effecting our reconciliation, even in the incarnation and death of his own Son,” as both a “surety” instead of the elect and a “mediator” for reconciliation between God and the elect. Rutherford so focused on the suretyship of Christ appointed in this covenant that he calls this covenant “the covenant of suretyship” as well as the covenant of redemption.

18 Goodwin, Works, 5:15-16.

19 In his dealing with the necessity of atonement, Goodwin writes that “he might if he had pleased have ran a way and course of mere mercy, not tempered with justice at all. He might have pardoned without satisfaction.” Here arises the issue of whether our sin could have been pardoned by a mere act of God’s will or whether God’s vindicatory justice necessarily requires satisfaction for the sin of the elect to be pardoned. For more information about the Reformed orthodox understanding, see Jones, Why Heaven Kissed Earth, 131; Carl R. Trueman, “John Owen’s Dissertation on Divine Justice: An Excercise in Christocentric Scholasticism,” Calvin Theological Journal 33 (1998): 87-103. For the specific knowledge about the discussion of this issue in the seventeenth century, see Thomas Jackson, The Humiliation of the Sonne of God by His Becoming the Son of Man (London: 1636), 20.

20 Goodwin, Works, 5:17, 19.

21 Rutherford, Covenant of Life, 310.
Goodwin emphasizes that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, was the fittest person to play a role as a surety and mediator for the work of reconciliation between God and the elect. How then should this work of reconciliation be done by the fittest surety and mediator? Goodwin answers that the mediator “must bear our sins” by being “made a curse.” He holds that Christ was chosen in eternity by the Father as a surety and a mediator so as to shed his blood for the elect. Goodwin goes on to say as follows:

And, further, consider what he chose Christ unto; ‘He appointed him to death,’ as the apostle says of himself in another case. Therefore Peter, 1 Pet, 1:18, 19, speaking of our redemption by his blood; ‘which (says he) was verily foreordained before the foundation of the world.’ So as he chose him not as a head only, but as a lamb to be slain… I have elsewhere shewed how he was appointed to be an heir; but there is some dignity in that, and yet it was a humiliation in him to take that by appointment which was his own by natural inheritance; but to be appointed to death so long afore, and to such a death, and there was not a circumstance in it but his Father appointed it, that it should be thus shameful, thus painful, &c., this was love indeed; Acts 2:23, ‘Him being delivered by the determinate counsel of God, ye have crucified and slain.’ All was done by the determinate counsel of God. He not only secretly determined it, but which is more, called him to it, moved him in it himself to undertake to do all this; for calling and election of us are two distinct things; and so in the designing of Christ to this office, they are to be considered apart.

To save the elect, God the Father, in the covenant of redemption, appointed Christ to die not only as a surety and a mediator, but also as a common head of the elect and “the heir of all things.” Goodwin argues that all these choices of God were free. In other words, God was neither bound to save sinners, nor to choose to save sinners by shedding the blood of his Son. By attributing the punishment of sin not to God’s nature, but to his

---

23 Goodwin, Works, 22.
24 Goodwin, Works, 4:474.
will, Goodwin boldly argues that “[t]here was one way indeed which was more obvious, and that was, to pardon the rebels, and make no more ado of it.”

With such an emphasis on God’s freeness, he seems to highlight God’s voluntary condescension unto death and thereby to manifest the fullness of God’s attributes, such as justice, mercy, and particularly love, in his choosing of the way for “the satisfaction of Christ’s death.”

This love was not simply the love given to the elect, Goodwin affirms, but the love with which Christ has to the Father and by which He obeys Him.

Not only was Christ’s sacrificial death appointed by the Father, but there was also a reward promised to Christ by Him. In the above passage, Goodwin points out that Christ was appointed not only to be a mediator and a surety, but he was also appointed to be a common head and “the heir of all things.”

In another place, Goodwin also calls Christ “the heir of all the promises.” When Christ accepted the terms given for the redemption of the elect in the covenant of redemption, God the Father also promised to reward him:

Christ thus willingly undertaking to die, and to fulfil his Father’s will, his Father, to gratify him, enters into a covenant with him, and binds himself to him to bestow the worth and value of all his obedience in all spiritual blessings (both of grace and glory, which that his death should purchase), to those whom he had given him, and that he and his children should have it out in everlasting revenues of grace and glory. As Christ undertook to God, so God undertakes to Christ again, to justify, adopt and forgive, sanctify and glorify those he gives him. All the blessings his love intended, Christ was to purchase them; and all the blessings

---

Christ’s death did purchase, he promiseth Christ to bestow on those whom he purchased them for, so as his labour should not be in vain.\textsuperscript{30}

Upon Christ’s acceptance of the terms, God the Father entered into the covenant of redemption with him and thus the Father bound himself to reward him. However, because Christ was chosen as a common head of the elect, Christ’s complete obedience was to be regarded as the obedience of the elect. In addition, as Christ was the heir of all things including the promise of the reward, God also promised to bestow on the elect the promised spiritual blessings Christ would purchase with his blood. These spiritual blessings to be bestowed upon the elect in time by virtue of the covenant of redemption are justification, adoption, forgiveness, sanctification, and glorification, which are often called the \textit{ordo salutis}. This theme will be specifically dealt with in the following two chapters.

Thus far, some important features of Goodwin’s thought on the covenant of redemption in particular relation to the covenant parties have been examined, the object who will benefit from this covenant, the terms Christ as a mediator, a surety, and a common head of the elect, the heir of the promises accepted, and the reward promised to the elect in the covenant, which will be enjoyed in the covenant of grace. Particularly, a relationship of the covenant of redemption with the order of salvation has been demonstrated. What needs to be done next is to examine an essential instrument God appointed in the covenant of redemption for the elect by which they both could enter the covenant of grace and enjoy those spiritual blessings in it.

\textsuperscript{30} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 5:27.
4.1.2. Conditions for the Covenant of Grace Determined

Goodwin confirms that in the eternal covenant of redemption the Father and the Son determined what shall be performed in the covenant of grace. The Father asked the Son to play the role of mediator and to shed his own blood for those whom God had chosen in Christ; the Son accepted all the conditions the Father required; and the Father in turn promised Christ to reward him by bestowing all spiritual blessings on the elect.

As mentioned above, Goodwin has a strong conviction regarding the covenant of redemption as an intra-trinitarian transaction in which each Person of the Trinity actively participates. However, the discussion thus far has included the actions of only two Persons of the Trinity, the Father and the Son. Therefore, given the significance of Goodwin’s “emphasis on the role of the Spirit” in the covenant of redemption as demonstrated earlier, there is an additional point to deal with, specifically the role of the Spirit in the covenant. Although it is clear that the covenant of redemption has been mainly regarded as “a starting-point,” or foundation, of any discussion of Christology in the tradition of Reformed orthodox theology, and that the role of the Spirit in the covenant was “not obvious or taken for granted,” the role of the Spirit received a good deal of attention from Goodwin.

---

31 Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 139-144.

32 See Trueman, *John Owen*, 80; Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 145. Most Reformed orthodox theologians focused on the role of Christ in their dealing with the covenant of redemption because they usually considered only the Father and the Son to be the contracting partners in this covenant, whereas some, such as Goodwin and Owen, emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit. Trueman and Jones go on to argue that Goodwin and Owen made a significant contribution to the role of the Spirit with reference to the covenant of redemption, though not regarding him as the contracting party of the covenant.

33 Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 140. The role of the Spirit in the covenant of redemption drew only a little attention from Reformed orthodox theologians. Wilhelmus à Brakel solely focuses on the Father and the Son and does not speak of the Spirit at all. Herman Witsius also describes the covenant between the Father and the Son without giving any notice to the role of the Spirit assigned in the covenant. In his discussion of the covenant of redemption, John Flavel deals with the eternal transaction as a covenant
Goodwin also seems to regard this covenant basically as a covenant between the Father and the Son. But as Jones indicates, he sometimes describes the covenant of redemption as a transaction made “by the three persons.” In *Man’s Restoration by Grace*, he notes that “the whole of our salvation is transacted as by parts, by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” In addition, the Spirit is also depicted by Goodwin as participating in the covenant by both making “report of that peace and atonement made” and shedding “abroad the love of both” the Father and the Son. Jones attributes the origin of the work of the Spirit that occupies a central place in Christological and soteriological discussions to the “explicit trinitarian nature of the *pactum salutis*” because Goodwin notes the distinctive role of the Spirit by drawing attention to the Spirit’s work in the incarnation.

---

34 Goodwin, *Works*, 75:7. Goodwin writes here that “the great business of reconciliation … tells us of those two great persons by who this great business was transacted, and brought to such a pass as men may come to be reconciled, and friends with God again; and what they are, that is, God the Father, the party wronged and injured, and Christ the means of reconciliation, the umpire and mediator between both.”


36 Goodwin, *Works*, 7:534. For more information about the issue of whether or not the Spirit participates in the covenant as a transacting party in Goodwin’s theology, see Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 139-144.


38 Goodwin, *Works*, 6:419 where Goodwin connects the actions of the Spirit in the incarnation to the covenant of redemption as follows: “And for this Christ hath expressly told us, that as he and his Father do confer together about the great transactions of man’s salvation, so that the Spirit hears all that passeth, John 16:13. Nor yet did he stand by as a bare witness to relate it and confirm it to us, but was sent down by both as a principal actor, that had the great and ultimate hand in effecting of it. The Son of God speaks of a body prepared by the Father for him to take up: ‘A body hast thou prepared me.’ The Father had a hand in it then, but by whom? By the Holy Ghost; so expressly, Luke 1:35, ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore shall that holy thing that shall be born of thee be called the Son of God.’ Here is, then, if not a visible Θεοφανία, as our divines call that at his baptism, yet an evident of an invisible and distinct conjunction of all three persons at the instant of Christ’s conception, bearing their parts in it. 1. The Father declaring it as his will, both to the Son and the Spirit. 2. The Holy
Moreover, the role of the Spirit in the covenant of redemption is vividly described in “a type of intra-trinitarian dialogue.”

Goodwin suggests:

I will choose him to life, saith the Father, but he will fall, and so fall short of what my love designed to him; but I will redeem him, says the Son, out of that lost estate. But yet being fallen he will refuse that grace, and the offers of it, and despise it; therefore I will sanctify him, said the Holy Ghost, and overcome his unrighteousness, and cause him to accept it.

God the Father chooses the elect in Christ; the Son redeems them; and the Spirit applies this redemption achieved by the Son to them by overcoming their unrighteousness and causing them to accept divine grace.

All taken together, Goodwin holds that the Spirit takes such a significant place in the eternal covenant of redemption that this covenant may be called an intra-trinitarian covenant, and that His main role is to apply the redemption Christ made to the elect both by leading them to the covenant of grace through letting them know the love of the Father and the Son, and by helping them to know all the spiritual blessings promised to Christ as the reward of his acceptance of the Father’s demand in the covenant of redemption. Thus, it is clearly observed that in the eternal covenant the Spirit was appointed to work in the elect and that these actions of the Spirit in the covenant of redemption are supposed to be performed until the elect arrive at the completion of their salvation. It is important to remember at this point that Goodwin considers the eternal covenant between the three Persons of the Trinity to be the groundwork of a new covenant because Goodwin argues that “one main end and consequent of his mediation” was that: “he was to be made a

---


covenant for the people; that is, the founder and striker up, and mediator of” a new and better covenant for us.\(^{41}\) This new and better covenant refers to the covenant of grace mediated by Christ, and Goodwin claims that Christ was “not brought into a better covenant, or made under a better covenant,” but he is “the maker of that better covenant itself, yea, so to be made that covenant.”\(^{42}\) Thus the covenant of redemption, in which the Son accepted God’s demand to be a mediator, can be called the foundation of the covenant of grace. This conclusion thus leads to the fact that unlike in the covenant of redemption, the Trinity agreed to make room in the covenant of grace for the elect to act, though not a meritorious way, through the work of the Spirit.

In addition, Goodwin confirms that in the covenant of redemption the Trinity also agreed upon the conditions of the covenant of grace, which must be performed by the elect. To demonstrate the qualification of Christ as the only possible mediator, Goodwin presents some reasons to consider. As one of the reasons, he questions “the conditions of the covenant (of grace),” since “no mere creature was fit to undertake them; neither those on God’s part, nor those on ours.”\(^{43}\) Goodwin affirms that the new and better covenant in which Christ was supposed to play the role of mediator requires humanity to fulfill the conditions and that Christ agreed to take the responsibility of it on behalf of humanity. Speaking of the conditions of the covenant of grace, which cannot be administered by sinful humanity, but by the Son of God only, Goodwin discusses two conditions: faith and obedience. First, Goodwin draws attention to the object of faith. He writes that when

\(^{41}\) Goodwin, *Works*, 5:36.


we think of “the business and acts of our faith, … our mediator should be such a one as
we might rely on, and trust in.”  
44 Therefore, only the second Person of the Trinity can be
the mediator and object of faith, and this faith is “the most suitable condition for the
covenant of grace.”  
45 The second condition for the covenant of grace is obedience. He
goes on to say that obedience is “mentioned in the covenant on our parts” and that “out of
thankfulness” we cannot help but obey God because “he that reconciled us must have
bought us, and so delivered us from death and hell.”  
46 Accordingly, since no mere
creature could die and provide salvation, reconciling mankind to God and thus deserving
obedience for this reason, Christ is the only Person who was qualified to act as a
mediator.

Although the eternal covenant of redemption planned the temporal covenant of
grace, in which the elect were bound to perform these conditions, it is the Holy Spirit
who works in the elect by both making “report of that peace and atonement made” and by
shedding “abroad the love of both” the Father and the Son so that the elect may have this
faith in their hearts. In addition, the Spirit not only sanctifies them, but overcomes their
unrighteousness by causing them to accept God’s grace through a Spirit-worked faith. All
this, which should be accomplished in the elect through the Spirit, was determined and
agreed on by the three Persons of the Trinity in the covenant of redemption.

In the covenant of redemption, therefore, the Trinity sets up a foundation for the
covenant of grace, not only by the agreement of the Father requiring the death of the Son

---


as a mediator, the Son’s acceptance of the requirements and the offering of the reward promised to the Son for His role as a mediator, but also by stipulating and acknowledging both conditions, i.e., faith and obedience, for the covenant of grace. Furthermore, the role of the Spirit for the elect was also determined in the same covenant in order for these conditions to be satisfied by Him in the temporal covenant of grace.

4.2. Two Roles of Faith in the Covenant of Grace

Goodwin proclaims that all humankind is “either under the covenant of works, or the covenant of grace.”47 These two covenants, however, are not simply distinguished from each other in their different titles, but “the one ever set up its righteousness against the other” because the covenant of grace is set up “to cause all men to distrust themselves, and be nothing in themselves, … to glory in the Lord;” whereas, the covenant of works is “expressly, sibi fidere, to trust in a man’s self” so that they may “establish their own righteousness.”48 With this expression, however, Goodwin does not simply intend to show the contrasting features of the two covenants, but he attempts to demonstrate that the covenant of grace is the manifestation of God’s eternal design to restore, or make even better, the relationship God had with Adam and his posterity before the fall. In this sense, the Westminster Confession of Faith defines the covenant of grace as a covenant made by God “wherein He freely offers unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ.”49 Goodwin called this covenant a new covenant or a better covenant, but most frequently

47 Goodwin, Works, 6:232.

48 Goodwin, Works, 6:249.

49 WCF, 7:3.
the covenant of grace. Thus, the covenantal relationship between God and human beings, which was destroyed by Adam’s disobedience and unbelief, is to be restored by Christ’s obedience and faith in the covenant of grace, that is, the actual, temporal performance of what was planned in the eternal covenant among the Trinity.

4.2.1. Covenantal Relationship Restored by Supernatural Grace

As noted above, dealing with both the natural state of Adam before the fall and his covenantal relationship with God based on his own work, Goodwin, in his Of the Creature, sheds light on the naturalness of Adam’s nature by repeatedly contrasting some characteristics of the covenants of works and of grace, such as faith and knowledge of God.

Based on the way of knowing and enjoying God ordained by him, which differs “not only in degrees, but kind,”50 Goodwin introduces a dichotomous classification of the knowledge of God that humankind can have. There is certain knowledge of God that can be possessed “either in glass, or in a riddle, darkly, now in this world;” whereas, we may also be able to know God “face to face” in the world to come.51 He calls the former “specularis cognitio,” which is the mediate knowledge of God found “in alio”; the other is called “intuitiva,” which is immediate knowledge of God found “in se.”52 Each of these two kinds of knowledge also falls into two categories. The immediate knowledge of God has two degrees: seeing God face to face in Christ, which will be experienced on the

50 Goodwin, Works, 7:38.
51 Goodwin, Works, 7:38.
52 Goodwin, Works, 7:38.
day of judgment, and seeing God face to face in himself, which will continue forever after the day of judgment. However, he pays more attention to two contrasting forms of knowledge of God in this world. Both forms of knowledge are common in their mediate nature, but one belongs purely to nature, or creation, so that God may be enjoyed “in the glass of the law” under the covenant of works, while the other appertains to supernatural grace so that God can be seen “in the glass of gospel” under the covenant of grace.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:39.}

Then he arrives at the following conclusion:

And if we compare either this knowledge of God in Christ presented in this glass with that of Adam, his will be found to be but as in a riddle, darker and obscurer far, for the kind and way of knowing him, though for degrees in its own kind it was more complete. And in like manner, the least drop of joy of the Holy Ghost, the droppings or heaven, which he puts into the heart, will be found more than all Adam’s full springs of peace, which arose but out of his own conscience, which was but as a spring on earth in comparison of this other. And both these ways of knowing and enjoying God, which a believer in part here hath, I take it to be the apostle aims at, ver. 8, calling the one, namely, that by relation in the gospel, \textit{prophesying}, which is the means of revealing God in Christ by the Scriptures, which are the glass and ordinance that present God in Christ most lively to us; the other, \textit{knowledge}, namely, that obtained by the creatures, as some have differenced these two.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:39.}

Knowledge of God obtained in Christ by grace far excels Adam’s natural knowledge of God not “for degrees in its own kind.” In terms of the degree of perfection, rather, Adam’s knowledge of God is more complete than the knowledge of God received by supernatural revelation. It is thus the source from which our knowledge of God comes that makes our knowledge through Christ better than Adam’s. All knowledge about God that Adam had was purely derived from the order of creation and nature, but the better
knowledge of God in the heart of the elect, though little, is obtained from the Holy Spirit by supernatural grace.

In addition to knowledge of God, Goodwin also sharply contrasts Adam’s natural faith with the faith of the elect granted by the supernatural order. Given that faith has an inseparable relationship with knowledge of God, this different nature between the two kinds of faith is also a reasonable understanding of the different types of nature found in the knowledge of innocent Adam and that which the elect possess. Adam’s natural knowledge of God brought forth natural faith in him, whereas our supernatural knowledge of God in Christ produces supernatural faith in our hearts as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit. As already demonstrated, in his expounding on the nature of Adam’s faith, Goodwin pits Adam’s faith under the covenant of works against the faith of the elect under the covenant of grace. He not only repeatedly pronounces that all men are either under the covenant of works or of grace, but also exclaims that “[i]t is strange to see how contrary to the way of salvation by Christ, the way of nature is.” God’s natural way of giving promised life to Adam under the covenant of works is far inferior to his way of salvation under the covenant of grace. In addition, describing Cain as the seed of the serpent and Abel as part of the elect, Goodwin argues that “the covenant of works and the covenant of grace are the concomitants that follows” upon works and election respectively. Given these facts, he asserts, all unregenerate men are under the covenant of works, and all regenerate under the covenant of grace. This implies


that each of these covenants has “a lordship or dominion over those that are under them.” Furthermore, “they have the power of life and death, peace or wrath, according as men demean themselves towards them.”

Goodwin does not forget to point out that the covenant of works once had “a royalty,” which “give life and peace, and pronounce the sentence thereof, which stood good in law.” All humanity was once under the covenant of works and was able to be justified by obeying God’s law, but now there are two groups of people belonging to either the covenant of works or the covenant of grace. However, those who are under the court of the covenant of works cannot attain justification by means of their own works-righteousness. Goodwin writes:

If a man belongs still but to the covenant of works, although now, man being fallen, that covenant be utterly unable to give peace, yet this having been the ancient custom of this manor in Adam’s time, when the covenant was in power and force unto such ends and purposes, and this being the natural law between the creature and Creator, thither therefore do poor deceived souls come all of them still to take up their copies for life and peace. … On the contrary, this covenant being made void, and so God having given unto free grace the dominion for justification and true peace, Rom. 5:21, grace is said to reign to eternal life, and it hath taken the kingdom to itself. … This grace in God’s heart will be applied unto us only by faith in our hearts, for it can trust no other principle within us. … Lastly, These two have divided the world, from the fall to this day, into parties, the one seeking righteousness of peace by the works of the law, the other seeking it by faith.

In order to understand what the above passage exactly means, it is important to remember Goodwin’s argument that all human beings are either under the covenant of works or the covenant of grace. Prior to the fall, all were under the covenant of works, which was purely natural, and could gain their justification according to the order of the covenant,

58 Goodwin, Works, 6:306.
59 Goodwin, Works, 6:306.
60 Goodwin, Works, 6:307-308.
but this covenant has been broken. Nevertheless, the natural covenant itself was not totally removed from the world because God proclaims that the unregenerate are still under the covenant of works. Unlike the prelapsarian covenant of works, however, now this covenant of works is neither intended nor able to work as a means to justify us because, making this covenant void, God gave dominion to his free grace for justification and true peace. Therefore, those who are under the dominion of free grace may be said to be under the covenant of grace, the dominion of free grace referring specifically to the covenant of grace. Accordingly, Goodwin seems to hold that the human relationship with God in the covenant of works was broken by the lack of Adam’s natural faith and that this covenantal relationship with God could only be restored and geared toward a better state by the supernatural covenant of grace, of which Christ is the mediator and faith “is appointed to transact the affairs.” To put it in another way, once Adam, who was able to keep himself holy by his own strength, degenerated into a state of sin by breaking the *jus creationis*, and all humanity in him in a natural condition, there could be no other way to deliver them out of their miserable condition than by means of God’s supernatural grace from above. Moreover, this restored state by the covenant of grace could not but be a better and more glorious condition than the prelapsarian natural condition of Adam, given Goodwin’s emphasis on the ontological difference between nature and grace. As

---


62 Cf. Peter Bulkeley, *The Gospel Covenant Opened* (1674), 27-28. Bulkeley even more strongly insists on the necessity of the covenant of grace in restoring covenantal relationship with God. He argues that God gives His people “all the deliverances and salvation … by virtue of, and according to his covenant. … as in the beginning, when God first promised life to Adam, it was not without a Covenant made with him … so it is now with us; it is by virtue of the Covenant, that we must expect life and salvation from Gods hand, the beginning of our salvation … is given unto us according to the covenant begun with us in Christ, and the end of our salvation is according to the covenant which he makes with our selves, in our own persons.”
demonstrated earlier, Goodwin teaches that the reward promised to Adam, the earthly man, under the covenant of works purely belonged to this natural, created world, whereas Christ, the heavenly man, carried humankind into heaven by the covenant of grace not because of the merit of his death, but because Christ himself is “the Lord from heaven,” and “heaven was his natural due and he is not gone thither himself, as unto his natural place.”

Therefore, what Goodwin intends to do by emphasizing the sharp distinction between nature and grace is not simply to explain the way in which fallen humanity could be saved, but more importantly to highlight the necessity of the covenant of grace for the elect remaining under the covenant of works, which has become void as a means to save sinners. Such intentional comparisons that Goodwin sets forth in relation to salvation between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace are also insinuated in his reference to Christ as the second Adam, following Paul’s famous comparison between the first Adam and the second Adam in Rom. 5.

### 4.2.2. Faith: A Condition and an Instrument

There is no doubt that Goodwin’s conviction about the restoration of the broken relationship by the covenant of grace is a key concept in his soteriology. What then is the content of the covenant of grace? As briefly mentioned in our dealing with the covenant of redemption, the purpose of the covenants of redemption and of grace in their actualization is to reconcile God the offended with the elect the offender. Thus, in the eternal covenant Christ had been appointed, and asked, by God the Father to play three significant roles, and, agreeing with the Father’s request, he did all he was required to do.

---

in the covenant of grace for salvation in time. Apart from the covenant of grace, however, Christ’s works in themselves do not have any inherent force obliging God to save the elect. It is only in the covenant of grace that all Christ actually did as a judge, a surety, and a mediator on earth could be effective for salvation. This is the reason why Goodwin announces the blessings, both promised to Christ in the covenant of redemption and given to the elect in the covenant of grace, as *pure grace* even though they are not received absolutely free, but “by Christ, and on account of his merits.”\(^{64}\) In addition to Christ’s merits, however, there is another essential element, which is required in the covenant of grace for salvation. This element is faith and one of the main objects of this faith is Christ, who completed all required roles as judge, surety, and mediator. The roles Christ took up in the covenant of grace, however, will be discussed in the following section for the purpose of this dissertation after the conditional character of the covenant of grace is examined. Thus, our attention now should be given to the conditions demanded by God for the elect to arrive at their final salvation under the covenant of grace.

As briefly described at the outset of this chapter, the issue regarding the conditionality of the covenant of grace was and still is discussed among many systematic and historical theologians studying Reformed federal theology. Under the covenant of works, Adam’s obedience to the *jus creationis* was the only condition for his happy life on earth. In the covenant of redemption, Christ’s acceptance of God’s demands on him was also the condition for the temporal performance of the covenant of grace. However, it is not as simple to decide whether the covenant of grace should be regarded as conditional or absolute, since, as von Rohr notes, this covenant contains both

---

\(^{64}\) Goodwin, *Works*, 5:30.
contradictory aspects in it. Beeke and Jones also affirm that the English Reformed orthodox “were able to keep these two aspects of the covenant in balance as they wrote prodigiously on the covenant of grace.” When treating the issue of the conditionality of the covenant of grace, it is necessary to take into account who the covenant parties are, since though all three divine covenants are made with God as one party, yet the condition of each covenant may vary according to the identity of the other party. The covenant of works was made with Adam as the covenant party, so that he alone was fully responsible for the conditions of the reward promised in the covenant. In addition, because the Son was one party of the covenant of redemption, which the Father transacted for reconciling the elect with himself, all conditions were given to the Son for the consummation of the covenant. In this manner, it could be said that the nature of the condition of the covenant depends partly, if not totally, on whom God made this covenant with.

To the question, “With whom was the covenant of grace made?” the Westminster Larger Catechism answers ambiguously, saying “The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.” As this answer reflects and Berkhof demonstrates, among the seventeenth-century Reformed orthodox theologians were two slightly different views on the parties of the covenant of grace.

65 Von Rohr, Covenant of Grace, 53.
66 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 260.
68 See Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 272-76. Berkhof introduces us to various opinions of the Reformed orthodox on the contracting parties of the covenant of grace. He notes, “Reformed theologians are not unanimous in answering this question. Some simply say that God made the covenant with the sinner, but this suggests no limitation whatsoever, and therefore does not satisfy. Others assert that he established it with Abraham and his seed, that is, his natural, but especially his spiritual, descendants; or, put in a more general forms, with believers and their seed. The great majority of them, however, maintain that He entered into covenant relationship with the elect or the elect sinner in Christ.”
There is no doubt that there was a strong consensus among them on the fact that God took the initiative in making those covenants for His people and graciously determined “the relation in which the second party will stand to him.” ⁶⁹ Nevertheless, there were some who considered the covenant to be basically between the Father on the one side and the Son on the other. Thomas Boston and William Strong stood in line with this theology because he thought that there was no distinction between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, but two different aspects of one and the same covenant of grace. ⁷⁰ Similarly, there were some others who argued that God the Father made the covenant of grace primarily with Christ and then with all the elect in Christ. Samuel Petto took this position and also tended to identify the covenant of redemption with the covenant of grace. ⁷¹ These two views on the contracting parties of the covenant of grace generally focus more on the absolute character of the covenant of grace than its conditional aspect ⁷² because, if the second party of the covenant is Christ, it is also Christ who would have to meet the conditions on behalf of the elect. Moreover, as Strong asserts, salvation is most sure when Christ is the second covenant party because this makes “the promises of it sure unto all the seed.” ⁷³ However, the majority of Reformed orthodox theologians considered the covenant of grace to be made between God the Father and “the elect, or

---


Thus the agent that is responsible for meeting the conditions of the covenant would be the elect themselves according to the same principle.

Goodwin’s position on this issue is similar to that of Petto. Goodwin argues that God made “the covenant of grace primarily with” Christ, “and with him as for us.” In dealing with Goodwin, however, this issue will be approached from the opposite direction. The second covenant party of the covenant of grace has been identified and then the logical conclusion was determined that those who viewed Christ as the second party were inclined to identify the covenant of redemption with the covenant of grace, or at least emphasize “their close connection” and “represent the covenant of redemption as the eternal basis of the covenant of grace.” In contrast, Goodwin’s view of the relationship between the two covenants will be discussed and then will thereby be shown to prove his position on the issue of the contracting parties of the covenant of grace.

In *A Discourse of Election*, explaining the meaning of God’s process for perfecting his sheep, particularly the meaning of the word “perfect,” by both expositing and comparing 1 Peter 5:10 and Heb. 13:20, 21, Goodwin asserts that what is commonly written by the two apostles, Peter and Paul, is not simply a prayer or a request, but a promise of God to His people in the covenant of grace about whether they are in a

---

74 See Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 273. Berkhof writes that “The great majority of them, however, maintain that He entered into covenant relationship with the elect or the elect sinner in Christ. This position was taken by earlier as well as by later representatives of federal theology. … This is also the position of Mastricht, Turretin, Owen, Gib, Boston, Witsius, a Marck, Francken, Brakel, Comrie.” Here Berkhof presents Boston and Gib as belonging to those who viewed the covenant of grace as a covenant made with the elect. However, Boston and Gib seem to have thought that the contracting party of the covenant was not the elect, but Christ himself.


situation of “backsliding” or of “declining from their first love and good works.” To put it another way, the perfection of the elect is not “a prayer that God would be pleased to perfect his people,” but is God’s “promise that he will.” What then is included in the promise? Goodwin decisively answers that “this promise must be a promise of the covenant of grace; a branch growing out of the main body of that covenant.” Based on Heb. 13:20-21, however, Goodwin also presents another reason these two texts are not a prayer, but a promise to perfect the sheep. He acknowledges that the author of the book of Hebrews petitions God to “perfect them in every good work,” but the foundation of this petition is Christ’s bringing us back from the dead by the blood of the eternal covenant. Goodwin then notes as follows:

> And that as to this sense, that Christ’s bringing back after his bloodshed, being by that covenant made with him by God, that if he could die, he would raise him again, &c., so that according to the same covenant struck with him for us, God’s promise to him also was that he would bring us back, and especially bring us to perfection also; and therefore he prays, ‘Perfect them,’ according to that covenant made for them, through the merit of his blood, and in the virtue of his resurrection.

> “The eternal covenant” here seems to refer to the covenant of redemption made between the Father and the Son in that, as already demonstrated above, in the covenant the Father asked the Son to die for the elect and promised to raise him again and to reconcile them with the Father himself through the blood of Christ. Therefore, the promise mentioned in the above passage refers also to the promise of the covenant of redemption. As an aside, Goodwin holds that the reason why Christ’s resurrection from the dead gives assurance

---


of perfection is because “the covenant here with him, must necessarily include the covenant made with him for us.”80 Therefore, this perfection in every good work is “a part of that covenant made with Christ for us,” the covenant of redemption, “and so a main promise of that covenant.”81

As noted above, Goodwin sometimes argues that the perfection of the elect is guaranteed by the covenant of grace, while he here explains it as the promise of the covenant of redemption. However, this confusion is not derived from his mistake; rather, he asserts that the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace are basically the same covenant between God and Christ, as seen in Goodwin’s statement that “the Scriptures do elsewhere represent the whole covenant for us, and the promises thereof, to be a covenant with Christ as our head; and the whole of it, both with him and us, to be but as one entire covenant.”82 If the covenant of redemption is a transaction between the Father and the Son, or an intra-trinitarian covenant, there is no place for humanity as far as a contracting party is concerned. Therefore, a covenant made with Christ as our head cannot be the intra-trinitarian covenant, but must refer to the covenant of grace. Therefore, when Goodwin writes, “the covenant here with him, must necessarily include the covenant made with him for us,”83 the former covenant refers to the whole covenant, which embraces both the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, and the latter implies the covenant of grace, which is the temporal application of the covenant of grace.

---

80 Goodwin, Works, 9:396.
81 Goodwin, Works, 9:396.
82 Goodwin, Works, 9:396.
83 Goodwin, Works, 9:396.
redemption. This is confirmed when Goodwin acknowledges the absoluteness of the covenant of grace, since in order for the elect to undertake “to fulfill the conditions themselves” this covenant of grace “must needs be made with Christ first, and mediately for us.” All taken together, it may be said that Goodwin considers the covenant of grace basically as a covenant made between the Father and the Son with the elect in him. This conclusion introduces his view of the conditionality of the covenant of grace. As mentioned at the outset of this section, those who identify the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace and who place emphasis on the close relationship between the two covenants tend to hesitate in regard to the covenant of grace as conditional, or even sometimes to use the term, “condition,” in their discussion of the covenant. Goodwin also approaches this issue in a similar fashion.

Of course, Goodwin does not refuse to use the term “condition” for the covenant of grace. He asserts that all God’s love and free grace toward his people are uttered and expressed both in his absolute promises and in the covenant of grace indefinitely as to persons, and that “they promise to give the very conditions required to salvation in that covenant.” When something is required and must be met for the elect to arrive at salvation through the covenant of grace, he calls it a condition. In this sense, for Goodwin, faith and obedience are the conditions for the covenant of grace. To show why Christ is the only possible and the fittest mediator of the covenant of grace, he reiterates the conditions of the covenant of grace, since only Christ is a perfect fit with the conditions necessarily required for salvation. He presents two conditions, the first of which is faith. Goodwin asserts that no mere creature could “be made and set forth to us

---

as the object of our faith.”

He thus affirms that “it is that faith which is the most suitable condition for the covenant of grace.”

The second condition for the covenant of grace that Goodwin presents is obedience. Obedience is not only “mentioned in the covenant on our parts,” but it is the duty of the elect, out of thankfulness for divine grace, to perform obedience, “as a due to him that should be a mediator.”

Goodwin continues to argue as follows:

For he that should have reconciled us must have bought us, and so delivered us from death and hell; and if so, we must then by all right and equity have been his servants for ever. Now surely, God would not have us so obliged to any mere creature, as wholly to serve and obey it; and therefore it was fit that none but God himself should save and buy us out; … The apostle also judgeth it an equal thing that men should live to him who died for them, to redeem them from death. … It was therefore no way fit that any mere creature should be employed in this work. It was fit that none should do so much for us, but only he who made us; for to justify us, and to restore us out of this miserable, lost condition, was more than at first to create us. For our misery was worse than a not-being; and should it ever be said that a creature had done as much for us as God did at the first?

The elect are obliged forever to serve God, who bought and delivered them from death and hell by reconciling them with Himself through Christ. No creature could have bought sinful humanity, so there is none but Christ to whom they are obliged to serve.

Although presenting here faith and obedience as the conditions for the covenant of grace, yet he elsewhere maintains that faith is the only condition for the covenant. He notes that “if there be any condition of the covenant of grace, faith alone is it (as our divines speak), and it is that alone that God requires.”

Why does Goodwin state this

---

85 Goodwin, Works, 5:38.
86 Goodwin, Works, 5:38.
87 Goodwin, Works, 5:40.
88 Goodwin, Works, 5:40.
89 Goodwin, Works, 8:470.
seemingly contradictory view on the conditionality of the covenant of grace? Is obedience truly a condition?

As examined above, Goodwin insists that “perfecting us in every good work” is the promise of the covenant made with Christ as our head, i.e., the covenant of grace, which is “requisite to our salvation.” If good works are required for salvation and are to be done for the promise of the covenant of grace, they are a condition, which must be met by God’s grace after one enters into the covenant of grace insofar as the promise of the covenant of grace means something that is to be actualized under the covenant to those who already took part in the covenant. Put in another way, obedience is a condition for the covenant of grace in the sense that this obedience is necessary for the believer, who already entered the covenant relationship with God, to stay in the covenant because obedience as the promise of the covenant must be brought forth under the covenant.

It is also observed that this obedience is the result of the Spirit-worked faith in the believer. As the passage cited above shows, the duty of obedience has been given as the result of our thankfulness to God for His redemption through Christ. This implies that faith in Christ and his role as a mediator of the covenant of grace, causes, moves, and encourages believers to obey God. In addition, Goodwin also claims that “the new evangelical gospel obedience” is “wrought by the faith of Christ.” Furthermore, he says that “[i]t is evident and clear by the Scripture, that the great spring of holiness and obedience is faith in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus.”

---


commandments is caused by the cooperation of the Spirit and “the new vital principle of spiritual life” endowed at the moment of regeneration.⁹³ What then is the new vital principle of spiritual life that changes the will of the unregenerate? Goodwin argues in another place that “it is our faith, which is the principle of spiritual life, which is said to be the subject of such trials and temptations, considered as such.”⁹⁴ The principle of spiritual life “acts concurring with the movings and influences of the Spirit,” who works in the understanding, so that the believer may obey God’s commandments. Goodwin also argues that “God puts in a foundation of faith into the heart, and then draws forth the acts of faith.”⁹⁵ He adds that “faith doth all” for believers to stay under the covenant of grace, “when as all graces else would soon be overcome and cast out again by lusts, and would soon be tripped up from off their standing, faith is able to keep its legs and standing.”⁹⁶ Therefore, faith and obedience are the conditions for the covenant because they are necessary for salvation, whereas with the help of the Spirit faith plays the role of an instrument as well, both in producing obedience and in overcoming the sinful temptations so that the believer, already in the covenant, may keep his/her own status in the covenant to the end of the spiritual pilgrimage. In this sense, faith is both a condition and an instrument, which leads the believer to keep himself/herself under the covenant by obeying the divine commandments.

---


The conflict concerning the conditionality of obedience under the covenant of grace has not yet been resolved. Here is Goodwin’s view on this issue:

For faith causeth the heart to apply itself to the law of believing, and to all that is revealed concerning Christ in the word. It takes whole Christ, and gives up the whole soul, and that is included in the very nature of faith; so that a man cannot believe in deed and in truth unless he doth thus. Therefore now, why should we make repentance, and sanctification, and such things conditions of the covenant of grace (as many do), whereas they are all seminally included in faith; and it is impossible for a man to believe but all these things must follow. God shall not need to stand treating with sinners in such a manner as this, You come to me for salvation, therefore thus and thus I expect you should do. God need not insist on such things as conditions; for if the soul doth come to him for salvation, all this is included in faith itself, and they are part of salvation itself; and when God bids me do all these things, he doth but bid me be saved. If a prince should say to one, I will give thee my daughter in marriage if thou wilt but marry her and take her for thy wife, will a man now say that this is a condition? No; it is that without which he cannot come to enjoy her, without which she cannot be his wife, or he have communion with her; the very law and nature of the thing requires it. So it is here, and therefore is faith made the sole condition (if I may call it a condition, for there is no need to call it so much), because it virtually includeth all these. He that believeth truly, according to the law of faith, he takes whole Jesus Christ, and gives up his whole soul to him, to be ruled and disposed by him for ever.  

In this long passage, there are two important elements regarding Goodwin’s view on the conditionality of the covenant of grace. First, he affirms that obedience, or sanctification, is not a separate entity apart from faith, but is included in it by nature. In other words, obedience is the outgrowth from faith seen as fruit of a tree that belongs to the tree as a whole. Faith not only works as a means by causing, moving, and encouraging the believer to obey God’s commandments, but it also includes obedience in its nature. This is the reason why Goodwin sometimes hesitates to call obedience a condition and regards faith as the only condition.

According to Goodwin, Works, 8:326–327.
Second, although Goodwin refers to faith as the sole condition, he is reluctant to do so because after calling faith the “sole condition,” he adds, “if I may call it a condition, for there is not need to call it so much.” Talking about the absoluteness of the promise made in the covenant of grace, he affirms that although faith alone is requisite and in this sense the covenant of grace may be called conditional, “there are promises that are absolute, holding forth no condition.”\(^98\) He goes on to explain why he considers them absolute though requisite for being under the covenant of grace, and states, “[w]hich being immediately made to the elect, and being an absolute undertaking on God’s part, to perform the condition themselves, I therefore call them most absolute.”\(^99\) The promises of the covenant shall be given because the promises themselves “promise to give the very conditions required to salvation in that covenant.”\(^100\) Christ is called not merely the surety of the covenant of grace, but the covenant itself, since “Christ is the grand promise, in whom, ‘all the promises are yea and amen.’”\(^101\) All promises are to be given in and by Christ. This proves that Goodwin views the covenant of grace as made between the Father and the Son, a covenant that is conditional, but absolute.

Accordingly, found in Goodwin’s covenant theology is a balanced view of the conditionality of the covenant of grace. Like many of his contemporary Reformed orthodox theologians, Goodwin is also able to keep the two aspects of the covenant: *foedus monopleuron* and *foedus dipleuron*. He does not reject referring to faith and


\(^{100}\) Goodwin, *Works*, 8:140.

obedience as a condition for the covenant of grace in that this covenant requires this on
the part of humanity. Given that Goodwin regards Christ as the second party of the
covenant, however, these are not the conditions required from the second covenant party.
The promises included in the covenant of grace are all to be bestowed upon the believers
because Christ is the covenant party, the covenant itself, and the grand promise in whom
all the promises are yea and amen. In this sense, therefore, Goodwin affirms that the
covenant of grace is absolute. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that faith and obedience are
necessary for the covenant of grace and that unlike obedience, Goodwin regards faith as
the sole condition of the covenant of grace and insinuates that faith is also an instrument
by which the Spirit helps the believer to stay under the covenant of grace by moving the
will of the believer to obey God’s commandments.

4.2.3. Christ As a Judge, a Surety, and a Mediator: the Object of Faith
Found in the Covenant of Grace

Goodwin deals with what is believed for justification most specifically in the first part of
The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith. Although this work is not focused on the
covenant of grace itself, its main goal is to expound on the object and acts of justifying
faith as the title shows, and he basically unfolds all the details of faith working under the
covenant of grace.102 For the continuity of this discussion about the covenant of grace,
therefore, Christ will first be examined, he who is the essence of the covenant, though
Goodwin deals with Christ as the second object of faith in the logical order, not in order

of importance. Moreover, other details related to the object of faith will be discussed later when dealing with the relationship between justification and faith.

The covenant of grace was planned and fixed in the covenant of redemption in eternity, in which the Father and the Son agreed upon how to save the elect sinners. The relationship between God and his people broken under the natural covenant of works was to be restored by Christ’s mediatory work under the supernatural covenant. The hostile relationship caused by the disobedience of the first Adam was to be reconciled by the obedience and the satisfaction of the second Adam, Christ. All this was determined in the eternal covenant of redemption, and now God performs them in time in the name of the covenant of grace. Therefore, the covenant of redemption may be called the material cause of the covenant of grace.

When it comes to the relationship of the covenant of grace with the prelapsarian covenant, it has been confirmed that the covenant of grace was required as a means of salvation on account of Adam’s failure in keeping his holy state by his own natural power under the covenant of works. In this sense, the covenant of works should be an efficient cause of the covenant of grace, which provided its foundation. As Von Rohr holds, “new

---

103 Cf. Rutherford, *Covenant of Life*, 109-110. Rutherford has a quite unique view of the covenant of redemption in the relationship between its eternal determination and temporal actualization. It doesn’t seem that Rutherford was opposed to Goodwin’s view of the relationship between the covenant of redemption as the eternal plan and the covenant of grace as its temporal performance. He divides the covenant of redemption into two parts: “a Covenant of Designation” and “(a covenant) of Actuall Redemption.” The former indicates its eternal, intra-trinitarian origin. The latter does not simply point to the covenant of grace as a temporal performance of what was designed in the covenant of redemption, otherwise the covenant of grace is to be considered involved in the covenant of redemption as a part. The reason Rutherford holds the concept of a covenant of actual redemption was that “the Man Christ, untill he should be Man and have a mans will, he could not in two wills close with the Covenant of actuall Redemption.” In other words, although the Son agreed with the Father’s commands and promises in eternity, unless in time he actually agrees with all the terms, agreed upon in the covenant of redemption in eternity, with a human will, the covenant of redemption is not complete and as a result all the promises determined in the covenant of redemption cannot be performed in the name of the covenant of grace.
life can come only through a new covenant, the covenant of grace.” Therefore, the covenant of grace has a double connection both with the covenant of redemption as the material cause and the covenant of works as the efficient cause.

The covenant of grace in the thought of Goodwin is primarily a covenant made with the elect in Christ. Thus for Goodwin, Christ’s role in the covenant of grace is so important that he describes his role with three titles ascribed to Christ. As already mentioned in this discussion of the covenant of redemption, the main goal of the covenant of redemption was to transact the actual reconciliation of God the Father with elect sinners by removing enmity between them and Himself. However, the problem is that there is no fallen humanity who is qualified or has the power to meet the requirements of both divine justice and divine mercy. In this terrible predicament between God’s love and mercy toward his people and the impotence for them to meet divine justice, Goodwin argues, God’s wisdom interfered suggesting “a commutation”:

so as that satisfaction should be performed by a surety in our stead, who might be a mediator and umpire, and who might take our sins upon himself, and upon whom God might lay the iniquity of us all, Isa. 53:6, and exact the punishment, as Junius reads it; that might become a surety. (italics mine)

Goodwin introduces Christ as a surety, mediator, and umpire in relation to his role in the covenant of grace. It is in Christ and by Christ, “as a mediator, and umpire, and surety between them and him” that the “great matter of reconciliation has been taken up and accorded.” The implications of these three titles assigned to Christ somewhat overlap

104 Von Rohr, Covenant of Grace, 43.
105 Goodwin, Works, 5:17.
with one another in the sense that they all refer to Christ playing a certain role in between God and the elect for reconciliation with God. However, Goodwin also makes a distinction between the three titles in relation to their specific work for salvation.

First, Goodwin’s reference to Christ as an umpire appears seven times in his entire work, five times of which it is mentioned alongside the other two titles without any specific explanation of each title. Goodwin claims that the role of Christ as an umpire is to “bind the parties in bond to stand to their word.”108 Goodwin argues here that although salvation is made possible by Christ’s merits, which was purchased by his laying down of a price for sin, salvation may “be said to be by grace” because Christ’s merits are bestowed and accepted only through the covenant of redemption made by God with Christ to accept it on behalf of sinners.109 Thus, what Christ does as an umpire between God and his elect is to let both parties stand on the covenant of redemption, which he himself made with the Father, and follow through on the agreement made in that covenant.

The second title assigned to Christ is surety. The suretyship of Christ is mostly related to satisfying God with the payment of the debt owed to God “in our stead.” Goodwin notes that Christ as a surety paid “the debt, by undergoing death in our stead,” and so satisfied God.110 When the least law is transgressed, a double debt is owed to


109 Goodwin, Works, 5:31. See also Strong, Discourse of Two Covenants, 148. Strong also argues in this treatise that “although all the benefits and blessings of the Covenant are purchased by Christ, yet the Covenant it self is grounded only upon free grace” because “it is this Covenant that is the ground of all the acts of Christ, and the acceptation of them all is grounded only upon free grace in the Covenant and compact between him and his father.”

God the law-giver in that all laws require both “a perceptive part” and “a penal part.” However, “neither of both debts can either” the elect themselves, “or any creature for” them, ever satisfy God. It was God who, in the eternal covenant of redemption, appointed Christ as a surety of the covenant of grace—as the one who would undertake the debts of the elect sinners. Goodwin confirms that Christ “became a Surety of the whole covenant, and every condition in it.” He then goes on to argue that this surety did neither merely undertake all the work to God nor “undergo all our punishments.” Nor is Christ a surety who only pays debts for us and works “in us all that God required should be done by us, in the covenant of grace.” Christ’s suretyship differs from that on the earth. Earthly sureties usually “enter into one and the same bond with the debtors, so as the creditor may seize on which of the two he wills, whether on the debtor or on the surety, and so (usually) on the debtor first.” However, God made “the covenant of grace primarily with Christ, and with him as for us, thereby his single bond alone was taken for all.” This means that God “laid all upon Christ, demonstrating that he would not deal with us, nor so much as expect any payment from us, such as his grace.”

Goodwin claims that Christ is not a fidejussor, one who is obliged to pay when the debtors cannot pay, but an expromissor, one who makes payment as if it were his own. Therefore, to hear the news of the resurrection of an expromissor is not only “an evidence

---

111 Goodwin, Works, 5:85.
112 Goodwin, Works, 5:85.
113 Goodwin, Works, 4:28.
114 Goodwin, Works, 4:29.
115 Goodwin, Works, 4:29.
116 Goodwin, Works, 4:29.
that God is satisfied, and that the *expromissor* is discharged from God,” but it also assures the elect that all their debts are paid and satisfied.\footnote{117 Goodwin, *Works*, 4:30. This is clearly a reaction to Cocceian view of Christ’s suretyship in favor of the position of both Voetius and Witsius.}

Lastly, Goodwin also styles Christ as our mediator. Goodwin uses this title more often than the other two in describing Christ’s role in the covenant of grace. Like the other two titles, Christ’s mediatiorship and its necessity is also related to human inability after the fall and grounded in a dilemma arising from the conflict between divine mercy and justice.\footnote{118 Goodwin, *Works*, 5:16.} A mediator in its literal sense is one that stands between two parties at variance and brings reconciliation between them. Goodwin confirms that Christ is the only mediator standing “between God and man.”\footnote{119 Goodwin, *Works*, 5:48.} For becoming the fittest mediator between God and the elect sinners, argues Goodwin, the mediator first must be “*medius*, a middle person,” who “participates of both natures,” and then *medians*, a mediator, who reconciles both natures. Christ is not simply a middle man “as a middle rank of man” between God above him and the elect under him, but of participation, as having the natures of both.“\footnote{120 Goodwin, *Works*, 5:48.} By being both true God and a true human, “he is of equal distance and difference from both” since as God he is different from humanity and as a human from God and thus “is indifferent also between both, so as not to take part with the one more than with the other, ready to distribute to both with unequal hands their due, and be faithful to both.”\footnote{121 Goodwin, *Works*, 5:49.} In order to make peace and reconciliation between both, Christ also
“takes pledges both out of earth and out of heaven.”

And this makes him “able to draw near both, and bring both together, and so make us one.” Finally, therefore, by virtue of all these facts “the benefit of all he did for us” could be communicated to us. Christ’s mediatiorship requires of him to be both God and human since “what did not become the one nature the other might do.”

Goodwin seems to argue that Christ the mediator is the only one who reconciles God and sinful humanity both by participating in both natures and by thus overcoming the infinite ontological gap between them.

Christ, as a judge, a surety, and a mediator, is the center of the covenant of grace and significant in the sense that he, with these three titles, is the object of faith in the covenant of grace. Christ actually completed his redemptive work assigned by the Father. Apart from the covenant of grace, however, Christ’s works in themselves do not have any inherent force obliging God to save humankind. All Christ has actually done for as a judge, a surety, and a mediator on earth would be effective for the salvation of His elect only in the covenant of grace. This is the reason why Goodwin announces the blessings promised to Christ in the covenant of redemption and given to the elect in the covenant of grace to be pure grace, even though they are not absolutely free, but “by Christ, and on account of his merits.”

In addition to Christ’s merits, however, there is another essential element that is required in the covenant of grace for the elect to actually be saved. This element is faith and one of the main objects of this faith is Christ as a judge, a

---


surety, and a mediator as discussed so far. This issue will be discussed in the following subsection.

Conclusion of Part I

One of the important characteristics in Goodwin’s covenant theology is his sharp distinction between nature and grace. Goodwin consistently contrasts Adam’s natural state under the covenant of works and the state of the elect under the covenant of grace. Adam was a completely natural man and it is the covenant of works that clearly shows Adam’s naturalness. The covenant of works under which all intelligent creatures were made is also called *jus creationis* and Goodwin defines it as an equitable transaction between God and them, which imposes due obligations on both parties though God was not obliged in an absolute sense. All under the covenant of works belonged to nature. Goodwin especially focuses on the rewards and punishments promised in the covenant and declares they are all natural. The reward, which would be given to Adam as a result of his obedience, was his happy life on earth because according to the sharp distinction between nature and grace, the earthly, natural Adam’s due is neither in the realm of heaven nor grace, but on earth and nature. In addition, Goodwin draws our attention to his argument that all Adam possessed also appertained to nature. Goodwin particularly explains why the image of God in Adam is not a *donum superadditum*, but constitutes Adam’s nature. His holiness, righteousness, and knowledge of God, of which the image of God consisted, are all natural. It was by this image of God that Adam was able to meet the condition by keeping himself holy under the covenant of works. He then deals with Adam’s faith. Adam’s faith is also natural faith based on his natural knowledge of God.
Setting up this natural background, Goodwin claims that although Adam’s fall was
directly caused by his disobedience, yet disobedience was brought forth by his unbelief in
his natural knowledge of God. Adam’s natural faith failed.

There is no other natural way by which the covenant relationship with God, which
Adam’s natural faith and ability broke, could be restored, since Adam and his posterity
are no longer innocent nor have natural ability to do it. Goodwin here brings in divine
supernatural grace as a way to overcome all failures that Adam’s natural faith brought
about. God first made an eternal covenant of redemption between the Father, the Son, and
the Spirit in eternity, though the Spirit was not a contracting party. Goodwin holds that
this covenant was made for the reconciliation between God and the elect sinners. The
entire plan for saving them with all the details was determined in this covenant. The
Father demanded the Son to take up human nature and to die for them and promised the
reward of saving them on the condition that the Son would agree to the demands. The
Son accepted all the demands. This covenant of redemption is the most supernatural
covenant the world has ever known because no creature is involved, but it is a purely
intra-trinitarian covenant in eternity. Everything was prepared for the supernatural way of
salvation to enter into the natural world. In this covenant, Christ was appointed to be a
judge, a surety, and a mediator between God and His elect. In order to play those roles,
Christ had to take up human nature and as true God also became a true man. In addition,
it was in this covenant that faith and obedience were determined as the conditions for the
covenant of grace. However, although these conditions are to be met for the covenant of
grace on the part of the elect, they are not proper conditions for the covenant of grace as
determined in the covenant of redemption because Goodwin argues that the covenant of
grace was made primarily with Christ as a head of his people. Therefore, the condition for the covenant of grace determined in the covenant of redemption was Christ’s death in time.

However, this covenant in itself cannot replace the broken covenant of works nor reconcile sinners to God. It was just a plan for reconciliation. In order for the elect to be actually saved, this plan must be performed in the name of the covenant of grace with its conditions of Christ’s atoning death and the faith and obedience of the elect. What Christ’s death signifies is Christ’s obedience to the law that Adam disobeyed. The earthly man’s disobedience, or the first Adam’s disobedience was annulled by the heavenly man’s obedience, or the second Adam’s obedience. In this sense, the covenant of works was not removed from the world after the fall. Christ met the condition of the covenant of grace by obeying the law of God with his death and still plays an important role in salvation. Now the covenant of grace was completed and the promise in the covenant is prepared.

Who then is this promise prepared for? Goodwin argues that the elect, more specifically, those who are in the covenant of grace are the recipients of the promised blessings of the covenant. How can one get into the covenant of grace? Goodwin simply says that only by faith can the elect sinners enter the covenant. How then can one stay in the covenant of grace? He also answers that those who are in the covenant will stay there by obedience to all God’s commandments. Goodwin thus regards faith and obedience as the conditions for the covenant of grace in the sense that they are all necessary for the covenant. Those who believe and obey are supposed to receive the reward promised in the covenant, that is, the enjoyment of all spiritual blessings. If faith is a condition for the
covenant of grace, what is the object of this faith? For Goodwin, the primary object of faith is Christ who is a judge, a surety, and a mediator in the covenant of grace. Although faith and obedience were mentioned by Goodwin as the conditions for the covenant, he elsewhere holds that faith only is the condition since obedience to God’s commandments is seminally included in faith. Goodwin expresses this in another way. He argues that the Spirit moves the will to obey God by means of faith. In this sense, faith is also an instrument that the Spirit uses to encourage the believers to keep themselves obedient to God under the covenant.

All this is determined in the covenant of redemption and performed by Christ and the elect in the covenant of grace. What the natural covenant failed in is restored by the supernatural covenants of redemption and of grace. Therefore, according to Goodwin’s principle, the final reward given by the supernatural covenant should be eternal happy life in heaven because Christ, who satisfied all the conditions of the covenant, came from heaven. Christ met all the conditions by taking up human nature and dying as a judge, a surety, and a mediator. Goodwin calls the covenant of grace an absolute covenant in this sense. In addition, given that faith and obedience as the conditions for the covenant are also undertaken on God’s part to perform them, according to Goodwin, the promise of the covenant of grace may be regarded as absolute. Therefore, the covenant of grace is the conditional covenant, since it requires faith and obedience, though not in a meritorious way, whereas this covenant is also an absolute, unconditional covenant in that Christ as a contracting party meets all the proper conditions and the Spirit works through faith as well as obedience by means of that faith.
Accordingly, Goodwin explains salvation through his clear parallel between Adam under the natural covenant of works and Christ under the supernatural, gracious covenant of grace as the head. What was destroyed by nature is restored and lifted up to a better state by grace. Adam broke the covenant relationship with God by his disobedience to the law, which was caused by the lack of his natural faith; whereas, the second Adam restored a renewed covenant relationship with God by his obedience, and the elect can participate in the covenant relationship through faith. All details for this restoration were planned and fixed in the eternal covenant and performed by Christ and the elect in time. In this sense, the argument of some scholars that the conditionality of the covenant of grace was the result of a compromising of God’s grace influenced by the conditional covenant of works needs to be corrected. As seen thus far, the conditionality of the covenant of grace in Goodwin’s theology is already embedded in his idea of the covenant of redemption, which is also embraced by the Reformers though considered a seminal concept. In addition, Goodwin consistently emphasizes the gracious, absolute, unconditional characteristics of the covenant by positing Christ as the primary covenant party who satisfied all the proper conditions of the covenant and by showing God’s initiative in the faith and obedience of the elect.

Goodwin clearly demonstrates that in all these covenants, faith plays significant roles both as a cause of the fall in the covenant of works and as a condition and an instrument for salvation. By contrasting the weakness of Adam’s natural faith rooted in his natural power with supernatural faith in Christ, the mediator given by God’s grace, Goodwin vividly describes God’s graciousness in the whole process of salvation.
PART II

FAITH AND THE ORDER OF SALVATION
CHAPTER FIVE
GOODWIN’S ORDO SALUTIS

Introduction

The first temporal covenant between God and humanity was broken by Adam’s unfaithful behavior rooted in his unbelief in God. God then wanted to restore His covenantal relationship with humanity, particularly with the elect, through another covenant, which Christ accomplished as a mediator, a judge, and a surety. God’s covenantal relationship with His people, broken by human unbelief, is to be restored, and even upgraded, by faith in Christ. The covenant of grace was not extemporaneously established. It was the temporal execution of the eternal covenant of redemption that was established among the Persons of the Trinity before the Creation. It is clearly found in Goodwin’s theology that the covenant of grace is firmly rooted in the eternal, trinitarian covenant as its foundation.

The covenant of grace has a twofold dimension: one is an objective accomplishment of the covenant that is made through Christ’s incarnation and His passive and active obedience; the other is a subjective dimension that an elect individual must get into the covenant by faith in order to enjoy all the blessings promised in the covenant. The former was objectively achieved by both Christ’s personality as true God and true man and His work, whereas the latter can be applied to each individual person by faith given by God through grace. The covenant of grace, therefore, is the only way for sinners to salvation God appointed. When participating in it with faith, each believer is supposed to enjoy all the blessings promised in the covenant. Given that the first
dimension of the covenant of grace was completed by Christ in history as already shown in the previous chapters, the next task to be done in this study is to identify those blessings promised in the covenant of grace. For Goodwin natural man cannot receive them because they are spiritual blessings “peculiar to believers.”¹ He argues that in the applicatory work for salvation, God endows those, who entered the covenant of grace by faith, “with all those blessings by the Spirit” such “as calling, justification, sanctification, glorification.”² Therefore, those blessings seem to be closely related to the final stage of salvation, i.e., glorification, and thus have in them a certain causal, sequential order which is now generally termed ordo salutis.³

5.1. Divine Causality and the Sequential Understanding of the Application of Salvation

The term ordo salutis, though it is a technical theological term, is no longer strange to modern Christians who love and are interested in theology, particularly Reformed theology. Muller thus writes that contemporary Reformed theology tends to take the concept for granted because there is a “general consensus” in Reformed circles concerning its usefulness as well as its function to portray “the priority of grace in the work of salvation.”⁴ This broad modern recognition of this term within Reformed theology is well expressed in the theological works of many Reformed theologians. Louis

¹ Goodwin, Works, 10:151.
² Goodwin, Works, 6:405.
³ “As Christ undertook to God, so God undertakes to Christ again, to justify, adopt and forgive, sanctify and glorify those he gives him. All the blessings his love intended, Christ was to purchase them; and all the blessings Christ’s death did purchase, he promiseth Christ to bestow on those whom he purchased them for, so as his labour should not be in vain.” Thomas Goodwin, Works, 5:27.
⁴ Muller, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, 161.
Berkhof accepts and describes the *ordo salutis* as “the process by which the work of salvation, wrought in Christ, is subjectively realized in the hearts and lives of sinners.”

Sinclair B. Ferguson defines this term in *New Dictionary of Theology* as “the systematic ordering of the various elements in personal salvation.” After introducing some recent criticisms against the *ordo salutis*, he adds, “[w]e cannot avoid thinking about salvation in a coherent (order-ly!) fashion.” The term, “*ordo salutis,*” thus basically points to the application of the work of redemption and “aims at describing in their logical order, and also in their interrelations, the various movements of the Holy Spirit throughout the lives of the elect.”

This *ordo salutis*, however, was not generally received by Reformed orthodoxy as a fixed technical term until the early eighteenth century. This means that in the time of Goodwin, there was “some variety in Reformation and post-Reformation Reformed discussion of the order of salvation.” Although the term “*ordo salutis*” was already used by Bullinger in his *De gratia Dei iustificante*, it was by the Lutheran theologians that the concept of the “order of salvation” received “a systematic treatment of different moments of the *Ordo Salutis* under a unifying head,” and in Buddaeus’s *Institutiones*

---


8 Muller, *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition*, 161.


theologiae dogmaticae (1723) the first actual use of the term *ordo salutis* appeared.\footnote{11}{Reinhold Seeberg, “Heilsordnung,” in RE, vol. 7, 593-94; Ferguson, “ordo salutis,” 480; cf. Max Koch, *Der ordo salutis in der alt-lutherischen Dogmatik* (Berlin: Dunker, 1899); Kuiper, *By Grace Alone*, 19. Koch and Kuiper regard Jacob Carpov (1737) as the first dogmatician who used the term in his discussion of salvation, whereas Seeberg and Ferguson antedate the first use of the term to 1723 as evidenced by Buddaeus’s *Institutiones theologiae dogmaticae*.}

However, acknowledgment of the formation and fixation of the *ordo salutis* as a technical theological term in the early eighteenth century does not mean that sixteenth-and seventeenth-century Reformed theologians did not have such an orderly, sequential understanding of the Spirit’s subjective application of objective salvation, accomplished by Christ, to individuals. Rather, a seminal, or undeveloped, form of the concept of an ordering of the work of salvation can be seen in Augustine’s work. While his predecessors focused more on Christ’s objective salvation, Augustine “made a marked contribution to the doctrine of subjective salvation by his teaching on internal grace.” In so doing, he notes the precedence of divine grace over all human merit and tries to demonstrate how this grace “illuminates the mind” and “creates in man a good will, love for the good, and ability to do the good.”\footnote{12}{Augustine, *De gratia christi et de peccato originali contra pelagium et coelestinum*, I, 13. See Kuiper, *By Grace Alone*, 18.}

Throughout the medieval era, though the Roman Catholic Church was not interested in the salvific movements of the Spirit in the heart of sinners, but paid major attention to the sacramental power in enabling sinners to “perform meritorious works whereby they may gain eternal life,” Thomas Aquinas, following Augustine, attempted to describe how grace affects the mind and the will\footnote{13}{Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologicae*, I, q105, a3-4.} and

*Theologia didactico-polemica* (1702) and Hollazius’ *Examen theologicum acroamaticum* (1718) were instrumental in moving Lutheran dogmatics from a less strictly organized order of salvation toward the point where the doctrine became so clearly divined that a term was applied to it (*Calvin and Reformed Tradition*, 163).
went a step further, setting forth the relationship between divine grace, justification,\textsuperscript{14} and sanctification, or “meritorious works,” as a result of “cooperating grace,”\textsuperscript{15} though, as Kuiper writes, his treatment of the order of salvation shows a significant deficiency in connecting the objective salvation of Christ and “the present work of Christ in applying salvation to individuals.”\textsuperscript{16}

At the time of the Reformation, the subjective phase of salvation, particularly the various moments in the process of salvation, started to receive attention in a measure that it had never enjoyed. Over against the emphasis on the sacramental approach to salvation by the Catholic Church, the Reformers and their late sixteenth-and seventeenth-century successors not only focused on the meaning of Christ’s objective accomplishment of salvation, that is, the \textit{historia salutis}, but on the subjective application of salvation, what would later be called the \textit{ordo salutis}.

\subsection*{5.2. Goodwin and the Order of Salvation}

Goodwin believes that Scripture is “only able to make thee wise unto salvation”\textsuperscript{17} and “is said to make the man of God perfect.”\textsuperscript{18} Thus, there is no doubt that salvation as a process to make sinners perfect should be one of the most important themes of Scripture.

\begin{flushright}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Aquinas, \textit{ST}, I-II, q113. a9-10.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Aquinas, \textit{ST}, I-II, q114, a1-10.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Kuiper, \textit{By Grace Alone}, 18. Kuiper adds that “as far as the teaching of Thomas Aquinas goes there is no necessary relation between the present-day operations of grace in the hearts of men and the person of Jesus Christ, who is Himself the perennial fountain of salvation.”
\item \textsuperscript{17} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 10:215.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 5:537.
\end{itemize}
\end{flushright}
Goodwin sees the gospel, or salvation, as “the means of revealing God in Christ by the Scriptures, which are the glass and ordinance that present God in Christ most lively to us.”¹⁹ In Goodwin’s view, the ultimate purpose of God’s acts for salvation would not be to save sinners, but to make God’s glory more clearly revealed. Goodwin attributes the efficient and principal cause of God’s predestination and election to the “good pleasure of his will” and the final cause of them to “the praise of the glory of God’s grace.”²⁰ It is covenant theology that sees salvation in the framework of the covenantal relationship between God and His people.

Von Rohr, in his dealing with the relationship between the covenant of grace and the ordo salutis, argues that each of the stages of the order of salvation “must be seen … as incorporated within the covenant of grace.”²¹ The inseparable relationship between the covenant and a series of sequential stages in the application of salvation to individual members of the elect is succinctly described in Von Rohr’s statement that the covenant as an instrument of salvation not only “relates in all stages to the ordo salutis,” but all parts of the ordo salutis “must be comprehended within the framework of the covenant of grace.”²² According to the Reformed orthodox, if in the covenant of redemption in eternity the Father and the Son agreed on all the specific stipulations of the plan to save the elect, it was within the framework of the covenant of grace that this salvation plan was actualized as planned. This covenant of grace is often said to be composed of two

---


²⁰ Goodwin, Works, 1:103.

²¹ Von Rohr, Covenant of Grace, 87.

²² Von Rohr, Covenant of Grace, 87.
parts. One is the objective *historia salutis*, which began right after Adam’s fall and was completed by Christ’s incarnation, life, death and resurrection. The other is the order of salvation, that is, the application of this objective redemption to each individual member of the elect. In the former, therefore, every objective condition for salvation was met entirely by the ministry of Christ in history, so that the Spirit may build up and complete the house of salvation on that platform by working through the *ordo salutis* in individuals. Therefore, all stages that the elect would go through from the entrance into the covenant of grace to the consummation of the same covenant are the spiritual blessings given both as planned in the covenant of redemption in eternity and as the gracious outcome of the covenant of grace, the temporal application of the pre-temporal covenant. Goodwin also takes the same position toward this issue as Von Rohr does.23

In the following three chapters, attention will be called to the role of faith in the enjoyment of those spiritual blessings. In other words, whereas in the preceding two chapters, the role of faith was examined with focus on the covenantal relationship between the elect and God, the focus now moves to the role faith has specifically played for the elect to enjoy the soteriological fruits of the covenant of grace. For this purpose, first, Goodwin’s own version of *ordo salutis* will be constructed and then, the specific role of faith will be viewed in light of each blessing of the *ordo salutis*.

Various seventeenth-century Reformed orthodox theologians, who lived in the period of high orthodoxy, discussed such elements as would be identified later as the *ordo salutis* without “establishing a definitive ordo and without using the term ordo

---

23 “As Christ undertook to God, so God undertakes to Christ again, to justify, adopt and forgive, sanctify and glorify those he gives him. All the blessings his love intended, Christ was to purchase them; and all the blessings Christ’s death did purchase, he promiseth Christ to bestow on those whom he purchased them for, so as his labour should not be in vain.” Thomas Goodwin *Works*, 5:27.
salutis as a descriptor." Therefore among them there was no such fixed way of classifying those elements so that not all thinkers might have had the same principle for establishing his/her own ordo salutis.25

It is even more difficult to establish Goodwin’s ordo salutis, since he did not write a systematic theology, or a body of divinity, in which each theological locus was orderly arranged according to a certain standard. There remain two confessional documents, which Goodwin participated in creating: the WCF and the Savoy Declaration. In particular, given that together with Owen, Goodwin was one of the most influential figures in creating the latter, it is worth calling our attention to the Savoy Declaration for the purpose of this discussion.

In chapter 3, section 5, the Declaration states that God chose “those of mankind that are predestined unto life,” “in Christ unto everlasting glory.” Here is the scope of the salvation of a believer: from election to glorification. It then shows how the beginning, election, is supposed to be completed at the end, glorification. The Declaration describes in 3:6 that God has “by the eternal and most free purpose of his will fore-ordained all the means thereunto.” What are the means? It gives an answer in the same section: “they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and

\footnote{24 Muller, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, 165.}

\footnote{25 Cf. Muller, Calvin and the Reformed Tradition, 165. Muller gives two Reformed orthodox theologians as examples for this argument. Marckius “identifies the works (officia) of the covenant of grace as faith and repentance, followed by a series of benefits (beneficia) of the covenant, vocation, justification, sanctification, and conservation, followed ultimately by glorification. These benefits Marckius in turn relates to a further set of adjunct terms, regeneration, adoption, reconciliation, and liberation or redemption, connecting regeneration with vocation, adoption and reconciliation with both vocation and justification. Turretin similarly identifies primary elements of the work of salvation: calling, faith, justification, and sanctification, as well as their adjuncts, relating perseverance to faith, remission of sin and adoption to justification.”}
kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation.”

Therefore, we can establish an ordo salutis from the Declaration, which Goodwin calls the means to glorification: divine election, redemption, effectual calling, justification, adoption, sanctification, and perseverance, or divine protection. However, this order of the means to glorification cannot be regarded as Goodwin’s own ordo salutis in that Goodwin was not the sole author of the Declaration, though it is understood that he played a significant role in this work. For this reason, it is still necessary to examine more of his personal documents so that his own version of an ordo salutis can be reconstructed.

5.2.1. Threefold Division of Divine Works for Salvation

Goodwin holds that there are three kinds of divine acts by which our salvation is completed and accomplished. He puts it this way:

1. *Immanent* in God towards us, as his eternal love set and passed upon us, out of which he chose us, and designed this and all blessings to us.
2. *Transient*, in Christ done for us; in all he did or suffered representing of us, and in our stead.
3. *Applicatory*, wrought in us and upon us, in the endowing us with all those blessings by the Spirit; as calling, justification, sanctification, glorification.  

The first divine act for salvation is eternal divine election by God the Father, which is based on His love toward and upon us. Goodwin attributes all spiritual blessings to divine election and predestination as an origin of them. He holds that God is full of blessedness in himself and thus that “God had first become our God” so that we may possess all spiritual blessings prepared for us. It is “by choosing us, which was done by election

---


entirely,” that God has first become our God. This election is neither in any sense rooted in any human acts including divine foreknowledge of faith nor even in Christ’s merit, that is, God’s “foreseeing his (Christ’s) death and passion.” All this is done in God immanently. After this election, argues Goodwin in other treatises, according to the eternal covenant of redemption made between the three Persons of the Trinity, God did for the elect “the things that God doth through Christ” in time, which are usually some transient acts of God towards us, or “those things which he actually performeth,” that is, “[g]iving Jesus Christ to be a head for us, and to die for us.” All these transient acts of God in and through Christ are “the fruits of the first act,” that is, election. Moreover, Goodwin seems to identify Christ’s active and passive obedience in time with the “redemption” that the Declaration mentions as the second step to glorification because everything required for salvation, particularly justification, is objectively accomplished by Christ and Goodwin calls it redemption. These immanent acts of God in eternity laid a firm foundation for all his redemptive acts afterwards and were a place for Goodwin to return to for assurance of salvation in his dealing with applicatory acts of God. The two

---


29 Goodwin, *Works*, 1:65. Refuting the Arminian view of election that election was done by God on the basis of his foreseeing our faith and holiness, he contends first that God elected us in order to make us have faith and be sanctified.

30 Goodwin, *Works*, 6:405


33 For Goodwin, election does not simply mean that God elected us to the final salvation, but that the elect were eternally predestinated to go through all spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace until they come to glorification. See Goodwin, *Works*, 1:65. In his exposition on the 4th and 5th verses of the first chapter of Ephesians, he reaffirms that the immanent acts of God include all applicatory spiritual blessings by making a distinction between the divine “act of blessing” and “the blessings wherewith God hath blessed us.” The act of blessings are “electing and predestinating of us”; the blessings themselves are
former divine acts are finally applied to the elect by the Spirit and bear the fruit of the spiritual blessings “in and upon us.” Goodwin calls it the “applicatory” act of God. The four blessings pertaining to this act are: calling, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

Interestingly, Goodwin attributes this trichotomous division of the divine acts for salvation to the mode of God’s existence. He explains the whole of salvation in a trinitarian way. He wrote a short treatise, titled *Man’s Restoration by Grace*, in which he tries to describe the role of each Person of the Trinity in salvation. Goodwin holds in the treatise that God is willing to reveal His triunity, particularly three Persons, by His own works and that it is when the gospel is preached that “these three persons, their distinction, order of personality” are most clearly revealed and manifested. He ascribes first of all election “peculiarly” to the Father, which is the foundation; then there is also redemption “appropriated to the Son,” which is the second work and “which supposeth election, depends on it, and flows from God’s decree and speaking to his Son”; and lastly there is the application of both, which “springeth both from election and redemption” and is ascribed eminently to the Holy Spirit. All these works and the relation between them reflect the relation between the three subsistences as well as the existence of the three

“holiness and adoption of children.” He puts it this way: “[H]is scope being to shew how all blessings depend both upon God’s election before all worlds. … the time when God bestowed all these blessings upon us in Christ was when he chose us, even before all worlds. … And then he mentions two particular blessings with which in election and predestination he hath blessed us, holiness, ver. 4, and adoption of children, ver. 5, and all this in Jesus Christ.”


Persons, Goodwin argues. Moreover, there is some causality adumbrating in the order of the peculiar work of each subsistence.

Therefore, Goodwin’s trichotomous division of the divine act of salvation is composed of two acts prior to faith – the immanent act of election by the Father and the transient act of redemption by Christ’s life and death – and the application of the Spirit to the elect, which is somehow related to faith.

5.2.2. Twofold Division of Divine Works for Salvation

In his exposition on Ephesians 1:4, particularly the phrase, “For by grace ye are saved through faith,” Goodwin introduces the spiritual blessings derived from divine election and categorizes them in various ways. He points out that “salvation by grace” includes all divine works immanent, transient, and applicatory, but that “salvation by grace through faith” as written in the text cannot refer to all of the divine works inasmuch as some of them are accomplished without faith or not by faith alone. To make clear the difference between salvation “by grace” and salvation “by grace through faith,” he divides salvation into two parts: one is “the actions of God upon us and towards us,” which may be properly called salvation itself, and the other “the workings of God in us” “which are unto salvation.”

37 Goodwin, _Works_, 2:314.

38 Goodwin, _Works_, 2:315.
accomplishment of it by degrees, time after time.””

Each sort of salvation mentioned above infers a distinct change. God’s work “upon and toward us” and salvation in “the right and the title” bring about “a relative change” in us, whereas divine work “in us” and salvation in the full accomplishment by degrees produce in us “a real change.” He concludes that all divine works are “toward” and “on” us but regeneration is possible purely by faith alone; all divine works “in us” are not realized only by faith but also by “sanctification.” Justification, reconciliation, and adoption belong to the former, whereas repentance, good works, obedience, sanctification, assurance of salvation, and perseverance are included in the latter. He thus confesses that “although I might shew you that faith hath a great hand in all parts of salvation, yet I could not shew you that it had a sole hand.” Accordingly, we may conclude that Goodwin’s taxonomy of the spiritual blessings, or divine work of God for salvation, given as the fruit of the covenant of grace, is made in a fourfold way. First, divine acts as immanent, transient, and applicatory; second, God’s acts upon and toward us and God’s acts in us; third, God’s works producing in us a relative change and real change; and last, divine works by faith alone and divine works by faith together with sanctification. However, the first two works of the first taxonomy already happened in eternity and in history, and the elements of the other taxonomies belong to the applicatory work of God happening in individual sinners until they arrive at glorification, that is, the last stage of salvation.

40 Goodwin, Works, 2:315.
41 Goodwin, Works, 2:315.
42 Goodwin, Works, 2:318.
43 Goodwin, Works, 2:318.
Before closing this section, it is worth giving brief attention to another one of Goodwin’s discussions regarding spiritual blessings. They may serve our goal of reconstructing Goodwin’s order of salvation. In dealing with the glorious state the elect will enjoy in the future, Goodwin gives a slightly different order of God’s applicatory acts for salvation from those in the aforementioned divisions. “[T]he great God of heaven and earth” is the efficient cause of this glory, who “built the great city.”44 As the meritorious cause of this glory, Christ is presented here because he has laid the foundation of this glory by purchasing “it for us in his blood.” Goodwin then urges deeper consideration over the purpose of his blood by asking what the revenues of glory purchased by his death shall be. He answers:

Consider with yourselves what this will amount to. And this is heaven, heaven is the revenues of Christ’s blood. Think, I say, what glorious heaven it must needs be which Christ’s blood hath purchased for us. This is that he aimed at in laying down his life for us; for justification, adoption, and sanctification, are but the way to glorification; and we are justified, adopted, and sanctified all to this end, that we might be glorified (Italics mine). 45

The aim of Christ’s purchasing of the glory by shedding his blood is for the glorification of the elect, and justification, adoption, and sanctification are the blessings also purchased by the blood as the stages leading to the final goal, glorification. Here Goodwin adds adoption to and yet removes calling from the elements of the applicatory act of God for salvation.

44 Goodwin, Works, 7:459.

45 Goodwin, Works, 7: 460.
5.2.3. **Reconstruction of Goodwin’s Own Version of an Ordo Salutis**

Thus far, we have seen Goodwin’s principles of classifying divine work for salvation. What is prominent in his understanding of the spiritual blessings on the way to the completion of salvation is that there is no fixed order of the blessings that each elect sinner should undergo. Goodwin does not deal with each of these blessings in particular loci, nor does he seem to treat them with a definite order in mind, as can be found in the above taxonomies he made, and Goodwin does not coherently suggest a confirmed order of the blessings in any specific place. As examined above, for example, he presents “calling” as an element of the applicatory divine work, but in another place omits it and instead adds “adoption” to the steps to glorification—an element which is not found in the list describing the applicatory work.

In addition, Goodwin is not very much interested in the logical, temporal, or causal order of salvation. He rather pays more attention to the characteristics of each spiritual blessing. As examined above, for example, he takes great effort to classify those blessings according to whether they are God’s work toward us, upon us, or in us, whether they produce a real or relational change in us, or whether they are brought forth by faith alone or not. Nevertheless, it does not mean that it is impossible to reconstruct Goodwin’s general order of salvation because, although Goodwin has never written a whole definitive list of his own order of salvation, he presents in many places the spiritual blessings, or divine works toward, upon, or in the elect. Therefore, we will try reconstructing Goodwin’s version of the order of salvation.

In reconstructing Goodwin’s *ordo salutis*, attention must be paid to the Savoy Declaration, chapter 3, section 6, which deals with the spiritual blessings and explicitly
presents them in a certain order, taking into account Goodwin’s trichotomous and
dichotomous divisions of the blessings. At this point, it can be deduced from these
observations an order of a series of spiritual blessings that Goodwin may have regarded
as an ordo salutis. The Declaration and Goodwin’s trichotomous division commonly
ascrbe the origin of our salvation to God’s immanent act of election. Divine election is
the first act of God based on His love toward and upon us. From this election flow all the
temporal, spiritual blessings for salvation to the elect. The Declaration gives the second
place to the redemption of the elect by Christ. As discussed earlier, however, this
redemption refers to the work of Christ for us, so it is not an event happening in the life
of individual believers. Therefore, both election and redemption already have been
completed in eternity and in the past. What remains for the elect is the application of the
Holy Spirit to each of them.

Treating those blessings belonging to the applicatory work of the Spirit, we will
follow the taxonomy that divides our salvation into God’s work on and toward us and in
us, since Goodwin most often describes each blessing according to this taxonomy.

According to Goodwin the first work of the Holy Spirit upon us is regeneration, because
he repeatedly emphasizes that regeneration is the first act of divine grace upon us and that
there is no preparatory grace preceding it. Conversion and effectual calling are also
often used as notions identical with regeneration. These three terms are often used

46 See Goodwin, Works, 2:314. Goodwin in most cases attributes redemption to Christ and His
works, but classifying redemption as God’s work on and towards us, he writes that God pronounces “us
just, redeemed, reconciled …” Therefore, redemption was accomplished by Christ, but we are counted as
redeemed by God in time.

47 Goodwin, Works, 9:17. For more information of the nature of regeneration, see particularly
Goodwin, Works, 6:359-404. Goodwin articulates the doctrine of regeneration most specifically in his
interchangeably, but it does not seem that Goodwin regards these three as exact synonyms, since there are some clues that insinuate there is a nuanced difference among them. This issue will be dealt with in detail in the section on regeneration.

The next spiritual blessing in Goodwin’s *ordo salutis* after regeneration is justification. Justification is one of the most important doctrines in Goodwin’s soteriology as evidenced by his works, such as *Christ Set Forth* and *The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith*. Moreover, as shown in many places where Goodwin enumerates spiritual blessings, justification is never ruled out and is in most cases placed right after regeneration, or its synonyms, such as calling and conversion.48

We already pointed out that Goodwin does not always include adoption in enumerating those spiritual blessings promised for the elect in the covenant of grace. As seen above, adoption is left out from the applicatory work of God in the trichotomous division of God’s works for salvation. However, in many places throughout his works he places adoption together with justification as a spiritual benefit in the soteriological context.49 Both adoption and justification are mentioned as God’s work upon us,50 as the promises of life,51 as benefits expressing the riches of grace,52 as divine acts toward us purely in God’s breast,53 as ways to glorification,54 the spiritual blessings witnessed by

54 Goodwin, *Works*, 7:460
the Holy Spirit on earth,\textsuperscript{55} and as the spiritual blessings prepared “from everlasting, which things eye hath not seen, nor ear heard.”\textsuperscript{56} When it comes to the order of justification and adoption, he offers quite an interesting opinion that in terms of eternal decree adoption precedes justification; whereas, in terms of actual application, justification is a prerequisite for adoption.\textsuperscript{57} Therefore, in the logical order of salvation, Goodwin puts justification ahead of adoption.

Thus far, we have treated God’s works upon us, which produce a relative change, not real change in us. It is time to turn now to a new phase of salvation, which brings a real change in us. Goodwin introduces them as blessings not by faith alone. The first is sanctification. In the WCF and the Savoy Declaration, adoption is followed by sanctification. In addition, in the trichotomous division of God’s works, particularly in God’s applicatory works, Goodwin places sanctification right after justification. However, as already pointed out, Goodwin includes repentance, good works, and obedience in the category of God’s works in us and yet places them prior to sanctification. How then can sanctification be placed next to adoption in his \textit{ordo salutis}? Goodwin does not seem to consider repentance, good works, and obedience to be worth taking a \textit{locus} in his order of salvation, since these three blessings do not consistently show up as spiritual blessings juxtaposed with other key blessings, such as justification, in his soteriological discussions. Moreover, these three blessings may be included in

\textsuperscript{55} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:370.

\textsuperscript{56} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 10:163.

\textsuperscript{57} Goodwin’s view of the issue related to the order between justification and adoption will be specifically discussed in the section dealing with the relation of his doctrine of adoption and that of justification.
sanctification because sanctification is the principle and they are its products. This will be more specifically discussed in the proper section.

Goodwin seems to put the perseverance of saints as the next blessing the believer receives in the course of salvation. The Savoy Declaration 3:6 says that those who are sanctified are to be “kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation.” In addition, the Declaration itself discusses and devotes a chapter to the perseverance of the saints right after the section, “Of Good Works,” which may be included in sanctification in a broad sense. Goodwin regards perseverance as a God-given blessing, calling it “the grace of perseverance,” and thus “wholly” attributing it “unto the power of God.” In addition, perseverance is a necessary blessing for us to arrive safely at the end of the salvation process. Goodwin argues that there is “an interstition or space” between the right of salvation and “entering into the full enjoyment and possession” of salvation. It is for this reason that there are “promises for perseverance, to keep and preserve you safe unto that possession, which is termed also salvation.”

Therefore, it is fair to put the perseverance of the saints after sanctification.

The last blessing at the completion of salvation, based on Goodwin’s works, would be glorification. The Savoy Declaration does not deal with glorification in the section, “Of God’s Eternal Decree,” nor does it make any room for a chapter on glorification as the _terminus ad quem_ of our spiritual pilgrimage on earth. However, as

---

58 Goodwin, _Works_, 3:448. See also Goodwin, _Works_, 9: 196-419. Goodwin approaches the doctrine of the perseverance of saints explicitly in a trinitarian way. He explains that our perseverance is originally rooted in the love of God the Father, that we are preserved in Christ who took us over from the Father as his, and that God’s preservation of us begins with calling and continues to the end of our life by the Holy Spirit. We will enlarge on this doctrine later in a proper place.

59 Goodwin, _Works_, 9:64.
already demonstrated, Goodwin urges us to consider the aim of the blood of Christ and confirms that the blessings of justification, adoption, and sanctification are the way to “glorification.” He emphasizes this truth by repeating that “we are justified, adopted, and sanctified all to this end, that we might be glorified.”

Thus far, Goodwin’s ordo salutis has been reconstructed on the grounds of the Savoy Declaration and his works. Although he mentions many other blessings related to salvation here and there throughout his works, those singled out for his ordo salutis are mentioned in the Declaration and are most frequently discussed by him, and bear more critical connotations than those left out. Goodwin never argues either a strict causal or strict temporal order in his discussion of the spiritual blessings flowing from the covenant of grace. Goodwin, for example, clearly says that God’s preserving the elect begins with effectual calling, or regeneration. Upon effectually calling the elect, he preserves them until they are glorified. Therefore, even if the perseverance of the saints follows sanctification in a logical order, it does not actually begin with the completion of sanctification, but from the first moment of salvation. It may be said that for this reason Goodwin classifies those spiritual blessings into God’s works upon us and God’s works in us. This issue will be articulated in detail as we examine each blessing.

5.2.4. Unio Cum Christo

William Evans pits Calvin’s “organic view of salvation as in principle communicated in toto and at once (though not fully realized at once) through a spiritual union with Christ” against “the Reformed orthodox view of salvation as applied in a series of temporally or

---

60 Goodwin, Works, 7:460.
logically successive acts.”

Goodwin, however, gives us reason to question Evans’ conclusion, inasmuch as he does not regard union with Christ as one element among others in the order of salvation. Rather, his concept of *unio cum Christo* is so comprehensive and overarching that he thinks it should relate to all the elements of an *ordo salutis*.

In order to properly understand believers’ union with Christ, he explains the meaning of “Christ dwelling in us” or “Christ in us.” This does not mean that we have just the image of Christ in us, but refers to the “union which Christ hath with the saints … whereby he and” we are all one. By means of this union, contends Goodwin, “all the glory he hath, and riches in him, are made” ours.

Goodwin continues explaining union with Christ as follows:

*that union, I say, of Jesus Christ and his saints, ‘Christ in them,’ is one great and eminent mystery of the gospel, and the greatest hope of glory. There are, saith he, a world of glorious riches and mysteries in the gospel, but I will give you one instance, which of all other is the greatest, or at least the comfortablest to you, and that is this, that Christ and you are one, that Jesus Christ is in you, and so the hope of glory. So that he speaks, I say, of the union that is between Jesus Christ and believers, as of all other the greatest and the richest mystery, at least the most comfortable into as which the gospel holds forth, and is the foundation of all glory and of all grace, it is the hope of glory.*

He first regards believer’s union with Christ as a “great and eminent mystery” and then describes it as “the greatest hope of glory.” When it comes to the mysterious aspect of

---

61 Evans, *Imputation and Impartation*, 54.

62 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 483. They write that some significant Puritan theologians judged union with Christ rather than justification to be “the chief blessing a Christian receives from God.”


this doctrine, Goodwin identifies it as one of the greatest mysteries of the gospel. The other is “the union of the human nature with the Godhead in the person of Christ.”

He holds that the union of Christ with His church is so mysterious and incomprehensible that the world and even some of His very disciples stumbled and thus left him. In John 6:57, moreover, “Christ himself parallels” it both with the hypostatical union of the Godhead with His human nature and with “his union with the Father.”

Union with Christ also brings to the elect “the greatest hope of glory” because it is the foundation of all spiritual blessings prepared for them. To receive the greatest glory reserved for the elect, there must be two elements: the exemption from condemnation and the bestowal of the spiritual blessings. Union with Christ does both. Goodwin holds that union with Christ “is the true original ground why there is no condemnation.” More importantly, union with Christ is “the foundation of all glory and all grace.”

Goodwin demonstrates his observation that “union with Christ is the first fundamental thing of justification, and sanctification, and all,” in the sense that Christ takes the elect first and then sends the Holy Spirit together with “a right of all those privileges.” Particularly, both justification and sanctification flow from this fountain. Goodwin claims that a twofold righteousness is “flowing from union with Christ, and a man’s being one with him, or being found in him” and then goes on to identify them, writing that:

---

1. One being a righteousness of sanctification, which is from Christ as the author of it, which yet he calls his own, because wrought in himself as the subject of it, though by Christ as the author.

2. Another, which is the righteousness of justification, which is the righteousness even of Christ himself, and God’s righteousness, as he calls it, imputed to him upon believing, and received by faith.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 5:357.}

All covenant blessings are found in Christ, and the elect partake in them by being united into Christ. It must be observed that introducing union with Christ as a foundation of sanctification and justification, Goodwin makes no distinctions concerning the nature of union with Christ. For this reason, as shown in our reconstruction of Goodwin’s \textit{ordo salutis}, union with Christ cannot be simply reduced to an element constituting the sequential chain of causality in our salvation. Other Reformed orthodox writers treat union with Christ in a similar way. Owen says that “Union with Christ is the principle and measure of all spiritual enjoyments and expectations,”\footnote{Owen, \textit{Works}, 19:471.} defining union with Christ as “An holy, spiritual conjunction unto him, as our head, husband, and foundation, whereby we are made partakers of the same Spirit with him, and derive all good things from him.”\footnote{Owen, \textit{Works}, 1:489.} Ezekiel Hopkins also confirms that “our union to Jesus Christ by the bond of faith … is a sufficient foundation for a real communication of all benefits and interests.”\footnote{Hopkins, \textit{Works}, 2:328.} Thomas Manton declares that “You cannot have spiritual life, and adoption, arid justification by Christ, till you are united to him by faith.”\footnote{Manton, \textit{Works}, 11:458.}
When it comes to Goodwin’s view on the relation between union with Christ and justification, there is no clear evidence that, as Evans says of other Reformed orthodox theologians, Goodwin divides union with Christ into two types, each of which is respectively rooted in the legal, federal union with Christ and in the spiritual union with Christ, and then attributes justification to the legal one and sanctification to the spiritual. Rather, Goodwin seems to put all the blessings under the same union with Christ, which is a substantial union. To prove this argument it is necessary to see how Goodwin classifies union with Christ. As Beeke and Jones point out, he divides it in two ways: a “threefold union with Christ” and a “twofold union with Christ.” The first part of the threefold union with Christ is a relative union with Him (This “relative union” is also found in Goodwin’s twofold division). This union completes the relationship between the elect and Christ in a legal sense, as a husband and a wife have such a relationship by marriage. However, this relational union does not guarantee an actual communion, or the communication of spiritual blessings, between them because Goodwin writes that this union is completed “before he act anything upon you.” In other words, spiritual blessings including justification, a fruit of the union with Christ, are not a direct, necessary result of this relational, legal union with Christ.

The second part of union with Christ, Goodwin suggests, is the union made by Christ’s actual indwelling in us just like “the soul dwells in the body.” Goodwin calls it “substantial union and communicative union” in the twofold division. He further comments on this union, explaining, “it is a union of the substance of his person and of

77 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 484. See also Goodwin, Works, 2:404 for the threefold division and Goodwin, Works, 2:309 for the twofold division.

78 Goodwin, Works, 2:404.
ours,” which is symbolized by the Lord’s Supper. By this union, he insists, God “communicates to you all those things which the relative union serves for.” Among those blessings communicated to us by this substantial union is justification.

Goodwin describes the third part of the believer’s union with Christ as “objective.” This concept of union is very significant in relation not only to the theme of this study, but particularly to the chronological order of the covenant blessings in their relationship to faith. Using the word “objective,” he intends to say that by faith believers “view Christ as the faculty doth view an object.” Goodwin goes on to explain this idea as follows:

Christ as the object of faith is said to dwell, and to dwell in us so far as we act faith towards him; that is that the Apostle prays for. He prays not that his person may dwell in them, but that he might dwell in them by faith.

This union does not refer to the actual indwelling of Christ in believers, which occurs before the first act of faith, but to His indwelling by faith after the second part of union with Christ. He articulates the meaning of Christ’s dwelling by faith with three assertions. First of all, this union is an operative dwelling. Although Christ may dwell in the believer regardless of the act of faith, without faith the believer cannot bring forth any faithful fruits because faith is the instrument that produces such operations in him. He then concludes that by faith the believer can see and act on Christ “as an object who hath virtue to convey into us, and to come in upon our hearts, and work upon our souls.”

Nevertheless, this does not mean that Christ cannot act in the believers without their act

---

79 Goodwin, Works, 2:395.

80 Goodwin, Works, 2:410.

81 Goodwin, Works, 2:404.
of faith, nor no operation can be found in them. Goodwin argues that Christ’s working in the believer is not to be limited to the act of his/her faith because Christ “works a thousand and a thousand operations” in believers’ souls, as is shown in the experience of two disciples on their way to Emmaus.82 But Goodwin pays his attention to the prayer of Paul that “Christ may do nothing, but that your faith might go along with him in it.” Even though Christ can do everything without faith of the believers, he should do it in them, and for them, through their faith and the exercise of their faith on Christ for it, so that through their “faith on Christ all might be derived unto” them, that “the whole management of the dispensations of God towards” them “might be by faith,” and that they “might attain the highest indwellings and operations in them through faith.”83 This is the second assertion. The last assertion explaining the third part of union with Christ is about the nature of faith, faith by which believers recognize Christ dwelling in themselves. When Goodwin argues faith makes Christ dwell in the hearts of believers, this faith is not only faith justifying, but it refers to all exercises of faith done in all ways. In other words, this faith not only leads the elect to justification, but also to “sanctification, deliverance, freedom from wrath, hell, and other things.”84 From this assertion, Goodwin draws two conclusions. First, Christ’s living in believers is by faith; second, the whole course of their lives in this world is by faith.85 Therefore, it is faith taking “the whole of Jesus Christ” that lets Him down into the souls of believers for Him

82 See Goodwin, Works, 2:404 where Goodwin writes that the two disciples “knew not that Christ talked with them; yet, said they, he warmed our hearts; and yet they did not believe nor act faith upon him.”

83 Goodwin, Works, 2:404-5.

84 Goodwin, Works, 2:405.

85 Goodwin, Works, 2:405.
to dwell in them, that makes impressions upon their souls according to what they know of Him, and that produces in them “dispositions to him, adorations of him, according as” they know Him.\textsuperscript{86}

Goodwin also offers another version of this threefold understanding of union with Christ in terms of “God’s immanent, transient, and applicatory works.”\textsuperscript{87} This looks quite similar to his threefold understanding of justification\textsuperscript{88} and also is a reminder of God’s threefold act for salvation. Goodwin argues that the elect were one with Christ from eternity “by stipulation” and “by a secret covenant undertaking for us.”\textsuperscript{89} He then goes on to say that the “act of God’s justifying us was but as we were considered in his undertaking.”\textsuperscript{90} With regard to this transient union with Christ, moreover, he insists, “When Christ died and rose again, we were in him by representation, as performing it for us, and no otherwise; but as so considered we were justified.”\textsuperscript{91} All these statements seem to confirm that justification is the result of a legal, federal union with Christ as Evans claims. But Goodwin adds that the actualization of justification is to be made as

\textsuperscript{86} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2:405.

\textsuperscript{87} Beeke and Jones, \textit{Puritan Theology}, 482. See also Sinclair Ferguson, \textit{The Holy Spirit} (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 109-11; John V. Fesko, “Sanctification and Union with Christ: a Reformed Perspective,” \textit{Evangelical Quarterly} 82, no 3 (2010): 199. Drawing on Ferguson, Fesko distinguishes three different aspects of our union with Christ in this way: “the predestinarian ‘in Christ,’ which is the union that the elect sinner has in the decree of election with Christ (Eph. 1:4); the redemptive-historical (\textit{historia salutis}) ‘in Christ,’ which is the union involved in the once-for-all accomplishment of salvation (Rom. 5:12-21; 8:3-4; Gal 2:19-20; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:6-3:4); and the applicatory ‘in Christ,’ which is the actual possession or application of salvation through work of the Spirit of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15, 19; Eph. 2:3, 12; Rom. 16:7).”

\textsuperscript{88} We will deal with Goodwin’s notion of threefold justification in detail later in the section on justification.

\textsuperscript{89} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:139.

\textsuperscript{90} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:139.

\textsuperscript{91} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:139.
the elect are substantially united with Christ by faith just like justification is. Goodwin decisively claims that “when we come in our persons, by our own consent, to be made one with him actually, then we come in our persons through him to be personally and in ourselves justified, and receive the atonement by faith.”92 In another place, discussing the dependency of justification on union with Christ, he contends along a similar line that:

though we were one in Christ before God in representation from all eternity, and when he was upon the cross, and by a covenant secretly made between God and him, yet there is an actual implanting and engraining us into Christ, upon believing to be obtained.93 (Italics mine)

Justification is not directly given from the principle of representation in eternity past nor by a federal union based on the covenant of redemption, but is firmly rooted in “an actual implanting and engraining us into Christ.” Accordingly, although Goodwin apprehends union with Christ in diverse manners, yet he does not explicitly ascribe certain benefits of covenant to forensic, federal union with Christ and others to spiritual, organic union with Christ. Rather, by putting justification in both categories, he reveals the full implications of the relationship between justification and union with Christ.

Concerning the way in which we are united to Christ, Goodwin argues that although immanent and transient union with Christ happened in God’s heart, we are substantially united to God by the Holy Spirit through faith. First of all, the Holy Spirit is the uniter of our souls to Christ. Goodwin explains that the uniter, who hypostatically united “Christ’s human nature and divine,” and the same “vinculum Trinitatis,” who is “the union of the Father and the Son” by way of their mutual love, “is so meet to be the

92 Goodwin, Works, 8:139.
93 Goodwin, Works, 8:406.
In addition, since the Holy Spirit “is the foundation of our union with Christ,” he holds, we may say that union is made “by the Holy Ghost.” Secondly, it is only faith that unites us to Christ, not any actions from us. Goodwin provides us with some additional information about this faith. According to him, this faith does not always need to involve assurance because union with Christ “is done without assurance that Christ is mine.” What is essentially required, therefore, is the act of our willingness to unite ourselves with Christ, not assurance of ourselves in Christ.

In so doing, Goodwin confirms the role of faith making us ultimately one with Christ. In relation to this role of faith, by the way, Goodwin writes a somewhat perplexing statement:

Christ first takes us, and then sends his Spirit. He apprehends us first. It is not my being regenerate that puts me into a right of all those privileges, but it is Christ takes me, and then gives me his Spirit, faith, holiness, &c. If we are united to Christ by the Spirit through faith, faith must precede the completion of our union with Christ. However, Goodwin argues that Christ first takes us even before the Spirit comes into us with faith. To solve this problem, Beeke and Jones suggest a good answer:

Goodwin’s *The Object and Act of Justifying Faith* is helpful in answering this question. In it, he speaks of the act of the will completing the union between Christ and the believer, which makes believers “ultimately one with him.” However, as the bride, we are simply confirming the union that has taken place. So, contrary to the common view of marriage, which requires the consent of both

---

partners since a man cannot marry a woman against her will, there is a spiritual union on Christ’s part to the elect that does not require assent from the sinner “because it is a secret work done by his Spirit, who doth first apprehend us ere we apprehend him.” That is to say, Christ establishes a union with the elect sinner by “apprehending” him and then giving the Spirit to him.  

In the above answer to the problem, the authors hold that the ultimate consummation can be made by faith, but that there is another union with Christ on God’s part before faith, which is worked by the Spirit secretly without our assent. Nevertheless, there still remains a problem, since the statement, “it is a secret work done by his Spirit, who doth first apprehend us ere we apprehend him,” and the last sentence, “Christ establishes a union with the elect sinner by ‘apprehending’ him and then giving the Spirit to him,” sound incompatible. But if we remember that God already united us to Christ in eternity and on Christ’s death and resurrection albeit in His heart, the secret work of the Holy Spirit Goodwin mentions here should not be necessarily a work within us. It is better to hear what Goodwin actually says:

Yea, by this act of the will is the union on our parts completed between Christ and us, and we are thereby made ultimately one with him. Now one main end of faith is to make an union with Christ on our parts, and that, as it is done without assurance that Christ is mine, so it is not chiefly made by a general assent; and to the union made on Christ’s part, it is not necessary I should then apprehend it when Christ first doth it, because it is a secret work done by his Spirit, who doth first apprehend us ere we apprehend him, as he first loves us ere we love him.

Here Goodwin parallels God’s apprehension of us with His love to us. Because God loved us first, He apprehends us first. If this is true, then His love to us is eternal and thus provides the foundation of all grace. Therefore, God’s apprehension of the elect that Goodwin mentions is not a certain work within them right before they exert their own

---

98 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 484.

will to complete the union, but a work that began with His love to them. Accordingly, union with Christ made on God’s part may refer to the immanent and transient union with Christ in God’s heart. It is this union with Christ – the secret of Christ’s taking the elect – from which all blessings, including faith, flow.

Examined thus far is Goodwin’s view of union with Christ. He like many other Reformed Puritans does not put union with Christ among the blessings leading toward glorification. Rather, union with Christ is directly related to and the source of all blessings. He even goes on to maintain that if we are not united to Christ, “there is no part of life.” Why? “Because all the parts of the spiritual life lie in our union with God and Christ,” he answers.\(^\text{100}\) In addition, although union is not an event purely happening in time frame, but has its origin in God’s eternal covenant of redemption and in Christ’s death on the cross, the actual, real, and ultimate union with Christ takes place by the Spirit through faith only. Based on this preliminary examination, we will move to Goodwin’s view on each element of his own *ordo salutis*.

\(^{100}\) Goodwin, *Works*, 2:204.
CHAPTER SIX
GOD’S WORK UPON US

Introduction

In this chapter, the first three blessings of the covenant of grace will be dealt with, that which Goodwin classifies as “God’s work upon us,” namely, regeneration, justification, and adoption, three blessings that account for the change of our right or title before God. Attention will be specifically given to their nature and the relation between faith and each blessing.

Before discussing the first blessing, however, it is necessary to make clear, though briefly, Goodwin’s concept of two types of God’s work for salvation: His work upon us and in us. By expositing 2 Peter 1:3, Goodwin tries to prove his assertion that it is by regeneration that “an inherent and abiding principle of life” is wrought.” Goodwin maintains that Peter is not speaking of such external privileges and benefits as justification and adoption,”1 since in contrast Peter is now talking about “such things as are wrought in us by power.”2 Goodwin further explains this by saying:

The giving justification and adoption is ascribed to his grace, &c., towards us; and so works done upon us, and out of us, and yet bestowed on us, are usually said to be ‘to the glory of his grace,’ Eph. 1. But what are done in us are the proper objects of power.3

He contrasts such divine works done upon us as justification and adoption with divine works in us. The former is done only by grace, bestowed upon us, and thus called “done

---

1 Goodwin, Works, 6:198.
2 Goodwin, Works, 6:198–199.
3 Goodwin, Works, 6:199.
upon us,” whereas the latter is done by power and thus called “done in us,” because these works done by power refer to an actual transformation in us. Goodwin, thus, appears to make a fundamental distinction between an initial work of grace in which the believer is passive and a subsequent work in which the believer participates or is active, paralleling the distinction between passive and active conversion.”

Still Goodwin’s language is somewhat unclear, given two senses in which he speaks of regeneration, sometimes “upon us,” other times “in us – again reflecting the distinction between passive and active conversion, but in these cases, focused on regeneration itself. Thus, given the context in which Goodwin deals with the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, Goodwin seems to consider regeneration belonging to God’s works in us. However, Goodwin also deals with this issue somewhat differently in another place. In his sermon on Ephesians 2:8-10, Goodwin divides the different aspects of salvation as follows:

I conceive that salvation imports two things, or, if you will, salvation hath two parts:—

The one is, of such benefits as do consist merely in the actions of God upon us and towards us, which indeed and in truth are properly salvation, in comparison of the other, as making us sons and heirs, pronouncing us just, redeemed, reconciled, graciously accepting our persons in his Son, giving us a light to heaven and to life.

And the other is of the workings of God in us, which are unto this salvation, as calling, and sanctification, and obedience, &c.⁴ (Italics mine).

Seemingly, Goodwin still argues that regeneration is the work of God in us because he attributes calling, which is often interchangeably used with regeneration, to this work together with sanctification and obedience. However, attention should also be paid to the

⁴ Goodwin, Works, 2:314.
standard by which he divides any divine work, either upon us or in us. The standard is whether that work refers to salvation itself or to a means “unto salvation.” As will be dealt with later, although both calling and regeneration are sometimes used to refer to a gradual process by degree from the beginning of salvation to a certain point, calling is the term that generally denotes this process; in contrast, regeneration is used with a focus on a decisive, instant change from death to life. Therefore, regeneration may also be regarded just like justification and adoption as a divine work upon us, “which indeed and in truth are properly salvation.” This is the reason why Goodwin sometimes calls regeneration God’s work upon us in terms of whether it is salvation itself or a means unto salvation, and in other places classifies it as God’s work in us according as it is bestowed upon us or done by power. In what follows, regeneration is understood in the first sense, as a work “upon us.”

6.1. Regeneration

6.1.1. Preparation for Faith

Many Reformed orthodox theologians in the seventeenth century, particularly New England Puritans, such as Thomas Hooker and Thomas Shepard, who paid special attention to this preparation, shared in the idea that there is a divine preparatory work

---

5 We will treat this issue in more detail later in a section where we make a distinction between regeneration, calling, and conversion.


8 See Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 444; Joel R. Beeke and Paul M. Smalley, *Prepared by Grace, for Grace: The Puritans on God’s Ordinary Way of Leading Sinners to Christ* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013), 4. The authors hold that although many Puritans were “tarred and feathered with the label of ‘preparationism’” because of both their use of “the language of preparation for
performed in the elect prior to their conversion. God works, they argue, in the hearts of the unconverted elect for them to see their sinful condition and thereby to get into a state of humiliation before they receive the first temporal blessing rooted in the election of God. They called it the preparatory work of God, preparation for salvation, or preparation for conversion. Likewise, calling the similar works of the Holy Spirit “the preparatory works,” Goodwin also acknowledges the convicting role of the law in the hearts of sinners and teaches that prior to the act of faith the Holy Spirit leads the elect to see their sinfulness, thereby convicting of sins, and brings the elect to “humiliation for sin, contrition, self-emptiness.”

There is, however, a difference between Goodwin and his contemporary Reformed Puritans who opt for the idea of preparation, since they teach that preparation of the heart should be made before the first act of divine redemptive grace; in contrast, for Goodwin, all these works of the Spirit are not given as preparatory grace before regeneration, or as the first coming of the Holy Spirit upon the elect, but brought forth as evidence of “regeneration.”

9 Goodwin, Works, 8:154.

10 We will examine in the following section how Goodwin uses this term, regeneration, and distinguishes regeneration and other terms Goodwin sometimes uses interchangeably such as conversion and effectual calling.
Besides such New England Puritans as Hooker and Shepard who pay special attention to the necessity of preparation for regeneration, many of Goodwin’s English Puritan contemporaries, such as John Owen and Thomas Manton, also argue that “there are some things to be done before regeneration.”\(^\text{11}\) Manton defines these things as “the preparative dispositions that lead unto regeneration” and holds that they “must be distinguished from regeneration itself” inasmuch as “[t]hey are not gradus in re, parts of regeneration, but gradus ad rem.”\(^\text{12}\) John Owen also argues in the same sense that “ordinarily there are certain previous and preparatory works, or workings in and upon the souls of men, that are antecedent and dispositive unto it (regeneration).”\(^\text{13}\) He goes on to explain the relationship between these preparatory works and regeneration itself by noting that “regeneration doth not consist in them, nor can it be educed out of them” and even confirms that this was “the position of the divines of the church of England at the synod of Dort.”\(^\text{14}\) Therefore, these preparatory works are worked upon the unregenerate for regeneration and thus to be done before their regeneration, though regeneration is not the fruit of their nature,. The Puritan concept of preparation for conversion refers generally to “God’s use of His law to convince sinners of their guilt, danger, and helplessness so that by His grace they may come to Christ.”\(^\text{15}\)


\(^{13}\) Owen, *Works*, 3:229.


\(^{15}\) Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 443. Cf. Because Baxter saw no qualitative but only a quantitative difference between common grace and special grace, he considered that even unregenerated people may have faith and love for God and Christ, and this attitude may well be a preparation for their reception of saving grace. For more detail, see Boersma, *Hot Pepper Corn*, 136-166.
For Goodwin, however, all preparatory works of the Holy Spirit are not the work of God toward regeneration but in the regenerate toward the first manifestation of faith. Relating to the relationship between faith and regeneration, he holds that although the whole of salvation may be said to be by grace, not all the particulars of salvation are “conveyed to us by faith, for regeneration itself is not.” Why? The answer is that “[a] man doth not first believe, and then is born again; but a man must first be born again before he believeth.” He then goes on to say that faith cannot manifest itself for the first time by its first act without any principle at all in us, “which is to make a man see without having an eye.” If “to see” here is the manifestation of faith, “having an eye” refers to the principle of faith, i.e., regeneration, because as without an eye one cannot see, so without regeneration, a principle, or seed, of faith, one cannot believe. But this does not mean that Goodwin rejects any concept of preparation because he uses the word “preparatory” and insists on preparation for the first act of faith.

Goodwin affirms without any hesitation that the Holy Spirit works immediately upon us in our natural condition without any preparatory grace. Concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit upon us, Goodwin asserts that:

the first coming of the Holy Ghost is immediately upon us, as we are in our natural condition, in our uncleanness and pollution, without any preparation to make way for his coming upon us, or into us. He doth not work grace first, and

---

16 Cf. Horton, “Puritan Doctrine of Assurance,” 308. Horton writes about Goodwin’s view of preparation in this way: “Goodwin insists, against the antinomians, that although the Holy Spirit comes upon a person in order to regenerate, and apart from his cooperation, the proper residence and communion of the Holy Spirit (and the communion that he effects with the Father and the Son) takes place when one believes.” He makes a distinction between the coming of the Holy Spirit for our regeneration and His residence in us by faith and gives priority, albeit temporal, to the former over the latter. This goes well with Goodwin’s idea of double unio cum Christo because he believes that God apprehends first and then the union is completed by the act of our faith.

17 Goodwin, Works, 2:313.

18 Goodwin, Works, 2:313.
then come into a man; but he comes first and seizeth on a man, then works grace in him.\textsuperscript{19}

Any preparatory works prior to regeneration, which is the first grace upon us, can neither be made by our nature nor by the Holy Spirit. Goodwin contends that the first grace of God upon us is not the so-called preparatory grace that leads to the first coming of the Holy Spirit in us, but rather any grace is the evidence of the already existing work of the Spirit work in us. He puts it this way:

\begin{quote}
That which you call the work of humiliation and repentance, which his ministry set their hearts on work upon, and which was the preparing the way for Christ, and which above ground did more appear, and grow up highest in their spirits, were yet as true \textit{evidences of an effectual calling}, as any of those actings that followed in those converts upon Christ’s preaching that followed.\textsuperscript{20}
\end{quote}

Goodwin demonstrates that the work of humiliation and repentance can be brought about before faith by the discovery of sin through the law and the revelation of Christ, and that it is God’s ordinance that the law should be preached to this end.\textsuperscript{21} He considers this conviction of sin as the work of the Holy Spirit and calls him when working for conviction “the Spirit of bondage.”\textsuperscript{22} It does not seem that Goodwin simply regards the convicting function of the law in the natural conscience as “the Spirit of bondage,” but the Spirit of bondage refers to the work of the Spirit, which brings forth “a further conviction than natural conscience had wrought,” by means of the application of the law in the hearts of the elect.\textsuperscript{23} This is also called by Goodwin the “humiliation preparatory”

\begin{footnotes}
\end{footnotes}
which is “mainly to be for sin as sin, and as a transgression of the law, which natural
conscience, without a further work of the Spirit, is not apprehensive of.”

The proclamation of the law is the means by which the Spirit of bondage works in the hearts
of the elect the conviction of sin and humiliation. For Goodwin, therefore, these
preparatory works are not a common, natural work of the law to all people, but a special
work of the Holy Spirit to the elect only. This is confirmed and strengthened by his
comparison of the preparatory works for faith with the ministry of John the Baptist for
Christ’s coming. As John prepared for the gospel, that is, Christ’s coming, by impressing
upon man’s hearts a sense of their sins, so the role of the Spirit of bondage is also to
prepare elect sinners for faith by convicting them of their sin by breaking and bruising
their hearts. He then adds:

Though a seed of faith was in the bud, and by his ministry begun, yet was it not
blossomed, but to be raised up to victory by him who breaketh not the bruised
reed, and Christ’s ministry was to raise assurance in them upon whom John had
wrought; and therefore John is said to have come mourning, and to have preached
repentance, and his baptism is called ‘the baptism of repentance.’ And these titles
his ministry had given it, to shew what were the eminent effects which it was
ordained to work. And accordingly, though it sowed a seed of faith by his
pointing to the Messiah, yet it left his hearers and converts a greater impression of
legal terrors still remaining upon their consciences, for Christ’s ministry to take
off from them by a more clear preaching the gospel.

Here Goodwin argues that the seed of faith begun with John’s ministry as a preparation
for Christ. This means that as the Spirit of bondage comes and starts those preparatory
works in us, as mentioned above, the seed of faith is simultaneously sown in our hearts.

Therefore, it may be concluded that all the preparatory works in Goodwin’s soteriology

---

24 Goodwin, Works, 6:362.


26 Goodwin, Works, 6:362.
are the work of the Holy Spirit in his use of the convicting function of the law. In addition, given Goodwin’s assertion on conviction that there is no prevenient grace of the Spirit before His coming, the first coming of the Spirit in a soul implies the first work of the Spirit in us, i.e., regeneration. Accordingly, Goodwin’s description of the preparatory work of the Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit-worked regeneration, not the preparation for the first work of the Spirit.

This argument is further evidenced by Goodwin’s explanation of the relationship between “the spirit of bondage” and “the Spirit of adoption.” Although they are seemingly different from each other, they are the same work of the Holy Spirit, though working for different purposes: the former witnesses “our slavery and bondage to sin and death” and the latter “adoption and sonship.” Once the elect receive the Spirit of bondage in our regeneration, argues Goodwin, they never return to fear again that is caused by the same Spirit of bondage, in that it is no longer the Spirit of bondage, but the Spirit of adoption who resides in the elect for the spiritual benefits that follow after the manifestation of faith. In other words, since the first coming of the Spirit of bondage in conversion, the same Holy Spirit continues to work as the Spirit of adoption in and upon us to the last blessing, glorification, for salvation. Goodwin goes on to reaffirm that the

---

27 See also Goodwin, Works, 6:48. Goodwin attributes some typical phenomena of preparation such as being under the law and conviction of sin, to the Spirit of bondage. This first coming of the Spirit in us, though entitled the Spirit of bondage, is the first step of our salvation by the Holy Spirit. Goodwin writes it this way: “He condescends to be termed ‘the Spirit of bondage;’ I say, he condescends but to the work and name; for otherwise, and in himself, he is ‘the free Spirit,’ (Ps. 51:11, 12), and delights in comforting us, not in grieving us. And he is therefore also called ‘the Comforter;’ but yet to affect our salvation, and the effectual application of it to us, he (contrary to his nature) becomes our jailor, takes the keys of death and damnation into his custody, and shuts up our spirits under the law, as it is a schoolmaster to Christ, rattles the chains, lets us see the sin and punishment we deserve. He convinceth of sin, John 1:6, and becomes a ‘Spirit of sonship,’ Rom. 8:15.” At another place, Goodwin also writes concerning these two contrasting works of the Spirit: “It is one and the same Spirit there spoken of, in respect of two contrary operations, who hath the title there of both” Works, 6:18.
title “the Spirit of bondage” the Holy Spirit receives “ere he becomes a ‘Spirit of adoption’” and that the work by the Spirit of bondage “hath not relation to the bondage under the law.”

Therefore, the first work of the Holy Spirit in His applicatory acts is to regenerate sinners, and while He is working in us as the Spirit of bondage, we are prepared for the manifestation of faith. This is why, unlike other Puritans who uphold such a concept of preparation, Goodwin has never expressed these preparatory works of the Spirit as preparation for regeneration or calling.

To wrap up, Goodwin’s concept of preparation may be described in this way. First, preparation starts as the Spirit of bondage first comes to the heart of an elect together with the proclamation of the law; second, as the Holy Spirit first comes in the heart of one of the elect in the name of the Spirit of bondage, the seed of faith is also sown there; therefore, third, this heart in which the principle of faith is already sown, responds to the law by the Spirit’s work and finally arrives at the first act of faith.

Goodwin’s view of the preparatory work of God is succinctly described by Petrus Van Mastricht, a Nadere Reformatie Dutch theologian highly praised by Jonathan Edwards, and who has a similar understanding of divine preparatory work for regeneration as Goodwin. He divides the notion of preparation for regeneration into two kinds: by the sinner himself/herself and by God, “the Author of regeneration.”

He first rejects any preparation proceeding from the sinner because “regeneration is an operation upon a spiritually dead man into whom the first act or principle of spiritual life is

---


30 Petro Van Mastricht, *Theorectico-Practica Theologia, Qua, Per singular capita Theologica, pars exegetica, dogmatica, elenchtica & practica, perpetua successionne conjugantur* (1724), 763.
infused.”\textsuperscript{31} The other view of preparation for regeneration is also distinguished into two models according to whether regeneration is understood in a larger sense as terminating in faith and actual repentance or in a narrower sense “as denoting only the introduction to the first act or principle of spiritual life.”\textsuperscript{32} To the latter Van Mastricht reserves his objection on the condition that this preparation occurs in those who are to be truly regenerated, since it is either as if before creating Adam God worked for five days or as if God formed “first the body of clay, or the rib, into which He afterwards breathed the breath of life.”\textsuperscript{33} He claims that this view is supported by many orthodox divines and that he has “no great objection.” It was the former, however, to which he agrees. He argues that “God uses many preparatory means to regeneration, taken in this sense, by the help of which one may attain to this faith and repentance.”\textsuperscript{34} Like Goodwin, Mastricht also sees preparation as a divine work for the manifestation of faith in the souls of those, who were regenerated by the infusion of the principles of spiritual life, but whose first act of faith has not appeared yet.

While it is true that Goodwin’s preparatory grace differs a bit from that of some other Reformed Puritans, they all firmly stand on the position that this preparatory grace is, as a supernatural grace, given totally from God and disposes and prepares our souls for the act of faith, or conversion, and that this grace is also irresistible and thus must lead us to salvation. In this sense, the general Puritan concept of preparation, which comes prior

\textsuperscript{31} Mastricht, \textit{Theorectico-Practica Theologia}, 763.
\textsuperscript{32} Mastricht, \textit{Theorectico-Practica Theologia}, 763.
\textsuperscript{33} Mastricht, \textit{Theorectico-Practica Theologia}, 763.
\textsuperscript{34} Mastricht, \textit{Theorectico-Practica Theologia}, 763.
to the first implantation of the spiritual life in the heart, as well as Goodwin’s concept, must be distinguished from similar concepts of the Arminians and Catholics, which put an emphasis on free-will, which can either reject or receive God’s prevenient grace.\textsuperscript{35}

### 6.1.2. Importance and Necessity of Regeneration

Together with the doctrine of justification, the doctrine of regeneration also received much attention from the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Reformed theologians. As Beeke and Jones write, the Reformers had to “supplant the whole Roman Catholic sacramental system” through which Rome believed “grace was granted to the faithful.”\textsuperscript{36}

Because it was regeneration to which Rome attributed the primary effect, one of the most important tasks given to Protestants, particularly the Reformed, was to reject this Roman Catholic idea of baptismal regeneration and to explain “how else one could be

\textsuperscript{35} The Council of Trent clarified and confirmed the Catholic concept of prevenient grace as follows: “The Synod furthermore declares, that in adults, the beginning of the said Justification is to be derived from the prevenient grace of God, through Jesus Christ, that is to say, from His vocation, whereby, without any merits existing on their parts, they are called; that so they, who by sins were alienated from God, may be disposed through His quickening and assisting grace, to convert themselves to their own justification, by freely assenting to and co-operating with that said grace: in such sort that, while God touches the heart of man by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, neither is man himself utterly without doing anything while he receives that inspiration, forasmuch as he is also able to reject it; yet is he not able, by his own free will, without the grace of God, to move himself unto justice in His sight. Whence, when it is said in the sacred writings: Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you, we are admonished of our liberty; and when we answer; Convert us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be converted, we confess that we are prevented by the grace of God.” As shown in the quotation, the Council of Trent affirms that we can admit or reject this prevenient grace. Arminians, especially Wesleyan-Arminians, also argue for a similar idea and define it this way: “Every man has a greater and less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. Everyone has sooner or later good desires; although the generality of man stifle them before they can strike deep root or produce any considerable fruit. Everyone has some measure of that light, … So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he has.”(John Wesley, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, 14 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 6:512. In this passage, Wesley considers this grace as universal grace given to all people whether regenerate or unregenerate. He goes on to argue that sinners can choose either to reject or receive the prevenient grace (\textit{Works}, 5:233).

\textsuperscript{36} Beeke and Jones, \textit{Puritan Theology}, 463.
regenerated” with a biblical foundation. The Reformed orthodox emphasis on regeneration, therefore, was not strange, but rather naturally caused them to develop “a robust theology of regeneration” that focused on the sovereignty of God. Accordingly, for Reformed orthodox theologians the doctrine of regeneration became a key doctrine for understanding salvation, completely depending upon Christ.

Goodwin also considers regeneration as the “foundation of all privileges” of a Christian following upon the state of grace and as “the eminentest mercy that God doth,” which consists in laying the foundation for salvation. It may be partly because of Goodwin’s own conversion experience. Thus, Chang writes that “[t]he doctrine of regeneration … is one of the most experiential doctrines to him.” In his magnum opus on the work of the Holy Spirit, The Work of the Holy Spirit in Our Salvation, Goodwin treats the applicatory works of salvation with particular attention to the doctrine of regeneration, though on account of Goodwin’s special interest in soteriology this doctrine is dealt with throughout his entire works. He repeatedly affirms that regeneration is the first fruit of election, or the first act of the Spirit upon us, and therefore there is no preparation, or grace, prior to this regeneration. He then defines regeneration as a work

---

37 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 463.

38 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 463.


40 See Goodwin, Works, 6:457.

41 See Goodwin, Works, 6:74.


43 Goodwin, Works, 6:43, 60.
distinguishing the elect from the world, “the foundation and first step unto all those
privileges of a Christian,” “the door, or first entrance” to the state of grace, “the
*transitus*, or passage” between the states of nature and grace the elect must pass
through, and “the new birth that an elect soul is transplanted from a state of sin and
wrath into a state of grace.” All these definitions of regeneration, argues Goodwin, lead
naturally to the necessity of regeneration.

6.1.3. **Regeneration, Conversion, and Effectual Calling**

Goodwin uses three different terms interchangeably, “regeneration,” “conversion,” and
“calling,” since they all broadly denote the notion of translating the domain of sin to that
of glory. In addition, they all are designated as the first fruit of election or election
grace. It is very difficult, therefore, to discern the difference between them and to
define the precise meaning of each term inasmuch as Goodwin seems to use them without
giving any fixed concept to each of them. He not only uses regeneration and conversion
interchangeably in the same sentence without any explanation as some of his
contemporary Puritans do, but he also identifies conversion as “a passing from death to

---

50 For example, Goodwin writes “So then it is clear from this, that as Christ and grace have a
dominion over a man after *regeneration*, the law hath dominion over every man before *conversion*.
Goodwin, *Works*, 6:258. See also Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 466. Berkhof rightly points out the
life,—that is, from a state of death to a state of life,” which is exactly the same as his definition of regeneration. But it is also observed that he sometimes makes a distinction between them. Goodwin writes, “[T]hat initial conversion wrought at first, which is called regeneration, is specially intended.” Here he calls regeneration the “initial conversion,” not conversion itself, for Goodwin actually thought that conversion is repetitive events throughout life, the first of which is often identified with regeneration. Therefore, when Goodwin uses regeneration and conversion interchangeably, he is referring to conversion taking place for the first time. Moreover, there seems to be a slight distinction between regeneration and the first conversion. This first conversion seems to be the fruit of habitual grace, or a habitual sanctification, which is one of the principles of spiritual life, infused at regeneration in the narrowest sense. The same is also applicable to the relationship between regeneration and calling. For example, trying to prove that “in that one work of calling God hath shewn himself to be a God of all grace,” Goodwin confesses that “my purpose is not to set out the greatness of God’s

necessity of the distinction between regeneration, calling, and conversion: “Several seventeenth century authors fail to distinguish between regeneration and conversion, and use the two terms interchangeably, treating of what we now call regeneration under vocation or effectual calling. …This comprehensive use of the term “regeneration” often led to confusion and to the disregard of very necessary distinctions. For instance, while regeneration and conversion were identified, regeneration was yet declared to be monergistic, in spite of the fact that in conversion man certainly co-operates.”

51 Goodwin, Works, 2:137. See also Goodwin, Works, 308. Goodwin also notes here that “conversion is called a translating us out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of his Son.”

52 Goodwin, Works, 6:125.

53 See Goodwin, Works, 6:188. The distinction between regeneration in the narrowest sense, which is the first coming of the Spirit of bondage in us together with a principle of faith, or the principles of life, and the first conversion, which is the fruit of regeneration, is emphasized by him and he also refutes both the Roman Catholic and Arminian views of regeneration, which deny any infusion of a “habit of grace” at regeneration, as well as a notion of deification in which we do not simply receive a habit of grace, or principles of spiritual life, but participate “in the divine nature by being transubstantiated into God.”

54 We will deal with the diverse implications of regeneration in the next section.
grace shewn in regeneration . . . But what I shall now treat of will be . . . demonstrating that God hath shewn himself a God of all grace in each of them, in and at his calling of us.”

He also defines effectual calling as the “first entrance” into eternity “through that little chink, or narrow passage from death to life,” which is almost the same definition as that of regeneration. In another place, however, he distinguishes between them by arguing that “calling include regeneration and sanctification” because “we are saints by calling as well as believers by calling.”

In a similar manner, moreover, calling and conversion are not only treated in most cases as synonymous terms, but they are also sometimes taken in a different sense.

Likewise, although regeneration, conversion, and effectual calling are so closely interrelated that Goodwin often uses them in the same sense, he also uses them distinctively as needed. As to the distinctive use of these terms, Beeke and Jones point out that regeneration and effectual calling started to be distinguished by the middle of the seventeenth century. Although this distinction does not explicitly appear in Goodwin’s works, a seminal form of differentiation in them can be observed. One evidence of this differentiation in the meaning of these three terms is adumbrated in his usage of the terms “calling” and “regeneration.” In this treatise, The Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation, Goodwin does barely use the term, calling, but consistently uses regeneration

---


57 Goodwin, Works, 2:314.

58 See Goodwin, Works, 2:229, 6:215, 9: 112, 349. In these places, Goodwin interchangeably uses the two terms, calls conversion “the first calling into glory,” or identifies calling with conversion, by both of which he argues “we are first estated into grace” and dedicated “as first fruit unto God.”

59 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 465.
instead, since it seems that this work is primarily dealing with the direct work upon us by the Holy Spirit and focuses on the change of our condition. On the contrary, in A Discourse of Election &c., he uses the term “calling,” which is the first fruit of election and makes election sure, much more frequently than the other two terms. Goodwin says that this calling does not only refer to a cause, which makes conversion take place, but the calling itself also includes regeneration in that “thy effectual calling” signifies “thy first entrance into thy eternity” in response to His calling. In addition to regeneration, he appears to include the certain act of faith in the concept of calling, as seen when he says that “God having by regeneration and faith called us unto a possession of glory hereafter.”

Berkhof explains why calling was so extensively used “in the post-Reformation times,” saying that Reformed orthodoxy had “a desire to stress the close connection between the Word of God and the operation of His grace.” Therefore, although both regeneration and calling are on occasion used denoting a process from the implantation of a new life in souls to the first act of faith, yet regeneration is totally passive because it emphasizes the first implantation of the principle of faith in souls. Given his emphasis on the Word as a means, Goodwin, as he mentions effectual calling, seems to focus more on the proclamation of the Word after regeneration in the narrow sense. Conversion is also used to refer to the whole process from the first infusion of new spiritual principles to the first manifestation of faith, but he sometimes uses conversion with a focus on the human act of faith in response to God’s calling as is evidenced in his

---

60 Goodwin, Works, 9:260.
61 Goodwin, Works, 6:199.
62 Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 470.
definition of conversion as “the change of a man’s utmost end, and upon that a man’s soul is turned to God.” Goodwin seems to think that conversion is the manifestation of necessary spiritual habits or principles infused by the narrow sense of regeneration. He goes on to say that those supernatural principles of life and grace are “required for man’s acting holily,” the first of which would be conversion together with the first act of faith. This becomes more manifest as Goodwin divides conversion into three parts: “1. Conviction of sin. 2. Of righteousness for justification. 3. Of judgment, holiness, and reformation.” What should be noticed here is that Goodwin ascribes the beginning of conversion not to the first infusion of new spiritual principles, but rather to its effect, which includes in conversion a certain aspect of justification and sanctification, thus focusing on our change.

However, if Goodwin really makes such a distinction between these three concepts, there still remains a question: can there be an interval, either logical or temporal, between regeneration and conversion. Goodwin seems to affirm it. A similar position can be found in Downname’s theology. Discussing the doctrine of adoption, he writes as follows:

The most that can bee said in this matter, as I supposed, is this. That when our gracious God by his Holy Spirit doth regenerate us, he doth beget in us the grace of faith. As soon as faith is wrought in us, wee are engrafted into Christ: to us being in Christ, the Lord communicateth the merits of his Sonnes; by imputation

---


64 Goodwin, *Works*, 6:188. Emphasizing the essential role of habitual grace, or infused principles, for our actual turning to God after regeneration, he consistently uses the term “conversion” to refer to our act of turning to God. This means that Goodwin ascribes the infusion of the new principles to regeneration and the act of turning to God as a result of regeneration to conversion. See Goodwin, *Works*, 6:187-188.

of whose righteousness unto us in Christ; but also in him hee adopteth us to bee his Sons and heirs of eternal life.66

The begetting of the grace of faith in regeneration looks similar to the implantation of the seed of faith by regeneration in the thought of Goodwin. Thus, Downname also insinuates that there may be a logical or temporal interval between the begetting of the grace of faith and the first act of faith in us after regeneration by which we are united with Christ. He then introduces justification by union with Christ as well as by faith. Of course, there may be raised some other specific questions concerning the interval between regeneration and justification. For the purpose of this study, however, these questions will be resolved later in their proper place. Rather, it is necessary to examine the meaning of regeneration in Goodwin’s theology in a bit more detail.

6.1.4. Threefold Meaning of Regeneration

Goodwin seems to use the term, “regeneration,” in a twofold sense: a process or an ongoing work of God in its wider sense and a single event in the believer’s experience. In book VIII of Of the Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation, which deals primarily with Spirit-worked regeneration, articulating the contents of the whole book, he writes that:

there are three parts of our regeneration: 1. Humiliation for sin, and the necessity thereof in order to faith; 2. Faith in Christ for justification; 3. Turning from sin unto God, or holiness of heart and life, proved, from the work which our Lord Jesus Christ ascribes to the Holy Ghost. 67

He then immediately adds the purpose of the first chapter of the book, noting:

conviction of sin, humiliation for it, faith on Jesus Christ, sanctification, or amendment of heart and life, are the parts of our conversion to God, is

66 Downname, Treatise of Iustification , 240.

67 Goodwin, Works, 6:359.
demonstrated from the work which our Lord Jesus Christ ascribes to the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{68}

These two almost identical passages cited above clearly state, first, that regeneration in a broader sense includes at least three different movements in the elect through the work of the Holy Spirit; second, that both regeneration and conversion refer to the same matter and thus are here used interchangeably.\textsuperscript{69}

This broader concept of regeneration sounds very similar to the notion of regeneration the Reformers embraced. Calvin opines in his \textit{institutes} that “by repentance I understand regeneration, the only aim of which is to form in us anew the image of God … This renewal, indeed, is not accomplished in a moment, a day, or a year, … God abolishes the remains of carnal corruption in his elect, cleanses them from pollution, and consecrates them as his temples, restoring all their inclinations to real purity, so that during their whole lives they may practice repentance.”\textsuperscript{70} Both Goodwin and Calvin see regeneration as including the whole experience of the elect except glorification.\textsuperscript{71} It is neither unique nor strange to the Reformed orthodox in the seventeenth century because David Dickson, for example, also defines regeneration as “the work of God … wherein by His Spirit … He quickeneth a redeemed person laying in dead in his sins, and reneweth him …; convincing him savingly of sin … and making him heartily to embrace

\textsuperscript{68} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 6:359.

\textsuperscript{69} Goodwin’s interchangeable use of these two terms is not only found in many other places of this treatise, but also throughout his entire works.

\textsuperscript{70} Calvin, \textit{Institutes}, III, 3, ix.

\textsuperscript{71} See also Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 6:458. Goodwin regards justification and sanctification as the principal parts of regeneration.
Christ and Salvation, and to consecrat himself to the service of God in Christ, *all the days of his life.*”72

Goodwin, however, has a narrower concept of regeneration as well that describes regeneration as “the first quickening” of the soul because he refers the first benefit, or application, of divine grace upon the elect both to regeneration and to the first quickening.73 This first quickening implies the moment when a principle of life is first sown in the soul because he regards quickening “principally and eminently” as “the first putting in of the Holy Ghost and a principle of life into a man.”74 Therefore, the initial quickening and regeneration in a narrow sense point to the same event of a principle of life, or the seed of faith,75 being first implanted in the hearts of the elect. This is the primary sense of regeneration most frequently used in Goodwin’s theology.

However, there is another sense of regeneration that has a rather hidden meaning in Goodwin’s theology. Goodwin makes use of regeneration as a term referring to a series of movements in us which range from the initial conception of a principle of life,

---


74 Goodwin, *Works*, 2:205. In his sermon on Ephesians 1:5,6, Goodwin holds that the meaning of God’s quickening us in this text comprehends in general “all that whole state of grace and the works of it” because “life,” which starts with this quickening, is often identified with the whole state of grace in Scripture. However, he does not forget to recognize that quickening also means in a narrower sense the starting point of this life, or putting of a principle of life, in us. He proves this by arguing that “if we be but quickened, if there be but the least degree of spiritual life, that thy heart is raised to God, and spiritually suited,—for a spiritual mind is life,—if there be the least spiritual life, though there be not that strength, nay, though it cannot be called a birth, though thou canst not say thou hast all the parts of the new birth, yet if there be quickening, there is a new life. The Apostle descends low; this is a seed that will rise to eternity.”(Works, 2:206) Therefore, for Goodwin regeneration and quickening are identical in their meaning.

or the seed of faith, to the manifestation of that faith. Goodwin explains that the unregenerate cannot receive the Holy Spirit as a comforter, assurer and a sealer, but they have first to receive Him as the Spirit of bondage, and in order for them to be “capable of the Spirit as a sealer, … they must have regeneration first, and faith first wrought.”

Here Goodwin uses regeneration as something positioned between the coming of the Spirit of bondage and His turning into the Spirit as a sealer. Given that Goodwin in other places refers to regeneration as the moment in which a principle of life, or seed of faith, is first implanted by the first coming of the Spirit of bondage, this regeneration seems to be pointing to a different event. Therefore, regeneration here is a certain point at which the title of the Spirit changes from the Spirit of bondage to the Spirit as a comforter, assurer, and a sealer. In addition, taking into account that this regeneration is juxtaposed with faith to be done first for this change, it may be assumed that regeneration here would signify a series of movements in the elect sinners by the Spirit between the narrowest meaning of regeneration, i.e., the implantation of the seed of faith, and the first manifestation of faith. However, regeneration is very limitedly used for this meaning in Goodwin’s theology.

This multiple sense of regeneration found in Goodwin’s theology was not commonly shared by all Reformed orthodox theologians in the seventeenth century. Brakel warns not to “understand this to refer only to giving birth itself.” He exhorts his readers to consider regeneration to be “inclusive of all that pertains to it, such as conception, fetal growth, and the birth itself.” This means that Brakel takes

---

76 Goodwin, Works, 6:63.

regeneration as the third sense of Goodwin’s regeneration. Brakel’s “conception” corresponds to Goodwin’s narrowest sense of regeneration in which the principle of faith and life is implanted by the Spirit; “fetal growth” in Brakel’s notion of regeneration is similar to Goodwin’s preparation; and “the birth itself” refers to the first manifestation of faith in Goodwin’s doctrine of regeneration. Turretin understands conversion in a twofold way dividing conversion into habitual and active conversion and then calls the former “regeneration” and the latter “conversion” because “it (active conversion) includes the operation of the man himself.”

He ascribes the first infusion of supernatural habits by the Holy Spirit to regeneration, while he takes conversion as the exercise of these good habits with emphasis on “the acts of faith and repentance,” both “given by God and elicited from man.” Owen also has a similar distinction between regeneration and conversion because he regards conversion as turning to God as a result of the gracious actions in the will and hearts, and life, which are preceded by “the spiritual actings of the mind by the renovation of the Holy Ghost.” Although sometimes interchangeably using the terms, “regeneration” and “conversion,” Owen distinguishes the two terms by connecting regeneration with the infusion of the spiritual principle as well as by emphasizing our action in conversion as a result of the actions of the principle. This distinction between regeneration and conversion is reminiscent of Goodwin’s nuanced

---

78 Turretin, Institutes, 2:522.

79 Turretin, Institutes, 2:522.

80 Owen, Works, 3:281.

81 Owen, Works, 3:336. Owen writes that “that power which we have and do exercise in the progress of this work, in sanctification and holiness, proceeds from the infused principle which we receive in our regeneration; for all which ends we ought to pray for Him, according to the example of holy men of old.” On the contrary, it is barely observed in Owen’s entire works that he deals with conversion with particular relation to the infusion of the spiritual principles in our hearts.
distinction between the two terms as examined earlier. Van Mastricht’s understanding of the distinction between regeneration and conversion is also similar to, but slightly different from, Goodwin’s. Both Goodwin and Van Mastricht make a distinction between regeneration and conversion and agree that the spiritual life or principle is bestowed in regeneration and that this principle is brought to be exercised in conversion. Goodwin regards, however, the principle of life sown in the heart as a habit and thus calls regeneration “habitual sanctification” or considers it to be the implantation of “habitual grace,” whereas, Van Mastricht argues that regeneration should not be understood as the infusion of a habit, but as the bestowing of the power of performing such exercises of faith, hope, love, and repentance.  

6.1.5. Faith and Regeneration

It has been demonstrated in Goodwin’s understanding of preparatory work that it is not meant to prepare the elect for the first coming of the Holy Spirit, but it prepares them, in whom the latent principle of faith was implanted at the Spirit’s coming, for the first act of faith or conversion. It has also been observed that the narrowest, but most common, meaning of regeneration in Goodwin’s theology is the first implantation of spiritual life. This spiritual life is also called by him the principles of spiritual life sown at regeneration.

---

82 Petro Van Mastricht, Theorectico-Practica Theologia, 762-763. In this careful, elaborated treatment of regeneration Mastricht makes a clear distinction between regeneration and conversion and expounds well their relationship. He writes in this way: “The spiritual life is bestowed by regeneration only in the first act (or principle), not in the second acts (or operation) understood either as habits or exercises. … in regeneration, there is not bestowed upon the elect any faith, hope, love, repentance, etc., either as to habit or act, but the power only of performing these exercises is bestowed, by which the regenerate person does not as yet actually believe or repent, but only is capacitated thereto. Wherefore the unregenerate are emphatically said to be unable either to see, as referring to the understanding, or to enter, referring to the will, into the kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5). This power in conversion which succeeds regeneration, proper circumstances being supposed, is in due time brought into actual exercise.”
and the first blossom of conversion or by the first act of faith. He describes this doctrine in this way:

**Doct.** That over and above exciting, and moving, and aiding grace unto acts, there are inwrought and infused in the soul at regeneration, inherent and abiding principles of spiritual life, by which the soul is inwardly fitted, capacitated, inclined, and quickened unto the operations of a spiritual life.\(^{83}\)

Goodwin maintains that the principles of spiritual life capacitate, incline, and quicken the soul unto the operations of a spiritual life. What then are the operations, which are caused by the principles? Goodwin answers:

sanctification doth, in order of nature, precede justification, and which to me seems not remote from truth, or prejudicial to the grace of justification at all, and withal consonant to right reason, for if (as all grant) justification be upon an act of faith on Christ for justification, and that not until then we are justified, as all do and must acknowledge that hold justification by faith, according to the Scriptures, and that an act of faith must proceed from a principle of faith habitually wrought, then necessarily sanctification, taking it for the principles of habitual sanctification, must be in order of nature afore justification; for the seed and principle of faith is a part, and a principal part, of regeneration or sanctification, as taken in that sense, for the working the principles of all grace, and so is agreeable to that order and chain, Rom. 8:29, where ‘called’ is put before being ‘justified,’ as predestination is put before being called, understanding calling, of the working the principles of regeneration.\(^{84}\)

When Goodwin speaks of sanctification above, it is not the sanctification generally regarded as following justification in his order of salvation.\(^{85}\) It is the habitual sanctification, and this habitual sanctification, as mentioned earlier, is equivalent with regeneration or the endowment of spiritual principles. What Goodwin really means here, therefore, is that because the seed and the principle of faith is a part of regeneration, expressed here as habitual sanctification, regeneration must precede justification, which


\(^{84}\) Goodwin, *Works*, 7:537.

\(^{85}\) Goodwin’s understanding of sanctification will be dealt with in the next chapter.
is given by the act of faith. Accordingly, Goodwin concludes that one of the principles of spiritual life put into the soul at regeneration is "a new principle of faith" and that "faith is made a sign of a man’s being born again." The above passage cited, however, also asserts that beside the principle of faith, there are other principles in regeneration that lead to sanctification and that will work out other spiritual blessings. Goodwin approves this in the following way:

The spirit begotten is the whole bulk, cluster, and lump of graces in our first calling received (we have spoken of), the whole seed infused when first born and begotten, all of which and throughout, is spirit, says he; and it hath not one only or a few particular objects to be drawn out unto, but all sorts of divine and spiritual things prepared for it to exercise itself upon, both in the first workings of it, and afterwards.

As John 3:6 expresses, “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” When the elect are regenerated or born of the Spirit with those principles infused, the person becomes a “spiritual man” with a “divine nature, which is the mass and lump of all things pertaining to life and godliness.” At the moment of regeneration, therefore, the elect receive not only a principle of spiritual life, which leads the regenerate to the completion of conversion, or to the manifest act of faith, but also “the whole bulk, cluster, and lump of

---

86 Goodwin, Works, 6:447.

87 Goodwin, Works, 6:193.

88 Goodwin, Works, 9:283.

89 See Chang, “Thomas Goodwin on the Christian Life,” 132. With regard to the meaning of “spirit” Goodwin has in mind, Chang writes that “Then Goodwin turned his efforts in opening the theological implication of the word, spirit. He said that spirit connotes "all those gracious and heavenly dispositions and habiliments wrought in the whole soul, especially the spirit of mind." (6: 162) After regeneration the new mind is elevated to suit things spiritual. So spirit is characterized by the new dispositions: gracious, heavenly and spiritual. The spirit of man is the new seat of the heavenly disposition.”

90 Goodwin, Works, 6:17.
graces” in which are included all necessary elements for salvation as well as for faith and conversion.

In dealing with the doctrine of regeneration in *Of the Work of the Holy Spirit in Our Salvation*, Goodwin, as the title shows, focuses on the work of the Spirit for salvation. All the blessings given for salvation are by grace because the Holy Spirit was given us “to work all these graces in us.” Nevertheless, Goodwin affirms that the Holy Spirit works them out together with those principles of spiritual life already infused at regeneration. They are required for “man’s acting holily, and for “the pleasing God by good works.” These good works or sanctification in turn “declare and assert withal that in our regeneration, from the first acts to the last, and so throughout our lives, there are infused supernatural principles of life and grace, which remain and are inherent in us.” He then concludes that all gracious salvific workings in us, therefore, were not merely “from motions and excitations of the Holy Spirit in us” apart from those principles, but rather that the Holy Spirit, “who gives us the new heart at first; and having predisposed and prepared us thereby, causeth us to walk, and do; that is, draws forth that new heart into act.” In addition, Goodwin adds that the Holy Spirit not only works together with the new principles of spiritual life already infused at regeneration, but also makes use of faith as a means for drawing forth “that new heart into act.” Accordingly, it is at regeneration that the principles of spiritual life, including the seed of faith, are infused in the unregenerate. These principles work throughout the preparatory acts, but they first

---


appear when the act of faith manifests itself at conversion. And the Spirit works out all the other spiritual blessings promised in the covenant of redemption together with the infused principles through the act of our faith.

6.2. Justification

6.2.1. The Background and Context of Goodwin’s Doctrine of Justification

Scholarship has identified two main patterns in the interpretation of justification prior to the Reformation. One pattern is to see justification as a forensic, imputative event (some of the early Church Fathers)\textsuperscript{94}; the other is to regard this doctrine as a transformational process (Augustine and medieval theologians)\textsuperscript{95} or a substantial change (Osiander)\textsuperscript{96}. Although the forensic, imputative understanding of justification, rooted in the early church, but almost vanishing during the medieval period, came on the scene again


receiving a splendid spotlight by the Reformers, this does not mean that the continuing conflict between the two different strands in appreciating this great doctrine of the Reformation breathed its last breath in the sixteenth century.

6.2.2. Controversy over Justification in the Seventeenth Century

This antithesis between substantially transformational and purely forensic concepts of justification took on a new dimension in the seventeenth century. The nature of justification, specifically whether or not Christ’s active obedience was imputed for justification, emerged as a hotly debated issue. It seems to be true that early Reformed orthodox theologians as well as the Reformers did not precisely delineate this issue. It is Johannes Piscator (1546-1625), a German Reformed theologian, who articulated his objection toward the imputation of Christ’s active obedience and thereby caused a dispute over the same issue within Reformed circles both in the British Isles and on the continent in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Refuting the Catholic view of justification as the “infusion of righteousness,” he upholds the doctrine of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. He goes on to argue, however, that Christ’s active obedience is not an element of justification, but that justification consists solely in the remission of sins. In

97 Herber Carlos De Campos Junior, “Johannes Piscator (1546-1625) and the Consequent Development of the Doctrine of the Imputation of Christ’s Active Obedience” (Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2009), 2. Campos claims, therefore, that “it is anachronistic to refer to figures such as John Calvin, Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus as either for or against the imputation of active obedience as it was understood in the seventeenth century.” However, he presents Beza as an exception because it was Beza’s view on this issue against which Piscator mainly raises an objection.

addition, righteousness, which is imputed to justify us, does not mean “the holy life of Christ,” but “nothing other than remission of sins.” To put it another way, he identifies the remission of sins with the imputation of righteousness. Piscator’s view drew diverse objections from many Reformed orthodox theologians, particularly on England soil and in France. His rejection of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience to the law was more critically challenged by many Reformed orthodox theologians due to its similarity to the Socinian refusal of the imputation of active obedience, rooted in their denial of the vicariousness of active obedience. In addition, Arminian denial of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness for justification also made Piscator’s view look more different from the orthodox view.

Nevertheless, his idea was not totally rejected among Reformed orthodox theologians. Particularly in England, Anthony Wotton (1561?-1626) and John Gallicarum” in Praestantium ac eruditorum virorum epistolae eccesiasticae et theologicae, ed. Christian Hartsoeker and Philip van Limborch (Amsterdam: H. Wetstenius, 1684), 123; Johannes Piscator, Apologia Disputationis de Causa Meritoria Justificationis Hominis Coram Deo (Herbon: n.p., 1618), 4, 54, 63.


100 See Frans Lukas Bos, Johannes Piscator: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der reformierten Theologie (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1932), 244.

101 A few French Reformed synods like the Synod of Gap (1603), the Synod of Privas (1612), and the Synod of Tonneis (1614) declared Piscator’s view as erroneous. See Edwin E. M. Tay, Priesthood of Christ: The Atonement in the Theology of John Owen (1616-1683) (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2014), 98; Campos, “Johannes Piscator,” 10-18, 195-238. Campos deals in his dissertation with the debates in detail, which happened in France and in England, as a ramification of Piscator’s rejection of Christ’s active obedience imputed for our justification.

102 Cf. Michael P. Winship, “Contesting Control of Orthodoxy among the Godly: William Pynchon Reexamined,” The William and Mary Quarterly 54, no 4 (Oct. 1997): 800. He speaks of the Arminians: “Denial of imputation was a logical, if not a major, part of their effort to enlarge human agency within a predestinarian framework and thereby avoid implicating God as the author of sin.”
Goodwin (1594-1565) had similar views of active obedience and thus were accused by George Walker either as a Socinian (Wotton) or as an Arminian (Goodwin). Walker maintains that both the Socinians and the Arminians including Goodwin go on to reject the imputation of Christ’s (active) righteousness, but come up with a new sense of “imputation where faith gains the sole status of propriety.” For them, it is faith, not Christ’s active obedience to the law, which is imputed to the sinners. Furthermore, the meaning of the “whole” obedience of Christ for justification was hotly debated in the Westminster Assembly. Thomas Gataker (1574-1654) and Richard Vines (1600-1655/6) sided with Piscator albeit not exactly the same, affirming that Christ’s active obedience was necessary for salvation, but was not imputed to the elect, while Charles Herle and

---


105 Campos, “Johannes Piscator,” 228. Criticizing those who “have set up Faith and thrust out Christ’s righteousness and have ever been branded all true Churches of Christ for pestilent Heretikes, and enemies of GODS saving truth” in his book *Socinianisme in the Fundamentall Point of Justification*, Walker mentions the names of some proponents of this blasphemous argument. Among them were Socinius and Arminius. In *A True Relation of the Chiefe passages*, he accuses Wotton of the same charge, claiming that “instead of mans owne works of righteousnesse, performed to the law in his owne person which was the condition of justification, and life in the first covenant, and instead of Christ’s fulfilling of the law for us which is the condition of justification and life to beleevers in the covenant of grace, he [Wotton] sets up faith, even the Act of beleeving for righteousnesse, affirms that it is said to be imputed in a proper sense without a trope, and serves for all purposes in our justification under the Gospell, as perfect righteousnesse of workes performed to the whole law did for mans justification in the first covenant.” See Walker, *Socinianisme in the Fundamentall Point of Justification*, 4-5; Walker, *A True Relation of the Chiefe passages*, 2.

106 Gataker’s view is the same as Piscator’s in rejecting the imputation of Christ’s active obedience for our justification, but as Trueman points out, unlike Piscator, Gataker does not identify justification with the remission of sin itself. See Trueman, *John Owen*, 105.
Thomas Goodwin played the role of main objectors against that idea and confirmed that active obedience is not only necessary for Christ to be qualified as the redeemer, but is also imputed to the elect.

With regard to this issue, attention must be called to the close relationship between the denial of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience and Richard Baxter’s unique position toward justification. Baxter’s neonomian tendency is rooted in the denial of active obedience imputed to us for justification. As Piscator claims, if Christ’s righteousness achieved by his active obedience to the law were imputed to sinners, there would be no need for them to obey the law in that Christ would have already observed it in their place, so Baxter also denies the imputation of active obedience on similar grounds in order that he may confute Antinomianism. The Antinomians, who insist on the strict sense of imputation, believe that Christ’s active obedience to the law, and the righteousness of Christ earned thereby, is identified so perfectly as the sinners’ obedience that there is no longer need of them to obey the law for salvation. In addition to this,


108 Dealing with the pardoning of sin as a gracious act of God, Baxter writes: “I call this Pardon, a gracious act; For if it were not in some sort of gratuitous, or free, it were no Pardon. Let those think of this, who say, We have perfectly obey the Law in Christ, and are therefore righteous. If the proper debt either of obedience or suffering be payed, either by our selves, or by another, then there is no place left for Pardon: For when the Debt is payed, we owe nothing (except obedience de novo) and therefore can have nothing forgiven us. For the Creditor cannot refuse the proper Debt, nor deny an Aquittance upon receipt thereof. But Christ having payed the Tantundem and not the Idem, the Value and not the strict Debt, this satisfaction the Father might have chosen to accept, or to have discharged us upon Christs sufferings: which yet because hee freely doth, therefore is his gracious Act properly called Pardon.” Richard Baxter, Aphorismes of Justification With Their Explication Annexed. Wherein also is opened the Nature of the Covenants, Satisfaction, Faith, Works, etc. (Hague: 1655), 109. For more information on the relationship of Antinomianism and the denial of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience, see Aland D. Strange, “The
there is another significant reason that caused Baxter to put much emphasis on the duty of justified sinners. The notion of eternal justification, or any concepts of justification prior to faith, embraced by the Antinomians is the enemy for him to break down inasmuch as, given that faith is the first act of the regenerate, it completely separates salvation from any human actions whether they are meritorious or not. Baxter’s so-called evangelical righteousness is not directly derived from Christ’s active obedience because His passive obedience as well as His active obedience is not the “righteousness of the second covenant,” i.e., the covenant of grace, but that of the covenant of works. If Christ’s obedience and satisfaction are not from the covenant of grace, from where do the elect get the righteousness justifying them in the covenant of grace? He answers this important question by presenting his own unique concept of “evangelical righteousness,” which “consists in our own actions of faith and gospel obedience.” Baxter makes its meaning more obvious by adding that “[t]hough Christ performed the conditions of the law, and satisfied for our non-performance; yet it is ourselves that must perform the condition of the gospel.” By Christ fulfilling the requirement of the law through His active and passive obedience, the covenant of works is no longer in effect, but instead a new covenant is established that requires faith and obedience as the conditions. If Christ’s

---

109 We will examine this concept in more detail in the next section in dealing with Goodwin’s understanding of justification.

110 Baxter writes that “[a]s the active obedience of Christ was not the righteousness of the second covenant, or performing of its conditions, but of the first, properly called the legal righteousness; so also his passive obedience and merit was only to satisfy for the violation of the covenant of works, but not all for the violation of the covenant of grace, for that there is no satisfaction made, and there remains no sacrifice.” Baxter, Aphorismes, 47-48. See also Fesko, Beyond Calvin, 305-307.

111 Baxter, Aphorismes, 66.
righteousness is public righteousness providing the foundation for the New Covenant, entering into the covenant by faith is private righteousness, i.e., evangelical righteousness, to be met by individuals. For Baxter, in this sense, faith is a condition for justification, but not an instrument for it, because Christ’s righteousness is not imputed to us through faith.

He acknowledges that Christ’s active and passive obedience is the meritorious cause of justification, but claims that the meritorious cause is not the only cause of justification.\footnote{112} Justification by faith, therefore, does not simply mean that sinners are justified by faith through the imputation of Christ’s merit in His humiliation and obedience. Rather, sinners are justified by faith in Jesus Christ “as Redeemer, Prophet, Priest and King,” not only in His office as Priest.\footnote{113} Among these three offices of Christ as the object of justifying faith, his emphasis is placed on Christ as King because Christ as “a King and Benefactor justifie us by Condonation, or constitution”\footnote{114} according to His promise.

In reviewing his doctrine of justification more specifically, it will be found that Baxter understood justification as having three distinct phases. In \textit{Of Justification}, he writes that justification signifies three acts. “First, Condonation, or constitutive Justification, by the Law of Grace or Promise of the Gospel. Secondly, Absolution by sentence in Judgment. Thirdly, The Execution of the former, by actual Liberation from

\footnote{112} “Christ in other actions is as truly the efficient Cause, as in his meriting, and that all do sweetly and harmoniously concur to the entire effect; and that faith must have respect to the other causes of our Justification, and not alone to the Meritorious Cause, and that we are Justified by this entire work of Faith, and not only by that Act which respects the satisfaction or merit.” Baxter, \textit{Of Justification}, 24.

\footnote{113} Baxter, \textit{Of Justification}, 17.

\footnote{114} Baxter, \textit{Of Justification}, 25.
penalty.”\textsuperscript{115} This distinction between the three kinds of justification is made by Baxter in his dealing with Christ as King. The first concept of justification is closely related to Jesus Christ as “a King, or a Benefactor” who justifies us by both “Enacting the law of Grace or Promise … that gives Christ and Life to all that will believe” and by giving us “Condonation, or constitution” thereupon.\textsuperscript{116} It focuses on the legal aspect of justification and signifies that one is “just in relation to the law of grace.”\textsuperscript{117} The second justification refers to justification by God’s sentence of judgment. It is also related to God as King, or Judge who sentences those righteous who are just in relation to the law of grace. Baxter regards it as a “most full, compleat, and eminent” justification, since, given that he speaks of this justification in view of the last judgment,\textsuperscript{118} it is the last, determinate sentence for the righteous according to the law of grace. Lastly, the third justification is the execution of the former two and thus actually liberates the justified from penalty. This is also the work of Christ as King.

If justifying faith is to see Christ as a King, whose law we are obliged to obey, and if as the first kind of justification insinuates, the second sentential justification, which is the final justification, depends on our conformity to the law of grace, then Baxter’s view of justification is not only conditional, but also somehow includes our works. This

\textsuperscript{115} Baxter, \textit{Of Justification}, 24.

\textsuperscript{116} Baxter, \textit{Of Justification}, 24-25. In another book, Baxter calls it justification “in Title of Law” and introduces it as “a Gracious Act of God, by the Promise or Grant of the New Covenant, acquitting the Offender from the Accusation and Condemnation of the old Covenant, upon consideration of the Satisfaction made by Christ, and accepted by the sinner.” Baxter, \textit{Aphorismes}, 120.

\textsuperscript{117} Boersma, \textit{Hot Pepper Corn}, 90.

is reaffirmed by his statement that “The Tenor of this Law is that whosoever will Repent, Thankfully and heartily accept Jesus Christ to be his Savior, Teacher, King and Head, believing him to be the Redeemer, and will Love him (and God in him) above all, and obey him sincerely, to the Death, shall upon his first acceptance be Justified and Adopted, and upon his perseverance be justified at Judgment, saved from Hell, and Glorified.”

Here are mentioned two justifications: one is by faith and repentance and the other is by perseverance at the last judgment. Each corresponds to the first and the second justification noted above. When the elect sinner believes in Christ and repents of his sins, he is justified according to the law of grace because the condition of faith and repentance is met. But his/her justification is not determined yet, since these conditions must continue to be met by conforming to the law through faith and repentance. Baxter maintains that “[M]en that are but thus conditionally pardoned and justified, may be unpardoned and unjustified again for their non-performance of the conditions.”

In so doing, faith plays a twofold role not only as a condition for the first justification but as a means by which one can satisfy the condition for the final justification in that true faith will always produce action. Accordingly, Baxter’s understanding of justification seems to have some affinity to the Roman Catholic version of transformational justification, though not giving any merit to works.

---

119 Richard Baxter, *Universal Redemption of Mankind, by the Lord Jesus Christ: Stated and Cleared by the late Learned Mr. Richard Baxter. Wherein is added a short Account of Special Redemption, by the same Author* (London: 1694), 53.

120 Baxter, *Aphorismes*, 126.

121 Faith as a means here does not refer to faith as an instrument, traditionally embraced by Reformed orthodoxy, by which Christ’s righteousness is imputed to us, but to an instrument by which we can fulfill the given condition of obedience to the law of grace for our final justification.

122 Boersma devotes a chapter to Baxter’s view on the relationship between works and
What was most influential in shaping this unique notion of justification in Baxter’s mind? The answer can be found in his works by taking a look at whom he mentions as the objects of his criticism. We can see him express his anti-Antinomianism in many places in his works. As Cooper notes, therefore, it may be no exaggeration to say that as a defining feature of his career, anti-Antinomianism profoundly shaped “his writings and his theology.” In addition to the Antinomians, there were two eminent seventeenth-century Reformed theologians in England with whom Baxter took issue concerning the doctrine of justification and of the related issues. Among them are William Twisse and William Pemble. Furthermore, when he printed his works dealing with the doctrine of justification, several Reformed orthodox divines criticized his view of justification and Baxter polemicized with them. Boersma describes those controversies in detail. Although the Antinomians and such Reformed orthodox theologians thought

justification and then draws a bit contradictory conclusion: “Baxter is convinced that this theological position implies some affinity to Roman Catholic soteriological thought patterns. This is clear from his highly selective opposition to Roman Catholicism and from his agreement with Le Blanc’s Theses theologicae. Also Baxter’s willingness to speak of merit in an evidently Scotist fashion supports this thesis. Despite this eclectic agreement with some Roman Catholics, Baxter remains firmly entrenched within the Reformed tradition.” Boersma, Hot Pepper Corn, 330. Cf. Timothy K. Beougher, Richard Baxter and Conversion: A Study of the Puritan Concept of Becoming a Christian (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2007), 59-76. Over against scholars who view Baxter’s justification to be deviating significantly from the Reformed orthodox understanding of justification, Beougher argues that although there are unique features in Baxter’s formulation, if we examine it “in light of his entire theology,” the differences would be found “largely verbal.” Beougher, Richard Baxter and Conversion, 63.


124 Boersma introduces us first to the “private animadversions” which came from Anthony Burgess, Richard Vines, John Warren, John Tombes, George Lawson, Christopher Cartwright, and John Wallis and then to some public controversies between Baxter and his opponents such as John Owen, Thomas Blake, George Kendall, Thomas Barlow, Lewis Du Moulin, John Crandon, Edward Fowler, Thomas Tully and Tobias Crisp. See Boersma, Hot Pepper Corn, 25-65.
significantly differently on some issues, even in their notion of justification, the reason why Baxter had to form a double front against both is that to Baxter’s eyes they all stood on the same ground of the so-called eternal justification, more specifically, faith prior to justification. Over against Baxter’s two-justification theory, which emphasized both the roles of faith and of works as conditions for justification, they called attention to the eternal decree of justification and to the graciousness and the certainty of justification without depending on faith. All these debates are, therefore, seemingly related to the doctrine of eternal justification, but their real concern is about the relationship between faith and justification, or sanctification. Boersma thus concludes that if sinners are justified in God’s eternal decree or on Christ’s sacrificial death, the value of faith would be significantly depreciated as not being absolutely necessary (Pemble), or being detached from the definition of justification (Du Moulin) because faith cannot be a condition, or even an instrument, for justification, but is identified with the manifestation of justification in foro divino (the Antinomians), or with the assurance of justification (Owen and Kendall) because both Owen and Kendall see justification as a process starting with an immanent divine act in eternity and terminating in conscience with faith. As Boersma succinctly sets forth, therefore, justification following faith came to be regarded “merely as a tribunal in conscience (Twisse, Du Moulin), as the knowledge of one’s justification, as innotescere (Twisse, Du Moulin), as patefactio (Twisse, Du Moulin), or manifestation (Pemble, Twisse, Du Moulin, Eyre), or as proof or evidence (Kendall).” Therefore, it may be concluded that there were also two major distinct

---

125 See Boersma, Hot Pepper Corn, 110.
126 Boersma, Hot Pepper Corn, 110.
views of justification in the seventeenth century: one is transformational act; the other forensic declaration terminating in conscience by faith.

6.2.3. Goodwin and Justification

As just demonstrated above, in Goodwin’s time there were various views on justification, in particular regarding the relationship between faith and justification. This diversity is not only found outside Reformed orthodoxy, such as in Roman Catholicism, Socinianism, and Antinomianism, but also among Reformed orthodox theologians. What then is the position Goodwin takes in relation to the doctrine of justification?

Goodwin deals with the doctrine of justification in many places throughout his Works. He opines that justification consists of two parts. When justified, sinners are both acquitted from sin and thereby freed from condemnation simultaneously; and then “the title of life” is bestowed upon them, which Goodwin calls “justification of life.”

He also writes in his treatise on the work of the Holy Spirit that “justification is the act of God towards his, pardoning and accepting of them to life.”

He introduces justification in a similar fashion in another place, defining justification as consisting “not merely in God’s not imputing sin to us, but the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.” What all these definitions of justification refer to is the fact that justification is not merely the remission of sin or exemption from condemnation, but “sets us far above that state.” What then is added to remission of sin in justification? Goodwin claims that by justification we are placed in heaven with Christ. He puts it another way: “when you

---

127 Goodwin, Works, 4:51.

128 Goodwin, Works, 6:154.
come to die, you shall go to heaven as to your own place, by as true a title, though not of your own.”

This heavenly ‘title’ rests on the imputation of Christ’s ‘obedience and sufferings.’ When it comes to the issue of whether Christ’s active obedience is imputed to sinners for justification, therefore, Goodwin does not hesitate to regard righteousness as a result both of Christ’s whole obedience including His active obedience and of the imputation of the whole obedience to the elect. Christ’s active obedience is the direct cause of the former part of justification (justification of life), and His passive obedience of the latter part (remission of sin). Concerning this, Goodwin writes:

As we are made his righteousness, so he was made our sin. Now, we are made his righteousness merely by imputation, that is, all his obedience to the law is accounted ours, is reckoned ours, even as if we had fulfilled it, though we knew none of it. It was fulfilled, not by us, but in us, Rom. 8:4. He fulfilled it, not we; so that there was an exchange made, and all our breaches of the law were made his; our debts put over to him, that is, reckoned to him, put upon his score. That is all; let your thoughts therefore go no further. It was ‘we that like sheep went astray,’ and not he, and yet ‘the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all,’ Isa. 53:6. And to be made sin in this sense is but to be charged and accused as a sinner, and not made really so by committing it.

However, Goodwin distinguishes the imputation of Adam’s sin to humankind and that of the sin of the elect to Christ. He writes that there are two kinds of imputation: one is “by derivation” and the other “by voluntary assumption, or willing taking it upon one.” Adam’s sin was imputed to his posterity “by derivation, and by a natural and necessary covenant,” whereas the sin of the elect was imputed to Christ “by a willing,

---

129 Goodwin, Works, 4:52.
130 Goodwin, Works, 1: 96.
131 Goodwin, Works, 5:182
132 Goodwin, Works, 5:182.
free undertaking or taking them off from us, and by a voluntary covenant.” By this distinction, he sharply contrasts human sinfulness due to the imputation of Adam’s sin with Christ’s innocence despite the imputation of our sin to Him. Goodwin then goes on to articulate the nature of our righteousness imputed from Christ:

Nay, in this doth the imputation of his righteousness to us differ from the imputation of our sins to him, that his righteousness is so imputed to us as we, by reason of that covenant between God and him, may be said to have fulfilled the law in him, and the law is said to be fulfilled in us, because we were in him; but not so are our sins imputed to him. It cannot be said in any sense, he was made sin in us, but for us only, or the sin which was committed first in us, and by us, considered in ourselves, was made his; for though we were in him, yet not he in us: for the root bears the branches, and not the branches the root.134

Contrary to Piscator’s concern that the doctrine of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience in justification necessarily makes Christ a sinner in the same sense as humankind is, Goodwin’s argument is that although the active obedience of Christ is imputed in justification, this does not make Christ a sinner in the sense that Christ himself committed sins. Goodwin claims that Christ’s righteousness becomes the righteousness of the elect in a strict sense as if they fulfilled the law because they are in Him, but that their sin, though may be said to be imputed to Him, is not imputed to Him as if He committed sins inasmuch as He is not in them, but he became a sinner for them. In other words, although the term, imputation, is used both for righteousness and sin between Christ and His people, the meaning is different because the relationship between Christ (the root) and His people (the branches) is only properly applicable to the imputation of righteousness, not to that of sin. To put it another way, sin, which would have been committed by the branches, could not be regarded as sin actually committed by the root,

133 Goodwin, Works, 5:182.

since the root has never been in the branches. There are numerous evidences testifying of Goodwin’s acknowledgement of Christ’s active obedience in justification, but it is suffice to see one more.

The Declaration, composed by the Independents, particularly Goodwin and Owen, was a revision of the WCF. Except the part on church polity, the rest of the WCF carried over into the declaration in an intact form with only a slight revision. However, unlike the WCF, in which, although there had been a hot debate concerning whether to use the expression “whole obedience,” and the affirmative view gained more votes, but the modifier “whole” was finally removed from the final document, the Declaration explicitly demonstrates its position as follows:

Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing Christ's active obedience to the whole law, and passive obedience in his death for their whole and sole righteousness, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.135

Both the WCF and the Declaration commonly reject all together the Roman Catholic view of the infusion of righteousness, the Piscatorian identification of justification with the remission of sin only, and Baxter’s imputation of faith and the way he involved works in justification. But it is only the Declaration that clearly includes Christ’s active obedience, as well as His passive obedience, in the imputation of His righteousness in justification.136

---

135 *The Declaration*, 11: 1.

136 Cf. “Those whom God effectually calls, He also freely justifies; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for
Goodwin’s affirmation of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is closely connected with the vicarious value of Christ’s work as “a common person,” which is rooted in his covenant theology. Unlike Piscator who rejects the vicariousness of Christ’s active obedience and Baxter who denies the direct imputation of both Christ’s active and passive obedience in justification, Goodwin ascribes the origin of the vicarious character of his active and passive obedience to the pactum salutis in eternity and holds that in the pactum salutis “it was agreed that the service he did in that nature should justify others” because though being “equal with God,” Christ’s Person was “to assume the nature and the form of a servant in the covenant, merely to justify others.” As demonstrated in the previous chapter on Goodwin’s covenant theology, in the pactum salutis were determined all stipulations of the covenant of grace. Particularly, Christ had been appointed as “a public person and the head of mankind” in the covenant for all His people and played that role by His perfect obedience to the law and by His death on the cross. According to the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son, therefore, when the Son fulfilled all the conditions of the covenant as a common and public person, Christ’s righteousness achieved by His obedience is imputed to the elect.

any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.” The Westminster Confession of Faith, 11:1.

137 “Now dying and rising as a common person for us, procures the first, sets us perfectly enough in that state of freedom from condemnation. But then, this Christ, his entering into heaven as a common person, sets us far above that state of non-condemnation. It placeth us in heaven with him.” Goodwin, Works, 4:51.

This covenantal origin of justification is more clearly evidenced in another of Goodwin’s definitions of justification. He writes that justification is composed of two things: “1. The righteousness imputed; and that is Christ’s, and to him we go for it. 2. The act of imputation, the accounting it mine or thine; and that is the act of God primarily.”

The former definition of justification, including the remission of sin and the bestowing of the title of life, deals with the content of justification, whereas this definition focuses on the formal cause of justification, i.e., the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and its agents. As justification is rooted in the covenant between the Father and the Son, so it is also the work of God the Father and the Son, in that as is mentioned, Goodwin attributes the righteousness itself to Christ the Son and the act of imputation to the Father. He succinctly sums up his manifesto as “Christ’s merits have their efficacy to justify us ex compacto, from agreement between the Father and the Son.”

This is how “Jehovah, that hath no need of acquisite righteousness, is our righteousness.”

Yet, in reconstructing the general features of Goodwin’s doctrine of justification, there is another thing that must be mentioned here. As examined thus far, Goodwin teaches that Christ’s passive obedience brings about the remission of actual sins in a sinner and that Christ’s active obedience makes the sinner righteous. In addition to these two things, however, Goodwin adds one thing more, which is related to the removal of original sin. Expositing Rom. 8:1-4, he holds that although the regenerate still has corruption in his/her nature, there is no condemnation to such a person because they are

---

139 Goodwin, Works, 8:134.
140 Goodwin, Works, 8:134.
141 Goodwin, Works, 5:132.
united with Christ. How can this union with Christ, or being in Christ, free the corrupt regenerate from the curse of the law? Goodwin maintains that by being in Christ the regenerate are no longer in “the law and power of sin and death,” but possess the law of the Spirit of life, that is, “a perfect holiness in Christ,” and that it is this holiness in the nature of Christ that “takes away the condemning power of original corruption in us.” This is the reason why Christ was sent to the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, which “in him was perfectly sanctified.”142 This ironical statement reveals a profound truth concerning justification. Goodwin argues that justification is not fully made by both the remission of sin through Christ’s passive obedience and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness through His active obedience to the law. It consists in the perfect fulfillment of the righteousness of the law. This fulfillment of the law could be completely made by removing the original sin of the believer by means of Christ’s coming into the world in the nature of the elect. Goodwin expresses it in the following way:

There be three parts of justification. First, The taking away of actual sin … His passive obedience takes away the guilt of actual sin. But, secondly, we ought to have an actual righteousness reckoned to us. … The active obedience of Jesus Christ made many righteous. Justification lies not only in pardon of sin, but in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and imputed to us as Adam’s sin was.

But the law is not fulfilled yet; for we have corruption of nature in us. The apostle therefore in this Rom. 8:4, he brings in the third part of justification, viz., That Christ came into the world in our nature, and fulfilled the righteousness of the law, in having that nature perfectly holy. And now the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in all parts of it; here is a perfect justification, and we desire no more. (Italics mine)143

In addition to Christ’s passive and active obedience, Goodwin insists that the problem of


corrupt nature caused by original sin must be resolved in order that the righteousness of the law may be completely fulfilled for justification. It is Christ’s having human nature being perfectly holy that completes the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle for justification. It is because the human nature Christ took upon Himself was an incorrupt, perfectly righteous human nature. The perfect human nature of the second Adam removes original sin and finally fulfils the law by replacing the sinful nature of the first Adam in the elect through their *unio cum Christo*. For Goodwin, therefore, when these three elements, Christ’s twofold, i.e., active and passive, obedience and His having a perfectly holy human nature, fulfil the righteousness of the law, all required conditions *extra nos* are already prepared.

Thus far we have clearly demonstrated that Christ’s active obedience which Piscator rejected is included in Goodwin’s concept of justification. For more specific understanding of his idea, by looking into Goodwin’s view on the relationship between faith and justification, we need to go a bit farther to see whether Goodwin considers justification to be a purely judicial concept or having a transformational character.

### 6.2.4. Justification and Faith

As examined so far, if justification includes the remission of sin by Christ’s passive obedience, the righteousness by Christ’s active obedience for actual sin, and the righteousness of the law for original sin, fulfilled by His coming into the world in our nature in having that nature perfectly holy, the question necessarily arises how all this multifaceted justification gained by Christ could be regarded as that of the elect. If all objective, external conditions for justification were prepared by Christ’s incarnation, life,
and death, how can the elect be justified subjectively and individually in one’s life? If imputation is the answer to this question, how then can justification be imputed to the elect?

A partial answer to this question was already given in the previous section by attributing the origin of justification to the eternal covenant of redemption among the three Persons of the Trinity, in which Christ was appointed not simply as an independent agent, but as a common and public person and head of His elect. However, this does not fully explain the way in which Christ’s fulfillment, or His merit, is counted as belonging to the elect before God. There is an essential element used by God as “a condition and a means” for the imputation of Christ’s to the elect. That is faith.

Goodwin divides justification into *tria momenta*. This division differs from the three parts of justification already treated in dealing with the nature of justification in the previous section. “[I]n regard of our investiture into this,” there are three “pauses and iterations of this act.”144 The first step was made as the holy Trinity transacted the *pactum salutis*. Goodwin expresses it in another way, saying that we were justified when first elected not in our own, but in Christ, our head, in whom “we came to have a being and interest.”145 Although Goodwin seems to think that election precedes the covenant of redemption, both events occurred in eternity. So there is no temporal priority between the two, but only logical priority should be given to divine election because Christ could not be required to die for those who were not elected yet. This act of justification is “an

---


immanent act, in God’s breast and heart” and thus called “in foro coeli.”146 This is often called eternal justification.147 However, justification in foro coeli is not a simple preparation for actual justification in time. He boldly claims that we were justified when first elected, since we were chosen in Christ, our Head. For this reason, Goodwin holds, in Rom. 8:30, Paul “speaks of all those blessings which are applied to us after redemption, as calling, justification, glorification, as of things already past and done, even then when he did predestinate us.”148 How can we, who are still on the way to glorification, be regarded as already possessing those spiritual blessings including glorification? Goodwin’s answer is this: “But in a more special relation are these blessings decreed said to have been bestowed, because, though they existed not in themselves, yet they existed really in a Head that represented them and us, who was by to answer for them, and to undertake for them, which other creatures could not do.”149 All these blessings were actually donated and received for us in the pactum salutis in which “Christ had all our sins imputed unto him, and so taken off from us, Christ having then covenanted to take all our sins upon him when he took our persons to be his; and God having covenanted not to impute sin unto us, but to look at him for the payment of all, and at us as discharged.”150 In this covenant, says Goodwin, “God told Christ” that “he would look for Christ’s debt” instead of ours and “for satisfaction of him and that he did

146 Goodwin, Works, 6:124.

147 Boersma elaborates on various understandings of the so-called eternal justification in the seventeenth century. See Boersma, Hot Pepper Corn, 66-135.

148 Goodwin, Works, 8:135.

149 Goodwin, Works, 8:135.

150 Goodwin, Works, 8:135.
let the sinners go free.”

This is the meaning of eternal justification, but he adds the notice that this is the “inchoation.” Therefore, it is by the *pactum salutis* and our union with Christ in God’s view that we are justified from all eternity.

The second step of the *tria momenta* is the act of justifying us in Christ’s death and resurrection. By the incarnation and passive and active obedience, Christ made all payments, the last of which is His death, and “God then performed a farther act of justification towards him, and us in him.”

Christ’s resurrection is the proof that God, who made Christ sin, has justified him. This justification of Christ, however, is not for Himself, but for our justification in that we were in Christ in the eyes of God. Here Goodwin once more bases our justification upon our union with Christ. But there is one thing we should point out concerning the relationship between our faith and justification. Goodwin puts a special emphasis on the meaning of Christ’s resurrection in relation to justification. He writes that “as justification in respect of the matter imputed is attributed to his death and blood (we were justified by his blood) so the formal imputation of it to us.”

Goodwin exposits on 1 Cor. 15:17 as follows:

although Christ died for your sins, and you had faith in that his death to be justified from your sins, yet this faith would be in vain, and neither it nor Christ’s death would justify you; and your title to justification were nothing worth, if Christ be not risen: for though you did believe, and could say the money was paid for you, if Christ had not risen to take delivery and seisin of the estate in your names, your plea would have been made void, the formality of justification being wanting. Now all this argues that our justification hath a farther dependence upon his resurrection than merely as to working faith, and that he rose not only to give

---


154 “If Christ be not risen, your faith is in vain, ye are yet in your sins” (KJV).
us faith, but that supposing we could have faith in his death, yet without his resurrection it had been in vain.\textsuperscript{155}

The life and death of Christ and faith is not enough for justification. Goodwin argues that the resurrection of Christ is necessary because justification does not simply consist in the imputation of Christ’s righteousness by faith, but we are justified in Christ who “at his rising … received it [justification] for us.” “For he being justified then,” adds Goodwin, “we are justified in him.”\textsuperscript{156} He puts it in another way, saying that “this present state of our justification by faith depends upon that fore-passed justification of his in our stead then.”\textsuperscript{157} So Christ’s death and resurrection are the “ground and foundation” of justifying faith.\textsuperscript{158} That which is delivered to us by faith, therefore, is not only the matter of justification, but its formality also. Accordingly, Goodwin’s argument is that “when he was justified we were justified also in him” and that Christ perfects “us all and God justifies us all, when he died and rose again.”\textsuperscript{159}

Although the first and the second steps of the \textit{tria momenta} are of essential significance in Goodwin’s doctrine of justification, they occurred all in the eyes of God, not substantially in time. Here is the third moment necessary for justification. The last act of God in the justification of the elect in Goodwin’s mind is the actualization in them of the two aforementioned immanent acts \textit{by faith}. Goodwin makes a distinction between the first and the second steps and the third in this manner:

\textsuperscript{155} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:136–137.

\textsuperscript{156} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:136.

\textsuperscript{157} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:137.

\textsuperscript{158} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 4:53.

\textsuperscript{159} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:137.
But these two acts of justification are wholly out of us, immanent acts in God; and though they concern us, and are towards us, yet are not acts of God upon us, they being performed towards us, not as actually existing in ourselves, but only as existing in our Head, who covenanted for us, and represented us: so as though by these acts we are estated into a right title to justification, yet the benefit and the possession of that estate we have not without a farther act to be passed upon us, whereby we have not as existing in our head only, as a feoffee in trust for us, as children under age, this excellent grace given us, but are to be in our own persons, though still through Christ, possessed of it, and to have all the deeds and evidences committed to the custody and apprehension of our faith.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:137.}

Although Goodwin writes that we \textit{were} justified both in eternity and in Christ’s resurrection, we do not actually possess God’s justification in us until we believe in Christ inasmuch as divine acts towards us unborn were to give us the title or right to justification \textit{in foro Dei} only.\footnote{Goodwin’s answer to the question, “why are we reckoned to be without Christ although we were chosen in Christ?” shows us the same principle. “[I]n God’s heart we may be said to have stood, although, until converted, we have not an actual being in Christ, according to the rules of the Word, which God will judge us by, but are ‘without God,’ and ‘without Christ’” Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:84.} However, it is by faith that we can have the benefit and possess the justified state. Therefore, Goodwin’s assertion is that although justification “was given in Christ afore for us,”\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:137.} we receive it as we \textit{now} believe.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:137.} He goes on to argue that “before faith the Scripture pronounceth the very elect, even those whom Christ died for, ‘children of wrath as well as others,’ till they believe.”\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:137.} When Scripture says that we are justified by faith, this not only refers to justification terminating \textit{in foro conscientiae}, which was already accepted \textit{in foro Dei}, but he also argues that even \textit{in foro Dei}, “God doth judge, and pronounceeth his elect ungodly and unjustified, till they
believe.” Therefore, justification by faith implies something more comprehensive than “a justification in our conscience,” or the apprehension of justification. When the elect actually believe, who were justified “out of” them by the two “immanent acts in God, God acts upon them and moves them “from a state of ungodliness to an estate of justification.” It is “a real moral change in our estates,” consisting not only “in our apprehension and judging of ourselves,” but in the judgment of God upon us. This third justifying act of God clearly distances Goodwin from the force of the Antinomian doctrine of eternal justification, which regards “justification by faith” simply as the manifestation of our justification through faith, which was already given.

Goodwin acknowledges that his arguments on the tria momenta of justification may look contradictory, but nevertheless boldly claims that both are true. Goodwin resolves the problem by means of three concepts: the scholastic distinction between the voluntas arcana and the voluntas revelata of God, the principle of representation or the doctrine of union with Christ. He argues that before faith we were justified according to voluntas arcana of God transacted with Christ; whereas, “according to the rules of His

---

165 Goodwin, Works, 8:137. When it comes to the temporal completion of the eternal justification by faith, see also Goodwin, Works, 2:333 where he comments: “Christ himself purchased it, with a reserve till we believe and repent, or else we are not to have the benefit of his death. The bond lay in God the Father’s hand till we should come in to him for it. I do not know that the Scripture useth the word ‘saved from everlasting,’ but only that the grace was given us in Christ, and that Christ died representatively. But when we come to exist in our own persons, then it is applied to us, and we are saved in our own persons by that grace which once made Jesus Christ a common person for us….. Now though God as God hath saved us from everlasting in his own breast, yet take him as a judge, that professeth therefore to go by a rule, and so we are not saved, according to that rule, till such time as he applieth salvation to us by his Spirit. ‘By grace ye are saved through faith,’ saith he.”

166 Goodwin, Works, 3:137-138. Goodwin calls justification “real moral change” in contrast to sanctification as “physical change.”

167 This distinction of divine will is sometimes expressed as the voluntas beneplaciti of God and the voluntas signi. For more information about this distinction, see Oberman, Harvest of Medieval Theology, 103-110; Muller, Dictionary of Latin and Greek, 331-33.
word” as the *voluntas revelata*, we are unjustified prior to faith. In addition to this, justification prior to faith is not of us as actually existing in ourselves, but we were only represented in Christ, our head. Our actual possession of justification as existing in us happens when we believe. He then concludes that we are said to be justified before faith “by representation only,” while we are said to be in ourselves “actually justified through Christ after faith.”

Therefore, Goodwin’s doctrine of justification is significantly Christ-centered in the sense that our justification in all steps is founded upon our being in Christ. We were justified in eternity because we were in Christ at the moment of the election and at the *pactum salutis* in which Christ agreed to take upon Himself our sin and debts, and the Father also agreed to discharge us “in his secret purpose” and expected all from Christ; secondly, we are justified with Christ’s death and resurrection because when “Christ was justified by His death and resurrection we were justified also in him”; lastly, our justification and the following blessings, “not as actually existing in ourselves, but only as existing in our Head,” become actually ours by faith, since Christ, by working faith in us, “knits us to him” and thereby God “pronounceth us righteous in ourselves through him.” For Goodwin, therefore, justification is also thoroughly rooted in our union with Christ in that the first two acts of God in our justification were made possible by the

---

union with Christ initiated by God before our faith; whereas, the last act is also made by union with Christ that is completed by our faith from our perspective.  

In addition, Goodwin argues that this faith makes our justification solely gracious by excluding our works. He insists that justifying faith is to see God “as one that justifies a person, though ungodly.” Goodwin goes on to say that works “are a contradiction to the very formalis subjectum, or that formalis ratio of a person to be justified, which true faith hath in its eyes.” True faith regards “the person to be justified as not working, yea, as ungodly” and considers God to be one who justifies the ungodly. Therefore, given “the nature and the tendency of faith as justifying,” claims Goodwin, it is impossible for works to make any contribution to justification at all. He thus asserts that:

[If we are justified, it must be by faith. For by this faith excludes works in the very formalis subjectum of the subject to be justified, who is one that worketh not, and in the formalis ratio of the object it eyes, the person justifying, God justifying the ungodly. (Italics mine except for Latin words).

For Goodwin, justification by faith alone does not simply exclude works from justification. It is faith that is necessarily required to justify the sinner with no dependence upon works. Goodwin uses the word “must,” intending to express the vital necessity of faith because the role of faith is not only to keep human works from entering

---

173 Goodwin expresses in this way: “From all eternity we were one with Christ by stipulation, he by a secret covenant undertaking for us; and answerably that act of God’s justifying us was but as we were considered in his undertaking. When Christ died and rose again, we were in him by representation, as performing it for us, and no otherwise; but as so considered we were justified. But now when we come in our persons, by our own consent, to be made one with him actually, then we come in our persons through him to be personally and in ourselves justified, and receive the atonement by faith.” Goodwin, Works, 8: 139.

174 Goodwin, Works, 6:104.

175 Goodwin, Works, 6:104.

176 Goodwin, Works, 6:104.

177 Goodwin, Works, 6:104.
into justification, but also as an instrument to perform all required acts for justification so that justification may be purely the work of God’s grace. In this sense, faith is a means taken up by God to make justification consummated under the pure grace of God.

Thus far, we have shown that justification had first originated from God’s eternal decree and then was made objectively by removing original sin through Christ’s coming into the world “in having our nature perfectly holy” as well as by both the remission of sins through Christ’s passive obedience and the fulfillment of actual righteousness through His active obedience. Justification made by God in these two immanent acts are justification in foro Dei. What is more, it is by faith alone that the righteousness of the law fulfilled by Christ’s three acts are applied to all the individual elect, and that the believers actually possesses justification in themselves. In this sense, it seems quite clear that Goodwin regards justification as a purely gracious act of God.

There is another significant aspect in Goodwin’s doctrine of justification. For him, justification is truly an “actus unicus et individuus,” but has to be continually “renewed all of the same every moment.” There is no doubt that Goodwin considers justification as a once-for-all act of God. That being said, how can the actus unicus et individuus be renewed every moment? What does this mean? In explicating the meaning of “the multiplication of God’s mercy, peace, and love as the continuing causes of our salvation and preservation,” Goodwin says that “The word πληθυνθείη, signifies both a continuation of the same thing, and a renewal thereof, and also an increase, or the fulfilling of a thing unto perfection.” This definition of πληθυνθείη can also be applied

---

178 Goodwin, Works, 9:211, 224.
to justification because, given that “we multiply transgressions, by adding unto the heap new acts of sinning,” God also multiplies His pardon to the full and perfect degree by continuing and renewing the act of grace every day. This is the meaning of justification continued and renewed every moment. But this does not deny the once-for-all character of justification in any sense, rather it is “for our comfort” that God multiplies His pardon. It does, of course, not concern the whole threefold meaning of justification, but only the remission of sin alone.

Taken all together, in Goodwin’s doctrine of justification is included not only righteousness, but holiness, which is given by the union with Christ’s perfectly holy human nature. Although he uses the word “holiness” instead of “righteousness,” it does not seem that his concept of justification includes the actual decrease of the power of sin in the believer, but rather it also takes the judicial meaning. Therefore, Goodwin’s understanding of justification may be said to be a purely legal concept. But he, by the term “holiness,” emphasizes that the definitive, judicial concept of justification must manifest itself in holy, sanctified life. In other words, by including in justification the concept of the union with perfect holiness that Christ’s human nature possesses, Goodwin strongly argues that the justified sinner cannot but go forward to sanctification throughout his/her life. Moreover, describing justification both as a once-for-all act of God and as an event God renews every moment in response to the sins believers continually commit, he intends to show that justification cannot be separated from sanctification or the actual holy life of believers.

---

6.3. Adoption

As examined above, because of its experiential significance for the believer, the doctrine of regeneration, or conversion, received much attention from Reformed orthodox theologians in the seventeenth century. Needless to say, it has been the doctrine of justification that has attracted the most attention and study from theologians since the Reformation. This doctrine is so essential to the Protestant church that since the Reformation the doctrine of justification has been accepted by almost all theological offsprings of Luther, including the Reformed tradition, as the \textit{articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae} without any significant objections. The Reformed orthodox in general and the Puritans in particular, devoted no less attention and efforts to such doctrines as adoption, sanctification and the union, and the communion, with Christ, relating to the holy life. In what follows, we examine Goodwin’s doctrine of adoption in his historical setting.

6.3.1. Doctrine of Adoption in Reformed Orthodoxy

As Joel Beeke rightly observes, the Puritan doctrine of adoption is one of the doctrines that has long been neglected and undervalued by modern scholars.\footnote{Beeke and Jones, \textit{Puritan Theology}, 537.} These scholars maintain that although the Puritans were strong in their teaching on Christian life in general, their teaching on adoption was notably deficient.\footnote{Thus, e.g., Tim J. R. Trumpter, “An Historical Study of the Doctrine of Adoption in the Calvinistic Tradition” (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 2001), 5-10, 15-22.} Over against this view of the Puritan doctrine of adoption, however, Beeke attempts not only to prove that the Puritans never neglected adoption, but also to show “how Puritanism recognized adoption’s far-
reaching, transforming power and comfort for the sons and daughters of God.” He argues that the Puritans not only regarded adoption as one of the covenant blessings given to the believer, but also an overarching concept, like our union with Christ, which provides a foundation for all other covenant blessings. He performs this job on the firm basis of the works of some Scottish and Dutch divines with Puritan persuasion as well as of many English Puritans, all of whom “gave it ample treatment in their systematic theologies,” “provide some treatment of the subject,” or “preached one or some sermons on adoption.” One obvious evidence for Beeke’s thesis would be the confessional documents made in England in the seventeenth century. The Westminster Confession devotes an entire chapter to adoption. And this was followed by the Declaration (chapter 11, 1658) and the Baptist Confession of Faith (chapter 12, 1689).

The Reformed orthodox not only acknowledged its significance, they also typically treated the doctrine of adoption in close relationship to other elements of the ordo salutis, namely regeneration, justification, sanctification, and the communion with Christ. Thus, Turretin deals with the doctrine of adoption as a question under the topic of justification, asking “What is the adoption which is given to us in justification?” He seems to identify adoption with one of the two aspects of justification, i.e., “the bestowal

---

184 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 539.
185 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 539.
186 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 537-538.
187 *WCF*, chapter 12; *The Larger Catechism*, Question 74; *The Shorter Catechism*, Question 34.
of a right to life."\(^{189}\) Brakel describes justification as composed of “acquittal from guilt and punishment,” “the bestowal of the right unto eternal life” and “God’s child being declared an heir of eternal salvation.” He then goes on to say that “justification includes spiritual sonship.”\(^{190}\) There were also some Reformed orthodox theologians who preferred to consider adoption to be a fruit of justification. Refuting Bellarmine’s Catholic view of justification and adoption as inherent transformation, George Downname claims:

> [A]s soon as faith is wrought in us, wee are engrafted into Christ: to us being in Christ, the Lord communicateth the merits of his sonne; by imputation of whole righteousness unto us, hee, remitting our sinnes, doth not onely accept of us, as righteous in Christ; but also in him hee adopteth us to bee his Sons and heires of eternall life.\(^{191}\)

Downname held that the imputation of Christ’s righteousness produces two effects, one of which is the adoption of us as his children. This sounds like adoption is included in justification, but given that he parallels these two benefits in the following passages and uses the two terms distinctively, it is better to conclude that Downname regards adoption as a fruit of justification. Anthony Burgess divides spiritual sonship into the “right to heaven” and the “holy nature and conversation.” He then asserts that the former is “founded upon their justification.”\(^{192}\) Thomas Cole places adoption after justification and considers it “as an Appendix, or consequent of it.”\(^{193}\) William Ames also teaches that

\(^{189}\) Turretin, *Institutes*, 2:684.


\(^{191}\) George Downname, *A Treatise of Ivstification* (London: Printed by Felix Kyngston, 1633), 240.


“adoption of its own nature doth forerequire, and presupposes that reconciliation which is found in justification.”¹⁹⁴ He goes on to compare adoption with justification in terms of the application of Christ in us, saying “as Christ in justification is applied as a garment to cover our sins: so in Adoption he is applied as a brother and Prince of our salvation.”¹⁹⁵

Another perspective on the doctrine of adoption is to see adoption as a necessary consequence of regeneration to be God’s children. Our sonship was not gained and given to us by a single, isolated divine act of adoption, but we were adopted by God inasmuch as we had been first born of Him. Thus adoption is rooted in our regeneration. Owen writes that believers are called the sons of God because they “are begotten by regeneration from sin and adoption into the family of God.”¹⁹⁶ Ezekiel Hopkins agrees with Owen, saying that “[i]n Regeneration, we receive his nature: in Adoption, we receive the privileges of his children: we are made sons, by both.”¹⁹⁷ He goes on to conclude that “we are the children of God, two ways; by Regeneration, and by Adoption: adoption gives us the inheritance of children; and regeneration gives us the nature of our Heavenly Father.”¹⁹⁸ Placing his sermon on adoption under the section of regeneration, Burgess also writes that “such who are Regenerated, or New born, are thereby become the sons of God.”¹⁹⁹ When regeneration and adoption are combined, he argues, adoption can be completed in


¹⁹⁵ Ames, Marrow of Sacred Divinity, 121.


¹⁹⁸ Hopkins, Works, 2:544.

¹⁹⁹ Burgess, Spiritual Refining, 237.
every sense. Therefore, to be a son of God with the full right, one must be regenerated first and then adopted as a necessary consequence of regeneration.

Various Reformed writers also connected adoption with sanctification because they found in the doctrine of adoption an important moral motivation for our sanctification. Hopkins encourages us to “have the affections of children” of God because we “bear the relation of children” to Him.²⁰⁰ Thomas Brooks regards the sanctified life as a strong evidence for being children of God. Of the “two ways of knowing our adoption,” maintains he, the second is “by our sanctification and holiness.”²⁰¹ Cole even calls adoption “causa dispositiva” to sanctification.²⁰² In addition, Burgess’s second property of adoption is inward holiness. He does not seem to think that adoption can be identified with inherent holiness. Rather, he intends to say that we cannot but resemble God in holiness because we have become His children by regeneration through His word.²⁰³

Lastly, some Puritans, such as Owen and William Gouge, treat this doctrine in connection with the doctrine of communion with Christ. Owen considers adoption to be “the spring and fountain whence they [the privileges we enjoy by Christ] all arise and flow.”²⁰⁴ He then goes on to mention both the “obligations,” from which we are freed by adoption, and “the rights and privileges,” to which we are translated, both of which


²⁰³ Burgess, *Spiritual Refining*, 238.

Owen says “comprise the whole issue of adoption wherein the saints have communion with Christ.”205 As the title of his work implies, A Guide to Goe to God, implies, Gouge holds that our sonship to God, or God’s fatherhood to us, is the firmest and surest foundation for our prayer to God.206 Thus, given that each one of the three persons of the Trinity are all our Father, Gouge insists, “Christ usually in his prayer used it [His fatherhood].”207

Because adoption was treated in connection with those doctrines in this manner, Reformed orthodoxy often focused not so much on its own theological principles as on its application and its highly valuable practical implications. Although subsuming adoption under justification by regarding it as an aspect of justification, Brakel devoted a chapter to adoption mainly for practical reasons. He spends most of the chapter, firstly, demonstrating the excellency of spiritual sonship – the excellence of the origin and state of sonship, of the manner of adoption, and of the privileges God’s children have – the marks of sonship, and the analogy between natural and spiritual sonship; secondly, encouraging them to examine their sonship; and lastly, showing them their obligation as God’s children. As the title of a sermon on the doctrine of adoption clearly shows,208 Burgess also allots most of the space in his discussion of adoption to the duties and

205 Owen, Works, 2:211. Owen elaborates on these two things under four heads: “(1.) Liberty. (2.) Title, or right. (3.) Boldness. (4.) Correction These are the four things, in reference to the family of the adopted person, that he doth receive by his adoption, where in he holds communion with the Lord Jesus.” (Italic’s added).


207 Gouge, Gvide to Goe to God, 11.

208 The title of the sermon is “Declaring what both by Duty and Privilege a Son of God is, which he becometh by the New birth.” Burgess, Spiritual Refining, 237.
privileges of God’s children. He presents seven duties as required of God’s children and
four privileges granted to them.\textsuperscript{209} Cole also makes known several special privileges
possessed by God’s children and encourages the believer to apply them in life.\textsuperscript{210} In
addition, for those who lack the assurance of their sonship, Cole and Brakel present some
signs or marks of adoption.\textsuperscript{211}

When it comes to the nature of spiritual adoption, Reformed orthodoxy
commonly regarded it as a relational change, not an inherent, actual change. In order to
see the nature of adoption, the first thing to see is how Reformed orthodoxy defines this
doctrine. Cole defines it as a “gracious act of God, giving all Believers power to become
the Children of God, … looking upon them ever after as such; taking them into his
Family, and under his eternal Care, … \textit{quasi filii constituti}, constituted, ordained, and
appointed by God to be his Children, to be in the state and condition of Children unto
him.”\textsuperscript{212} As the definition shows, adoption is God’s gracious act of reckoning, or
reputing “us to be his Children, whom he will love and own as such.” So, he confirms
that “[a]s Justification, so Adoption makes only a relative change of state in the Judgment

\textsuperscript{209} Burgess, \textit{Spiritual Refining}, 239-243.


A reverential Fear of God in all our ways … joined with filial Obedience. … 4. A restless breathing and
panting after God when he hides his face from us in any displeasure.” Brakel presents three marks: “First,
one obtains the adoption of children by faith. … Secondly, spiritual sonship may be recognized by the
bearing of God’s image. … The third mark qualifying one as a child of God consists in the inner motions
which only belong to a child of God.” He then elaborates on these inner motions in terms of love both to
God and to our spiritual brothers and sisters by means of the analogy between natural sonship and spiritual
sonship.

of God.” Ames reaffirms this by defining adoption as “the gracious sentence of God whereby he accepts the faithfull for Christ's sake, unto the dignity of Sons.” In this definition, the juridical sense of a verdict can be found as is found in justification. Owen also accepted this definition, “[T]his investing them with the power, excellency, and right of the sons of God, is a *forensical act*, and hath a legal proceeding in it.” He even claims that “in the present case *justification* and *gratuitous adoption* are the same grace, for the substance of them,” in the sense that they are commonly a forensic act of God accompanying no internal change.

This act of adoption, however, cannot be said to have anything to do with any real change in us, since adoption is made by God on the ground of our regeneration and for our sanctification.

Accordingly, Thomas Cole indicated three causes of change that occur in the regenerate. First, he attributes adoption entirely to “the free Grace of God the Father,” nothing to human merit. It is only by divine grace that we can possess “a right of inheriting Glory” and be inclined to “enjoy this glory, and delight in it.” Secondly, Cole sets forth union with Christ as a cause by which God adopts the elect as His children. He explains this cause in the following manner:

God gives the Elect to Christ as his Children, as the Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Christ; they lost their Inheritance in the first *Adam*, and recovered it in the second *Adam*; they now stand in the same relation to God, (in their measure) as Christ does.

---

Cole offers a covenantal explanation of how God gave the elect to Christ as his children. What they lost in the covenant of works they recovered in Christ given as the head and a public person in the covenant of grace, which is the temporal application of what was agreed upon in the *pactum salutis*. According to the covenant of grace, therefore, they are given to Christ and stand now in Christ before God. So Cole proclaims, “[H]ere comes in our Adoption by vertue of our relation to Christ our elder Brother, as one with him, *Gal.* 3.28. All God’s Adopted Children are found in his natural Son, mystically united to him, deriving from him that filial relation which they have to God.”

If we are really adopted as God’s children due to our union with Christ, how can a holy God see and be pleased with such sinners as we are? Cole answers that as God is pleased with the man Christ because of his own image in him, so he is pleased with the believers because of the image of Christ in them. This image of Christ is, of course, not the incommunicable essence of God, but a lively resemblance of all the communicable attributes of God in some degree and measure. Cole then continues to explain the nature of this union:

> As the humane Nature does subsist in the Divine Person of Christ; so our humane Persons, so far as we are new Creatures, do Subsist in Christ, in whom we spiritually live, move, and have our Being, as New Creatures; the Divine Graces of Christ do subsist in the Saints, by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them; *i.e.* They act the same Graces finitely, which Christ acts infinitely; they receive of his fullness, but cannot contain all his fullness, they have not a capacity for that; they enter into his fullness, but all his fullness cannot enter into them.²¹⁹

In spite of the essential difference between the image of God in Christ and the image of Christ in us, Cole boldly compares our union with Christ to the hypostatic union of Christ’s divine nature and his human nature. Therefore, we are united with Christ “not


only in a way of outward resemblance, but by a real inward participation of the Life and Spirit of Christ according to our finite nature” and capacity.\textsuperscript{220} Here also does union with Christ play a key role in the Reformed orthodox doctrine of adoption.

The last cause of adoption that Cole presents is the work of the Holy Spirit “bearing Witness with our spirit to the truth of the Image of Christ drawn upon the Soul, inferring from thence our Adoption.” Cole holds that spiritual adoption is carried on by the Spirit because he witnesses sonship “by inward impressions” which are always given through the word,\textsuperscript{221} and also showing “the good Will of the Father… wherewith the Father hath accepted them in the beloved, that he might be a Father to them.”\textsuperscript{222} In addition, although “the Spirit works all other saving Graces,” concludes Cole, “yet because Adoption is the prime, and chief work of the Spirit, therefore he is called the Spirit of Adoption.”\textsuperscript{223} The emphasis on union with Christ as an important cause of adoption is also found in the works of many other Reformed orthodox theologians.\textsuperscript{224}

Thus far, the contour of the Reformed orthodox understanding of adoption has been presented. For the purpose of this dissertation, however, it must now be asked, “how did Reformed orthodoxy understand the relationship between faith and adoption?” If as Cole and many other Reformed orthodox theologians suggest, God adopts the elect

\begin{center}
\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{221} Cole, \textit{Christian Religion}, 341.
\textsuperscript{222} Cole, \textit{Christian Religion}, 341.
\end{footnotesize}
\end{center}
through union with Christ, and as examined earlier, union with Christ is consummated by our faith, the means by which we are adopted into God’s family should be faith.

Ames reaffirms that God does not justify the elect by adopting them, but rather adopts them on the foundation of justification because “the right of Adoption is obtained by Faith and the righteousness of Faith.”²²⁵ Downame writes in a similar vein, holding that as God regenerates us through the Holy Spirit, he begets “in us the grace of faith.” He then continues to give more detail about the relation between faith and adoption:

As soon as faith is wrought in us, wee are engrafted into Christ: to us being in Christ, the Lord communicateth the merits of his Sonnes; by imputation of whose righteousness unto us in Christ; but also in him hee adopteth us to bee his Sons and heirs of eternal life.²²⁶

By the act of faith we are united with Christ; as the result of our state being united with Christ we are justified by God; and it is in Christ that God adopts us to be his children who will be bequeathed eternal life. We can here find those four crucial doctrines – faith, justification, union with Christ and adoption – intimately interwoven with one another: faith unites us with Christ; justification happens by faith and the union with Christ; and we are adopted to be God’s children on the ground of justification and union with Christ, both of which are done by faith. Owen makes statements alluding to adoption by faith in several places in his works. He expresses justification as believers being “made partakers of this (Christ’s) righteousness.” He does not write that they are justified by faith, rather he says this justification is “by gratuitous adoption,” all of which is “by faith.”²²⁷ Owen focuses therefore on the fact that those adopted to be God’s sons are heirs of the promised

²²⁵ Ames, Marrow of Sacred Theology, 120.

²²⁶ Downame, Treatise of Ivstification, 240.

²²⁷ Owen, Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 55.
inheritance of righteousness and then concludes that by faith we are qualified to be the sons of God and thus heirs of the inheritance. Accordingly, the Reformed orthodox understood faith as a means to adoption as well as justification and union with Christ.

6.3.2. Goodwin’s Doctrine of Adoption

Both the Westminster Confession and the Declaration assign adoption a *locus* and include it in a series of spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace. In accord with the model, Goodwin seems to regard adoption as a locus included in the order of salvation and he often juxtaposes adoption with these other blessings. As Chang rightly observes, in describing adoption Goodwin often uses “superlative adjectives” to express its superiority over other doctrines.²²⁸ Chang also discovered a seemingly contradictory fact that despite Goodwin’s high regard of adoption, he had not written any separate monograph or sermon focused mainly on this doctrine, though he “expounded adoption whenever he had the chance to do it in many places of his works.”²²⁹ How can one resolve this problem? For this it is necessary to first give attention to the nature of adoption that causes Goodwin to give such praises to this doctrine.

Goodwin deals with the doctrine of adoption in most detail in his sermon on Ephesians 1:5, 6. He first considers adoption to be the fruit of divine predestination. The apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 1:3 that God had blessed believers “with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ.” Goodwin regards both election and predestination

---

²²⁸ Chang, “Christian Life,” 215. Chang writes that “[h]e described it as ‘one of the greatest benefits of all others,’ (5:43) ‘the highest way,’ (5:548) ‘the highest favour,’ (4:562) ‘the greatest change of our state,’ (6:409) and ‘the height of our happiness.’ (4:499)”

as divine “acts of blessing us” and then presents “a perfect holiness” and “adoption” as particular blessings bestowed upon us by the two acts respectively.\textsuperscript{230} Goodwin then concludes that adoption is both the fruit and the end of predestination. To explain this more specifically, Goodwin makes a sharp distinction between election and predestination. He opines that election “being a preferring of some before others,” connotates “the terminus à quo,” while “predestination more eminently denotes out the terminus ad quem.”\textsuperscript{231} Unlike those who are not elected and decreed to stand alone, the elect are “ordained to be in Christ, as a Common Person and root to spring in and out of.” Moreover, Goodwin emphasizes that the elect were not chosen to be in Christ in the future, but were already in Christ “in the very first act of God’s choosing us.” In other words, election is “the first act that gives us a subsistence … in God’s mind, and that in Christ.”\textsuperscript{232} What then is predestination as the second act? Goodwin answers that predestination ordains the elect, who subsist in Christ by election, to adoption, “the right unto the glory of heaven,” “as the end God means to bring us to.”\textsuperscript{233} For this reason, Goodwin considers adoption to be “a privilege or dignity … over and above election,” bestowed upon the elect. Accordingly, election first had put them into Christ, and then predestination “conveyed unto us all those privileges which we have through him, and

\textsuperscript{230} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:83. \\
\textsuperscript{231} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:84. \\
\textsuperscript{232} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:84. \\
\textsuperscript{233} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:85.
union with him.” Goodwin concludes.

Goodwin maintains that the possession of such a privilege as sonship through predestination can only be obtained by being in Christ first. He asserts that “[b]efore ever you can come to have a right of inheritance in anything of the other world, you must first be supposed to be in Christ.” As before “a man can have any privilege in the visible world, he must be a man, that is, a son of the first Adam,” argues he, so the elect “must first be supposed to be in Christ” in order to have “a right of inheritance in everything in the other world.” For Goodwin, therefore, not only is our union with Christ the prerequisite to be adopted into God’s family, but union with Christ even in God’s eternal election is also the foundation in which the decree of adoption is rooted.

The value of adoption is more clearly demonstrated as Goodwin reveals the relationship between holiness and adoption. He explains why election must be the foundation of adoption. It is because holiness is “the image of God, and a likeness unto him, which makes us capable of communion with him.” Given that all the glorious privileges and inheritance of heaven are rooted in union and communion with Christ, electing grace and its fruit, holiness, is the groundwork unto the glory of predestination and of its fruit, adoption, which the elect will possess. Therefore, Goodwin confesses as follows: “if you ask me what adoption is, it is plainly this: it is a right to the glory of

---


heaven, and that is superadded to holiness.”

Here is Goodwin’s definition of adoption:

*a right to the glory of heaven superadded to holiness.* He then adds to this, saying:

adoption contains all the great dignity of a Christian in this life; but ultimately, and more especially, as here, that fulness of glory whereby we shall be like to Christ in his glory; according to that in John 17:22, ‘The glory thou hast given me, I have given them.’ In a word, adoption and holiness here are all one with what the Psalmist speaks, ‘He will give grace and glory; and no good thing will he withhold from them,’ &c. Perfect grace and holiness, that is the fruit of election; and glory added to grace (that is the varnish of it) is meant by adoption. And so you have the first thing, the difference between perfect holiness and adoption.

When Adoption is added to the groundwork of holiness, the glory of adoption will look more brilliant against this background. This is the reason why Goodwin modifies adoption with these superlative adjectives. Furthermore, he reaffirms the priceless value of adoption, boldly declaring that “the main end of his (Christ’s) being mediator … is adoption, and making us sons, which is one of the greatest benefits of all other.”

In the same vein, Goodwin also sheds light on the doctrine of adoption in relation to God’s blessings. Speaking more precisely, he argues that God’s fatherhood is one of essential foundations of blessings flowing from God. God is “the fountain of all blessings and blessedness,” whereas all others can only invoke blessings for someone. Why does this blessed God bless us? What makes Him give many blessings? Goodwin affirmatively takes up the view commonly accepted among the schoolmen, particularly drawing on Aquinas’ *Summa Theologicae*, II-II, Q. 30, A. 2.

He writes that God is moved to love

---


by “an apprehending our misery, *ut suam*, as his own” and all this is “done by an union of affection to us.” Particularly, God’s love to people is distinguished into “a common love to men as creatures” and “a special love” to some. Goodwin once more brings in Aquinas’ view, writing, “Aquinas resolves that, with this further foundation, to be *aliquid sui*; to make those he specially loves some way his own, and then the consequence of that to be, to look upon their misery as his own.”243 What then did make God draw a line between the two groups of people? “Nothing but election,” Goodwin answers resolutely. God “makes us first his own” by electing us in Christ because “so far as he loved us, so far he hath blessed us, with special blessings appropriate, suitable thereunto.”244 Goodwin goes on to claim that once God becomes our God, “he cannot but bless us.” Accordingly, God became our God first “on purpose to bless us.”245 However, it is not enough for God to bestow upon us such infinitely valuable blessings. As the patriarchs in the Old Testament showed, the hearts of fathers are filled with the greatest love and good-will to their own children. So God also “blesses us out of infinite good-will.”246 Therefore, the blessings God pours upon us first come from God’s ownership of us by election and then are abundantly multiplied by His adopting us according to predestination.

The value of adoption is even more clearly revealed as can be seen when Goodwin describes the privilege of sonship. What does it mean that the elect become

---

244 Goodwin, *Works*, 1:42.
God’s sons? Goodwin simply answers that sonship and adoption mean they have “no less than all privileges in the world and the world to come.”247 These privileges are numberless and so enormous that as a mighty rich man does not know the end of his wealth, so no adopted son of God “can come to know the consequence” of sonship. Why? Because a son who is adopted “is an heir, co-heir with Christ, yea, an heir of God.”248 What does an heir of God possess? He possessed God Himself and enjoys Him, “as Christ doth.” Goodwin adds, “I say as Christ doth ... as he enjoys God, so shall we.” He then asks, “what further follows upon being a son” and immediately gives the answer, saying “God himself hath but all things and thou shalt have all things too; and this is to be predestinated unto adoption.”249 Do the elect then really possess all Christ has? Goodwin says, yes, just like Christ, but “in our proportion.”250 In other words, as a co-heir with Christ, an adopted son of God can possess all Christ’s possessions to the extent that our nature is capable of it.

Goodwin goes on to discuss the causes of predestination to adoption by analyzing Eph. 1:5, 6. He first sets forth Christ as “the instrumental cause” of adoption. The elect become “sons of God and heirs of heaven” and “co-heirs with Christ” “in and through a relation unto him.”251 There is also “the principal efficient cause,” which he calls “the mover of God thereunto.” It is “the good pleasure of his will” that first moved God to predestinate us to adoption. This is not only the efficient cause of adoption, but

249 Goodwin, Works, 1:88.
251 Goodwin, Works, 1:88.
“all is resolved into that” and we in our thoughts “are to attribute all to that” as we think of our “being made holy or happy.” This reminds us that Goodwin attributes the efficient cause of the covenant of redemption to the same thing. He then shows “the final cause” of our adoption. Goodwin divides it into “for whom” and “for what.” Goodwin precludes the possibility of interpreting “εἰς αὐτόν” either as “in himself” or as “to himself" and says that “the word … will serve either to signify ‘for himself’ … or ‘for him’” because the preposition εἰς “doth oft-times signify ‘for,’ as it doth denote the end or final cause” as is evidenced in the very next verse, “εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ” (Eph. 1:6). Goodwin argues that in this phrase, “εἰς,” whose most common literal meaning is “to,” can also be interpreted as “for,” since “ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ” (the praise of the glory of his grace) signifies an end or a purpose in the context. Thus, if “εἰς αὐτόν” signifies “for himself,” then the final cause of adoption should be God the Father; whereas, if that phrase refers to “for him,” Jesus Christ is “also together

252 Goodwin, Works, 1:88-89.

253 Goodwin gives us the reason why the interpretation of “εἰς αὐτόν” as “in himself” has to be rejected: “1. There are some would interpret it by ἐν ἑαυτῷ; to this sense, that he hath predestinated us ‘in himself,’ to shew that it was God’s sole act immanent within himself, and in that respect to give him the glory of it as the contriver, &c., ‘within himself.’ But this will not hold; for, first, it is harsh in the phraseology of it, to render εἰς ἑαυτῷ by ἐν ἑαυτῷ. 2. That God was the cause of predestination, we see how that followeth after, for the Apostle attributeth it unto his will in the next words, ‘according to the good pleasure of his will.’ And certainly, in so brief an enumeration of causes, he could not use a repetition.” Goodwin, Works, 1:89.

254 To explain why “to himself” must be ruled out, Goodwin draws on Baines: “Holy Baines, not being satisfied with this last reading of it, gives two reasons against this interpretation. First, saith he, that God did predestinate us to be children to himself, is sufficiently implied in the sole word ‘adoption;’ for to whom should we be children but to him? Not to Christ. Again, secondly, the Apostle, saith he, doth not say that He hath chosen us to be sons in the concrete, but he hath chosen us unto adoption in the abstract; so the words in the original do run. Now, says he, to add ‘to himself’ unto ‘adoption’ in the abstract, that is not proper. If indeed he had said, ‘He hath chosen us to be sons to himself,’ that had been proper; but the words run in that tenor.” Goodwin, Works, 89.

255 Goodwin, Works, 1:89.
with the Father one end of this our predestination unto adoption.”\footnote{256} Goodwin holds that the phrase “will fully bear the one as well as the other.”\footnote{257} According to his confession, however, when he expounded that verse before, he understood it “as only to intend that we were predestinated to and for Christ, and to the glory of Christ.” But Given that the Greek word may also be “rendered ‘to himself’ and ‘for himself,’” and so refer unto God the Father and that “the Scriptures do frequently express God’s electing of us by choosing us to himself and for himself,”\footnote{258} according to his rule of the interpretation of Scripture, which is to take Scripture phrases and words in the most comprehensive sense, he confirms his position to the final cause of adoption, saying that:

So that I understand the word ‘to himself’ not primarily or alone to refer to adoption of children to him (the Father), but to refer distinctly and as Immediately unto his having predestinated us, and separated us to his own great and glorious self, and for and to his great and blessed Son.\footnote{259}

The elect were not predestinated to adoption to the Father, but they were predestinated unto adoption both for the Father (“to his own great and glorious self”) and for the Son (“to his great and blessed Son”). Goodwin concludes that the final cause of predestination unto adoption is the glory of the Father as well as of the Son. Accordingly, Christ is the double cause of adoption – both the instrumental cause and the final cause.

Lastly, it is necessary to look at the role of the Holy Spirit in adopting the elect as God’s sons. As examined briefly in the treatment of his view of preparation for faith, Goodwin mentions the role of the Spirit in relation to our sonship. The main role of the

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{256}{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:89.}
\footnotetext{257}{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:89.}
\footnotetext{258}{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:90.}
\footnotetext{259}{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:90.}
\end{footnotes}
Spirit of adoption is to “witness adoption,” to “testify our sonship,” to give us assurance, and to seal adoption to us. Owen is in agreement with Goodwin concerning the role of the Spirit of adoption, which is to testify “to the heart and conscience of a believer that he is freed from all engagements unto the family of Satan, and is become the son of God.” The Holy Spirit does not seem to do any substantial work particularly for adoption because adoption, for Goodwin, is a relative change, or the change in title for the elect, not any change in them. Rather, the Spirit of adoption primarily works for assurance and spiritual comfort so that they may persevere in their pilgrimage toward glorification in that there is nothing which can give them greater comfort and encouragement than being God’s children.

In addition, Goodwin goes on to say that this Spirit of adoption plays these roles under the gospel only. He maintains that the sealing work of the Spirit “was reserved to the time after Christ was glorified.” Although the Old Testament believers had Spirit-worked faith, they could not possess such a Spirit of adoption in the way that the New Testament believers would have after their conversion. But Goodwin also points out that there were some exceptional cases, such as “David and some others in the Old Testament, … who were eminent types of Christ that was to be anointed with the oil of gladness.”

260 Goodwin, Works, 6:363.
261 Goodwin, Works, 6:18.
262 Goodwin, Works, 8:271.
265 Goodwin, Works, 1:248.
266 Goodwin, Works, 1:248.
This seems to insinuate that the sealing work of the Spirit of adoption was a special work of the Holy Spirit upon some chosen people in the Old Testament; whereas, it is the Spirit’s common work in the hearts of all believers in the New Testament era.

Nevertheless, Goodwin does not hesitate to call the Spirit in the Old Testament era “the spirit of adoption,” but notes that the Spirit of adoption in that era did not “seal up to a man his sonship.” Therefore, Goodwin regards the sealing, assuring, and testifying work of the Spirit in the Old Testament as “the promise of the gospel.”

Goodwin’s view of the relation between “the spirit of bondage” and “the Spirit of adoption” is worth being discussed now. How can this sealing, assuring, testifying work of the Spirit of adoption be accomplished? This is made possible partly by experience of adoption. As Chang rightly points out, Goodwin does not ignore the experiential aspect of adoption. Chang holds that “the filial cry to God the Father” is the first experience of a believer.

This is because the believer underwent a certain dramatic experience, the experience that the spirit of bondage, who convicts, humbles, and humiliates us, turns
into the Spirit of adoption, who assures, seals, testifies of sonship with heavenly comfort. The believer, who was the heir of eternal punishment in the past, becomes the heir of the heavenly kingdom and possesses God Himself, who is blessedness itself. The regenerate undergo this dramatic change as the Spirit changes from the spirit of bondage to the Spirit of adoption. Furthermore, as just discussed, this experiential aspect of adoption will continue by the assuring and comforting work of the Spirit of adoption.

There is another role of the Spirit of adoption. Goodwin claims that “the spirit of adoption not only puts us on to pray, but ‘helpeth our infirmities.’” 271 The Spirit helping the believers in their infirmities is the third Person of the Trinity, now called the Spirit of adoption. This might imply that since He turned from the spirit of bondage to the Spirit of adoption in our conversion, the Holy Spirit helps our infirmities so that we may actually complete our pilgrimage and all this gracious help is firmly rooted in the relationship of the father and son. All taken together, Goodwin intends to demonstrate that the main role of the Spirit of adoption in the believer is closely associated with the experiential aspect of Christian life not only in its first step, but throughout the whole life until the last breath is taken in this world.

Now, returning to the question raised at the beginning of this section, why then did Goodwin not write a separate monograph for such a precious doctrine? It is not known exactly why he does not explicitly comment on this. But the reason can be inferred partly from what we have examined in this section. Goodwin seems to deal with the doctrine of adoption with a focus on the excellence of the benefits and privileges that bondage to sin with which we have nothing to do.

271 Goodwin, Works, 6:281.
adoption brings about. Moreover, all the benefits and privileges are better than the other doctrines can give. However, these superb benefits and privileges are something building up on an already established foundation, but not the foundation itself. In other words, some doctrines, such as election, the covenant of redemption, regeneration, justification, and sanctification, on each of which Goodwin wrote a separate treatise, are treated by Goodwin not so much in relation to the excellence of their benefits as with emphasis on the soteriological significance of each doctrine: each doctrine marks a crucial moment in a soteriological sense. For example, election is the first eternal event of salvation in God’s heart; the covenant of redemption is the eternal plan of salvation agreed on by the three Persons of the Trinity; regeneration is “the foundation and first step unto all those privileges of a Christian” and “the door, or first entrance” to the state of grace; justification is the first moment in the change of the legal status and thus “the title of life” is bestowed upon us in justification; sanctification, as will be examined, refers to our actual transformation, which signifies another essential aspect of salvation. Therefore, though its benefits are superior to the benefits of other doctrines in perfection, adoption signifies not so much the moment of a radical change as something made better by addition. In other words, the superiority of the benefits and privileges of adoption over the benefits of the other doctrines does not stand alone, but draws necessarily on the other doctrines as a foundation in Goodwin’s theology. For the same reason, it seems, although Goodwin acknowledges that the doctrine of union with Christ is also “the first fundamental thing of justification, and sanctification, and all,”272 he did not set this

doctrine apart for a monograph. This assumption may also be supported by the fact that these two doctrines are in many cases mentioned with other important doctrines.

### 6.3.3. Faith and Adoption

Goodwin does not explicate a direct and specific relation of faith with adoption. But this does not mean that adoption has nothing to do with faith, or that faith is not required for the elect to be adopted by God. To explore the proper relationship between faith and adoption, it is necessary once again to return to Goodwin’s distinction of salvation. As demonstrated earlier, Goodwin says that in the course of salvation the elect will experience “a double change wrought in” them: “a relative change” consisting merely in title and “a real change” consisting in works in them. Adoption belongs to the former together with justification because “it lies in reputeing, in God’s accounting us sons, in giving us the right and title to it.”

As the Church of Rome believed, argues Goodwin, if adoption does not cause a relative change but brings a real change to the image of God in us, it must make a real change in God our father because “father and son are relatives.” Therefore, to the question, “now being a son, what doth it lie in?” Goodwin gives an answer, saying, “it lies in a title, in an authority, in a charter, in a commission.” He then goes on to show the relationship between faith and such benefits as adoption consisting in a relative change by asserting that:

Now take salvation thus, as it is endowing us with all the title and interest of whatsoever God means to bestow upon us, and this is wholly by grace, and wholly through faith. These three are adequate:—1. Such benefits as are by

---


imputation or reckoning: 2. by grace, out of us; 3. received only by faith.

Here now is the solution of the text: here is whole salvation in the very lump, it is all given at once, given at first; the whole of it as it lay in the womb of God’s decree and free grace, it is completely, according to the right and title of it, bestowed upon us at once, and it is received through faith. ‘By grace ye are saved through faith,’ saith he; that now solves all the difficulty. They are, I say, all bestowed upon us at once; all that are, or as they are, acts of God upon us; that great salvation, ‘so great salvation,’ as the Apostle calls it, is given all at once: and by grace ye are thus saved, completely and fully, and this as soon as you believe, *eodem die*, as Jerome speaks. Here is the greatest gift that ever was given; ‘not of yourselves,’ saith he, ‘it is the gift of God.’ The Apostle hath penned the words so that they will refer as well to salvation as to faith.276

He argues that unlike other benefits consisting in a real change, accomplished by degree, such benefits as adoption and justification, which are at once bestowed upon us “according to the right and title of it,” refer to the whole salvation and that the way through which we receive those benefits is *faith*, since Paul declares, “By grace ye are saved through faith.” Salvation is always by grace through faith. Goodwin, therefore, avers that “[w]hen you come to the whole of salvation bestowed upon you, it is merely the grace that is in the heart of God about which faith deals with immediately.”277 Here grace and faith can be seen walking together hand in hand. This implies that faith is something fitting well with grace in salvation. In other words, faith does not impair, but rather upholds grace. Particularly in salvation, faith is a means that God takes up to apply such a title and right to believers keeping divine grace intact, since Goodwin writes that the whole of salvation “cometh immediately and purely through the hands of free grace,” which is faith, and thus that “this is said to be received through faith.”278

---


278 Goodwin, *Works*, 2:318. In the same vein, based on Acts 26:18, Goodwin also testifies that Paul divides the whole of salvation into “forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified” and then “cuts off from these two faith and sanctification.” Contrasting with sanctification which is “a qualification of that person God means to save,” Goodwin writes that Paul “makes faith the
This becomes even clearer when adoption is connected with justification. It may be helpful to take a look at how Goodwin talks about the relation of faith to both adoption and justification:

As now, take justification, being saved from wrath, and saved from sin, the Scripture is clear in it that you receive it by faith. ‘Being justified,’ saith he, ‘by faith.’

And so adoption and sonship, being made heirs of life, which you may in some sense make a part of justification, and so the Scripture doth, yet notwithstanding we are said to receive it by faith, Gal. 4:4, 5, and Gal. 3:26.

Take both in, remission of sins, and being heirs of life, you receive them both through faith, and through faith alone. 279

As justification is received by faith alone, so also is adoption given us through faith alone.

Goodwin holds that adoption is “the highest and most eminent privilege” conveyed to us through our union with Christ. 280 He also points out that Christ was appointed “as the means or virtual cause” and God thus “adopts us by union with him.” 281 He then explains a bit more specifically how God adopts believer by union with Christ and what it means that Christ was set up as a means or virtual cause of adoption unto God. Union with Christ is based on Christ’s natural sonship of God the Father. Believers can become God’s sons inasmuch as they are married with God’s natural Son. If they are married with Him, then “we become sons-in-law unto God.” 282 For this thing that receiveth the right and title, and so receiveth salvation completely, both the one and the other, and this from the hands of free grace immediately.” 279 Here is also faith described as the means which conveys free grace to the believer.

279 Goodwin, Works, 2:318.
280 Goodwin, Works, 1:85.
281 Goodwin, Works, 1:96.
282 Goodwin, Works, 1:96.
reason, Goodwin calls “Jesus Christ … the instrument, or rather virtual cause by or through whom God makes us sons.” Goodwin calls “Jesus Christ … the instrument, or rather virtual cause by or through whom God makes us sons.” All this once more proves that adoption is truly a relative change consisting in God’s “forensical actions.” Therefore, union with the natural Son, Jesus Christ, is most essential for being adopted unto God and it is by faith alone that this union is completed in this temporal world.

The relation of faith to adoption through union with Christ also more clearly appears when looking into the relationship between justification and adoption. He asks a question, “how is this being adopted through him to be understood? O, being made sons through his merits, or through the more relation to his person?” The answer itself is very simple as Goodwin states, “I answer, through the relation to his person, and Christ’s being a Son.” In agreement with Forbes’s statements, Goodwin claims that “adoption … was not founded upon redemption, or Christ’s obedience, but on Christ’s personally being God’s natural Son.” These questions and answers make a clear distinction between justification and adoption though both belong to the concept of relative change. Justification is obviously rooted in Christ’s merit and satisfaction obtained by His active and passive obedience, while “our adoption is through his being the natural Son of God, and we his brethren in relation to his person.” Goodwin, however, presents a seemingly contradictory statement, saying, “so indeed it is true that adoption and all the rest are the

fruits of his merits, as actually they come to be bestowed.”

Although the elect were chosen in Christ and were predestinated to adoption unto God, they lost all their privileges when they fell in Adam. It is Christ who “was fain to purchase them anew.” This is the reason why Paul confesses that “he redeemed us, ‘that we might receive the adoption of sons.’”

Goodwin tells believers to “mark the phrase, that we might receive adoption.” He continues to explain that there was an obstacle and impediment – “our sins and bondage under the law and curse of it” –, which keep God from adopting them, and that “when sins are by his merits done out of the way, then this comes to take place.”

This is the reason why Goodwin agrees with Junius when he calls justification “via adoptionis.”

But redemption or justification founded on his redemption is not the cause of adoption. Nevertheless, Goodwin holds that “still intended it was, and founded upon our relation to Christ’s Person as he is God’s natural Son, and we married unto him.” It is the unchangeable truth, argues Goodwin, that our adoption is founded on our relation to the Person of Christ, that is, our union with Christ. With regard to the relationship between adoption and justification, Goodwin concludes as follows:

Now then, election that gave us relation to Christ, did put us into him; God chose us in him. And then came predestination, and gave us this privilege. Is Christ my Son? says God. They shall be my sons, too; they shall be like him. Is he my heir? They shall be heirs, and co-heirs with him. And this may help to solve that question among divines, whether adoption or justification be the first benefit. For,

---


I answer, that in God’s intention of bestowing it from everlasting in predestination, adoption is the first, as being founded upon our mere relation to the person of Christ; and this without the consideration of merit. But for the actual bestowing it upon us, pardon of sins goes first. We are redeemed from under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and that God might own us as such.  

In terms of logical order in eternity, adoption precedes justification, since, given that adoption is caused by the relation of the elect to Christ and that justification by Christ’s merit, relation to Christ was changed as God chose them first in Christ “without the consideration of merit.” Moreover, it is based on God’s immanent act of uniting the elect to His natural Son by choosing them in Christ that they become His sons and share all inheritance with that natural Son. On the contrary, however, temporal priority must be given to justification over adoption because in order for adoption to take place in time all the obstacles and impediments – sin and bondage under the law and the curse of it – should be done away with from the road to adoption. How can these be removed from sinners? It is by Christ’s redeeming of the elect from the law. How then are they redeemed? It is done when sins are forgiven and Christ’s merits are imputed to them, which is justification. Accordingly, Goodwin’s argument is this: believers are adopted on the foundation of their relation to Christ, but the actual bestowal of adoption depends on justification, which is by faith alone.

Goodwin, Works, 1:97.

Goodwin, Works, 1:97.
CHAPTER SEVEN
GOD’S WORK IN US

Introduction

As Richard Lints puts it, the gospel is not only first received by faith alone, but also “continually embraced by faith throughout the entirety of the Christian life.”

In the same vein, Goodwin also says that “there is another remaining in the thing itself, which is concerning the blamelessness, or being void of offence; how both in this and other places, as 1 Cor. 1:8, 1 Thes. 5:23, the promise included in these prayers, to present us blameless in that day, is to be understood.” He then asks, given that the justified believer still “runs into scandals and offence to others, and their own consciences in this life,” how can the believer be sustained “to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”?

Goodwin immediately rejects the anticipated Antinomian answer according to their doctrine of eternal justification. But he argues that:

the blamelessness of the saints here, and in other the like places at that day, is not that of justification, but sanctification... your whole soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of Christ.’ It is spoken of sanctification, you see; and as so taken, I find it sometimes uttered (1.) as an absolute promise which God undertakes to perform, as well as that the saints shall persevere.

Although regeneration, justification, and adoption bestowed upon the elect a “title” or “right” to salvation and thus changed the legal status, yet still “One thing thou

---


lackest,” (Mark 10:21), that is inherent, transformational change into perfect holiness.

Goodwin in the above passage mentions three blessings given as a result of “God’s work in us.” Sanctification and the perseverance of the saints are necessary benefits unto glorification, that is, the consummation of salvation. Those who received the principle of faith at regeneration and were justified and adopted by the act of faith are also to be sanctified, preserved, and glorified by means of faith. In this chapter, we will examine how Goodwin understands the role that faith has in the life of a Christian after adoption in logical order.

7.1. Sanctification

7.1.1. Doctrine of Sanctification and the Issues

Recently there has been a rekindled controversy over the Reformed doctrines of justification and sanctification, mostly between the theologians of the Westminster seminaries on both coasts of the United States. This controversy was originally concerned over some differing opinions about the role of the traditional Reformed notion of the ordo salutis and about Calvin’s unio cum Christo and its duplex gratia. We already briefly described the different views on this issue. But recently it has become a controversy over the problem of the priority of justification over sanctification. Richard B. Gaffin emphasizes the inseparability and simul of the duplex gratia in Calvin’s theology, such that he rejected giving any causal priority, whether logical or legal, to justification, but instead focused on union with Christ.5 On the contrary, Fesko argues that Calvin and his

---

successors in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries assigned “a priority to justification over sanctification and even uses language of causality to do so.” In his response to Fesko’s critique, however, pointing out that Fesko misunderstood his view on the priority of justification, as a necessary prerequisite to sanctification, Gaffin turned this discussion in a new direction, raising a question about “the beginning of sanctification” which is grounded in “Spirit-worked” deliverance, or “definitive sanctification.” He contends that for Calvin this definitive sanctification, as the ground of ongoing, progressive sanctification, is coincidental with justification. Fesko consistently attributes the legal ground of sanctification to justification, not vice versa, saying that “God always looks upon her (the sinners) as holy because of the imputed righteousness of Christ.” When it comes to the concept of definitive sanctification that Gaffin asked him to consider, Fesko holds that it “muddies the waters regarding the

---


inseparable but nevertheless distinct blessings of the *duplex gratia*.”¹¹ In contrast to Gaffin, who argues that the forensic aspect of salvation is simultaneous with the definitive aspect of salvation without any logical or temporal priority, Fesko claims that even the “definitive breach with the world of sin” is also grounded in “the forensic aspect of our union with Christ (justification).”¹² He rather evinces that the definitive break with sin does not refer to actual freedom from sin, but to legal freedom from the condemnation of the law. He goes on to say that it is thus justification and its legal implications that “yield definitive positional changes in status for those whom each Adam represents.”¹³ Accordingly, asserting that Murray’s definitive sanctification bears a forensic meaning, Fesko concludes that he subsumes justification under the broader concept of sanctification by merging forensic and transformative realities into sanctification. Refuting each of Fesko’s proofs, which are used to support the argument just summarized, however, Ralph Cunnington defends Gaffin’s view by claiming that both Scripture and Calvin’s teaching commonly bear witness to definitive sanctification as the ground of ongoing, progressive sanctification and rather gives a counter argument to Fesko by asserting that Fesko’s “insistence on justification securing subjective deliverance from the power of sin is itself a confusion of the forensic and transformative categories.”¹⁴ Since Fesko’s argumentation looks beyond Calvin to the Reformed orthodox, specifically to Owen, Baxter, Turretin, and Witsius, all roughly contemporary


to Goodwin, the debate between Fesko, Gaffin, and others provides a background to the identification of issues confronting examination of Goodwin’s thought.

7.1.2. Sanctification in the Context of Seventeenth-Century England

To the seventeenth-century Reformed orthodox theologians, the doctrine of sanctification was framed with attention to the problems both of the Roman Catholic tendency toward semi-Pelagian works-righteousness about the doctrine of justification, on the one hand, and the threat of Antinomianism and its works-ignoring tendency on the other. In addition, they were also concerned about “the corruption of the doctrine of justification” as they urged people to live holy lives according to the Word of God. \(^{15}\) In particular, the Antinomian view of the law and Christian works caused a heated controversy within Reformed circles, particularly in both Old and New England. As Fesko indicates, during the Westminster Assembly, on many occasions “the names and works of reputed Antinomian theologians were brought to the assembly’s attention.”\(^ {16}\)

We already examined some essential tenets of Antinomianism in relation to the conditionality of the covenant of grace, and this discussion is primarily concerned with the doctrine of justification. However, Antinomianism may be said to be more directly connected to the doctrine of sanctification than to that of justification in the sense that its practical concern was about the Christian life after justification in its relation to the law.

For the seventeenth-century Antinomians, given their view on eternal justification, or justification prior to faith, sanctification is definitely preceded by

---

\(^{15}\) See Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 239.

\(^{16}\) Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 239.
justification. Differing from the common assumption of many people, however, the seventeenth-century English Antinomians did not simply reject the law as if the law was no longer effective in any sense to believers. Crisp maintains in his sermon on Titus 2, “Free Grace the Teacher of Good Works,” that “THE End of this Love of God, here expressed in General, is our Sanctification.” He holds that sinfulness itself cannot keep sinners from salvation. Although sometimes sins are committed and sinners “get many a knock,” if only their souls “fight Christ’s Battels,” they are still Christ’s warriors and not “under Sin’s Regiment.” Those who mistakenly think that they cannot fight against sin Crisp comforts by saying that your “Frettings and Outcries of Heart are the noise of War” against sin and then emphasizes God’s gracious character by stating with his argument that “Salvation may belong to one, who at the present is under the full power of sin, otherwise could no Man be saved.” He goes on to the next theme, which is “the End of that free Love of God, in giving salvation, or the inseparable fruit, which follows this Grace.” Crisp affirms that this love of God “teaches to deny Ungodliness” and then explains that:

Let us therefore take this general point into our consideration. *That wheresoever the Grace of God brings Salvation, it is not bestowed in vain.* But inclines the Heart to new Obedience, and makes him fruitful in his Life, in all well-pleasingness, who partakes of this Grace. By the particulars mentioned in the text, you may plainly see how naturally this general Doctrine ariseth from it, which I have rather pitched upon, that I might prevent that licentious Soul-destroying Misconceit, … the Doctrine of free Grace by the devilish Cunning of that old Serpent, who knows his own Bain and Ruine is contained in this soverign Antidote, hath been marvellously abused divers ways, in all Ages, some, as namely, such before mentioned, overthrowing it with licentious inferences. … Others again abuse it by establishing a Righteousness of their own, in the room of

---

18 Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted*, 32.
19 Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted*, 32.
it, against which the Apostle contends vehemently, especially in the whole Epistle to the Galatians.\textsuperscript{20} Crisp rejects both the licentious understanding of the grace of God and the attempt to establish one’s own righteousness by obedience. He claims that obedience is necessary for justification not causally, but consequentially. Grace, therefore, does not “void our obedience, but establish it rather.” He warns, nonetheless, that obedience must not be mixed with Christ’s merit, nor added to it, for justification, because given that obedience is the consequent of justification, obedience serves in justification “for no use, nay, they damnify, being brought in for that purpose.”\textsuperscript{21} Accordingly, Crisp’s view of sanctification seems to be in substantial agreement with that of Reformed orthodoxy.

The neonomian view of sanctification found in Baxter’s writings is somewhat nuanced.\textsuperscript{22} As examined earlier, Baxter’s concept of justification is not purely forensic because our legal righteousness can be imputed to us by faith alone “without us in Christ,” whereas our evangelical justification “consisteth in our own actions of Faith and Gospel obedience”\textsuperscript{23} and is required of us for our final justification. Thus, it seems that Baxter mingle justification with sanctification and in a sense makes our final justification depend on our sanctification.

Before proceeding to Goodwin’s view on sanctification, it would be helpful to peek at the Reformed orthodox view through one of the representative works on sanctification by a Reformed orthodox theologian in the seventeenth century. Walter

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Crisp, \textit{Christ Alone Exalted}, 34.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Crisp, \textit{Christ Alone Exalted}, 35.
\item \textsuperscript{22} See Packer, \textit{Redemption and Restoration}, 251-263.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Baxter, \textit{Aphorismes of Justification}, 108.
\end{itemize}
Marshall (1628-1680), a Puritan pastor and author of the well-known book on sanctification, *Gospel-Mystery of Sanctification*, evinces his own view on sanctification in this way:

The great Objection and Reason of so many Controversies and Books written about it is, because they think that Men will trust to be saved however they live: But Sanctification is an Effect of Justification, and floweth from the same Grace; and we trust for them both by the same Faith, and for the former in order to the latter: And such a Faith, be it never so confident, tendeth not to Licentiousness, but Holiness. And we grant that Justification by Grace destroys Holiness by legal Endeavors, but not by Grace: So that there is no need to live a Papist and die an Antinomian.24

7.1.3. Goodwin on Sanctification

Although the diverse facets of the doctrine of sanctification are spread throughout many of his writings, it is in both *The Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation* and the writings collected in the third volume of Goodwin’s works edited by James Nichol that we can find the most elaborated explication of the doctrine. His *An Exposition of the Revelation* was not simply written to imbue his congregation with a rosy fantasy for the world to come, but he, in view of the nearness of the second coming of Christ and of the independent church polity as most biblical, aimed at urging believers to purge themselves of the filthiness and ungodliness rampant in the church.25 In *A Child of Light Walking in Darkness*, acknowledging that God’s true children could be in distress and affliction they did not want as if they were walking in darkness, Goodwin demonstrates the various reasons and causes of those evils and gives readers both practical, specific directions to

24 Walter Marshall, *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification Opened in Sundry Practical Directions*, Suited especially to the Case of those who labour under the guilt and power of Indwelling Sin. To which is added a Sermon of Justification (London: Printed for T. Parkbury, 1692), 323.

overcome them, and comforts rooted in God’s love to His people. Goodwin also deals with prayer as a vital means for salvation in his *The Return of Prayers*. Chang writes that *The Trial of a Christian’s Growth* is “the most important book on sanctification by Goodwin.”²⁶ Given that this book was primarily for the spiritually young Christians as expressed in the preface, Goodwin’s concern with the believer’s sanctification is clearly manifested in this book because he felt young Christians are most vulnerable to lusts and that for believers this is the “eminent time of warfare.”²⁷

The last book in this volume is *The Vanity of Thoughts*, in which Goodwin emphasizes the necessity for believers to keep their hearts clean and holy, analyzes the causes and sinfulness of vain thoughts and the evil effects on believers’ hearts, and then suggests some remedies against them. All the books but *An Exposition on Revelation* in this volume are cases of conscience and thus provide practical and specific directions for sanctification in our daily lives. There is another book focusing on sanctification, titled *Three Several Ages of Christians in Faith and Obedience*. Based on 1 John 2:13,14, Goodwin here divides believers into three ages: “Father in Christ,” “Men grown up, which is translated ‘young men,’” “Babes, or new converts not yet grown up, but true believers all.”²⁸ As Goodwin himself points out, they are all true believers so that they, even spiritual babes, were already regenerated, justified, and adopted. Therefore, the focus in this book is how justified believers could be conformed to Christ in their lives. Above all, *Of Gospel Holiness in the Heart and Life* cannot be omitted from the


discussion about Goodwin’s doctrine of sanctification. This work consists of three books, each of which has a distinct theme. In the first book, Goodwin examines the nature and characteristics of obedience with an emphasis on grace and holy disposition as its principle. The second book, which is focused on our relationship with God as His friend, reveals the proper demeanor of a Christian in a friendship with God and introduces the privileges and duties that originate from this relationship. Various motives of obedience to God drawn from diverse sources are mostly treated in the third book, and then Goodwin rounds off his entire discussion with a warning of the dangers and mistakes believers must avoid. Besides the works briefly outlined above, there are many other works dealing with sanctification – Goodwin deals with it as part of specific topics, such as pneumatology and hamartiology.  

As is evidenced in the long list of writings dealing directly with the doctrine of sanctification, Goodwin’s concern is not limited or biased toward some doctrines related to doctrines that refer to forensic change like justification, rather he always tries to balance himself between an antinomian emphasis on the forensic aspect of salvation having absolutely nothing to do with anything from believers and the acts of believers in the papist, Arminian, or neonomian tendency that gives more room to the act of believers in salvation. As demonstrated in the two previous chapters, he does not hesitate to attribute all salvation to God’s grace and does his best not to compromise God’s grace and sovereignty in salvation. As we will see in this chapter, he pays no less attention to the believer’s responsibility than he does to God’s grace in the discussion of salvation.

29 Goodwin’s other writings directly related to the doctrine of sanctification are Aggravation of Sin, Encourage of Faith, The Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation, On Repentance, The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith, A Discourse of Thankfulness, which is Due to God for His Benefits and Blessings, and An Unregenerate Man's Guiltiness Before God, in Respect of Sin and Punishment.
7.1.3.1. Nature of Sanctification

Goodwin defines sanctification as “a conformity to his (God’s) will” that is “expressed in his commands.”\(^{30}\) In *The Trial of a Christian’s Growth*, Goodwin holds that sanctification is composed of two parts: mortification and vivification. Mortification implies growth in mortifying, or purging out, sin; whereas, vivification refers to “[a] positive growth in holiness, and all the fruits of it.”\(^{31}\) In contrast to the logical order of sanctification in which purging out of sin precedes growth in holiness, he deals with vivification first because “growth in positive holiness … is the end and perfection of the other,” and yet “the other but subserving unto this.”\(^{32}\)

When it comes to the scope of both mortification and vivification, Goodwin argues that “vivification, or quickening, is of as large an extent as mortification can be supposed” because vivification “comes in the room of that inherent corruption that was destroyed” by mortification, otherwise, “so much of the soul in which sin was afore, and in which sin is now mortified, should remain … naked and unclothed upon with grace, and have neither grace nor corruption in it.”\(^{33}\) How does the Spirit do all this? Goodwin argues that the Spirit works out mortification and vivification through the principle of new life, or habitual grace, infused by regeneration. Goodwin repeatedly emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit not only in the work upon us, but in His work in us also. Thus, he attributes sanctification to the work of the Holy Spirit,\(^{34}\) but it must be noted that he at


the same time refuses to regard the Holy Spirit as the sole cause of sanctification. There is another vital element for sanctification to which Goodwin places much stress so that he may distinguish the Reformed doctrine of sanctification from other erroneous teachings of salvation in particular relation to the doctrine of conversion or sanctification. What is at stake here is the role and nature of the infused principle of new life, or habitual grace. Goodwin first rejects the Catholic view, particularly as presented by Bellarmine. According to Goodwin, Bellarmine argues that our first turning to God is possible out of our free will with simple assistance of “the exciting and adjuvant grace” and that God then “infuseth a habit of grace as a root, or a radical principle of good works.”

Goodwin also opposes the Arminian view of conversion. The Arminians attribute justification to “faith in Christ alone,” and not to “habitual grace at all.” Goodwin complains that they “utterly deny any infusion of habits or principles abiding in the soul necessary to conversion.” Goodwin maintains, however, that “the Holy Ghost doth not only move and stir us up to all good actions which we do, but that in the work of conversion, he produceth in us living and lasting principles of a constant holy life.”

Sanctification, therefore, is the work of the Holy Spirit together with the principle of new life, which He infused by regeneration. In this sense, Goodwin considers sanctification as “the working all the principles of habitual grace … by the Spirit.”

---

36 Goodwin, Works, 6:188.
37 Goodwin, Works, 6:187-188.
38 Goodwin, Works, 6:191. Remember that Goodwin often uses the terms, “regeneration” and “conversion, interchangeably, and that conversion is a broader concept including the first moment of our salvation.
39 Goodwin, Works, 7:536
Goodwin argues that sanctification is absolutely necessary because if we look to be saved, we must be offered up to God as “a sanctified sacrifice,” or otherwise we cannot avoid being “made a sacrifice of his wrath.” God ordained sanctification as the means to our salvation together with faith. Until “such time as we have holiness, and perfect holiness,” reflects Goodwin, we cannot “attain the glory of heaven.” He argues that justification and adoption, which refer to a relative change, are called salvation itself because they grant us a title and a right to salvation, but sanctification, a real change in us by degrees, is to be considered divine works unto salvation. Thus, says Goodwin, sanctification is “a medium through which he (God) carries us.” When God chose the elect to eternal glory and salvation, he also chose the means by which the elect should attain the final goal. He thus writes that “[f]aith and holiness they are the means, glory and salvation the end of those means.” How and where then could they find the means? Goodwin answers that God, who is “pleased to instate us into the right of that glory by calling us,” will certainly “bestow those means effectually upon us, and carry us through those means unto that glory.”

Union with Christ is also an important element in Goodwin’s doctrine of sanctification. Although he presents the Holy Spirit and the infused principles of new life

---


43 Goodwin, *Works*, 9:322. See also Goodwin, *Works*, 2:336. Goodwin argues that we are saved through faith and sanctification because they are means to our salvation. But he makes a distinction between the two means, saying “We are saved through faith, as that which gives us the present right, or that which God doth then give as a judge, when we believe, before faith hath done a whit of work else; but we are led through sanctification and good works to the possession of salvation.”

by regeneration as the two causes of sanctification, Goodwin finds the efficient cause of sanctification in our union with Christ. Because believers are substantially united with Christ, Christ’s interest and theirs are but one. This implies that those, who are joined with Christ, are “of one and the same disposition, ends, and aims,” and thereby naturally yield to a conformity to Christ in every aspect, that is, sanctification.

Goodwin thus insists that Christ first takes us and then gives us “holiness.” In addition, he goes on to say that if union with Christ is the foundation of our sanctification, sanctification is the foundation of our communion with God. Goodwin maintains that “holiness … is the image of God, and a likeness unto him, which makes us capable of communion with him.” This holiness makes us like unto God and “fit for communion with him.”

Goodwin elaborates on the theme of sanctification by union with Christ through his exposition on Rom. 8:1-4. He holds that this text must be treated in light of the preceding passage where there is a person struggling with his/her indwelling sin. He is confident that the person in this text is the regenerate who is godly and in Christ. He grieves for his miserable condition beset with sin on the one hand, but on the other hand he gives thanks to God for deliverance “from the power of sin at last” and also for the freedom from guilt and condemnation of sin “at present.” His conclusion is this: if a

---


46 For Goodwin, the image of God is a key concept by which we may understand what sanctification is. He explains that the image of God lies in two things: “A conformity or frame of spirit suited unto the things he commands and willeth” and “in having God’s glory set up in our hearts as our own utmost end, and the square and measure of all our affections and actions, … and the one to be made as co-natural to us as self-love once was.” Goodwin, *Works*, 6:152. See also Chang, “Goodwin on the Christian Life,” 227-30.

Christian who “yet serves the law of sin in a great measure, is yet a man in Christ, because in his mind he serves the law of God,” then he will not be condemned. He is free from any condemnation because he is united with Christ. But why does our union with Christ keep us from condemnation despite our indwelling sin and corruption? Goodwin’s answer is this:

(Because) 1. They are in Christ Jesus. 2. They walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. These two restrain non-condemnation to such. Their being in Christ is the true original ground why there is no condemnation to them. Though their conflict be great, and corruptions strong; yet being in Christ, and flying to him for help, there is no condemnation to them ‘who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ This is a description who these are.48

It is by both being in Christ and walking after the Spirit that believers can avoid condemnation for sin. This raises a question, however; if a believer is in Christ and yet is held captive by sin, is the believer also free from condemnation or to be condemned due to his sinful walk after the flesh? Goodwin decisively answers “no” because:

He is led captive; but there is a spirit of regeneration in him that works against his lusts, even in the midst of his captivity. A poor soul hath some weak resistances against sin, even whiles he commits it. There is a thread of the renewed nature still runs through him; he hath a pulse still, though it be but weak, and Jesus Christ knows it. There is a stream of spirit runs out against sin, and that is his walk.49

If he is a regenerate person united with Christ, there should be evidence of the work of the renewed nature, whether strong or weak, done by a spirit of regeneration, which seems identical with habitual grace, habitual principle of holiness, etc. and which were infused at regeneration. Therefore, the two prerequisites for being free from condemnation are met by union with Christ.


However, the main cause, which makes those who are in Christ to be delivered from condemnation, is Christ’s perfect holiness given through union with Christ. Goodwin pits “the law of the Spirit of life” against inherent corruption because it is perfect holiness in Christ. Because the function of the law is to justify or condemn people, the law belonging to the covenant of works condemned them; whereas, the law of the Spirit of life has “a right and authority” to quicken them. Thus, Goodwin concludes that “such a perfect holiness in Christ, which being mine by my union with him, frees me from the law and power of sin and death.” Goodwin reaffirms it, saying “the holiness that is in Christ’s nature takes away the condemning power of original corruption in us.”

Given that this passage focuses on the freedom of believers from condemnation, the main theme of this text should be the doctrine of justification. But Goodwin understands freedom from the condemning power of sin and death as based forensically on the believer’s holiness communicated from Christ by union with Him. So, this text also reflects a forensic or judicial element of sanctification. In addition, considering all believers who have received Christ’s perfect holiness by union with Him, as those who “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,” Goodwin does not forget also to shed light on the ongoing, progressive aspect of sanctification.

Actually, what is happening here is that Goodwin is establishing two aspects of sanctification, one forensic, parallel to justification, the other actual, as a progress in life. However, it is true that all this sounds like sanctification or holiness in us is the cause of

---

our justification. It is partly true because the priority of sanctification over justification established in this discussion is not applicable to ongoing, progressive, actual sanctification, but only to the definitive sense of sanctification as was demonstrated earlier in our discussion about the relationship between justification and sanctification in Goodwin’s thought. Holiness we receive from Christ by union bears basically a forensic meaning, since it “takes away the condemning power of original corruption in us.” In addition, Goodwin explicitly writes that “what is said between ver. 1 and ver. 5 (of Rom.) is meant of justification.” But it also has an aspect of real change in us inasmuch as Goodwin writes that “the law of the Spirit of life,” which is identical with “the inherent holiness of Christ,” is given us by union with Christ and that “from the writing of the law” in our hearts flows our delight to do God’s will. Thus, the law of the Spirit of life is evidence of an actual change in us, by and from which we start to walk after the Spirit. Therefore, by union with Christ we get two distinct benefits – the forensic justification as represented by freedom from condemnation and a definitive sense of sanctification as the beginning of actual sanctification, which will enable us to walk after the Spirit. All taken together, Goodwin concludes that from this holiness given from Christ by union with Him not only flows our justification, but also grows our actual, ongoing

53 Goodwin, Works, 5:351.

54 Goodwin, Works, 5:350.


56 Cf. Chang, “Christian Life,” 232-37. Chang argues in his dissertation that Goodwin clearly teaches “definitive sanctification” suggested by John Murray. He holds that Goodwin’s concept of inceptive mortification and vivification is particularly related to Murray’s idea of definitive sanctification because the former destroys inherent corruption and the latter called “habitual holiness” dyes our heart anew and changes it so that this inceptive mortification and vivification “makes a decisive and irreversible cleavage with inherent corruption in the beginning of a Christian life.”
sanctification by virtue of the work of the Spirit through our faith.

Lastly, faith also plays an essential role in the process of sanctification. Given Goodwin’s deep concern with the habitual grace, or the infused principles of new life, and with the union with Christ as the source of all soteriological benefits, his emphasis on the instrumental role of faith can be naturally expected because, as we already demonstrated, Goodwin holds that among the principles of new life is the principle of faith and the union with Christ is completed by our faith. We will discuss this topic in more detail later.

**7.1.3.2. Sanctification and Regeneration**

As examined earlier, Calvin used the term, “regeneration,” not simply to refer to an event coming after justification, but he identified regeneration with the whole life of a believer from the beginning of the conception of a new life to the end of life.\(^\text{57}\) Although Reformed orthodoxy in the seventeenth century developed and specified the notion of regeneration in Calvin’s theology, we can find this term was not always sharply distinguished from sanctification in Goodwin’s theology.\(^\text{58}\) More often than he identifies one with the other, however, Goodwin emphasizes a continuity in their nature. He presents a doctrine related to it:

*Doct.* That over and above exciting, and moving, and aiding grace unto acts, there are inwrought and infused in the soul at regeneration, inherent and abiding principles of spiritual life, by which the soul is inwardly fitted, capacitated,

\(^{57}\) Calvin, *Institutes*, III, 3, ix.

\(^{58}\) In our earlier treatment of the three notions of regeneration, it was demonstrated that Goodwin used the term “regeneration” in a threefold meaning, the broadest meaning of which includes “conviction of sin, humiliation for it, faith on Jesus Christ, sanctification, or amendment of heart and life.” See Goodwin, *Works*, 6:359.
inclined, and quickened unto the operations of a spiritual life.\(^{59}\)

In this passage, given “the operations of a spiritual life” refers to sanctification, Goodwin holds that in order for a soul both to turn to God and to live a spiritual life, the soul need more than exciting, assisting grace as argued by Bellarmine. What is required for sanctified life is the inherent and abiding principles of spiritual life, which are implanted in the soul at regeneration. Thus, regeneration can be considered to be the starting point of sanctification. Owen agrees with Goodwin on this matter as evidenced by his explanation on the relationship between regeneration and sanctification:

> The Holy Ghost is the *immediate author* and cause of this work of regeneration. And herein again, as I suppose, we have in general the consent of all. Nothing is more in words acknowledged than that all the elect of God are sanctified by the Holy Ghost. And this regeneration is the head, fountain, or beginning of our sanctification, virtually comprising the whole in itself, as will afterward appear.\(^{60}\)

After attributing both regeneration and sanctification to the work of the Holy Spirit, Owen confirms that regeneration is the beginning of sanctification. He even seems willing to identify regeneration with sanctification. But he immediately adds that regeneration “is a part thereof is not to be denied.”\(^{61}\) Like Goodwin, therefore, Owen also does not always sharply distinguish regeneration from sanctification, but acknowledges strong continuity between the two to the extent that he identifies the one


\(^{60}\) Owen, *Works*, 3:299.

\(^{61}\) Owen, *Works*, 3:299. Owen differentiates regeneration and sanctification in terms of whether it is instantaneous or progressive. Owen puts it this way: “This work of sanctification differs from that of regeneration, as on other accounts, so especially on that of the manner of their being wrought. The work of regeneration is instantaneous, consisting in one single creating act. Hence it is not capable of degrees in any subject. No one is more or less regenerate than another; every one in the world is absolutely so, or not so, and that equally, although there are degrees in their state on other reasons. But this work of sanctification is progressive, and admits of degrees. One may be more sanctified and more holy than another, who is yet truly sanctified and truly holy. It is begun at once, and carried on gradually.” *Works*, 3:387.
with the other. Regarding the principle that is infused at regeneration and leads to sanctification, Owen comments in exactly the same manner as Goodwin does, saying:

that power which we have and do exercise in the progress of this work, in sanctification and holiness, proceeds from the infused principle which we receive in our regeneration.⁶²

The evidence of the continuity between regeneration and sanctification is also found in the Savoy Declaration. The Declaration defines sanctification as follows: “They that are united to Christ, effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, are also further sanctified really and personally through the same virtue.”⁶³ Those who have a new heart and a new spirit – Goodwin’s inherent principles of a spiritual life – at regeneration are not newly sanctified, but further sanctified. In other words, because regeneration also has the notion of sanctification, the authors of the Declaration could use the comparative “further,” which compares things that have the same nature, but a different degree. But this does not mean that Goodwin and Owen, who are the main authors of the Declaration, do not make any distinction between the two benefits. Both of them generally limit regeneration to the beginning act of sanctification and regard it as a once-and-for-all act of the Spirit; whereas, sanctification is more often rendered by them as a progressive act. For Goodwin, therefore, regeneration means the infusion of the inherent principles of a spiritual life, or habitual grace, but sanctification is “the operations of a spiritual life” given as the result of the principles working in us.

What then do these inherent principles of a spiritual life mean? These principles

---


⁶³ Savoy Declaration, 13, 1.
are infused at regeneration and “required for man’s acting holily, and for the pleasing
God by good works.” Goodwin continues to say,

in our regeneration, from the first acts to the last, and so throughout our lives,
there are infused supernatural principles of life and grace, which remain and are
inherent in us; and so the works thereof, nay, the workings of grace in us, are not
merely from motions and excitations of the Holy Spirit in us.

These principles are not a driving force, which gets the vehicle of sanctification first
moved and then disappears, but remains in us continually supplying it with fuel so that
we may be more and more conformed to the image of God. Marshall also comments on
the necessity of “several Qualifications and Endowments that are necessary to make up
that Holy Frame and State of the Soul.” He then enumerates four endowments for us to
obey God’s Word, one of which is “an Inclination and Propensity of the Heart to the
Duties of the law” and then argues that “God restores his People to Holiness, by giving
them, a new heart, a new spirit, and taking away the heart of stone out of their flesh, and
giving them an heart of flesh … And he circumsiceth their heart to love him with their
whole heart and Soul.”

Regeneration or the infusion of these principles in a soul does not simply mean
that the soul has an inherent ability to sanctify itself together with the Spirit’s work. By
regeneration we are “transplanted from a state of sin and wrath into a state of grace.”

This is the definitive, once-and-for-all change of our state. We cannot be partly

---

64 Goodwin, *Works*, 6:188.
regenerated nor can we be partly transferred to the realm of holiness. Although our actual holiness is not perfect yet, regeneration brings about a perfect holiness for its kind.\(^6^9\)

Goodwin attributes this perfect holiness to union with Christ. The reason why “there is no condemnation to those in Christ, notwithstanding all the remaining corruptions that are in him,” is because “there is such a perfect holiness in Christ, which being mine by my union with him, frees me from the law and power of sin and death.”\(^7^0\) Given that regeneration includes the principle of faith and that union with Christ is completed by that faith, it may be said that regeneration grants us a perfect holiness. Goodwin further evidences it by arguing that:

habitual holiness, and all the principles of holiness. I have shewn afore that they are wholly of his operation, and this our baptism (which is the seal of regeneration, or of the new creature) doth signify in a special manner. The letter of that word Βάπτω imports not simply to wash, or to be washed, but to be dyed also. It is also taken from the dyer’s vat, into which what clothes are dipped they carry away in them a new habitual tincture. The Holy Ghost takes a man’s heart, and dyes it anew, changeth it. As a cloth goes into the vat of one colour and comes out of it of another, ‘so is he who is born of the Spirit:’ he goes wholly flesh, comes out spirit in a good degree, ‘which two are contrary,’ Gal. 5.\(^7^1\)

Baptism, which signifies habitual holiness in the principles of a spiritual life infused at regeneration, does not only signify the temporal washing away of our present sins, but the dyeing of our soul with holiness. In this sense, the infusion of habitual holiness in us needs to be distinguished from sanctification by degrees, or progressive sanctification, making an eternal departure from our state under sin and the wrath of God. Therefore, this perspective on regeneration shares much with Murray’s definitive sanctification in

---


\(^7^0\) Goodwin, *Works*, 5:351.

\(^7^1\) Goodwin, *Works*, 6:29.
comparison to the progressive aspect of sanctification.

7.1.3.3. Sanctification and Justification

As a way to approach another aspect of sanctification in Goodwin’s thought, it would be worthwhile discussing the relationship between sanctification and justification. Goodwin almost always places justification before sanctification in his discussion of spiritual blessings that come out of the covenant of grace. In addition, he explicitly prioritizes justification over sanctification. When the unregenerate, who broke the least of God’s law in the covenant of works and still stood under the same covenant, are by God’s law dead in sins, Goodwin argues, sin has “two evils in it: there is the guilt of sin, and there is the power of sin,” and in both respects “a man in his natural estate is dead in sin.”

Corresponding to the concept of double death, he presents the double life given to the elect:

> so there is a double life we are restored unto by Christ. There is, first, a *life of justification* from the death of guilt, which is called a ‘passing from death to life;’ which is a greater change upon a man, (not a change in a man,) in respect of his estate, than for a man condemned to die to receive a pardon, that you may say now he is a living man, whereas before he was a dead man. And, secondly, there is a *life of sanctification*, a spiritual life.

Forensic justification changes our status from the guilty to the righteous, and then transformational sanctification follows, being “opposed to the power of sin and the death that the power of sin bringeth.”

---

sanctification in Goodwin thought.

It does not seem, however, that Goodwin always places justification prior to sanctification in either logical or chronological order. He acknowledges that sanctification could possibly be regarded as preceding, or at least simultaneous with, justification. Goodwin deals with this issue through his exposition on 1 Peter 1:2, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ.” Goodwin asserts that election “is not vocation in time,” but was made from everlasting “not according to foreknowledge of our sanctification, but according to foreknowledge in and through sanctification.”76 This means that our election is not based on our holiness, but on foreknowledge of “our persons, abstracted from all condition, joined with importing special love and dearest affection.”77 Accordingly, Goodwin attributes salvation to “express God’s knowledge of us with special love and regard.”78 But he confesses that the difficulty lies in the interpretation of the order for those benefiting from the election of God the Father. According as set in order, he states, it seems that “sanctification, whereby is meant the working of all the principles of habitual grace by the Spirit, should be the first and immediate medium of election,” and then “unto obedience and sprinkling of Christ’s blood” comes in as the immediate consequents of that sanctification.”79 But this may look contradictory. How can sanctification follow on the obedience or particularly

76 Goodwin, Works, 7:536.
77 Goodwin, Works, 7:536.
78 Goodwin, Works, 7:536.
79 Goodwin, Works, 7:536.
justification, which is signified by the “sprinkling of Christ’s blood”? Goodwin’s preferred answer does not focus on resolving this problem. Goodwin regards “sanctification of the Spirit” as “habitual sanctification in the heart” in which is included progressive, “actual sanctification in the life.” In addition, he considers justifying faith “as the act, under the name of obedience and Christ’s blood as the object thereof, and the sprinkling or application of it by the Spirit upon that act of obedience.”80 In other words, identifying “obedience” with the act of believing Christ’s redemption, Goodwin subsumes “obedience” and “the sprinkling of the blood of Christ” under justification.81 He opines, accordingly, that no causal or instrumental relationship between sanctification as habitual sanctification and justification is eminent in this text, but the primary concern of this text is that justification and sanctification are “two more eminent effects of election,” of which sanctification “is attributed more specially to the Spirit,” and justification “to faith and blood of Christ.”82 This text, therefore, is not interested in the

80 Goodwin, Works, 7:538-39, where Goodwin presents four proofs for his viewing of obedience as the act of justifying faith: “1. For, first, it is not only called ‘obedience to the faith,’ Πίστει, as Acts 6:7, in the dative case, as noting out obedience to the doctrine of faith, but it is expressly termed ὑπακοὴ πιστεως, the obedience of faith, in the genitive case, as noting out the act of faith, its being termed by way of eminency, obedience. … 2. That which confirms this interpretation, that by obedience should be meant the act of justifying faith, is that in that parallel place, 2 Thes. 2:13, we are said to be elected through sanctification, or in or unto sanctification, ‘and belief of the truth.’ Faith is joined with sanctification there when election to the medium of salvation is spoken of. … 3. And thirdly, as Paul, so Peter himself also in this chapter termeth faith obedience: ‘You have purified your souls by obeying the truth;’ and so look as Paul calls it belief of the truth, Peter terms it obeying the truth; and as Paul calls it obedience simply, so Peter here also. … 4. Fourthly, Faith as justifying is eminently called obedience in the point of justification coupled with Christ’s blood here, and the imputation of it, as the proper object of that act, and the true effect or consequent of that act, according all you have it, Rom. 3:25, God hath set forth Christ as ‘a propitiation, through faith in his blood.’”

81 See Goodwin, Works, 7:537, where Goodwin notes that there is another way to put “obedience” under the category of justification, which is suggested by “our protestant divines” including “Bishop Downam.” Goodwin also considers this view plausible. This view refers “obedience” and “the sprinkling of the blood of Christ” to the two parts of justification, “the imputation of the active and passive obedience of Christ.”

82 Goodwin, Works, 7:537.
order and relationship of them, but in showing that they are distinctive benefits from election. Beside this answer, however, Goodwin also presents another interpretation of this text in which he gives affirmation to a certain logic embedded in this interpretation.

This interpretation does not avoid, but actively tries to resolve the problem of priority between sanctification and justification by making use of the notion “habitual sanctification.” Goodwin first agrees that if “sanctification of the Spirit” refers to the definitive sense of sanctification, or habitual sanctification, and “unto obedience” is considered progressive sanctification “in our whole course to the whole will of God,” insofar as “operations are of their proper habits,” and if “the sprinkling of the blood of Christ” is identified with justification, then, as just mentioned, one cannot but ask the question, “how the sprinkling of the blood of Christ should be the consequent of sanctification?” He also acknowledges that this logic is then in contrast to “the received opinion” about the order between justification and sanctification, since 1 Peter 1:2 actually means, according to this logic, that “justification should rather be the medium of sanctification, and in order to go afore it.” How is it possible to get around this seemingly contradictory problem?

It is natural that progressive sanctification, expressed as “obedience” in the text, proceeds from habitual sanctification, since habitual sanctification is the principle and fountainhead of progressive, ongoing sanctification as demonstrated above. There is no conflict in the order of two kinds of sanctification, holds Goodwin. The problem is the priority given to sanctification over justification. Goodwin explains his own view on this

83 Goodwin, Works, 7:536.

84 Goodwin, Works, 7:536.
issue as follows:

Now yet this might stand, if as learned Mr Pemble and others assert, sanctification doth, in order of nature, precede justification, and which to me seems not remote from truth, or prejudicial to the grace of justification at all, and withal consonant to right reason, for if (as all grant) justification be upon an act of faith on Christ for justification, and that not until then we are justified, as all do and must acknowledge that hold justification by faith, according to the Scriptures, and that an act of faith must proceed from a principle of faith habitually wrought, then necessarily sanctification, taking it for the principles of habitual sanctification, must be in order of nature afore justification; for the seed and principle of faith is a part, and a principal part, of regeneration or sanctification, as taken in that sense, for the working the principles of all grace, and so is agreeable to that order and chain, Rom. 8:29, where ‘called’ is put before being ‘justified,’ as predestination is put before being called, understanding calling, of the working the principles of regeneration.  

Given that at regeneration the Spirit infuses the inherent principles of a spiritual life, including both habitual sanctification and the principle of faith, Goodwin is not opposed to the idea that sanctification can precede justification because justifying faith or “an act of faith must proceed from a principle of faith habitually wrought,” since “for the seed and principle of faith is a part, and a principal part, of regeneration” or habitual sanctification. He goes on to argue that this order is supported by Rom. 8:29 where calling, identical with the working principle of regeneration, is put before being ‘justified’ To sum up, although Goodwin does not choose this interpretation as the best understanding of 1 Peter 1:2 because his view on the first two of the three elements, “sanctification of the Spirit,” and “obedience,” is different from that of this interpretation, nevertheless, he does not reject the relationship, adopted in this interpretation, between habitual sanctification, progressive sanctification, and justification. Moreover, he

---

85 Goodwin, Works, 7:537.
86 Goodwin, Works, 7:357.
87 Goodwin, Works, 7:357.
acknowledges that justification, the result of an act of faith, may or may not precede sanctification according to whether sanctification represents a habitual sanctification, which includes the principle of faith, or ongoing sanctification.

7.1.4. Sanctification, Good Works, and Faith

One of the most common mistakes many believers have made would be confusing sanctification with good works. They so readily identify the one with the other that they tend to find the assurance of their justification by looking primarily to their external behavior conforming to the law. Although good works are closely related to our sanctification and could be regarded as a secondary evidence of our justification, Goodwin seems to make a distinction between sanctification itself and good works.

The Savoy Declaration deals with sanctification in chapter 13 and with good works in chapter 16. Sanctification is an ongoing process of growing in holiness, which begins from habitual grace and continues by “his (Christ’s) Word and Spirit dwelling in” those united with Christ.88 Whereas, good works are external behavior done in obedience to God’s commandments. Thus, if sanctification refers to the state of a believer, good works are the external effects that reflect the sanctified state of the believer. In Goodwin’s perspective on works, he makes a distinction between sanctification and good works. “[W]e are saved through faith” because God “gives us the present right” and “doth then give as a judge, when we believe, before faith hath done a whit of work else,” maintains Goodwin. Whereas, we are led “to the possession of salvation” “through

88 The Declaration, 13, 1.
sanctification and good works.”

He also encourages us to consider that “God hath chosen us unto holiness, and unto good works.”

Goodwin’s doctrine of sanctification is drawn from diverse texts of Scripture, but with regard to the nature of sanctification it may be helpful to read his exposition on Phil. 1:9-11. He accepts this text as Paul’s prayer “for holiness, and the increase of it.” For him, sanctification is the increase of holiness by “such graces and dispositions as are the inward springs, or primary essential principles.” Goodwin reduces “that which concerning holiness” for which Paul prays into four heads:

I. Such graces and dispositions as are the inward springs, or primary essential principles, of holiness, which are three: 1. Love; 2. Knowledge; 3. Sense.

II. The next immediate consequents of these; the next streams from these in their inward man are, that in their judgments (which is τὸ ἦγεμονικὸν of all both holy affections and actions) they might, 1. ‘Approve of things most excellent;’ 2. ‘Discern things different;’ the words import either; 3. That in their hearts they might be ‘sincere.’ These are inward.

III. The third thing which the apostle prays for is, that holiness be perfectly, and all sorts of ways, held forth in their lives.

IV. The fourth and last thing is, the extent and continuance of this holiness for the time of it. It is to be found in them, ‘in the day of Christ,’ or ‘until the day of Christ.’

Here are mentioned three principles God infused for sanctification at regeneration. All these three are “the inward springs of true holiness.” They are springs because love flows

---


91 “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.” Phil. 1:9-11.


from the spring of love ceaselessly and abundantly. Goodwin also explains why love is first mentioned, for it is love that “incites us to holiness and obedience” and “holiness arises from love.” 95 He then adds knowledge and senses to this love, all of which constitute “a principle of holiness” in the heart. Goodwin then presents “the inward fruits and effects that flow from a principle of holiness, and do constitute and form such an habitual frame of spirit as may practically fit a man to walk holily.” 96 This principle of holiness bears two fruits, the first of which is brought forth in understanding so that the regenerate may “discern upon all occasions the difference of things and choose and approve what is best;” whereas, the other fruit works in the heart and thus has a sincerity, which is able to “incline and direct a man in his way, to keep him so as not to turn to the right hand or the left, and to preserve him from stumbling and falling from his course.” 97 All these are inward movements and may be referred to as sanctification proper. The meaning of the next step, “holiness (should) be perfectly … held forth in their lives,” is closely related to the phrase “without offence” in Phil. 1:10. Goodwin interprets the sentence including “without offence” as “that I might not sin against light in my inward converse before God, or outward before men, grossly and willingly against light.” 98 Therefore, this step is all about righteousness and sin either inward or outward. In particular, good works are related to the outward acts in response to God’s commandments. The fourth and last thing about our sanctification for which Paul prays is

95 Goodwin, Works, 7:133.
96 Goodwin, Works, 7:139.
97 Goodwin, Works, 7:139.
98 Goodwin, Works, 7:146.
the continuation of our sanctification in being filled with the fruit of righteousness, as well as without offence, until the day of Christ.\textsuperscript{99} So the doctrine of perseverance is deeply connected with it. The last two things, including good works, asked in Paul’s prayer, are the fruit of the inward principle of holiness and its inward effect. In this sense, Goodwin calls sanctification “the writing in the heart.”\textsuperscript{100} In summary, as Goodwin writes at another place, “it is holiness that makes us fit to live with the Holy God for ever.”\textsuperscript{101} Nevertheless, although Goodwin sometimes distinguishes, not separates, sanctification, as the inward principle of holiness, from good works in that sanctification itself is not precisely identical with good works, sanctification refers generally to a notion that includes good works. In other words, good works are included in the broader sense of sanctification as a necessary element.

Marshall also similarly makes a distinction between sanctification itself and good works as its fruit. He defines sanctification as “a Grace of God” “by which our Hearts and Lives are conformed to the Law.”\textsuperscript{102} Sanctification is here mentioned as the cause of our external good works. Owen defines sanctification as “an immediate work of the Spirit of God on the souls of believers, purifying and cleansing of their natures from the pollution and uncleanness of sin, renewing in them the image of God, and thereby enabling them, from a spiritual and habitual principle of grace, to yield obedience unto

\textsuperscript{99} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:150.

\textsuperscript{100} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:230. Goodwin’s understanding of sanctification as an inward movement prepared for external good works, may be reaffirmed by this statement: “the work of sanctification is a work framing and casting the heart itself into the word of God (as metals use to be in a mould); so that the heart is made of the same stamp and disposition with the word.” \textit{Works}, 6:392.

\textsuperscript{101} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:240.

God, according unto the tenor and terms of the new covenant.” Sanctification is also considered to be “the act of the Spirit,” which makes the inner state of believers capable of doing good works by conforming to the law in a way that the covenant of grace requires them to do. But both Marshall and Owen equally emphasize the necessity of good works as the result of sanctification.

How can this internal principle of holiness bring forth those external good works, that is, external obedience to the law of God? For this, we need to return to the Savoy Declaration again. What it places between sanctification and such fruit of sanctification as repentance and good works is saving faith. This undoubtedly implies that faith is somehow related to sanctification. Interestingly, the topic of saving faith is not treated in relation to justification by being placed before or after the chapter of justification, but rather as an element connected with sanctification, being treated right after this topic. It seems that although acknowledging the instrumentality of faith for justification, nonetheless the authors including Goodwin are willing to emphasize the fact that justification is purely God’s gracious work excluding any merit from human works even if it is faith. This opinion becomes more plausible as can be seen in the Declaration denying any possibility of human merit by confirming that God freely justifies not “by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to” those who God effectually called. It seems that for the same reason, the authors do not place repentance prior to justification, but treat it after sanctification as an element of sanctification. Therefore, the Declaration first presents the inward principle of holiness

103 Owen, Works, 3:386.
104 The Declaration, 11, 1.
under the title “Of Sanctification” and then deals with faith as a means by which a believer “acteth differently upon that which each particular passage” of the Word contains. Faith leads the Christian to yield “obedience to the commands,” to tremble “at the threatening,” and to embrace “the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come.”

This faith is called saving faith because faith for justification and faith for sanctification are the same faith.

In Goodwin’s work, a similar view can also be found on the relationship between faith and good works. Goodwin claims that not all external good works testify of our true sanctification in that the unregenerate can also do good works as “the work of the law written in the heart by nature.”

He opines that Paul reduces Christianity to credenda and agenda. Faith is “the principium credendorum, the principle of things to be believed,” and conscience is “the principium agendorum, the principle of things to be done by us.” Goodwin gives us some more information about these two concepts:

Faith looks upward to the things of the gospel, and takes in all supernatural truths, with application to a man’s soul. Conscience looks both inward, to our own actings within; and outward, to the law or rule which is to guide us. And it also is the spring to all the wheels, and the mover in all provocations to duties, or avocations from sins.

True faith is “a supernatural grace” given by God; whereas, conscience “is in every man by nature” under the law and the covenant of works. But true piety including good works derives from good conscience affected by true faith. What matters for our true and inherent holiness depends on which is the predominant principle in the heart between

---

105 The Declaration, 14, 2.

106 Goodwin, Works, 6:231.

107 Goodwin, Works, 6:232.
faith and conscience. If faith is predominant, conscience would be good in distinction from natural conscience and our inward and outward acts would also turn out genuine. But in case natural conscience is the predominant principle in us, our acts originated from that conscience would also be the counterfeit of the truth. Goodwin in this sense holds that faith frames the heart.

As mentioned earlier, faith and sanctification are a necessary means to salvation, so they must go together. Goodwin in many places reaffirms this truth. He asserts that:

> What God has joined, as here Paul saith, let no man put asunder,—saints and believers,—neither really in our own hearts and lives, nor in our judgments either of ourselves or others. Do not think this enough, that they are true believers; that is, that they make a profession of the doctrine of faith; but see that further they hold forth a work of faith wrought by that doctrine; and not only so, but do approve themselves faithful (as here) in that profession, (as Lydia said, ‘If ye have judged me faithful,’) and that they add evidences of saintship, they must be saints too; saith he, were ‘saints and faithful.’ It is not a profession of faith joined with morality, and no grand scandal, but a profession of such a strictness as will rise to holiness, that you are to judge men saints by.

All this passage repeatedly emphasizes is the inseparability between faith and good works. Goodwin even says that “sanctification is nothing else but faith in the mind, having suitable affections thereunto in the whole heart.” Saints are believers and believers are saints. Never can these two terms be separated. Goodwin, however, encourages us to scrutinize our holiness so that we may “not look upon legal holiness” in ourselves “as a sign or mark of a good estate.” What we must make sure is that that

---

108 See Goodwin, *Works*, 6:232. With regard to the relationship between faith and conscience, Goodwin puts it this way: “Again, all men’s conditions falling to be either under the covenant of works, or the covenant of grace, hence all that are enlightened and carried on with any powerful effects in the profession of religion, are either acted therein by conscience, as the predominant principle, which is the seat of the dominion of the law and covenant of works; or by faith, which is the inlet or receptive of the dominion of grace.”


holiness flows from “a work of faith distinctly working toward the Lord Jesus Christ” and that our hearts are “drawn out to him, as much and more than ever, after holiness.”

If true faith and good conscience affected by true faith bring forth genuine sanctification, and if faith and sanctification are linked with an inseparable relationship, how does this relation work? Goodwin answers this question this way:

The very law and nature of faith, if it be genuine, hath this seed and principle in it, which I say is naturally and essentially an ingredient in it, that it will make thee to say, as the apostle himself cries out in Rom. 6:2, 3, &c. How shall I then live in that which Jesus Christ died for? Do I come for every part of Christ’s obedience to be counted mine? Certainly then the very law of faith frames the heart to this, to conform myself to that obedience of his, to apply myself thereto. The law of faith seminally doth all this, and it is not only in the case of assurance of the love of God, but in the case of depending upon the love of God; not only in the case of assurance that Christ died for me, but in depending upon this, that Christ died for me. Thus faith hath a thousand ways whereby it sanctifies the heart, by going to Christ for virtue, by looking to the example of Christ, by looking to its oneness with Christ, and the like; but the truth is this, that that which we call sanctification (or call it what you will), is contained seminally in the very law of faith, when it is actually drawn out and exercised. You call it repentance, and sanctification, and the like, but seminally it lies in believing, and in the very law of believing, if it be faith unfeigned, if it be a true and genuine act of faith, which I take it is the reason why all is ascribed to believing.

What is repeatedly emphasized in the passage is “the law of faith” and its functions. We will not discuss here about the law of faith in detail, but only briefly touch upon it because it will be treated in the next chapter. The law of faith implies some principles and functions included in true faith, particularly related here with sanctification. Faith is not a mere psychological or mental movement in us, which is caused and stirred by internal or external stimuli, but a certain principle acting according to its given nature after being infused in the form of a seed by the Spirit. In other words, faith plays the role of framing

\[111\] Goodwin, Works, 1:13.

\[112\] Goodwin, Works, 8:319.
and fitting the heart to obey God’s law. He puts this in a similar manner in another place, holding that “repentance and sanctification, take the acts of it, they are all seminally included in faith, and flow from it.”

Goodwin holds that this law of faith also has a function that takes the “whole Jesus Christ, and gives up his whole soul to him, to be ruled and disposed by him forever.” In apprehending Christ for justification, “the law of faith” leads the soul both to “apply itself to all” that is “in and of Christ” and to give up “the whole soul to God and to Jesus Christ.” To put it another way, when we are united with Christ by faith, a special interchange takes place between Christ and us: sharing in all that belongs to Christ giving up ourselves to follow Him. True believers are sanctified by their mystical union with Christ because they partake in the perfect holiness of His nature through the union with Him.

Although sanctification and good works are the fruit brought forth by such gracious acts of God as union with Christ, the work of the Spirit, the infused principle of sanctification, and faith, Goodwin never make us mere passive receivers as evidenced by his comments on mortification:

1. That purging here intended, which is indeed all one with mortification, and emptying out sin out of our hearts and lives, is to be restrained here to the progress of a Christian in that work, and not as taking in with it that first work of mortification wrought at a man’s first conversion; …

3. In this work of mortification, considered thus in the progress of it, we are not mere passives,—as at that final perfecting and finishing of it, and carrying away all sin at death we are, and are at that first habitual beginning of it, at conversion,—

---

113 Goodwin, Works, 8:319.
114 Goodwin, Works, 8:327.
115 Goodwin, Works, 8:320.
but therein we are ‘workers together with God.’\textsuperscript{116}

There is no doubt that there is nothing we can do for habitual holiness to be infused in us at regeneration. But when it comes to progressive sanctification, we work together with God not as if “the pruning-hook cuts off branches from a tree, or as if a surgeon cuts out dead flesh,” but God cooperates with us for sanctification “by stirring up our graces, and quickening them, and by setting our thoughts, and faith, and affections a-work.”\textsuperscript{117} God purges us daily not without any means, but with such means as “his word, and afflictions, and the like.” Goodwin thus asserts that “[i]t is certain, that unless our thoughts work upon the means, as well as the means work upon us, and so do mingle themselves with those means; that unless faith and Christ’s death be mingled in the heart, it purgeth not.”\textsuperscript{118} Without our movements through faith, no sin or corruption can be purged from us in the course of progressive sanctification. Therefore, sanctification is the cooperation of God and believers because “God still, in going on to purge us, doth it by stirring up our graces, and useth therein acts of our faith, and love, and many motives and considerations, to stir up our graces so to effect it.”\textsuperscript{119}

7.2. Perseverance of the Saints

7.2.1. Reformed Orthodoxy and the Doctrine of Perseverance of Saints

As Jay T. Collier has indicated, the doctrine of perseverance of the saints has long been

\textsuperscript{116} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:474–475.

\textsuperscript{117} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:475.

\textsuperscript{118} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:475.

\textsuperscript{119} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:475.
neglected as a distinctive doctrine of Reformed theology. He argues that although much of the scholarship has paid much attention to the doctrines of “election and predestination” as Reformed distinctives, and that these doctrines are worth receiving considerable attention for their significance in Reformed theology, they can hardly be characterized as Reformed distinctives if a distinctive means “something that sets one thing apart from all others” because they are also found “throughout the course of church history” as well as “during the Reformation and post-Reformation eras in distinctly non-Reformed communions.”

Of the five heads set forth at the synod of Dort, Collier instead suggests the doctrine of perseverance of the saints as the only doctrine taking on “a distinctive nature of its own.” Beeke and Jones similarly consider this doctrine to be “one of the cardinal truths of Reformed soteriology.” Nevertheless, this doctrine did not receive widespread confessional status until the Synod of Dort.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there were several controversies over the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. To narrow it down in the Protestant

---


122 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 601.

123 Collier, “Uneasy Reception,” 11. Collier briefly describes many sixteenth and seventeenth-century confessional documents and how they deal with the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints in each of them. Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, Faith and Perseverance (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), 19-36. He acknowledges that it is the Canons of Dort which “speak the most explicitly about perseverance,” but exhorts us to “consider the other confessions, because they, too, though incidentally and only in connection with the assurance of salvation, clearly echo its fundamental tone.” Berkouwer goes on to analyze some of the sixteenth and seventeenth Reformed confessions with a focus on the three forms of unity.

124 Cf. Berkouwer, Faith and Perseverance, 39. Berkouwer presents three major controversies over this doctrine. He writes, “First, the controversy with the Remonstrants, which resulted in the formulation of the doctrine of perseverance in Article V of the Canons of Dort. Second, the Reformed doctrine of perseverance was opposed by the Roman Catholic doctrine that grace can be lost. And, finally,
church, there were two eminent public controversies on the same doctrine. One was a controversy between the Remonstrants and Reformed orthodox theologians and the other was between the Reformed orthodox and the Lutherans. In 1610, the followers of Arminius drew up the Five Articles of Remonstrance. It was reviewed by the Dutch National Synod held in Dort by the government and the Synod also produced the Canons of Dort, which refuted each of the five points of Remonstrance. The Remonstrants asserted in the fifth article, “But whether they are capable, through negligence, of forsaking again the first beginnings of their life in Christ, of again returning to this present evil world, of turning away from the holy doctrine which was delivered them, of losing a good conscience, of becoming devoid of grace, that must be more particularly determined out of the Holy Scriptures before they can teach it with the full persuasion of their minds.”

They simply blurred any certainty of our salvation and went on to make “the perseverance of believers dependent on their will to believe and on their good works.” Refuting this view, the Canons argues, “But God is faithful, mercifully strengthening them in the grace once conferred on them and powerfully preserving them in it to the end.”

Berkouwer points out that the theologians of the Reformation, whether Reformed or Lutheran, lined up solidly behind the *sola fide*, although standing on different sides of this doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Interestingly, unlike the Remonstrants and

________________________

we must consider the rather unique controversy between Lutherans and Reformed.”

125 *The Five Articles of the Remonstrants*, art. V.


127 *Canons of Dort*, V, art. 3.
Roman Catholic theologians who thought that “perseverance and assurance were not to be separated from one another,” the Lutherans acknowledged the assurance of salvation on the one hand, but rejected perseverance on the other. The Lutherans were concerned that the Reformed doctrine of the perseverance of the saints had “the acute danger of a speculative doctrine of election, in which Christians, proceeding from the unchangeable decree of election, would reason logically to the inalienability of grace.” Therefore, they feared, Berkouwer argues, that “the way of salvation, which was the way of consolation through the gospel, would be weakened.”

If limiting our scope to English soil, the first to be seen would be the famous controversy over the Lambeth Articles, particularly Article 5, which is on perseverance. This debate was not suddenly kindled and inflamed at the time of the Lambeth Articles were drew up in 1595, but its context was set by some debates at Cambridge University. In the early 1590s, there was a boisterous dispute between two Cambridge

128 Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, 55-56. Lutheran theology affirms that sinners can be saved by faith alone which is given only by God (*The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord*, III, 11) and that the elect will arrive at the final salvation (*The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord*, XI, 22). But this does not necessarily mean that those who are once justified by faith, not the elect, never lose the Spirit of God, or their faith (*The Augsburg Confession*, XII, 7) or must persevere in faith to the end. Rather, they teach a seemingly paradoxical assertion that while theoretically faith that can be granted only by God’s grace may be rejected by the justified, at the same time those who have saving faith can have assurance of salvation with unwavering confidence that they have been included in God’s gracious election to salvation (Heinrich Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Verified from the Original Sources*, trans. Charles A. Hay and Henry E. Jacobs [Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1899], 412). For more information about the Lutheran understanding of the relationship between faith, election, and final salvation, see Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, 270-292.

129 Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, 56-57. In this book, Berkouwer presents Marbach’s sharp criticism on Zanchi’s Reformed view of the doctrine of perseverance as the typical Lutheran position towards the Reformed doctrine of perseverance. Marbach’s view appeared in the debate between himself and Zanchi and was well summarized in the *Formular of Concord*, XI, 12.

130 Berkouwer, *Faith and Perseverance*, 57.

131 See Collier, “Uneasy Reception,” 14. In contrast to many scholars who “frequently refer to these articles for the importance they have regarding the doctrine of predestination,” Collier here argues that “the doctrine of perseverance played much more significantly into the debates that brought the articles
professors, William Whitaker and Peter Baro, on the issue for the possibility of the forfeiture of true justifying faith. Baro claimed that even such faith may fail, whereas Whitaker rejected this view, arguing “[T]hat Justifying Grace and Faith might not only be lost, in some finally, but even in the Elect, for a Time totaliter.”

This controversy was fueled by Barrett’s sermon vilifying the names of Calvin, Beza, Peter Martyr, and Zanchius for their conviction of God’s sovereignty expressed in His predestination. As is revealed in Barrett’s retraction, drawn up by the order of the university, his critique of those Reformed people was made more directly toward the assurance and perseverance of faith than toward the Reformed doctrine of predestination itself. However, those who suspected Barrett’s view of being anti-Reformed were not satisfied with the retractions and the conflict continued to burn at Cambridge. When Archbishop Whitgift convened a conference at Lambeth to allay the flame of controversy, they generated the Lambeth Articles, first drafted by Whitaker, then modified and finally signed by the archbishop.

Article 5 deals with the Reformed doctrine of perseverance, but Barrett rejected it. Although the Lambeth Articles focused on the doctrines of predestination and the effectual calling for some reason, the Cambridge controversy between Barrett and Whitaker, which led to the generation of the Lambeth Articles, had been more concerned

---


with the different views on the doctrine of perseverance than that of predestination.  

Lastly, we will briefly take a look at a debate between Owen and John Goodwin, an Arminian Puritan. Of many Puritan works, Owen’s *The Doctrine of the Saint’s Perseverance Explained and Confirmed* provides us with the most profound, thorough, and rigorous view of the Reformed doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. This work was written in response to the denial of God’s securing of faith in a believer. Both Owen and John Goodwin were Thomas Goodwin’s contemporaries, so the debate between them offers a succinct informational background for this study. Although John Goodwin attempted to demonstrate on various grounds that saints might possibly depart from a state of grace and finally end up with destruction, such as scriptural testimonies and those of the Reformers, Owen responded primarily to the three major objections against the Reformed doctrine of perseverance raised in Goodwin’s treatise, *Redemption Redeemed*. Goodwin questioned that if God keeps the faith of a believer unto the end of life, how could he explain those who departed from a state of grace in Scripture? Owen answered that although they looked like true believers, “they had never been true believers.” Goodwin’s second question was if all true believers persevere in grace, why

---

135 For the reason of such a shift of the emphasis from perseverance to predestination, see Collier, “Uneasy Reception,” 30.

136 The outline of the controversy between Owen and Goodwin concerning the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is indebted to the succinct summary in Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 603-607.

137 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 603.

138 Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 603.

does Scripture “urge Christian to maintain themselves in a state of grace”?\footnote{Beeke and Jones, \textit{Puritan Theology}, 605.} Owen responded first by revealing Goodwin’s failure in discerning the relationship between obligation and ability\footnote{Beeke and Jones, \textit{Puritan Theology}, 605. The authors put it this way: “Goodwin failed to see that obligation does not entail ability.”} and then concluded that “Our duty and God’s grace are nowhere opposed in the matter of sanctification, yea, the one doth absolutely suppose the other. Neither can we perform our duty herein without the grace of God; nor doth God give us this grace unto any other end but that we may rightly perform our duty.”\footnote{Owen, \textit{Works}, 3:384.} The third objection from Goodwin against perseverance was that this doctrine might promote an antimonian tendency and thus make void God’s commandments and sovereignty. Owen’s answer was simple, but scriptural: God’s preservation and the holiness of His people are not incompatible because God preserves them in holiness by keeping them from sin’s deadly power,\footnote{Owen, \textit{Works}, 11:392-93.} by encouraging their love to God,\footnote{Owen, \textit{Works}, 11:394-95.} and by strengthening their faith.\footnote{Owen, \textit{Works}, 11:398.}

\subsection*{7.2.2. God’s Preservation of All True Believers}

Thomas Goodwin wrote a significant work, \textit{Patience and Its Perfect Work}, on the doctrine of perseverance of the saints in the midst of those great calamities after he resigned from all public positions. But the concept of God’s preservation of the true believers to the end of life is also spread throughout his various works, particularly in two
works, *A Discourse of Election* and *The Heart of Christ in Heaven toward Sinners on Earth*.  

Whose work is the perseverance of the saints? Is it really the work of the believers who persevere unto the end? At the outset of *A Discourse of Election*, Goodwin makes clear that the perseverance of the saints is mainly the work of both God and Christ. He treats this topic mostly in Book IV, which is the exposition of 1 Peter 5:10. Peter, writing a letter to the saints who had faced many persecutions and afflictions, comforted them with the truth that God of all grace, who chose and called them in Christ, will keep them from falling away from God and lead them safely to glorification. Thus, he calls the participation of God and Christ in this work “the great engagement” and affirms that by such “engagement of God and Christ” “all that are truly called in and through all temptations and sufferings” are relieved and carried to glorification.  

First, it is God’s work because He is “God of all grace.” Goodwin holds that God’s engagement in our preservation is clearly revealed by the phrase, “God of all grace.” Almighty God is full of grace. God is gracious not simply in his nature, but particularly to His children who are “in point of temptations, sufferings, trials,” Goodwin argues.  

He distinguishes this grace of God toward His children into three aspects: “His purposing grace afore this world, and still continued in his heart,” His “Dispensatory grace in the world, or his gracious dealings with, and giving forth of grace to us,” and “the riches of grace that are

---


in his nature.”  

Goodwin then explains the relationship between these graces. “The grace in his nature is the fountain, the spring; the grace of his purposes is the well-head, and the grace in his dealings and dispensations are the streams.”

This rich grace in God’s nature did not work *ad intra* only, but manifested itself as divine grace, “which *in actu exercito* will supply the needs, and *de facto*, doth it.”

But the object that this grace is given to is not all people, but “us,” who are discriminately called out of grace. “[T]his discriminating grace is more conspicuously seen by those others that are called, as well as we, whom yet God leaves to fall away.” This effectual calling is the first “outward effect” of election grace and “the fountainhead of all the following acts of grace.” This insinuates the infusion of the principles of spiritual life at regeneration, from which other spiritual blessings such as sanctification and perseverance flow.

The fact that the calling of us by “God of all grace” assures us that “he will carry on all other workings which are necessary to bring us

---


152 See Goodwin, *Works*, 9: 270. Goodwin acknowledges that all people are called by God, but he makes a distinction between us, who are called out of grace, and others called out of providence. He explains the difference between the two callings: “These note a difference in the tenure of callings, the original tenure which they hold of; ours holds *in capite*, in freehold of grace; but others have theirs in copyhold of works; and but *dum bene se gesserint*, if thou dost well, thou shalt be accepted. So that *us* here, the subjects of the God of grace calling them, doth in that respect secretly imply and connotate with it, and a *not-others*, who yet have a sort of calling.


155 See Goodwin, *Works*, 9:277. Goodwin seems to refer to the *syllogismus practicus* because he argues that “every spiritual acting of grace, to the end of a man’s life, evidenceth that first work of calling to be sound and saving, and so conduceth to make a man’s calling and election sure.”
to glory.” Goodwin holds that this perfection is one that marks off the true calling from other gifts God bestows on the non-elect. In calling the elect, claims Goodwin, God of all grace does not only make them born again, but puts the principles of a new life from which all acts of grace flow. He distinguishes them into “pardon grace” and “sanctifying grace.” Pardoning grace is God’s grace that works for our justification by forgiving our sin and bestowing on us Christ’s righteousness including all His obedience, while sanctifying grace is divine, such divine grace as both mortifying sin and creating a new creature that “is wrought in the room of corruption then mortified.”

Besides God the Father, Goodwin introduces another “person engaged for preservation of us unto glory,” Jesus Christ. In addition to the securities the Father affords to faith, Goodwin claims that Christ provides us with “complete consolation.” Goodwin holds that God is a God of all grace “to us” “by Jesus Christ” because all his purposes of grace, and all his dispensations of grace, are all in and by Jesus Christ.

---

156 Goodwin, Works, 9:276.
159 Goodwin, Works, 9:309.
other words, it is when we were considered in Christ that “the very grace and love he shews us, was placed upon our persons.” Therefore, Christ is the foundation of God’s preserving us unto the end. Goodwin then proceeds to consider Christ’s Person, His relation to us, and office for us so that we may have “consolation and security” in such thoughts of Christ. Our perseverance depends on Christ both as Christ and as Jesus. As Christ, He is our head and husband, and we are His body and bride. Moreover, we were chosen to be one with Him. To put it another way, our union with Christ is “a sufficient ground for God’s bestowing all the benefits upon us in election.” God views us in Christ in such a way that “he is our head, God loves us in him, and with the same love he does him, and therefore he will love us unchangeably, and never cease so to do.” As Jesus, a Savior, argues Goodwin, He purchased both “our first calling into grace and our continuation and perseverance in it by His blood” on the one hand and on the other hand gives “us ability to strengthen us against temptations and deliverance out of them” by his sufferings. Goodwin then enumerates the five acts of Christ in his calling us, which are done for us and “have a binding force upon Christ to preserve” us: 1) His owning us, 2) taking charge of us, 3) apprehending us, 4) putting us into safe custody, and 5) interceding for us. Of these five acts, Goodwin specially focuses on the fifth act. He deals with this matter in much more detail in The Heart of Christ in Heaven. Although Christ ascended into heaven and is sitting at the right hand of God, His heart not only

165 Goodwin, Works, 9:342.
166 Goodwin, Works, 9:342.
“remains the same” as it was on earth, but He still “intercedes there with the same heart he did here below.”169 Goodwin goes on to claim that “calling is in a more eminent manner attributed to his death … yet our preservation in grace is more eminently ascribed to his life in glory after his death, and therein, unto this, which is the end and eminent fruit of that his life, his intercession.”170 With all these acts in his calling us, therefore, Christ preserves us until we safely arrive at the end of our spiritual journey.

Goodwin presents two other significant contributions Christ makes to our perseverance in grace. “[A]t, and by, and from our calling,” holds Goodwin, “we begin actually to be united to him by his Spirit, engrafted into him to the end.”171 As Christ is in His Father “inseparably, indissolubly” so that “it is impossible to pull him out of his being in the Father,” so we are in Christ and cannot be separated from Him. Therefore, as long as Christ is alive, “He that believeth on him shall never die.”172 The other contribution is that what Christ has accomplished to himself as a common person representing us should be counted to be ours due to the covenant of redemption.

Goodwin explicitly attributes the perseverance of the saints to the engagement of both the Father and Jesus Christ, whereas, the role of the Spirit in perseverance receives little attention in Goodwin’s works. It may be partly because the doctrine of perseverance of the saints substantially overlaps with the doctrine of sanctification in which the Spirit plays a main role together with the human agent. Nevertheless, Goodwin does not totally

---

169 Goodwin, Works, 4:95.
omit the part the Spirit plays for our perseverance. Since we were once justified by faith and had Christ’s righteousness imputed to us, it was the Holy Spirit who has kept it until now and will continue to keep our “heart fixedly to wait for, and hold to that righteousness alone for” our salvation.\(^\text{173}\)

But Goodwin’s view on the preservation of the triune God excludes neither temptations nor afflictions in the life of a Christian. He maintains that “God hath set down with himself a necessity of our suffering, and undergoing outward sufferings and also inward temptations to sin.”\(^\text{174}\) As Christ our head was made perfect through sufferings, albeit he does not need them, so we must go through those sufferings so that He may make us perfect, Goodwin holds. Goodwin makes clear that these are all under the control of God’s will and sovereignty which “would have our salvation carried on and accomplished … even through sufferings and temptations.”\(^\text{175}\) Therefore, God, who wisely appointed these sufferings, glorifies his own grace the more by “strengthening, recovering, and delivering us” from them.\(^\text{176}\)

In *Patience and Its Perfect Work*, Goodwin more vividly describes the nature of the perseverance of the saints in its relation to sufferings and temptations. God’s preservation manifests itself as the patience of the saints in the time of persecutions and afflictions. Given that this treatise was written in the midst of the great persecutions imposed upon nonconformists, Goodwin would certainly have written it to hearten his


fellow nonconformists, who were discouraged by serious persecutions, so that they might persevere in hope. According to his exposition on James 1:1-5, it is only Christians who are able to attain to the state in which they regard all temptations and afflictions as joy.\footnote{177 Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2:431.} Goodwin acknowledges that rejoicing in temptations and afflictions is a difficult duty. He presents two grounds or reasons believers must be patient. One is “a ground from what follows in this life;” the other is “the reward that follows in the life to come.”\footnote{178 Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2:430.} As for the former, Goodwin argues that what causes believers to rejoice in afflictions is the fact that “if patience have its perfect work, it will make us perfect Christians.”\footnote{179 Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2:432.} To put it another way, if a person is a true believer, his goal would be to become a perfect Christian, and if he regards being a perfect Christian as the ultimate goal, he could not but desire to have patience that makes the believer a perfect Christian. Goodwin then identifies patience with “the suffering the will of God in any kind.”\footnote{180 See Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 2:437 where Goodwin argues that patience has a twofold meaning. Patience first means “Doing the will of God.” He explains that this active sense of doing every good work needs our patience because “there is difficulty that accompanies every duty.” The other meaning of patience is “the suffering the will of God in any kind,” which Goodwin considers as the primary sense of patience James uses in the text.} Goodwin goes on to claim that the suffering refers not only to suffering for the gospel, but also to “mere providential accidents that have fallen upon believers,” as evidenced in the sufferings of Job.

One of Goodwin’s main tasks in this work is to define the perfect work of patience because a perfect Christian is brought forth by the perfect work of patience. Presenting four branches of the perfect work of patience, he holds that when these four
works of patience are accomplished, patience has its perfect work for the same reason that “in general, a thing then is perfect when all the parts that belong to it are finished.” The first branch is “its privative work” that expels such contrary passions and affections from believers as “inordinate grief,” “envy and passionate anger,” “inordinate fears,” “murmuring against God,” and “inordinate cares.” The second branch is seven “positive acts and workings of patience” which Goodwin enumerates from the lowest level to the higher. The third branch of patience is “the fruits of patience” that are “a holy contentment,” “self-sufficiency,” and “joy.” The last branch is “some eminent properties or adjuncts of patience, which, added, do make it and its work perfect.” He holds that when the readiness of the heart, durability, and universality are added to patience, this patience has its perfect work. Thus far, Goodwin’s view on the nature of perseverance of the saints was discussed. On the one hand, Goodwin attributes the perseverance of the saints to God’s preservation of His people, but on the other hand, he encourages believers, particularly believers in severe temptations and sufferings, to be patient and thereby to work out the perfect work of patience. There seems to be a tension between the two different aspects of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. In other words, this is the problem of whether the perseverance of the saints is the work of

181 Goodwin, Works, 2:446.
183 Goodwin, Works, 2:449-452. The seven positive acts of patience are “an act of waiting upon God,” “a waiting with quietness,” carrying “on the heart without fainting or discouragement,” submission “to God, and the will of God,” putting one’s “mouth in the dust,” “an effect, when there is no hope, as to the things and concernment of this life,” and causing “the soul to sanctify God in man’s heart.”
believers or that of God. This will be discussed in the following section.

7.2.3. Means of Preservation: Faith

If God promised believers that He would perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle them in spite of temptations and sufferings, how does God’s executive, or caring, grace actually perform this promise? As “a God of all grace” who called them and engaged to preserve them, argues Goodwin, so they have after their calling, “the same God of al grace, that careth for” them, to perform it and to make it good.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 9:409.} In this, Goodwin intends to show how God cares for believers to the completion of salvation. First, God vigilantly watches them in all their ways. He keeps His eyes on them “as if he had non else to look to in the world.”\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 9:410.} Second, He is not looking at them at a distance, but He is continually present with them just like sheep are safe when their shepherd is with them. Third, God takes them “unto sure and safe custody,” which refers to the “mighty hand” of God. He continually holds them by His hand. Even when “the saints run into evil, and go astray,” “God’s eye and care …” are “continually over them, every moment.”\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 9:412.} While believers do not sense any protecting hand of God over themselves, confirms Goodwin, “God had as strict and waking an eye over him all along as ever” and they will come in due time to realize it.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 9:412.} Thus, the experience of God’s continual care, “even during this temptation” and suffering, “becomes the greatest pawn and pledge to” the saints, assuring them that
God would preserve them forever. God cares for the bodily life and the concerns of His people, but is more concerned with “the souls of his saints in spiritual life” which “trials and such probations … do wholly respect.” But what has been examined thus far is concerning God’s acts of preserving His people. Why does Goodwin call it the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints? Perseverance is an act of humanity. This means that God’s acts of preserving them must be turned into their perseverance. In other words, God’s act of preservation must be applied to them, and the effect of that application manifests itself as their perseverance.

Goodwin is clear that this application is grounded in faith: “though the devil not only plucks the stool away, but also strikes at the hand that holds it, yet still faith cleaves to Christ, and that so as sometimes the hand is benumbed also, and feels not that it holds it.” To know what makes believers endure all temptations they are confronted with on the way to the eternal kingdom, we must see the object that the devil attempts to destroy. Goodwin repeatedly emphasizes that the object of temptations is the faith of believers. All outward distresses and hazards surrounding David “were and had been temptations to him to try his faith.” Goodwin argues that “the sense of belief of general principles and foundations of faith may be over-clouded and prevailed against by temptations to the contrary.” Moreover, faith must be tried first, which then brings up the question,

“what tries faith more than temptations…?”¹⁹⁵ Therefore, it is also faith that most strongly resists those temptations. Goodwin insists that it is by “the grace and exercise of faith” that “temptations to sin are most resisted.”¹⁹⁶ In addition to temptations, faith also helps the believers to overcome sufferings and afflictions visiting them. Goodwin notes that sufferings stagger our faith.¹⁹⁷ The reason why faith shall “be found unto praise, honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ” is that “it is faith being tried by all the afflictions.”¹⁹⁸ God’s power, however, keeps unto salvation those who are under the temptations and sufferings, but, Goodwin asserts, this power works in them “through faith.”¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, there is another enemy who ceaselessly tries to cause faith to collapse. He asserts that “Satan hath desired to winnow thee.” But Christ prays for His people in that “faith being that thing that Satan desires most to winnow.”²⁰⁰ Accordingly, as Goodwin reveals, the purpose of his writing is to “conduce to strengthen our faith in this great point of perseverance, and the engagement that God hath hereby both put and taken upon himself to carry us through to the end.”²⁰¹

The role of faith in the perseverance of saints is also found by Christ’s work sitting at the right hand of God in heaven. Goodwin holds that faith can be strengthened by the inferences from the fact that \textit{in Christ} our God is called a God of grace and of all

---


grace to us. He evinces at the outset of *The Heart of Christ in Heaven* that the purpose of writing this book is to assure poor souls that Christ’s “heart, in respect of pity and compassion, remains the same it was on earth”; that he still “intercedes there with the same heart he did here below; and that he is as meek, as gentle, as easy to be entreated,” so that they may deal with him as “fairly about the great matter of their salvation.”

Goodwin regards these truths as the most excellent comfort and encouragement “for those who have given over all other lives but that of faith.” In other words, he is writing this treatise to encourage and comfort those who are rooted in faith so that all demonstrations would help their faith. Goodwin then tries to prove true his argument about Christ’s heart toward them. He discusses the various extrinsic and outward events of Christ: “his last farewell afore his death, his resurrection, ascension, and how he is sitting at God’s right hand.” All Christ’s behaviors, statements, and prayers that Goodwin deals with in these events clearly show that Christ’s heart is consistently facing toward His own people. Particularly, he emphasizes that Christ sitting at the right hand of God still intercedes for His people, converting and preserving them, which is evidenced by Paul’s conversion and his life. Thus, when Paul prays that God “would fulfill the work of faith that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him,” Goodwin interprets “the work of faith” as “to keep and preserve you until then.”

For Goodwin, therefore, it is faith that changes God’s preservation into the

---

perseverance of the saints. God’s care is so strict that God being present with them keeps evil from them in all ways by holding them with His hands. Moreover, the triune God strengthens the faith of the saints so that they may endure all the temptations and afflictions providentially given to them. For this reason, Goodwin concludes as follows:

All these are propounded to believers, in order to produce stedfastness in faith, which he had pre-exhorted to in ver. 8, and unto which these words, and every word of them, do visibly look and refer, as a complete, adequate ground set forth unto their faith, and which if we believe, we have abundant matter of stedfastness and security.206

There is another way in which faith helps a believer to persevere in grace. Goodwin encourages those who are groaning under temptations and sufferings to turn their eyes to the eternal glory they will enjoy. Faith is not only the ability to see,207 but also stirs their hearts and affections to look to the glory unseen with their physical eyes. He holds that in 2 Cor. 5:2,3, Paul

utters what is the faith of a Christian concerning the glory to come, when he is dissolved. And in ver. 2, &c., he proceeds to shew the effects or workings of the heart and affections towards this glory, as flowing from this faith. True saving faith or knowledge always works upon the affections suitably to the object believed or known: ‘For we know,’ &c., says the first verse,—there is the act of faith; ‘For we groan, earnestly desiring,’ vers. 2, 4,—there are the affections flowing from this faith, and flowing from it as the effect from the cause.208

Goodwin believes that true faith has an inherent desire for the glory to come, and it is upon the heart and the affection that true faith works. Therefore, the heart and affection of a believer cannot but be moved because of true faith toward the object of that faith.


207 Goodwin, Works, 7:363 where Goodwin writes, “This faith brings eternal things to us, and not to look at them as things afar off. And it is the nearness of things, and not the greatness only, if apprehended far distant, that doth affect men. Faith is a telescope, an optic glass (to which the allusion may seem to refer) that brings them near to us, as glasses use to represent things otherwise greatly remote; and because they are so near as our death is, therefore we are affected with them.”

What then is the object believed or known? That is the glory we will enjoy after death. Thus, glory that a believer will put on after death and faith looking to it make it possible for the believer to persevere in grace to the death. Faith toward glory after death brings us to our condition in glorification.

Goodwin’s view on the role of faith for the perseverance of the saints is most highlighted and experientially described in the treatise that he wrote on sufferings. In *Patience and Its Perfect Work*, after defining patience, Goodwin holds that faith and love are “two principles here that work patience.” He continues to explain how faith works patience “in the general.” Faith makes “things hoped for . . . and all things that are revealed in the word . . . subsistence and real to a man’s soul.” Thus, faith not only has “all the motives and considerations that the whole word affords,” but also brings them in to the soul of a believer “to support it in trials.” Goodwin then goes on to give five most proper acts of faith.

Firstly, faith has a privative, emptying work. Faith totally changes the view on self. It deprives “the soul of all its own value, righteousness, excellency in its own eyes” and shows its “just deservedness to be utterly destroyed.” Thus, faithful believers become convinced of their “due desert of all or any afflictions whatever.” Meanwhile, faith “lays the soul a poor, empty, naked, wretched creature in all spiritual respects, both in the sight and presence of God and in its own eyes.” This emptying work of faith serves to work

---


patience in believers. Secondly, faith also opens the spiritual eyes of the soul to see “the
dominion of God, and the sovereignty of that dominion over a man’s soul and person.”
This sovereignty not only reaches all worldly affairs surrounding a believer, but includes
the soul of the believer. Thus, faith encourages and comforts the believer by showing
God’s “absolute dominion already toward” the believer in saving his/her soul. Thirdly,
“[f]aith brings home the love of God.” The conviction of God’s love to the believer and
communion with God based on this conviction “may well serve to strengthen patience in
the greatest distresses.” Fourthly, Goodwin argues that “faith tells us that there will be
a good issue of all as to the other world.” Faith enables the soul to be convinced not only
that it will not lose anything in the end, but that “the issue will be most blessed and
glorious.” The last act of faith for patience is to “bring in heaven as the reward of
patient enduring.” When the trials of the saints are finished, and when their faith hath all
along wrought patience in their courses, Goodwin asserts, “[i]t is persevering patience, or
endurance,” that receives the crown of life.

The other principle that works patience in believers is “love to God.” But this love
is not mere love because Goodwin calls this love “faith working by love.” Believers’
love to God and their cleaving to Him with this love make them “willing to suffer and

---

214 Goodwin, Works, 2:441.
215 Goodwin, Works, 2:441.
216 Goodwin, Works, 2:442.
217 Goodwin, Works, 2:442.
218 Goodwin, Works, 2:436.
endure, in that it is for his sake.”

Thus, it is also faith working by love that leads true believers to undergo afflictions and sufferings with joy.

7.3. Glorification

Finally the discussion turns to the last blessing of Goodwin’s *ordo salutis*, i.e., glorification. This is also the last state of the fourfold state of humanity mentioned earlier as Goodwin’s theological project. Although many seventeenth-century Reformed Puritans considered glorification the *terminus ad quem* of all the benefits for our salvation, it seems that there are just a few works on glorification as a main theme by the Puritans. This would be partly because they often treated glorification in the discussion of eschatology. In the seventeenth century, it was not strange to deal with these two distinct topics together. The WCF and the Declaration also have the last two chapters devoted to these topics. Glorification and eschatology are similar in the sense that both refer to the eschaton, either personal or redemptive historical, but they are a heterogeneous combination in their nature in a strict sense. What has been discussed over

---


220 By the way, the fact that Goodwin presents both faith and faith working by love as the effective principles for patience seems to give an impression that he regards faith without love as genuine faith working patience. But what he is actually doing in making a distinction between faith and faith working by love is not attempting to give any value to faith without love, but simply explaining two different aspects of true faith. In other words, when he presents five acts of faith, this faith refers to faith working by love, but with a focus on other functions of faith besides love. Accordingly, all that was discussed in this section assures that faith plays a role in turning God’s preservation into the perseverance of the saints.

the last three chapters is the spiritual journey of individual persons from the inception of the spiritual life to the continuation of that life, and glorification is the completion of this entire process of salvation. On the contrary, eschatology including the last judgment is not about individual salvation, but is the end of redemptive history. In many Reformed systems in the seventeenth century, nevertheless, it is at the discussion of the doctrines of glorification and the last judgment that the ordo salutis and the historia salutis converge, although each of which had run independently from different starting points theologically and chronologically. This convergence of the personal eschaton and the universal eschaton at the end of a theological system could have been made partly because of their inherent continuity and may in part reflect the influence of Puritan eschatology in the seventeenth century. For the purpose of this study, we will first take a brief look at Goodwin’s eschatology.

### 7.3.1. Latter-Day Glory

Goodwin’s eschatology can be researched in four main sources. First, his sermons on the Apocalypse of St. John preached in Holland in 1639 and published posthumously under the title An Exposition of the Revelation. Second, there is another series of sermons on the epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, preached in the early 1640’s, which were also posthumously published under the title of An Exposition of Ephesians. The third source, 222 These two doctrines must be distinguished because of the heterogeneity of the nature of each doctrine: glorification is personal, whereas the last judgment is universal. But they have also a strong continuity because glorification not only brings a significant change to the believer, but completes one’s personal process of salvation so that those who are glorified will never turn back to any corruption, but wait for the universal consummation of the historia salutis in a glorified state. Compared with the disjunction with the sinful life on earth, therefore, it may be said that the glorified condition has more continuity with the last judgment.
from which we can find his idea of eschatology, is a sermon entitled, *A Glimpse of Syons Glory, or The Churches Beautie Specified.*223 The last source is also a sermon preached before the House of Commons in 1646 entitled, *The Great Interest of States and Kingdoms.*224

In agreement with Joseph Mede,225 at the outset of his exposition on the book of Revelation, Goodwin explicitly points out that the book of Revelation in general, from the fourth chapter to the end of the book in particular, contains a pictorial history “from John’s time to the world’s end.”226 He also regarded the book of Revelation as “the fates and destinies of the kingdoms of the world which should be after Christ’s ascension, until he take the kingdom to himself.”227 In his interpretation of Revelation, like most Protestants he applies many of the references in it to the papacy and its impending destruction. Goodwin sees this last book of Scripture as composed of two main

---

223 This treatise is controversial in its authorship, but many internal evidences prove Goodwin as the author of it. For more details, see Peter Toon, “Appendix II,” in *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600 to 1660*, ed. Peter Toon (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1970).


225 Joseph Mede (1586-1639) has been remembered as a biblical scholar. Particularly his *Clavis Apocalyptic* (1627), which was translated in English with the title of *Key of the Revelation Searched and Demonstrated* (1643), was a widely influential work on the interpretation of the *Book of Revelation*. There were many Puritans following him partly as a chronologist and interpreter. Among them was Thomas Goodwin. As we can see in the title of his book, Mede seems to have considered that his great contribution to the interpretation of the Apocalypse was his discovery of the synchronism of prophecies. In other words, much of the prophetic teaching in the book of Revelation refers to the same time period and signifies different beings or events during the period. With the tool of this synchronism, Mede tries to unlock the meaning of the text and link each portion of it to Church history. He believes that the golden age of the millennium on earth will come in the future. It is also clear in his eschatology that the millennium will begin with the resurrection of the dead, and that at the end of the millennium there will be the final resurrection of the dead and the judgment of Christ upon all people.


prophecies, the *Seal-Prophecy* including seven trumpets and the *Book-Prophecy*, and maintains that both prophecies “do run over the same whole course of times, from Christ’s ascension unto his kingdom.”²²⁸ In his understanding of the events included in Revelation, Goodwin is in many cases in agreement with Mede’s interpretation of them.

Goodwin interprets the *Seal-Prophecy* in the same way that Mede does. He also adopts synchronism in his interpretation of the Apocalypse. In addition, he applies the first six seals to pagan Rome and regards the first four trumpets as “signifying the ruin of the west empire”²²⁹ and the last two as betokening “the ruin of the eastern empire, which was first broken by the Saracens, and at last utterly destroyed by the Turks. . . ”²³⁰ Dealing with the *Book-Prophecy* which starts from chapter twelve, he divides the state of the church into two: the state of the “primitive church,” which lasted four-hundred years after Christ and the state of the church during the time of the Antichrist, which refers to the Pope. He maintains that “all which time there was and is both his false antichristian and the true church under him running along together.”²³¹ Goodwin maintains that this *Book-Prophecy* also points to the same period of the entire history of the church. He then goes on to argue that the twelfth chapter of Revelation shows “the face of the church in these primitive times,”²³² that the thirteenth chapter shows the state of the false church under the Antichrist, and that the fourteenth chapter describes the state of the true church under the Antichrist to which he believes the church of his time belongs.

The concept of the millennium, though not specifically explained in his exposition of Revelation, plays a significant role in Goodwin’s eschatology, since he anticipates that God’s work of perfecting His church would arrive at its climax in the millennium. In his exegesis of Ephesians 1:21-22, he deals in some length with the implication of Christ’s reign over “the world to come.” He preaches to the readers that:

There is a special world, called the world to come, appointed eminently for Jesus Christ to reign in . . . God did not content himself to bestow this world upon Christ, for him to rule and reign in, and to order and dispose the affairs of it as he doth, and after the day of judgment to reign in that sense you heard spoken of before for ever, more gloriously than he did before. But he hath appointed a special world on purpose for him, between this world and the end of the day of judgment, and the day of judgment itself is part of it, if not the whole of it – wherein our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall reign; which the Scripture eminently calleth the ‘world to come’; Christ’s world, as I may so call it: that as this present world was ordained for the first Adam, and God hath given it unto the sons of men, so there is a world to come appointed for the second Adam, as the time after the day of judgment is God the Father’s in a more eminent manner, who then shall be all in all.  

“The world to come” is prepared for Christ. This new world needs to be distinguished from both the world where God’s church is under the Antichrist, or Adam’s world, and the world where God the Father Himself is all in all. “The world to come” is Christ’s world and will come “between the state of this world, as now it is, and the state of things after the day of judgment, when God shall be ‘all in all.’”

Goodwin argues that this special world has already begun on earth with Christ’s preaching of the gospel. However, it is not yet made perfect, but is gradually proceeding to the perfection of it. Goodwin believes that the primitive New Testament churches had been ruined by worldly emperors and the Antichrist in the west, and the Saracenes and

---


the Turks in the east, and that the restoration of the churches to the purity of the New Testament churches, which was initiated by Christ’s own work on earth, should be culminated in the millennium. It seems that he also identifies the millennium with the Fifth Monarchy, which appears in Daniel 2:44.\textsuperscript{235} It is in his parallelism between the inauguration of this “world to come” and the original creation in six days that his perspectives on world history or church history can be seen:

Because as the other world was six days a-making, – there was chaos first and so it went on by degree, – so it will be in this world likewise; we are now but in the first day’s works as it were, the perfection is to come . . . Here is a creation, a beginning, here is the first day’s work, and God will never leave till He hath perfected this world; and because the perfection of it is not yet, therefore it is said to be a world to come.\textsuperscript{236}

The perfection of the world will be made after the first day, whereas he is still in the first day’s work in which the world is being gradually recovered to perfection as the chaos of the beginning was by degree formed into this world. Another important point to make here is that Goodwin maintains that this gradual recovery of church purity to the original purity of the New Testament churches is made possible primarily though the restoration of pure doctrine and pure church government. Goodwin is very convinced that the Independent form of church polity and worship is the purest form, which the New Testament teaches. As Anthony Dallison writes, attention should be called to the newly formed independent churches in the seventeenth century that may have been “the high-water mark in this recovery of New Testament church polity,” and the rise of the churches that adopted the Independent church polity accordingly marked the nearness of

\textsuperscript{235} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:27.

\textsuperscript{236} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:511.
the millennium.\textsuperscript{237} To sum up, for Goodwin the millennium is the last stage of “the world to come” by which the recovery of the church, begun by Christ’s work, is made perfect. He also considered that his own time was very near the end because he thought that the rise of independent church polity testified of it.

Goodwin argues that God is angry with insufficiently reformed churches and that the Independent way, indeed, was the only way to avoid the overgrowing corruptions and defilements of carnal Protestants. According to him, it was the purer form of church polity that provoked the resurgent power of the Antichrist to impose the bitter persecution upon the Independents. Goodwin suggests the year 1666 as the date of the final climax of the Antichrist’s power that would bring about their exile and silence.\textsuperscript{238} He also dates the period of these final events of history between 1650 and 1700. During this period,

\begin{quote}
shall follow the orderly performance of those things which are to end and consummate all before the glorious kingdom of Christ. As first, the ruin of Rome, and so the end of Antichrist’s reign; and then the destruction of the Turkish empire; after which shall begin that great resurrection . . . falling out about 1700, which is the consummation of all.\textsuperscript{239}
\end{quote}

According to the above passage, it seems obvious that Goodwin believes that the millennium would begin around 1700. This also matches his statement that “we live now at the extremity of the times . . . we are at the verge, and, as it were, within the whirl of the great mystery of Christ’s kingdom.”\textsuperscript{240}

\textsuperscript{237} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 1:511.

\textsuperscript{238} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3: 158, 178.

\textsuperscript{239} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:198.

\textsuperscript{240} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 3:204.
7.3.2. Goodwin’s Doctrine of Glorification

Goodwin’s doctrine of glorification reflects and is interwoven with his understanding of the millennium. His primary work on the doctrine of glorification, *A Discourse of the Blessed State of Glory which the Saints Possess after Death*, was written against the background of the imminent second coming of Christ. In other words, with the persecution imposed upon his fellow Independents and the second coming of Christ in mind, Goodwin tries to give them comfort and encouragement by combining the personal eschaton with the universal eschaton in the doctrine of glorification.

It is quite clear that Goodwin regards glorification as the last blessing or the goal of the salvation process. In addition to the simple fact that glorification takes the last place in Goodwin’s sequential order of spiritual blessings, it should be noted that he claims justification, adoption, and sanctification to be “but the way to glorification; and that we are justified, adopted, and sanctified all to this end, that we might be glorified” because Christ aimed at glorification “in laying down his life for us.”

When the Reformed orthodox theologians deal with the doctrine of glorification, it is not strange for them to take a look first at the death of a believer as reflected in the WCF as well as the Savoy Declaration. Goodwin also follows this order. It is, of course, very natural that death precedes glorification because without death believers

---


242 See Thomas Watson, *A Body of Practical Divinity, Consisting of above One Hundred Seventy Six Sermons on the Lesser Catechism Composed by Reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster* (London: Printed for Thomas Parkuurst, 1692), 225-234 where Thomas Watson (1620-1686), a Puritan pastor, examines the death of a believer under the title of “A Believers Privilege at Death” and then deals with the doctrine of glorification under the title of “A Believers Privilege after Death”; Brakel, *Reasonable Service*, 4:303-322. Brakel also discusses about death and then goes on to the state of glorification. Cf. Turretin does not seem to deal with the doctrine of glorification, which refers to the glorified state between death and the resurrection of the body.
cannot be glorified. However, he did not consider death as a simple event a believer must go through before glorification. Rather, death was regarded as a significant experience for both a believer and a pastor theologically, as well as pastorally, since death is one of the most terrifying things for most people in the world. Goodwin, by means of the hope for glorification, comforts believers who are afraid of persecution and death, which might be given as its effect, and rather encourages them to press on in the spiritual pilgrimage with that hope.

In *A Discourse of the Blessed State of Glory*, Goodwin devoted the first two chapters to this theme. Death is a fearful experience, but everyone has to pass through it. Goodwin argues that faith and hope for the blessed state that will come after death would be a great comfort for dying saints. He then goes on to comfort them, saying that dying in the Lord is a special privilege because they will not only go to the blessed state after death, but would die “with a lively . . . and steadfast hope in the Lord Jesus.” Goodwin presents some other reasons why dying in the Lord is blessed. First, it is the blessing martyrs enjoy. Second, upon their death, Christ admits them into the actual possession of the eternal inheritance that He had purchased. Third, those who die in the Lord with a lively faith and hope are blessed because “Christ is infinitely more glorified upon” them by such dying than when they were in their whole lives. In addition to these benefits, the last one Goodwin mentions as a benefit for those dying in the Lord is the privilege to

---

243 See Goodwin, *Works*, 7:391 where, concerning the natural fear of death in all people including Christians, Goodwin says, “that nature in us shrinking at this dying (all men naturally abhorring death), that therefore it should be here intended that the saints do groan as being burdened with the very thoughts of dying, and therefore do secretly desire not to die at all.”

“have the Spirit in that hour, which would otherwise be dark and gloomy.”

He next explores the condition in which the souls of saints after death would stay until the resurrection. When, seeing Lazarus dead in the tomb, Christ said that Lazarus was sleeping, He spoke of his body only, not of his soul because, for believers, death is not the end. Rather, Goodwin asserts, “a believer, in respect of his soul, doth continue to live, after death, a life of activity and blessedness, and never dies nor sleeps.”

Goodwin then moves on to describe the condition of the souls of saints after death. Those souls “do live a life of perfect holiness and blessedness in the enjoyment of God and Christ in the heavens, until resurrection.” This proposition is neither made up by Goodwin’s imagination nor was it drawn from his hope for a rosy future. He asserts that the Old and New Testaments consistently demonstrate as well as support it. Goodwin refers to Abraham as a representative believer through whom God reveals the glorious condition of saints after death. When Abraham was justified by faith in Gen. 15, heaven is also adumbrated as a place where “mans happiness consists,” and the condition in which “Abraham’s soul should be” after death is also introduced. Goodwin holds that the New Testament speaks more clearly and abundantly of the state to which those dying in faith must go.

---


249 See Goodwin, *Works*, 354-55 where Goodwin also presents some examples in the New Testament to prove his view on the condition of the souls of saints. His particular attention is given to what Christ says in Luke 16:9. According to Goodwin, in this text, first, “Christ expresseth death, and the soul’s going out of this world, by our ‘failing’”; second, “Christ shews that at that time the soul is put to it what it shall do, and whither it shall go”; third, Christ “compares the state of the other world in heaven to a city or country, where are many inhabitants gathered, already replenishing of it, and accordingly many houses
When it comes to such a blessed state for the believer after death, Goodwin divides this glorious condition into two states: “1. The resurrection of the body, with the glory that follows thereupon. The ultimate object of our faith, . . . 2. The glory of the soul in the mean time presently after dissolution.”

In agreement with Calvin’s view, Goodwin argues that the proper comfort against death comes from faith and hope for both states, saying, “the whole from first to last, even to eternity, must be intended.”

Therefore, he concludes that the glorification to which saints are looking forward is grounded in a sort of glory that brings the two states together.

Expositing 2 Cor. 5:4, Goodwin first points out that God ordinarily leads saints to glory through “the dissolution of their bodies,” of which people, even Christians, are afraid. So for our comfort and “relief against the time of this their dissolution,” Goodwin asserts that Paul goes further to say, “we have an house.” Therefore, saints are groaning after that house, i.e., glorification, which is given after the dissolution of their bodies, i.e., death. What our souls are looking forward to is not only the glory after the resurrection, but also the glory after physical death. Therefore, the dissolution that all unbelievers want to avoid Christians do groan for. Even if any unbelievers also groan for the dissolution of their bodies, Christians do more than them because Goodwin claims a Christian to be doubly burdened on earth. In addition to the common evils and afflictions that all people go through, “further, we have all sorts of persecutions, that are *tributa* build, and all accommodations.”

---


Although it is true that the burdens saints must bear in this world make them groan for glorification, Goodwin argues that this is not enough for them to desire dissolution because:

all these burdens arise not so high, or prevail not so far upon us, as to cause us to desire death simply (as the heathens or others use to do) for an avoidance of present miseries; but know (says he) that our religion, and that alone, presents us with, and holds up to our faith, and assures us of a glorious crown and estate of life, when this mortal is ended, whereby mortality shall be swallowed up of life, whereof we have the earnest, ver. 5; and this is it that raiseth and ennobles our spirits to this height of confident willingness to die, as in the following verse 6th he expresseth.

It is the glorious state saints will possess that spurs them to aspire after death and dissolution. Christians are not merely people who determine to believe in Christ with a view both to freedom from the burdens of this world and to escape from the fear of death. They are “undervaluers of life, and ambitious aspirers after death and dissolution,” since they saw “a glorious crown and estate of life” that will be granted to them after dissolution. Therefore, Goodwin concludes that the aim of Christians is not simply to be unclothed, but that their souls “be clothed upon with that glory which, upon” their unclothing, is prepared for them.

Goodwin explains that because “grace or holiness” is immediately worked by God in the souls of His saints through the blessings of the ordo salutis, “when the body

\[253\] Goodwin, Works, 7:398.

\[254\] Goodwin, Works, 7:400.

\[255\] Goodwin, Works, 7:399.

\[256\] Goodwin, Works, 7:405.
dies, the souls shall be taken up to life.”

Over against the Catholic doctrine of purgatory, moreover, he holds that the soul of a saint will be immediately glorified after death albeit without the body. In addition, Goodwin insists that between death and the resurrection of the body the soul will stay in glory until the resurrection of the body because although faith ceases with death, the soul instead will be enabled to see God face to face, and, Goodwin adds, “the sight of God face to face, and to know as we are known, is the very essence of glory, as it differs from faith.” Thus, Goodwin asserts that it is the soul prepared that is glorified at the moment of death. To put it another way, those divine sequential blessings that we have dealt with thus far, for which God works upon or in the elect, are all God’s preparation of the soul for glorification. Does this then mean that the body shall remain dead and punished forever due to sin? Goodwin’s immediate answer is “No,” because body and soul, Goodwin confirms, will be brought “together unto complete glory” at last.

Goodwin then moves on to the difference in glory. He first affirms that “there are several states after the separation of the soul, or after death, which the souls of saints do run through.” Not all souls of saints will have the same glory forever after death. In other words, there is not one degree of glory prepared for the souls of the saints, but several conditions and degrees of glory, which bring forth several different states of the souls. Goodwin claims that the souls in the Lord have in their separate condition various

---

257 Goodwin, Works, 7:416.
258 Goodwin, Works, 7:421.
“degrees of glory among them, according to their works.”261 He then deals with the difference in glory between the glory of souls separate from the body and the glory of saints putting on the new bodies after the resurrection. Although the glory that the separate souls attain makes their state far better than the state on earth, Goodwin contends, “they attain not their fulness of glory, for all sorts of glory, till after the day of judgment.”262 Furthermore, he even expresses the vastness of the difference in glory between the two glorious states of the saints after death in this way: “it is certain that the glory of the last day will comparatively rise to be so great, as this of the soul separate hath no glory in comparison of it.” 263

Goodwin then goes on to describe the glories of each state. When it comes to the first glorious state, he holds that the promise of this state is performed only for one “who hath finished his course with a victory, which is at death.” In other words, this glorious state is given to those who die in faith. There is no second death waiting for them partly because the devil cannot “lay an hand, or so much as a finger-touch, on them”264 and partly because sin no longer influences them who are “fully purified from sin, and made perfectly holy.”265 What is more, angels will wait on them “as the midwife doth the child.”266 Furthermore, there is no need of worry about any doubt and anticipated evil in

261 Goodwin, Works, 7:440.

262 Goodwin, Works, 7:440. See also Goodwin, Works, 7:443-48 where, before describing the condition of each state of grace, Goodwin discovers the mistake of identifying one with the other made due to the miscomprehension of the same expressions referring to both states and enumerates various instances of the mistake.

263 Goodwin, Works, 7:441.


265 Goodwin, Works, 7:452.

266 Goodwin, Works, 7:452.
that state, since God does all needed acts upon them, “as reward of” their “former imperfect endeavors, and as a part of glorifying” them. Because they will see God not by faith obscurely, but by sight clearly, they are absolutely safe and well there.\textsuperscript{267} Lastly, Goodwin argues that there will be “a solemnity upon the soul’s arrival and first coming” there.\textsuperscript{268} The soul will have a great joy because it sees God in glory, which was not seen in life, but nonetheless gave “joy unspeakable” by mere faith. This joy will also be multiplied in believers when they go before the presence of the one who loved them.\textsuperscript{269}

However, Goodwin asserts that the culmination of the glory that the saints will enjoy consists in the state of glory after the resurrection. This is the greatest encouragement to the godly, which should help them to “pass through the afflictions of this life” and through “the evil world with their heart raised up to heaven.”\textsuperscript{270} He considers this glory in two ways: “comparatively” and “simply as it is in itself.” As for the comparative way, Goodwin first compares this glory with the glory that can be seen in all other things in the world. The glory of this state, Goodwin holds, cast temporal, worldly glory into the shade. When compared with the affliction we suffer here, “it doth, as the apostle saith, weigh them all down, not only the afflictions which befall one man, but all men.”\textsuperscript{271} Goodwin thirdly compares this glory with the spiritual joy given only to God’s people in this world, which is called “the joy of the Holy Ghost,” “unspeakable and glorious.” This joy is so great that Goodwin says, “one drop of which transcends

\textsuperscript{267} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:454.

\textsuperscript{268} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:454.

\textsuperscript{269} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:455.

\textsuperscript{270} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:456.

\textsuperscript{271} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:457.
infinitely all the joy the creatures can afford us.”

Goodwin, however, is convinced in claiming that “yet this joy of the Holy Ghost is not comparable to the joys of heaven.” Furthermore, comparing this glory with “that glory the saints that are now in heaven enjoy,” he insists, filled with conviction, that the glory to be revealed after the resurrection will surpass “the present joy of the glorified saints.”

As for the heavenly glory in itself, Goodwin first asks for consideration of “the efficient cause of this great glory” so that it may be more clearly beheld. God is the efficient cause of that heavenly kingdom. The greatness and glory of God can only be comprehended by His works. God created a world that is also glorious, but Goodwin evaluates the glory of this world as if God showed “no art upon this in comparison of heaven.” The meritorious cause of heavenly glory also helps us to know what a glorious state it is. Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, has purchased the saints with His own blood. It is the goal for which Christ laid down His life for them and purchased them. Thus, the reason why spiritual blessings, such as justification, adoption, and sanctification, are “but the way to glorification” is because of the meritorious cause of this glory, Jesus Christ.

This glory is also found by its exemplary cause, which is also Jesus Christ. Goodwin holds that Christ is the pattern of this glory, so that we can apprehend the greatness and glory of this state through Christ’s glory. The last way in

---

272 Goodwin, Works, 7:457.
274 Goodwin, Works, 7:458.
275 Goodwin, Works, 7:459.
276 Goodwin, Works, 7:459.
277 Goodwin, Works, 7:460.
which Goodwin suggests we can behold that glory more clearly is to think of the material cause and object of the happiness in this state, which is God. He, as the efficient cause, not only “promise us great and glorious things to be created by him,” but, as the material cause, He Himself “will be our heaven.” In addition, it is God as the object and subject of this happiness that makes the saints happy, Goodwin argues. All this is Goodwin’s understanding of the glorified state of the saints.

### 7.3.3. Glorification and Faith

When it comes to the relationship between faith and glorification, what must be made clear at the outset is Goodwin’s distinction between “faith” and “sight.” Faith walks together with a believer as one of the closest friends in the world, whereas it will cease with one’s physical death. Goodwin asserts that God ordained only two ways of communion with Himself unto all eternity. When a believer is on earth, faith is the only means through which the believer can have communion with God. Given that the unio cum Christo is completed by faith, the whole Christian life is a life of faith, since what makes Christians distinct from others may be said to be nothing but the union and communion with God through Christ. However, faith is not ordained to work forever, but, Goodwin holds, faith must make way for sight upon glorification and then vanish. Therefore, Goodwin does not mention any role of faith in the life after the death of the saints. Rather, his discussion of faith is focused on its role for dying in the Lord, which is the last, but is more important than any other role of faith. Goodwin holds, “That for

---


dying saints to have their souls enabled to exercise faith and hope on the Lord Christ in the hour of death, is a singular and super-added blessing, over and above that of being blessed in heaven.”\textsuperscript{280} For this purpose, he particularly explains faith in two aspects with respect to the death of a believer.

First, faith gives a comfort and even joy to a dying believer facing such a moment that is terrifying to unbelievers. To give comfort to a dying believer, Goodwin demonstrates why dying in the Lord is so blessed. What is dying in the Lord? Goodwin argues that not only those who die of persecution in the last day, but those who “die in a live faith, and steadfast hope in the Lord,” also die in the Lord. Given that faith brings forth hope, it is faith only that leads us to die blessedly in the Lord.\textsuperscript{281} How then can they endure those times of suffering and die in the Lord? The Holy Spirit passing “a promise of his own” blesses “multitudes of his dying saints so to die in faith, and hope, and the exercise of other dying grace.”\textsuperscript{282} Only Christianity presents “us with, and holds up to our faith, and assures us of a glorious crown and estate of life, when this mortal is ended.”\textsuperscript{283} Goodwin presents an example of Abraham who peacefully died in the Lord with a comfort from the promise of God. When “God declared himself his exceeding reward, and declared him justified from all sins,” this means that Abraham himself is worth receiving the reward signifying the land of Canaan. But God told him that not he but his seed should possess Canaan, and this silenced Abraham. Why did this quiet him?

\textsuperscript{280}Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:342.

\textsuperscript{281}Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:341.

\textsuperscript{282}Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:341.

\textsuperscript{283}Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 7:400.
Goodwin answers, because “he declares what should be his state after death, that so he might die in the faith thereof.” In other words, the land of Canaan in the visible world is the symbol of the genuine reward that Abraham would possess after death. Abraham knew it and so could die in the Lord.

Another comfort that faith gives to a dying believer in the Lord is to enable the believer to foresee Christ more glorified when he/she dies in faith than when living by faith. Goodwin holds that “The believer is blessed who dies in the Lord; that is, who dies in the lively exercise of faith and hope, because Christ is infinitely more glorified upon us by such our dying than ever he was in our whole lives.” He properly points out that this comfort that believers enjoy on their deathbed by faith does not apply to all believers who will be glorified, but to such who have faith lively working in them at the time of death. Thus far, we have demonstrated that faith gives comfort to a dying believer. There is another aspect of faith in relation to the death of saints.

Second, salvation is “the end of faith.” Goodwin writes that Peter “speaks it unto such Christians who . . . were shortly to be martyred, and at present were sorely tried.” In other words, Peter is comforting the persecuted saints by convincing them that where “faith ends, salvation begins and succeeds it,” so their faith will finally bring forth salvation as a fruit. Then he argues that this phrase also should give some encouragement to them because salvation is not only the result of their faith, but also that for which “the great God (who ‘keeps us by his power through faith unto salvation,’ ver. 5) hath


wrought this faith in you.” Faith is not a work of the saints, but of God, so this makes their perseverance and salvation surer. “The end of your faith,” according to Goodwin, refers to the perfection of everything because “end” denotes “perfection and consummation.” But faith is “an imperfect knowing of God.” What shall be perfect at death? He asserts that this phrase may imply that imperfect faith shall then be “swallowed up of sight (which is all one with salvation here) tanquam perfectibile, a perfection.”

To put it another way, Goodwin considers Peter to be comforting the saints under persecution by saying that they can rejoice now with “joy unspeakable and full of glory” though imperfectly seeing Christ by faith in the time of persecution, but how much more will they rejoice than now if they see Him face to face?

Goodwin’s strong emphasis on the faith of a dying believer is quite unique even among the Reformed orthodox theologians. Although dealing with the blessed death of the saints at the outset of his eschatology, Thomas Watson (1620-1686), in his *A Body of Practical Divinity*, does not pay much attention to the role of the faith of dying believers as described by the blessedness of their death. Manton also in his two funeral sermons, *Saints Triumph over Death* and *The Blessed State of Them That Die in the Lord*, powerfully comforts and encourages those who mourn the dead and fear death with vivid delineation of the victory over death they will possess, but he only touches on the comfort to which faith can contribute. Witsius barely mentions faith in his lengthy discussion

---


290 See Manton, *Works*, 2:448, 451, 453, 459, 470 where Manton mentions the role of faith in comforting and encouraging the saints not to fear death, but to regard it as a joyful door to glorification.
Owen, however, approaches this issue in a similar fashion as Goodwin. He also makes a distinction between faith and sight in beholding the glory of Christ. Owen argues that “[T]here are, therefore, two ways or degrees of beholding the glory of Christ, which are constantly distinguished in the Scripture. The one is by faith, in this world,—which is “the evidence of things not seen;” the other is by sight, or immediate vision in eternity.” In addition, he makes another distinction between dying safely and dying cheerfully and holds that every true believer dies safely, but “many believers do not die cheerfully and comfortably.” How then can Christians die cheerfully and comfortably? The first way Owen presents to die cheerfully and comfortably is “the constant exercise of faith, as to the resignation of a departing soul to the hand and sovereign will of God.” In the long explication of the comforting and convincing act of faith, which enables believers to die cheerfully and comfortably, Owen calls this act of faith both “a great and eminent act of faith” and “the last victorious act of faith.”

---

291 See Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants between God and Man Comprehending A Complete Body of Divinity*, trans. William Crookshank (London: Printed for R. Baynes, 1822), 81-107. Witsius considers glorification either “as begun in this life” or “as consummated in the next” and then presents the first-fruits of the Spirit, belonging to the former, as granted to the children of God. Although he says that these fruits are given “in the course of faith and holiness” for comforting and encouraging the saints under the fear of death, he does not pay any more attention to faith itself in explaining each of the fruits the saints enjoy before death.


Conclusion of Part II

In the second part, dealing with the order of salvation, two things have been reviewed. First, the nature of each blessing given to a believer in the covenant of grace was examined. Second, the role of faith in each blessing was also discussed, which is the primary concern of this study. Goodwin’s own version of an ordo salutis was constructed at the outset. Although he does not have a definite order of salvation in mind, found throughout his works was a pattern of the sequential causality of salvation discussed in various contexts, setting up Goodwin’s tentative ordo salutis.

Goodwin discusses different taxonomies of this causal sequence. He distinguishes three aspects of God’s work in those covenant blessings: the immanent, transient, and applicatory work of God. It is the applicatory work of God that this chapter was mainly focused on. Goodwin also divides this work into two kinds according to the nature of the work: God’s work upon us and in us. God’s work upon us primarily represents a definite change or changes in the right or titles of the elect. Throughout this applicatory work, Goodwin emphasizes that not only in the works of God upon us, but also in His work in us, His work involves the Holy Spirit as the first agent. This is clearly evidenced in his doctrine of union with Christ. Goodwin calls the Spirit “the uniter of” our souls to Christ.297 This union is so comprehensive as a source of all the covenantal blessings that it cannot be reduced to one of them in his ordo salutis.

Goodwin considers regeneration as the first fruit of union with Christ. By regeneration, all the new principles of new spiritual life are infused. In relation to faith, regeneration is significant because one of the principles newly implanted by the Spirit is

297 Goodwin, Works, 6:50.
“the seed of faith,” out of which faith acts and grows to justifying faith. Goodwin seems
to regard the intermediate period between regeneration and justification as preparation for
conversion. Regeneration is followed by justification. Refuting some erroneous views on
justification, particularly the Antinomian view of eternal justification, Goodwin firmly
argues that justification solely refers to a forensic change and thus is given by faith alone.
Sinners can be justified only through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness
accomplished by both His active and passive obedience. The next benefit prepared in the
covenant of grace is adoption. Goodwin did not overlook the importance of the doctrine
of adoption. His particular emphasis is on the sublime glory and privileges that the
sonship of God guarantees and brings to the believer. He does not deal with adoption
simply as a part of justification, as some of his Reformed orthodox contemporaries do,
but he clearly discloses the immediate relationship between faith and adoption. These
three blessings in his ordo refer to God’s definitive work upon us. Even though our real
condition is neither perfectly holy yet, nor fit for living together with God, we possess a
right or title. The Spirit now sanctifies us so that we may be sustained “to the end,
guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”298

The first work of the Spirit bringing about a real change in the believer is
sanctification. Sanctification is the removal of sin from us and the process of making us
holy by degrees. Goodwin never makes less of sanctification than justification. Both
sanctification and justification are derived from union with Christ, through which His
perfect holiness is delivered to those united with Him as a principle of their
sanctification. Goodwin even says that this perfect holiness of Christ in us is the

foundation for our forensic change by freeing us from the condemning power of both sin and law. This truth insinuates a certain relationship between regeneration and sanctification. He confirms this inseparable relationship by arguing that one of the principles infused by regeneration is the seed of sanctification. Goodwin, moreover, claims that sanctification is also inseparably related to faith in two senses. Given that faith includes sanctification, first, faith is the driving force of sanctification, and second, faith is also a continuing principle of sanctification. In this manner, Goodwin brings in the principle of sanctification from union with Christ, regeneration, and faith itself. In other words, sanctification is a cooperative work of God’s various graces through the Spirit. However, it should not be forgotten that sanctification is also a human work due to faith. Faith itself is an act of humanity exerted by the believer, even if the Spirit infuses the principle of faith in the believer. Therefore, sanctification is a grace that manifests itself out of the inward principle and increasingly grows through faith.

The perseverance of the saints is the next blessing given to the believer in the covenant of grace. This doctrine is one of the distinctives of Reformed theology. God preserves all His elect children to glorification. In this sense, this doctrine is a doctrine about God’s preservation of those in the covenant of grace. But it is at the same time truly the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, since it is the saints who persevere in grace to the last day of their lives. What changes preservation into perseverance? According to Goodwin, it is faith because faith enables the saints to persevere in grace by showing them things unseen.

Glorification is the last blessing at which all other blessings are aimed. For Goodwin, the personal *ordo salutis* and the *historia salutis* meet at the doctrine of
glorification, and glorification is the most glorious state of humanity. When it comes to faith, however, faith has nothing to do with the glorified saints inasmuch as faith ends with physical death. Saints in this state can see God’s glory not by faith, but by sight. Nevertheless, Goodwin emphasizes the necessity of faith in his discussion of glorification in that the saints must pass through death to be glorified. Here faith is most urgently required because death is one of the most terrifying experiences and God thus preserves faith for this significant moment. By showing them the eternal glory they will soon enjoy, faith comforts and encourages the saints on their deathbed to keep their faith at the moment of death. Therefore, Goodwin praises faith for its last function.

Throughout Goodwin’s ordo salutis, faith is closely related to each blessing in various ways. The seed of faith is implanted by regeneration; for justification and adoption, faith is the sole condition; for sanctification, faith is the significant means and provides the driving force; in the perseverance of the saints, faith is the means by which God preserves His children unto death; and for glorification, faith plays the last role as the means of God to help the saints advance beyond the terror of death to glorification. In all these functions of faith, faith keeps God’s sovereignty and grace.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION: NATURE OF SAVING FAITH AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Thus far we have examined issues related to faith in the three divine covenants and the specific role of faith played throughout a series of the sequential blessings of the covenant of grace. Adam’s lack of natural faith in God’s word was the cause of the Fall of the whole humanity in Adam, but God ordained supernatural faith to be both a condition and an instrument by which salvation is to be given to those who have that faith. Union with Christ is completed by faith. Faith is also the sole instrument for such blessings as justification and adoption and is a means by which God sanctifies, preserves, and glorifies the elect. These special functions and the importance of faith naturally bring us to the inquiry of saving faith itself. How does faith enable the regenerate to go through all the blessings promised in the covenant of grace? To answer this question, this chapter will explore Goodwin’s concept of saving faith and its nature.

8.1. Two Kinds of Faith: General Faith and Special Faith

In his exposition on 2 Tim. 3:15, Goodwin explores the nature of “justifying faith.” Although this phrase consists of two words or doctrines, that is, the doctrines of justification and of faith, he first makes a distinction between “general faith” and “special faith.”

General faith has reference to “all divine objects,” which signify “a belief and

---

1 This distinction is not found uniquely in Goodwin’s thought. Some other contemporary Puritans also made use of this distinction in their dealing with faith. See Thomas Manton, *Works*, 17:111, 114; John Owen, *Works*, 9:600. Cf. see Thomas Boston, the *Whole Works of the Late Reverend Thomas Boston OF Etrick; Now First Collected, And Reprinted without Abridgment; Including His Memoirs, Written by Himself; ed. Rev. Samuel M’Millan* (Aberdeen: George and Robert King, St. Nicholas Street, 1848), 1:362 where Boston presents a different concept of general faith from Goodwin’s, “which, being without
knowledge of the Scriptures, and all things revealed in them, and a having a man’s heart suitably affected with the things according to the nature of them.” In other words, when the soul and heart of a believer take all contained in Scripture by faith, it is called a general faith. Although this faith sounds like a faith that Christians should pursue for their salvation, it is impossible for general faith alone to justify a sinner. Thus Goodwin introduces us to another type of faith that justifies sinners. He calls it a special faith that is “pitched upon God’s free-grace, and Christ as matter of justification to us, as its special object.”

Goodwin then presents three reasons that make this faith special in distinction from general faith. First, special faith has “an eminent special object.” He claims that God has “framed on purpose a peculiar and special object for this faith.” The object of general faith are all the promises, threats, and attributes of God; whereas, the object of special faith is:

either the free grace of God, who is our justifier (for God as justifying is as much the object of faith as Christ himself, and more), which is the object of this special faith, or else Jesus Christ and his righteousness, as the matter of our justification and salvation, and faith as it respects these two as they are objects, and that for justification, that I call, I say, special faith.

Goodwin makes this distinction of faith according to the object of faith, whereas Boston does this according to whether faith exercises application in the life of a Christian or not.

2 Goodwin, Works, 8:275.

3 Goodwin, Works, 8:274.

4 Goodwin, Works, 8:278.

5 Goodwin, Works, 8:278. In the first part of The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith, Goodwin presents as the object of justifying faith God’s mercy, Christ, and God’s free grace, but in the second part dealing primarily with the acts of faith, he mentions only two of them, Christ and God’s free grace, as the object of special faith. This does in no sense mean that God’s mercy is to be excluded, but he seems sometimes to subsume God’s mercy under God’s grace because he mentions God’s mercy as one of the objects of special faith in the immediately preceding sentence.
Although a person has “all the faith, and knowledge, and wisdom,” Goodwin argues, they cannot lead the person to salvation. It is faith in Jesus Christ and God’s free grace that make general faith truly “wise unto salvation.”\(^6\) The second distinctive characteristic of special faith is its special aim and intent. Goodwin asserts that the aim of special faith is not simply to come to “God or to Christ for anything else temporal and spiritual, but as coming for salvation and pardon of sin.”\(^7\) The last factor that makes faith special is the consequence of that faith, i.e., salvation and justification. The preciousness of special faith, therefore, does not lie in the degree of a believer’s acting, but in the object of that faith.

Goodwin’s discussion of special faith is particularly opposed to the Roman Catholic sense of *fides catholica*, which is the same as Goodwin’s general faith and is regarded by Roman Catholics as the faith that justifies sinners.\(^8\) According to Goodwin, *fides catholica* or general faith cannot save a sinner without special faith since general faith does not refer to a faith that believes all things in Scripture, but a faith that is pitched on many other matters contained in Scripture besides the objects of special faith. For example, unlike the Catholic sense of saving faith which regards faith in God’s existence and in His holiness as part of justifying faith, for Goodwin believing that God exists and is holy is just general faith, but this faith cannot save sinners without looking to Christ and God’s mercy and grace as objects. For Goodwin, general faith may not include in it special faith and thus cannot contribute to justification.


\(^7\) Goodwin, *Works*, 8:278.

The main difference between the two, as pointed out above, lies in the object at which each faith looks. Only when this general faith is combined with a special faith looking to Christ and God’s grace as the object can faith have an ability to save sinners who have that faith. But he warns believers not to exclude a general knowledge of God for salvation by arguing that a special faith also would not justify sinners “if it were not supported with acts of general faith.” With this statement, however, he does not seem to argue that these two types of faith are equally supplementary to each other for the justification of a sinner. His intention would be to make sure that justification is not rooted in any other matter in Scripture, but in such a special object of faith as Christ and God’s mercy and grace. Moreover, he also intends by this statement to hold that although special faith plays an essential role for justification, this does not make useless general faith as if one denies the other. Rather, special faith always accompanies general faith, and not vice versa. In this sense, Goodwin opines that both general and special faith can be called saving faith in the sense that they are all wisdom unto salvation. But special faith is in a higher and more peculiar manner a faith that is not simply unto salvation, but faith that “saveth us.” For Goodwin, therefore, special faith is faith that saves sinners, whereas general faith can be made “wisdom unto salvation” only because and by reason of special faith.

As just mentioned above, although general faith does not play a primary role for justification or salvation, Goodwin argues, it is still required for salvation because it is

---


“without which God saveth no man.”\textsuperscript{11} In what sense can general faith be regarded as necessary for salvation? Goodwin explains the role of general faith more specifically as follows:

In a large sense we may be said to live by that general faith (as I may so call it) to live by the belief of anything else in the word of God, with affections suited to that knowledge and that faith. It helps us to mortify lusts, it helps us to quicken many graces in us: whatsoever God sanctifies us by, that faith takes it in, and so in a sense it may be called a life of faith; in temporal temptations it upholds us by many temporal promises, a thousand considerations there are in the word which are not the objects of special faith.\textsuperscript{12}

Goodwin agrees that general faith can help believers to be sanctified and encourage them to endure temporal temptations with many temporal promises. He also holds that general faith can promote a believer’s sanctification, saying, “if I believe that God is holy (this I call part of a general faith), and believe it spiritually and rightly, it makes me holy as he is holy, in my affections.”\textsuperscript{13} It is because “the belief of God’s holiness, if it be a true belief, with the whole heart, serveth only to frame the heart to holiness answerably.”\textsuperscript{14}

Therefore, although both special and general faith are referred to as faith by which the righteous live, the faith by which we live the life of justification and of salvation is the former only; whereas, the latter could serve sanctification together with the former because general faith is necessarily included in special faith. But it must be denied that special faith does work for justification only and then is replaced with general faith for sanctification. Rather it is special faith that works throughout the whole process of

\textsuperscript{11} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:281.

\textsuperscript{12} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:281.

\textsuperscript{13} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:300.

\textsuperscript{14} Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:300
salvation, both God’s work upon and in us, whereas general faith helps special faith in leading believers to the completion of salvation particularly in all God’s works in them.

The last point that needs to be discussed in this section is the question Goodwin raises about the reason why “God hath singled out special faith thus to justify us upon; and why he doth not justify us upon general faith.” One of the reasons Goodwin presents is that special faith “agrees with the way of God’s justifying us.” This means that God justifies sinners by faith not because He regards faith as a precious act of sinners, but because of “the object laid hold on by faith, the free grace of God, and of Jesus Christ.” Thus, what is indeed said to justify is the object of that special faith rather than faith itself. To put it another way, justification in no sense consists in an act of humanity, even faith, but in Christ Himself. When Roman Catholics deny that “faith alone in Christ” justifies, argues Goodwin, they reject that “the grace of God is the justifier of us, nor the righteousness of Christ the matter of our justification.”

As seen earlier in our treatment of the relation of justification and faith, Goodwin defines justification as a gracious act of God consisting of the remission of sin and the imputation of righteousness to a sinner through faith, the righteousness that was gained by Christ through His active and passive obedience and His coming on earth in our nature and having that nature perfectly holy. The Reformed orthodox generally agreed on the proposition that faith is a means, or an instrument, of justification as evidenced by the

---

eleventh chapter of the WCF. He makes the relationship between faith and justification a bit clearer in his exposition on Rom. 3:24-25:

Justification is attributed as much to free grace as to Christ’s righteousness, for both are joined … Therefore faith looks as much to free grace ordaining and imputing, as to Christ performing. In a word, God’s free grace is the original, Christ’s righteousness is instrumental to the manifestation of free grace, and faith is the instrument of apprehending all.

Our justification derives originally from God’s free grace, but this grace manifests itself in Christ’s righteousness. Thus, justification is totally a divine work extra nos so far. But it is faith by which God applies to us His free grace manifested in the work of Christ for us. He emphasizes here that though faith is an instrument, it has no inherent value for our justification but simply an instrument for apprehending that free grace of God. Nonetheless, faith is not a simple instrument for our salvation. Goodwin holds that “as Jesus Christ was so fit an instrument, and a servant to all free grace’s ends and purposes, the truth is, so is faith every whit.” Faith is a divine instrument that makes salvation totally God’s gracious work in that faith “is conformed to all the contrivements of grace, to give glory to it.” This is the reason God chose special faith, not general faith, to justify the elect since it is not the nature of faith, but the object of faith, that justifies

---

19 “Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification.” WCF, 11:2.

20 “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” Rom. 3:24-25.

21 Goodwin, Works, 8:134.

22 Goodwin, Works, 2:322.

23 Goodwin, Works, 2:322.
sinners, and it is God’s grace revealed in Christ that is the object of special faith and that is our justifier.

However, Goodwin does not ascribe sanctification to the proper work of general faith. Rather he regards it as the outcome of justifying faith, that is, special faith, by arguing that “faith that sanctifies also justifies.” He identifies sanctifying faith with justifying faith. This means that justification is solely the work of special faith and that the main power of sanctification flows from Christ and God pardoning elect sinners with mercy by means of special faith. But this special faith is supported and promoted for sanctification by faith that looks to all other objects revealed in Scripture. For Goodwin, therefore, justifying faith not only justifies, but also sanctifies sinners in the most suitable way to the nature of salvation as God’s grace. It is general faith that takes no part in “God’s work upon us,” but plays an ancillary role in “God’s work in us” such as sanctification and perseverance.

8.2. Seat of Faith

It is in The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith that we can find the most specific view of Goodwin on saving faith. As the title shows, this treatise scrutinizes what the proper object of saving faith is and how this faith acts in the life of a believer and what the effect of it is.

When seeking to grasp the nature of faith, many medieval scholastic theologians had often distinguished aspects of faith in terms of notitia, assensus, and fiducia and then turned to the problem of whether the seat of faith lies in the intellect or in the will. It is widely believed that Augustine held a voluntarist view of faith and that many medieval
theologians held either a voluntarist or intellectualist view of faith. Contrary to this widely held opinion, however, not only did Augustine think that will is closely connected with intellect since for him “understanding the truth is the deepest desire of our hearts” and thus saw faith as a matter of both intellect and will, but Aquinas and Bonaventure, who have been generally regarded as proponents for intellectualism and voluntarism respectively, also synthesized the two in their understanding of the seat of faith, howbeit with different emphases. Moreover, contrary to the arguments of such modern scholars

24 Cf. Richard A. Muller, The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 162. Muller defines the two terms, “voluntarism” and “intellectualism,” as follows: “The terms refer to the two faculties of soul, intellect and will, and to the question of which has priority over the other: intellectualism indicates a priority of the intellect; voluntarism, a priority of the will. In a technical theological and philosophical sense, however, intellectualism indicates a view of soul that denominates intellect the nobler of the two faculties because it is the intellect that apprehends the final vision of God as being and truth, whereas voluntarism denominates the will as the nobler faculty and assumes that its ultimate cleaving to God as the highest good (sumnum bonum) addresses the highest object of human love.” Refuting R. T. Kendall’s view, Muller immediately adds that “neither view leads naturally to the assumption of a human act prior to the work of grace … It is this more technical sense of the terms in their relation to faith that provides us with the focus of our inquiry.” Muller, Unaccommodated Calvin, 162.


27 Tobias Hoffmann, “Intellectualism and Voluntarism” in The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy, ed. Robert Pasnau, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1:415-16. Hoffmann writes concerning Bonaventure’s view on faith in its relation to the will and the intellect: “The will depends on reason for its act, for without prior knowledge it cannot elicit its act. Yet, freedom consists principally in the will: reason’s control of the lower powers of the soul depends on the “command” (that is, the control) of the will, and the will is not bound to follow the dictate of reason unless it is a ‘definitive judgment.’” With regard to Aquinas’ view on the same issue, Hoffmann concludes in this way: “In his account of free decision, Thomas distinguishes, but does not separate, the acts of intellect and will. Every act of the will is informed by an act of the intellect, and the way in which one uses the intellect depends on
as Kendall and Bell that Calvin held an intellectualist view of faith based on Calvin’s famous definition of faith as “a firm and certain knowledge of God’s benevolence toward us.” Calvin also did not connect faith to our intellect only. As Muller rightly points out, although Calvin’s emphasis on *fiducia* in the definition of faith does not so clearly appear in his 1536 *Institutes*, he immediately after that altered and pushed the definition of faith in the direction of putting more weight on the role of the will. On the ground of his thorough examination of Calvin’s reception and application of Aristotelian faculty psychology to faith in a soteriological context, Muller concludes that Calvin upholds “a nonspeculative, soteriological voluntarism that carries over into the language of faith” and his “language of faith as cognition tends to balance intellect and will.” The approach to the nature of faith in terms of faculty psychology carried over into the seventeenth century. In the early seventeenth century there was a controversy on the seat of faith between William Ames (1576-1633) and Johannes Maccovius (1588-1644). The will. The activities of intellect and will penetrate each other, and ultimately it is the human person who moves him or herself to a choice by means of reason and will. Because Thomas considers acts of intellect and will to be blended in this way, his doctrine does not neatly fit into the categories of intellectualism and voluntarism.” See also John Francis Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure’s Philosophy* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1973), 460-61.


29 Muller, *Unaccommodated Calvin*, 163.

30 Muller, *Unaccommodated Calvin*, 171-72. Concerning Calvin’s harsh criticism toward those “scholastics” who identify faith with “bare and simple assent arising out of knowledge,” Muller says that allowance must be made for “Calvin’s relative ignorance of the details of the medieval tradition” and “his lack of training in the intricacies of medieval thought and that none of whom actually fall under Calvin’s critique of a purely intellectualistic definition of faith.” For example, Muller states that even for Aquinas, a philosophical intellectualist, faith is not purely a matter of assent to knowledge because ‘faith is lodged in the intellect,’ in such a way ‘as to receive its specification and motivation from the will.’” Muller then suggests that “in the medieval tradition, … the question of the priority of one faculty over the other has to be determined not so much by the question of efficient as by the question of final causality.” It is against this background that Muller draws the conclusion that “Calvin appears to lean toward the voluntarist model” because “for Calvin, it is the heart, not the mind, that is ‘the chief part of faith’ and that is ultimately ‘established’ in the ‘truth of God.’”
difference between them does not simply lie in their different views of faith. Rather, this controversy is more about their different views of theology. Ames defines theology as something that is not so much concerned with simple statements about God” as with the knowledge of how to live unto God, while for Maccovius, though his definition of theology itself looks similar to that of Ames, the main task of theology is “to make correct statements about God and salvation.”

It seems to be, therefore, a natural ramification of their nuanced views of theology that Ames and his Franeker colleagues are at odds with each other in their understanding of the seat of faith. If theology is concerned mainly with statements about God, the main subject of faith should be human intellect; if theology is all about our life before God, faith should lie in our will. None of these theologians, however, holds to one faculty to the extent of ruling out any role of the other. Maccovius puts an emphasis on the primacy of the intellect in the sense that “the will is renewed through the mediacy of the intellect.” Ames’s voluntarism implies that “the act of the will in believing the gospel is that by which, by the Spirit’s grace, makes knowledge saving.”

---

31 In his Medulla, Ames defines theology as doctrina Deo vivendi, which is similar to Maccovius’s definition of theology as disciplina bene ac beate vivendi in aeternum in the sense that both understand theology as a matter of life. Cf. Dolf te Velde, The Doctrine of God in Reformed Orthodoxy, Karl Barth, and the Utrecht School (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2013), 82. Velde points out significant similarity between Ames’s definition of theology as doctrina Deo vivendi (doctrine of living unto God) and that of Petrus Ramus as doctrina bene vivendi (doctrine of living well). Joel R. Beeke and Jan Van Vliet also acknowledge the influence of Ramus as well as of William Perkins on Ames’s definition of theology.


34 Beeke and Jones, Puritan Theology, 47.
words, although saving faith always presupposes a knowledge of the gospel, yet this
knowledge does not shape the will, but “follows the act of the will and depends on it.”  
As Horton rightly points out, therefore, the Puritans, as well as the Reformers, also do not
seem to cast any doubt on “the involvement of every faculty in the act of faith.”

Goodwin also agrees that faith is not a simple act of either the will or the intellect.
He explicitly holds that saving faith “is seated in the whole heart” and then goes on to
elaborate on the meaning of believing with the whole heart:

If thou believe with thy whole heart;’ and indeed every faculty, and every
power of the soul in believing doth put forth a several sprig, a several fibra into
Jesus Christ; as you see in the roots that are in the earth, every root shoots a small
string into that by which the tree and the root is united thereunto; thus are we
rooted in Christ, and grounded in him, as the expression is in Col. 2:7, which is
then when the faculties do thus shoot forth several acts suitable to themselves,
into our Lord Christ, and then the soul believeth on him.

Faith is a matter of our whole heart. Here heart does not refer to a certain faculty of our
soul, but to the seat of all acts coming out of all faculties. Calvin and many other
Reformed orthodox theologians often distinctly use the terms, mind (mens) and heart
(cor), to refer to the intellect and the will respectively, whereas for Goodwin heart refers
to all the faculties of our soul including both the intellect and the will. Goodwin uses
another similar expression to demonstrate the involvement of both the will and the
intellect in saving faith.

---

35 William Ames, *The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, Drawn out of the Holy Scriptures, and the
Interpreters Thereof, and Brought into Method* (London: Printed by Edwards Griffin, 1643), 1,3,4.

36 Horton, “Puritan Doctrine of Assurance,” 144.


As the fourth error or mistake about true faith made by “ordinary professors of Christ,” which is briefly mentioned above, Goodwin sets forth the simple possession of Christ in thoughts only. To put it another way, mere knowledge of Christ in our mind is not true saving faith, Goodwin argues, but to have faith in Christ is “to strike forth a sprig or fibre from every faculty into him, to be rooted in him, to draw nourishment from him, to digest him, to give up thy soul to him, and to be one with him.”39 Moreover, Goodwin’s doubt of the primacy of intellect in faith is well described in the aforementioned five errors or mistakes found in the faith of common professors. But it is worth examining Horton’s view on this issue because he opposes Kendall’s view by holding that Reformed orthodoxy, particularly English Calvinists, did not shift from Calvin’s intellectualism to voluntarism in relation to the seat of faith. He presents as evidence of his position Goodwin’s alleged intellectualist view, concluding that “[i]f one faculty does appear to find a supreme place in Goodwin’s theology, in spite of his location of faith’s seat in the heart, it is the intellect, where the knowledge is received, assessed, and acted upon.”40 Horton argues for the continuity between the Reformers and the Reformed orthodox by asserting that they all acknowledged the primacy of the intellect in the act of faith. However, in view of the fact that Calvin’s understanding of the various terms related to this issue bears a more voluntaristic connotation in the soteriological context, Horton’s argument needs to be reconsidered. The two main quotations from Goodwin’s works that Horton makes use of in support of his argument

39 Goodwin, Works, 8:332. See also Goodwin, Works, 8: 273.

40 Horton, “Puritan Doctrine of Assurance,” 147.
are not exactly relevant to the issue. It is unclear whether Goodwin holds to the
primacy of the will or of the intellect because he does not explicitly state that one has the
primacy over the other, but what is clear is that for Goodwin mere knowledge of the
object of saving faith cannot lead us to justifying faith and that as shown above, he puts
faith in the heart, which signifies all our faculties, saying:

Justifying faith is seated in the whole heart, . . . Now, if only a general assent,
though never go spiritual, in the understanding, which is but one faculty in the
heart, were that act that justified, then the will should be excluded, which, if faith
be with the whole heart, it is not. And now, if the will come in to put forth an act,
then an act of application must be also added to that general assent, such as indeed
is to trust in Christ, to cast myself on him, to wait upon him, which are all acts of
the will. It is true indeed that in the understanding part, there is no other act of
faith required absolutely unto justification, than a spiritual sight of, and assent to
the truth and goodness of the things believed. This is all God exacts of the

41 In the first quotation Horton gets from *A Discourse of the Glory of the Gospel*, Goodwin writes:
“He doth not say, until you are formed in Christ, but until Christ be formed in you He cannot mean the person
of Christ dwelling in them. Why? Because that is not formed, that was formed in the womb of the virgin, and
now is glorious in heaven, therefore it must be the right notion and apprehension of Christ in the gospel that
he meaneth. It is as if he had said, 'til you be fully evangelised, and as both Piscator and Pareus interpret it,
till you be fully restored to your former true knowledge of Christ, now you are full of Moses, he is formed in
you, that appears by the twenty-first verse, for there were some amongst them that were so full of the law,
that there was nothing but law almost in them, now in opposition to this, saith he, I long till such time as
Christ be formed in you, till there is a complete knowledge of Christ, according to the nature and genius of
the gospel begotten in you And this is called Christ.” (*Works*, 4:335). Horton's identifying our possession of
the knowledge of Christ with Christ Himself formed in us is not necessarily good evidence for an
intellectualist interpretation of Goodwin’s understanding of faith because the knowledge Goodwin
emphasizes is not simply a head knowledge of Christ, but Goodwin describes it as an intimate heart
knowledge experienced and revealed by God. In addition, right before the above quoted passage, Goodwin
writes, “They had not lost the image of Christ in respect of sanctification in their hearts, for certainly they
were men that were holy, but the truth was this, they had been diverted from the knowledge of Christ which
at first they had received, they were diverted to another gospel, as he saith, chap. 1, and so to another Christ.”
They already had the knowledge of Christ but they were diverting from the knowledge. This is the reason
why they had to restore to themselves that knowledge in order for Christ to be formed in their heart. However,
they do not seem plausible to assume that they have forgotten the knowledge of Christ they had gained before.
They would still have that knowledge in their mind, but they had been departing from Christ for some reason.
This implies that the problem does not lie in their lack of the knowledge of Christ, but rather that it is not
enough to have good knowledge of Christ for Him to be formed in us. The second quotation is: “you shall
find 'riches of assurance' joined with a saint's knowledge, which, 1 Thes 1: 4, 5, is made a note of election,
and not in another. Scotus says that to get a true and perfect knowledge in divine things, *fides infusa et
acquisita*, both faith infused and acquired, are necessary. Unless faith rivets the principles of divine
knowledge into the heart, all the conclusions hang on uncertainties, and fall down in the end.” (*Works*, 4:239).
This passage does not demonstrate the role of knowledge in our acquisition of faith. Rather, it shows that
faith works for our assurance of salvation by riveting the knowledge of Christ in our hearts. Therefore, mere
knowledge not fixed in the heart is useless and falls down in the end, Goodwin argues. Accordingly, these
two passages quoted by Horton are not convincing evidences for Goodwin’s intellectualism in relation to
faith.
understanding, for an assent or assurance that these things are mine is not of the essence of faith, but there are acts of the will besides that go to make up faith; therefore, Heb. 11:13, there are three things attributed to faith: First, A real sight of the promises: ‘They saw them.’ Secondly, A persuasion or assurance of their truth and goodness: ‘they were persuaded of them;’ and these two make up a spiritual general assent in the understanding. But then, thirdly, is added their embracing them: ‘they embraced them,’ which is an act of the will, or an act of application; so, Rom. 4:5, to believe that God justifies the ungodly, is the act of general assent, but to believe *on him* that justifies the ungodly, is an act of application; it is an act of the will, resting on him for a man’s own particular salvation.42 (Italics mine).

Contrary to Horton’s view identifying Goodwin as an intellectualist, the above passage shows that Goodwin is inclined to attribute the essence of faith to the will rather than the intellect. But Goodwin’s intention does not seem to give any supremacy to any one faculty because his attention is not so much focused on the question of whether faith consists primarily in the intellect or the will as on the acts of faith which require both the intellect and the will.

8.3. Law of Faith

In fact, although in the discussion of sanctification, the law of faith was briefly expounded, it is helpful to examine this topic here for wrapping up this study on faith before getting into the concluding remarks.

Goodwin seems to use “the law of faith” in two slightly different ways. He first uses it to refer to a kind of the substance of faith. Goodwin holds that the law of faith excludes any works for justification. He writes, “if it be true faith, and genuine, it is impossible, saith he, that works should have any mixture with it,”43 since if any work is


added to the nature of faith, “it overthrows the nature of faith.” Goodwin once again emphasizes the gracious character of faith by excluding works in any sense.

The second meaning of the law of faith refers to the inherent principle which God ordained to be in faith so that true believers may apply themselves to all in Christ. Because the seat of faith is the heart, according to the law of faith, unfeigned faith “frame and fashion in a natural way the heart to a suitable disposition unto” the object and goal of faith:

45

thou comest to believe in Jesus Christ; let me ask thee this question, What is it thou aimest at in thy coming to him? what wouldest thou have from him? what wouldest thou have with him? what is thy intent, thy business with him? The soul will say, I would have pardon of sin, and I believe on him for the forgiveness of my sins; for ‘blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven;’ and forgiveness lies only in him. Why now, according to the law of faith, according to that ingenuity and unfeignedness of faith, what will be the issue of it? Thou wilt let fall all the weapons that are in thy hand against God presently. It floweth, I say, naturally, from the very law of believing.

46

Goodwin claims that if sinners truly come to Christ to be pardoned through His blood and sufferings, which is “the only all-sufficient sacrifice of himself,” then the law of faith, if it is genuine, would certainly frame their hearts to conform to Christ’s obedience and to apply themselves to it. Therefore, although faith sanctifies sinners in ways as numerous as our purposes of going to Christ are, all sanctification “is seminally contained in the very law of faith.” Goodwin denies that the elect do first see themselves “lost without Christ” and then concludes that they must “repent to perform a condition” of their

44 Goodwin, Works, 8:316.

45 Goodwin, Works, 8:318.

46 Goodwin, Works, 8:317–318.

47 Goodwin, Works, 8:319.

48 Goodwin, Works, 8:319.
justification. But it is the law of faith seminally contained in faith that brings forth repentance and sanctification within themselves. In other words, sanctification is not brought forth from the intellectual, logical judgment of a sinner, which is separated from faith, but an inherent principle embedded in faith itself.

The law of faith does not merely produce repentance and sanctification, but, “in treating with Jesus Christ for justification,” applies the souls of the believers fully to Christ and gives up their whole souls to both God and Christ. The application of our souls to Christ means that believers begin to receive Christ as a lord, a king, and a husband, and apply their souls accordingly to him. However, Goodwin warns his readers not to misunderstand that justification is the result of the simple application of our souls to Christ according to the law of faith. Believing in Christ is the only way for justification in that justification is a forensic act of God. Goodwin’s argument is this: Given that taking Christ as a husband is “an act of love,” not faith, “if this was the justifying act, love would go before faith.” Goodwin once again makes sure that all our acts of receiving Christ as a king, a lord, and a husband and the due obedience naturally following it are flowing from “the very nature of that act of faith that seeketh justification from Christ.” Therefore, Goodwin draws a conclusion from the law of faith:

faith is not only opposed to doubting, but it is opposed to disobedience. Unbelief, you see, and unbelievers, are expressed by being disobedient. Why?

---

Because virtually and seminally taking Jesus Christ as a Lord and a King, in all things to obey him, is contained in the very nature of faith.\(^{54}\) For this reason, opposing some Reformed theologians’ argument that faith and repentance are the conditions for the covenant of grace, Goodwin goes on to claim that repentance and sanctification cannot be regarded as the conditions of the covenant. All these are seminally included in faith, argues Goodwin, thus they should not be regarded as “conditions of the covenant of grace. . . . it is impossible for a man to believe but all these things must follow.”\(^{55}\) God never negotiates with sinners for the conditions of the covenant of grace. These are not conditions for justification, but they are something without which the believer cannot come to enjoy the covenant of grace. In other words, they are the necessary constituents of justification and part of salvation. Accordingly, Goodwin avers that faith is the sole condition for the covenant of grace because faith seminally includes them and that “[h]e that believeth truly, according to the law of faith, he takes whole Jesus Christ, and gives up his whole soul to him, to be ruled and disposed by him for ever.”\(^{56}\) Repentance and sanctification do not exist being apart from justification, but the natural outcome of faith that works in justification.

Goodwin gives another explanation to the law of faith in his dealing with the distinction between special faith and general faith. Even though he focuses on the difference between the two kinds of faith, he affirms that each faith does not have its own principle or root, but the same one. When Paul, in 2 Tim 3:15, teaches that “the holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ

\(^{54}\) Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8: 325.

\(^{55}\) Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:327.

\(^{56}\) Goodwin, \textit{Works}, 8:327.
Jesus,” argues Goodwin, this faith may refer to both general faith and special faith alike because their principle is one and the same. Not only special faith, but even general faith, which cannot save a sinner alone without special faith, may be rightly called wisdom unto salvation “because it superadds unto notional knowledge in things spiritual, as wisdom in men superadds unto knowledge notional in worldly businesses.”

Goodwin clearly explains how mere knowledge of spiritual things can be made a wisdom unto salvation by shedding light on a peculiar function of faith:

That knowledge which constitutes a man a wise man, as such, in worldly matters, beyond a man simply knowing, is such a degree or kind of knowledge as over and above the notion affects and strikes the spirit of a man to act accordingly, and puts him on to practise; whereas the like knowledge in others, though it may be more clear and distinct for the notion, is overly, and affects not the man, nor is strong enough to overcome his affections to the contrary. Now, look what difference there is in this twofold knowledge about temporal things, the like there is as to spiritual; there is an enlightening of the Holy Ghost, which clears up the notion of all things spiritual to be known, unto which faith is a farther special gift superadded, to affect and strike the heart with them, as the gift of wisdom added to knowledge useth to affect in outward affairs. Take then faith as it hath thus all the Scriptures, and all in them, for its object, and as it thus strongly makes an impression on the heart to act accordingly, and it is a wisdom unto salvation.

Faith, whether general or special, is a supernaturally added gift and has a faculty to “affect and strike the heart” in relation to spiritual things, just like wisdom does to worldly matters. He thus identifies faith with a wisdom unto salvation since mere knowledge changes into saving wisdom by faith. This faculty embedded in faith Goodwin seems to call the root or principle of faith shared by both general faith and special faith. In addition, the law of faith may also be identified with this faculty, which not only justifies, but also sanctifies those believing sinners.

---

57 Goodwin, Works, 8:275.

Taken all together, Goodwin classifies faith into special faith and general faith according to the objects on which each faith rests. Special faith is a faith that justifies and saves sinners and accompanies general faith, whereas general faith cannot save any sinner alone without special faith, but it can be called “a wisdom unto salvation” when accompanied by special faith. For Goodwin, saving faith, whether special or general, must have a seat in the heart, which includes both mind and will, and have fiducia as well as notitia and accensus. God uses special faith alone as a means for His “work upon us,” but he uses special faith for His “work in us” together with general faith. All this is possible because of the law of faith, which is an inherent principle of faith that makes mere knowledge “wisdom unto salvation.”

Concluding Remarks

The focus of this study has been on the broader role of faith in its relation to other aspects of the work of salvation in early modern Reformed theology, with specific reference to the thought of Thomas Goodwin. Particularly, this study had three specific purposes. First, this study has been done with a view to demonstrating how Goodwin, with his doctrine of faith, responded to theological controversies in his time. Second, we tried to demonstrate that the old scholarship on Reformed orthodoxy is seriously problematic and thus needs to be corrected. Third, by showing how these are organically interconnected, this study hopes to contribute to the historical scholarship on Reformed orthodoxy, in which little significant integrated study on the three important topics of Reformed theology – covenant theology, the ordo salutis, and faith – was done.
Goodwin's doctrine of faith refutes the Antinomians’ doctrine of eternal justification. They argued that the elect were justified prior to faith either in eternity or on Christ’s death on the Cross. For them, faith does not contribute anything to actual justification, but simply manifests justification completed in the past. They went on to claim that in the covenant of grace no condition is required because the elect are already justified and have entered the covenant of grace. Goodwin decisively denies the Antinomian notion of eternal justification. Dividing justification into *tria momenta*, immanent in God’s heart, transient on the Cross, and actual in the elect, Goodwin holds that although we *were* justified both in eternity and in Christ’s resurrection, we do not actually possess God’s justification *upon* us until we believe in Christ. Therefore, Goodwin disputes the Antinomian concept of eternal justification by not only attributing the origin and source of justification to God, but also its actualization to faith.

Goodwin’s doctrine of faith also rejected the Arminian view of justification. In contrast to the Antinomians, the Arminians put too much value on faith because of their denial of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience. They claimed that instead of Christ’s active obedience, faith itself is imputed to sinners. According to Goodwin’s doctrine of faith, however, faith is not something that a sinner can produce by himself/herself, but something that is infused by the Spirit. Goodwin maintains that the Holy Spirit infuses the principles of new spiritual life in the elect at regeneration, one of which is the principle, or seed, of faith.

The Neonomian doctrine of justification was also refuted by Goodwin’s understanding of the relationship between faith and sanctification. Baxter and his fellow Neonomians held that faith is required of the elect to enter the covenant of grace, so in
this sense, faith is an instrument for justification, but our actual obedience is also necessary for the evangelical righteousness needed for the final justification, so in this sense faith is not an instrument. Thus, Baxter argued that we must achieve our own evangelical righteousness with obedience to the law. Baxter seems to have separated faith and obedience when he denied the instrumental role of faith for the “evangelical righteousness.” But Goodwin’s view of the relationship between faith and sanctification rejected Baxter’s Neonomian view of the relationship between faith and justification. Goodwin explained that faith includes sanctification and thus that sanctification grows out of the principle of faith in the sinner. When the Holy Spirit regenerates sinners, Goodwin asserted, He infuses the principles of new spiritual life, one of which is “the principle of sanctification” or “habitual holiness.” Therefore, if faith is true, saving faith, faith must bring about sanctification. Accordingly, Goodwin’s doctrine of faith efficiently refuted the Antinomian doctrine of eternal justification by emphasizing the substantial role of faith for actual justification on the one hand; on the other hand, it denied both the Arminian-Socinian view of justification by locating the origin of faith in God, and the Neonomian understanding of faith’s role for justification by shedding light on the origin of sanctification belonging to faith.

Over against the old scholarship that claims Reformed orthodoxy has distorted the theology of the Reformers, particularly Calvin, because it undermined divine sovereignty in salvation by regarding faith as a condition, Goodwin’s entire soteriology demonstrates that faith is both an instrument and a condition that make room for human participation in salvation without compromising God’s sovereignty. On this point, others of Goodwin’s Reformed contemporaries largely agreed. Even though not agreeing on all the details of
the conditionality and instrumentality of faith, they shared the conviction that faith is essentially required for the covenant of grace and vibrantly works in the application of salvation in an individual believer and that nevertheless faith does not undermine God’s grace. Goodwin’s emphasis on the doctrine of union with Christ serves as evidence of how Reformed orthodoxy could successfully combine these two seemingly contradictory elements. He explains that faith and all the blessings of his *ordo salutis* flow from the believers’ union with Christ. On the one hand, we are united with Christ by faith; on the other hand, Christ first takes us, even before we are regenerated, and then gives us the Spirit, faith, and other spiritual blessings. This doctrine clearly shows both that the origin of faith is in God Himself, not from us and that faith is the instrument by which all other blessings are bestowed upon believers.

In Reformed soteriology doctrines, such as covenant theology, the *ordo salutis,* and the doctrine of faith, take a significant place. Although they are inseparably connected, little significant historical research has been done in Reformed circles dealing with these topics together.

As demonstrated so far, Goodwin’s comprehensive understanding and emphasis on the role of faith for salvation and his broad interest in soteriology turned out to be one of the fittest cases for our study. In other words, Goodwin’s doctrine of faith is eminent among the Puritans, which is proved not only in his massive book on faith, *The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith,* but is also reaffirmed by his frequent reference to faith in his treatment of various topics in other works. Moreover, given that Goodwin’s theological project is highly focused on soteriological concerns, his soteriology and its emphasis

---

59 This does not mean that most of Goodwin’s works deal immediately with soteriological topics as the main theme because Goodwin shows a good deal of interest in covering almost the entire theological
on faith demonstrate the acme of the Reformed Puritan understanding of the relationship between faith and salvation.

Goodwin does not discuss covenant theology, the order of salvation, and faith separately, but views all of them as an inseparably interwoven single body. Goodwin understands covenant theology and the divine sequential causality, which would later be called the *ordo salutis*, as the two main frameworks of salvation. Although in the seventeenth century the term *ordo salutis* was not a technically fixed term, Goodwin had a similar concept of a sequential causality of salvation, and Goodwin’s whole theology was firmly rooted in the covenantal structure. God ordained Himself to deliver His elect sinners from the fallen state in His covenant relationship with them. All about salvation from the eternal decree to the personal application of the decree was incorporated into the covenant theology; in contrast, the divine sequential causality refers to the blessings flowing out of the covenant of grace. Thus, it deals specifically with the whole application of salvation from regeneration to glorification. Then, Goodwin adds faith to this structure as a binding bond so that the God’s entire salvation may be an organism. Goodwin believes that faith is the only requirement of humanity that works in every moment of salvation. In other words, faith, as an instrument, makes God’s salvific plan work in the individual elect.

God made the covenant of works with the innocent Adam in his natural state.60 This covenant is not newly given to him after creation, but confirms an existing law in Adam’s heart since the creation. Although the relationship between God and His rational

---

60 See Goodwin’s *Of the Creatures*.
creatures has already been prescribed in the name of *jus creationis*, God makes the covenant of works with Adam as a representative of the entire humankind. The nominal condition of the covenant concerns eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but the real implication of the covenant of works is that if Adam lives according to the law of creation inscribed in his heart, he could live in the garden enjoying due happiness forever. God bestowed Adam with enough ability, knowledge, and purity to keep the covenant of works, but Adam broke it. Goodwin claims that the cause that led Adam to sin was not simply his disobedience. There was a more serious crime embedded in it. It was Adam’s unbelief of God’s Word that caused him to eat the forbidden fruit. This was not simply an accidental disobedience. Because he was an innocent man and his one sin caused the total change of his nature. He distrusted not only God’s Word, but also God Himself. Goodwin holds that it actually means Adam put more trust in the devil’s word than God’s and believed the devil. It was a challenge against God’s sovereignty and His glory. Due to this sin caused by unbelief, all humanity fell with Adam and was placed under the divine curse and judgment. All their spiritual functions became corrupt and ended. Without grace, there is no hope in human nature according to Goodwin’s sharp distinction between the natural and supernatural domains.

For His children in this desperate situation, God made an intra-trinitarian covenant, i.e., the covenant of redemption. Choosing the elect in Christ in eternity, God the Father makes the covenant of redemption with the other two Persons.61 Although Goodwin in most cases refers to this covenant as the transaction between the Father and the Son, he does not exclude the Spirit from the covenant. Goodwin mentions the Spirit’s

61 See Goodwin’s *Christ the Mediator*. 
role as a principal actor assigned in this covenant. In the covenant of redemption, the Trinity ordained and agreed on all the details for the salvation of the elect. The covenant of grace was appointed to be a framework for our salvation. Christ was also ordained to be crucified for us as the mediator, judge, and surety. Above all, the Trinity appointed faith both as a means by which Christ’s merit and righteousness are imputed to us and as a condition that must be met for the elect to enter the covenant of grace. Goodwin strongly rejects any merit in fulfilling the condition, but he acknowledges that faith may be regarded as a condition in the sense that faith is necessary for a sinner to enter and stay in the covenant of grace. In this eternal covenant, God in turn ordained the relationship broken by Adam’s unbelief to be recovered by faith in Christ.

Once the elect enters the covenant of grace, they are privileged to enjoy all the blessings prepared for them according to the covenant of redemption. The order of salvation as the application of Christ’s redemption by the Spirit includes all spiritual blessings existing between the entrance into the covenant of grace and staying in the covenant until death. Arguing that all these blessings are bestowed upon us by the Spirit, Goodwin specifically describes how the Spirit works in our salvation in his book.62

But Goodwin also pays close attention to the vibrant role of faith in experiencing each of the blessings. To put it another way, the Spirit uses faith in accomplishing our salvation. Salvation is completed in the framework of the covenant of grace; it is also the result of union with Christ from which all spiritual blessings for salvation flow; and faith is the means by which these two vessels of salvation can function properly for salvation without undermining both God’s sovereign grace and human responsibility. Particularly,
it is faith that connects each blessing of the covenant of grace so that all the steps of the ordo salutis, from regeneration to glorification, may be a sequential, and organic, single body. The seed of faith implanted by the Spirit in regeneration buds in justifying the regenerate;\textsuperscript{63} this justifying faith adopts the justified into God’s family; the habitual holiness included in faith sanctifies God’s child;\textsuperscript{64} God preserves His child in grace and turns His preservation into their perseverance by faith;\textsuperscript{65} and God-given, Spirit-encouraged faith finally does its last work in comforting and strengthening the saints on their deathbeds to die cheerfully in hoping for the glory of heaven and waiting to be glorified.\textsuperscript{66} Goodwin’s understanding of God’s salvation reaches its zenith in glorification. For him, glorification is the doctrine where the universal historia salutis and the personal ordo salutis meet. In addition, glorification is the last, eternal state of humanity. There is, therefore, no blessing independent from faith. In this sense, for Goodwin the syllogismus practicus is important because justifying faith must work for sanctification.

This is the way in which Goodwin incorporates Reformed covenant theology, the order of salvation, and faith into his soteriology. The relationship between God and humanity broken by the lack of faith is restored to a better relationship by faith alone.

\textsuperscript{63} See Goodwin’s Of the Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation; The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith; Christ Set Forth; Man’s Restoration by Grace.

\textsuperscript{64} See Goodwin’s A Child of Light Walking in Darkness; The Return of Prayers; The Trial of a Christian’s Growth; The Vanity of Thoughts; Of Gospel Holiness in the Heart and Life; A Discourse of Thankfulness, which is Due to God for His Benefits and Blessings; Three Several Ages of Christians in Faith and Obedience.

\textsuperscript{65} See Goodwin’s Patience and Its Perfect Work; A Discourse of Election &c. (particularly Book IV); The Heart of Christ in Heaven Towards Sinners on Earth.

\textsuperscript{66} See Goodwin’s Of the Blessed State of Glory Which the Saints Possess After Death; An Immediate State of Glory for the Spirits of Just Men, Upon Dissolution, Demonstrated.
The least lack of faith cast all humanity in Adam under eternal death in the covenant of works, whereas in the covenant of grace the least saving faith, if only genuine, can deliver the elect from the wrath and judgment of God and keep them all the way throughout their lives to glorification. Faith is such a unifying concept in Goodwin’s soteriology, which reconciles God’s sovereignty and human responsibility.

Faith neither undermines God’s grace nor makes any change to the nature of *sola gratia*. Rather, faith is the perfect means for both making salvation totally God’s gracious work and at the same time keeping the elect from being a passive object. Faith is also a condition for the covenant of grace in the sense that it must be met for being involved in the covenant. As a means and a condition, therefore, faith makes the elect, in a sense, active and vibrant principal agents in the salvation process, particularly after their justification. Goodwin claims that faith, as a condition, qualifies them to enter the covenant of grace and, as an instrument, helps them stay in the covenant. Thus, faith is an instrument for fulfilling the condition. Goodwin shows in his soteriology that God does everything for salvation through the Spirit, but the elect do their part for salvation through faith. Nevertheless, there is no conflict between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility because faith functions by grace. For Goodwin, salvation is not only fully God’s work, but requires active human participation, which Goodwin would express as “salvation by faith alone.”
THESES

Theses Related to the Dissertation

1. Thomas Goodwin’s major work on faith The Act and Objects of Justifying Faith can be regarded as an introduction to his whole theological project based on a fourfold human state. It is evidenced by the following three reasons. First, the strong impact of his conversion experience from false faith to true saving faith caused him to focus on the broader role of faith in salvation. Second, faith actually plays a unifying concept in his theological project as an interconnector for each state of the fourfold human state. Third, this work also includes the same major characteristics of Goodwin’s whole project.

2. Goodwin claims that God’s relationship with Adam under the covenant of works was broken by Adam’s unbelief, or lack of faith, because although the immediate cause of Adam’s fall was his disobedience to God’s Word, his disobedience was brought forth by his lack of faith in his natural knowledge of God. In addition, he believes that the covenantal relationship between God and His people broken by lack of natural faith is also restored by supernatural faith in the framework of the covenant of grace that is rooted in the covenant of redemption. Therefore, Goodwin regards faith as one of fundamental concepts on which he builds up his own soteriology.

3. Goodwin explains salvation through his clear parallel between Adam under the natural covenant of works and Christ under the supernatural, gracious covenant of grace as the head. He also argues that the conditionality of the covenant of grace in Goodwin’s theology is already embedded in his idea of the covenant of redemption, which is also embraced by the Reformers though considered a seminal concept. Accordingly, given that Goodwin consistently emphasizes the gracious, absolute characteristics of the covenant by positing Christ as the primary covenant party who satisfied all the proper conditions of the covenant and by showing God’s initiative in faith and obedience of the elect, for Goodwin, rather than compromising God’s grace influenced by the conditional covenant of works, the conditionality of the covenant of grace simply refers to the necessity of faith rooted in God’s graciousness in the whole process of salvation.

4. Even though it is widely acknowledged that the term “ordo salutis” was not generally received by Reformed orthodoxy as a fixed technical term until the early eighteenth century, Goodwin as well as many Reformed orthodox theologians acknowledges that there is a divinely ordained sequential causality for salvation and identifies it with the series of blessings prepared for the partakers of the covenant of grace.

5. For Goodwin, the doctrine of unio cum Christi cannot be reduced to one of the elements of an ordo salutis, but is the origin of all spiritual blessings. His argument
concerning the *unio cum Christi* consists of two parts, one is immanent in the divine decree and on the Cross and the other actual in time by faith, and protects both God’s sovereignty and human participation of salvation against the attacks of the Antinomian undervaluation of faith and of the Arminian, Neonomian, and Socinian overemphasis on faith and obedience.

6. When it comes to Goodwin’s view on the relation between union with Christ and justification, there is no clear evidence that Goodwin divides union with Christ into two types, each of which is respectively rooted in the legal, federal union with Christ and in the spiritual union with Christ, and then attributes justification to the legal one and sanctification to the spiritual. Rather, Goodwin puts all the blessings under the same union with Christ, which is a substantial union.

7. While it is true that Goodwin’s preparatory grace differs a bit from that of some other Reformed Puritans, they all firmly stand on the position that this preparatory grace is, as a supernatural grace, given totally from God and disposes and prepares our souls for the act of faith, or conversion, and that this grace is also irresistible and thus must lead us to salvation. In this sense, the general Puritan concept of preparation, which comes prior to the first implantation of the spiritual life in the heart, as well as Goodwin’s concept, must be distinguished from similar concepts of the Arminians and Catholics, which put an emphasis on free-will, which can either reject or receive God’s prevenient grace.

8. Goodwin claims that regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit, who infuses the principles of new spiritual life at the very moment of regeneration. Of the principles are the seed of faith, the act of which will be manifested in conversion and justification, and habitual sanctification, which leads to a sanctified life. Goodwin also presents union with Christ as a significant source of sanctification because by being united with Christ a person can shares in Christ holiness through which the person can get two distinct benefits – the forensic justification as represented by freedom from condemnation and a definitive sense of sanctification as the beginning of actual sanctification, which will enable him/her to walk after the Spirit. Therefore, for Goodwin, the principles of new life, particularly the seed of faith, which are implanted in the souls by the Spirit at regeneration and believers’ union with Christ are two proofs that demonstrate an inseparable relationship between justification and sanctification in the life of the believer.

9. Goodwin had two somewhat different concepts of sanctification. One is a definitive sense of sanctification or habitual sanctification; the other a progressive sense of sanctification. Speaking of the latter, he always places sanctification after justification in his discussion of spiritual blessings that come out of the covenant of grace. However, given that at regeneration the Spirit infuses the inherent principles of a spiritual life, including both habitual sanctification and the principle of faith, Goodwin is not opposed to the idea that sanctification can precede justification because justifying faith or an act of faith must proceed from a principle of faith
habitually wrought, since the seed and principle of faith is a part, and a principal part, of regeneration” or habitual sanctification. Therefore, for Goodwin, that justification, the result of an act of faith, may or may not precede sanctification according to whether sanctification represents a habitual sanctification, which includes the principle of faith, or ongoing sanctification.

10. Goodwin makes a distinction between sanctification and good works. If sanctification is the inward condition of holiness, good works are external fruits reflecting that condition. In addition, faith can be referred to as the origin from which inward sanctification is manifested as the external good works due to “the law of faith.”

Theses Related to the Ph.D Course Work

11. Most of the new concepts found in the discussion of the late Puritans on vocation do not signify a fundamental deviation from the early Puritan view on the same matter, but the late Puritans developed and embodied, rather than twisted, those concepts and ideas into a more mature form as they applied those new concepts to the actual lives of Christians.

12. G. W. M. Lampe’s doctrine of atonement makes critical mistakes in relation to his criticism on the Reformed doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement though he shares some important points with it. It is his understanding of sin that plays an essential role in shaping his idea of Christ’s atonement. However, because his understanding of some critical elements of the penal substitutionary atonement theory, such as merit, substitution, divine justice, satisfaction, and punishment, were formed on this basis, his whole idea of the atonement is driven to the point that he argues that divine love was subordinated to divine justice. Therefore, in the doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement divine love is not subordinated to God’s retributive justice, rather the divine justice serves to reveal God’s love to man clearly.

13. Thomas Goodwin’s sermon on Zechariah 4:6-9 proves that there is continuity in the interpretive principle of Scripture between the Reformers and their 17th century followers. In particular, the method of quadriga, which is found in this sermon, is an essential evidence to prove the continuity between the two parties, just as quadriga plays the same role in the issue of the continuity between the Middle ages and the Reformation period.

14. Herman Witsius had a twofold preparation concept based on his idea of twofold regeneration. Regeneration is the first moment of God’s infusion of the spiritual principle in a sinner, so the first preparation is totally God’s work. The second regeneration refers to the manifestation of the principle, so the second preparation is a preparation for the act of faith and the work of the regenerate with the inward spiritual principle.
15. Wilhelmus à Brakel urges the unregenerate to know God and His law that is written upon their hearts for desiring God’s grace, and yet for the regenerate he asks them to live out holy lives according to God’s law which is identical with natural law in content.

**Miscellaneous Theses**

16. The best way, as well as the biblical way, of evangelizing unbelieving society is not to plead with unbelievers to come to church, but to make them walk to church by themselves because they are curious about the faithful life of Christians.

17. Church reform cannot be performed by those who are inflamed with a zeal for reform, but by those who hide themselves behind the Cross.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources


Ball, John. *A treatise of Faith Divided into Two Parts the First Shewing the Nature, the Second, the Life of Faith : Both Tending to Direct the Weak Christian*. London: Printed for Edward Brewster, 1657.


__________. *Universal Redemption of Mankind, by the Lord Jesus Christ: Stated and Cleared by the late Learned Mr. Richard Baxter. Wherein is added a short Account of Special Redemption, by the same Author*. London: 1694.

Birch, Thomas, ed. *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Esq.; secretary, first, to the Council of State, and afterwards to the two Protectors, Oliver an Richard Cromwell. … To Which is prefixed, the life of Mr Thurloe*. 7 vols. 1742.


Bullinger, Heinrich. *In divinum Iesu Christi domini nostri evangelium secundum Ioannem*. Zurich: Apud Frosch, 1543.


Cameron, John. *De triplici Dei cum hominefoedere theses*. Heidelberg, 1608.


__________. *The Fountain of Life Opened Or A Display of Christ in His Essential and Mediatorial Glory*. London, 1700.


Preston, John. *The breast-plate of Faith and Love a Treatise Wherein the Ground and Exercise of Faith and Love, as They are Set upon Christ Their Object, and as They are Expressed in Good Works, is Explained*. London: Printed by George Purslow, and are to be sold in the Companie of Stationers, 1651.

Roberts, Francis. *The Mysterie and Marrow of the Bible: viz. God’s Covenants wit Man, in the first Adam, Before the Fall: and in the Last Adam Jesus Christ, After the Fall From the Beginning to the End of the World*. London, 1657.

Rogers, John. *The Doctrine of Faith Wherein are Practically Handled Ten Principall Points, which Explain the Nature of Vse of It*. London: Printed for N.N. and William Sheffard, and are to be sold at his shop at the entering into Po[p]es-head-Alley out of Lumbar-street, 1657.


Van Mastricht, Petro. *Theorectico-Practica Theologia, Qua, Per singular capita Theologica, pars exegetica, dogmatica, elenchtica & practica, perpetua successionne conjugantur.* 1724.


Secondary Sources


Emerson, Everett H. “Calvin and Covenant Theology.” Church History 25 (1956): 136-144.


