

Christ of the Covenants

November 30, 2008

The Covenant of Works

- Westminster Confession of Faith (1647)
 - VII.1. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He has been pleased to express by way of covenant (Is. 2:25; 40:13-17; Job 9:32-33; 22:2-3; 35:7-8; Ps. 113:5-6; 100:2-3; Lk. 17:10; Acts 17:24-25)
 - VII.2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works (Gal. 3:12), wherein life was promised to Adam; and in him to his posterity (Rom. 10:5; 5:12-19), upon condition of perfect and personal obedience (Gen. 2:17; Gal. 3:10)

- *Introduction to Covenant Theology* by J.M. Zugg (2008)
 - The first covenant is the “Covenant of Works” between God and Adam
 - God entered into a covenant that required perfect obedience from Adam in the Garden of Eden
 - Adam had to obey the command that he not eat of one tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen. 2:15)
 - If he broke the covenant he would die; if he obeyed God, he would live
 - This covenant is “of works,” because the success of this covenant was based upon Adam’s obedience
 - The covenant was made with Adam and all men, since Adam was a representative for the whole human race (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:22)
 - Adam failed in this test, and so condemned himself and all those he represented to death

God Alone – *Solus Christus*

The Covenant of Grace

- Westminster Confession of Faith (1647)
 - VII.3. Man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second (Gal. 3:21; Rom. 8:3; 3:20-21; Gen. 3:15; Is. 42:6), commonly called the covenant of grace; wherein He freely offers unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved (Mk. 16:15-16; Jn. 3:16; Rom. 10:6, 9; Gal. 3:11), and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe (Ez. 36:26-27; Jn. 6:44-45)

- *Introduction to Covenant Theology* by J.M. Zugg (2008)
 - The term “Covenant of Grace” does not occur in the Scriptures; we use the term to describe the series of covenants from the first gracious promise Adam in Genesis 3:15 to the promises made to Abraham, Moses, and David that reach their fulfillment in the New Covenant in Christ (Luke 22:20)
 - The principle behind the Covenant of Grace is that man is unable to please God by his works
 - We say it is “of grace,” because since man’s fall in the Covenant of Works, man can no longer please God by his works, so the only way that God can deal with man now is by grace
 - God covenants with men for the forgiveness of their sins and enters into a new relationship with them
 - God graciously supplies all that is necessary for man’s salvation through Christ Jesus
 - Christ promised to obey the Father and to act as His people's representative and surety in order to deliver them; the Covenant of Grace is based upon Christ's obedience.
 - The Covenant of Grace begins with the promise to Adam in the Old Testament and is brought to fulfillment in Christ's work
 - There is one Covenant of Grace, which can be divided up into a number of dispensations, the principle ones being the Old and New Covenants
 - Christ is the center of the covenants; in the Old Testament, God's people looked forward to the coming of Christ; today, we look back to the cross in the New Covenant

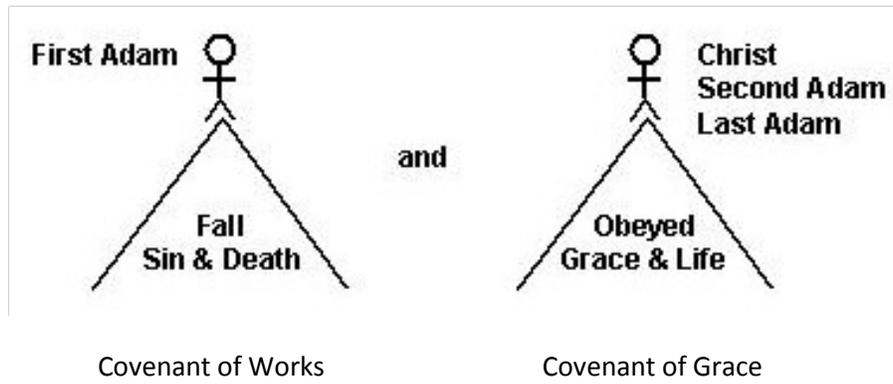
Solus Christus

- Faith – the instrument of our justification

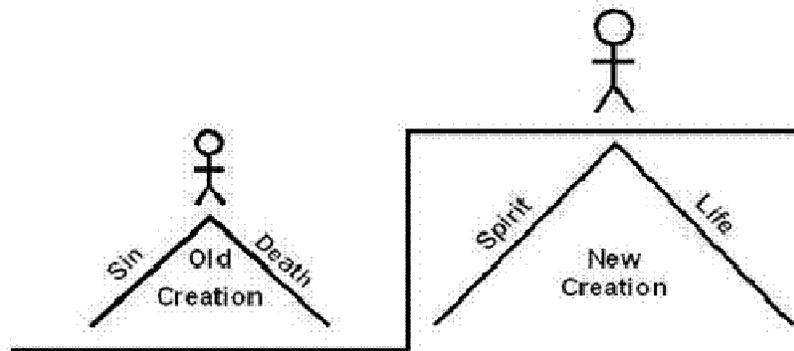
- Grace – the means of our justification

- Merit of Christ – the grounds of our justification
 - Alien or imputed righteousness – *extra nos, pro nobis*

The Two Adams (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:45-49)



- The Scriptures speak of two principle covenants: one with Adam, the Covenant of Works; the other with Christ, the Covenant of Grace.
- Adam was the representative of the old creation and all mankind born naturally from him; Christ is the representative of the new creation, one of grace and life to all in Him
- Due to his sin, Adam fell, leading to death for all those in him; Christ, through His obedience, merited life to all those in Him (1 Cor. 15:20; Rom. 5:1-19)
- In 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, the link between Adam and the old creation and Christ and the new creation is stressed; based upon this we can expand our diagram as follows:



- Adam, under the Covenant of Works, was the head of the old creation; through his failure, he brought in sin and death to himself and all creation
- Christ is the head of the new creation; through His obedience under the terms of the Covenant of Grace, Jesus brings in grace, the Spirit, the new creation, and life to all who are in Him