

Christ Presbyterian Church

Officer's Training

Lesson #3

AN OUTLINE OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH
Lesson #3
Chapter IV: Of Creation

Introduction:

The Shorter Catechism, question 8, links the last Chapter III, “Of God’s Eternal Decrees,” with this Chapter IV, “Of Creation,” and the next Chapter V, “Of Providence.”

Question 8: How doth God execute His decrees?

Answer: God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.

We studied God’s decrees; now we move on and see how God carried them out. He does this first in creation.

IV: i

Creation in general: (*Genesis 1; Jeremiah 10:12; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 4:11*)

- A. The universe is not self-existent or eternal.
- B. The universe has its existence from the triune God.
- C. God made it all “of nothing.”
- D. This took place in six days.
- E. It was “all very good.”
- F. God did all this for His own glory.

IV: ii

Creation of man in particular:

- A. Man was God’s last, crowning creation. (*Psalms 8:4-6*)
- B. The whole human race descended from one human pair. (*Genesis 1:27; 3:20*)
- C. They were made in the image of God. (*Genesis 1:26, 27*)
 - 1. Created with “reasonable, immortal souls.” (*Genesis 2:7; Matthew 10:28*)
 - 2. Created with “knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.” (*Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24*)
- D. They had given them knowledge of God’s will.
 - 1. Inwardly (*Romans 2:14, 15*)
 - 2. Outwardly (*Genesis 2:16, 17*)
- E. They were capable of obeying God.
 - 1. While obedient they were happy and in fellowship with God. (*Genesis 3:8-11*)
 - 2. They also had dominion over animals. (*Genesis 1:28-30; 2:19, 20*)
- F. They were also capable of falling. (*Genesis 2:17*)

Lesson #3

Chapter V: Of Providence

Introduction:

- A. “The decrees of God are, His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.”
- B. “God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.”

V: i

God’s providence in general, (preserving and governing):

- A. God who created, also upholds His creation. (*Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:16, 17*)
- B. God directs everything in creation. (*Psalms 135:6; Acts 17:24-28*)
- C. This complete control is wise and holy and according to God’s unchanging will. (*Ephesians 1:11*)
- D. All this is to give glory to God. (*Romans 9:17; Psalms 145:10-12*)

V: ii, iii

Second Causes:

- A. God’s decree is always the first cause.
- B. God works by means of second causes. (*Genesis 8:22; 50:19, 20; Acts 27:24, 31, 44*)
- C. God may work without second causes. (*Hosea 1:7; II Kings 6:6; Daniel 3:21*)

V: iv

God is not the author of sin:

- A. God controls sinful acts for His own holy purposes. (*Genesis 50:20; Isaiah 10:5-7, 12, 15; Acts 4:26-28*)
- B. Yet, God is not author or approver of sin. (*I John 2:16; James 1:13, 14*)

V: v, vi, vii

Providence in particular:

- A. The children of God (*II Chronicles 32:25-31; II Corinthians 12:7-9*).
(Why the righteous suffer?)
 - (1) God leaves them to trials and sin.
 - (2) To discipline and humble them.
 - (3) To draw them to Himself and make them watchful and for other reasons.
- B. Un-godly men (*Romans 11:7,8; Mark 4:11, 12; I Peter 2:7, 8*)
 - (1) God blinds and hardens them for their sin.
 - (2) They harden themselves.
- C. The Church
All comes to a good end for God’s people. (*Romans 8:28*)

“To summarize the matter: because God controls the universe, chance is ruled out, and because it is God who controls the universe, fate is ruled out also.”

Lesson #3

ASSIGNMENT:

1. The Westminster Confession of Faith,
Read: Chapters IV and V.
Read: G. I. Williamson, pages 41-52
2. The Book of Church Order of the P.C.A.
Read: Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. How did the world and all things in it come into existence? (WCF, IV/I)

2. Of what did God make the world and all things? (WCF, IV/I)

3. Do those who believe in the theory of evolution have undeniable proof that their doctrine of the origin of the world is true? (GIW, pg 41)
 Yes No
4. Is there any good reason not to believe that God created the world in six twenty-four-hour days? (GIW, pg 42, 43)
 Yes No
5. *Genesis 1:26, 27* tells us that God created man, male and female, in His own image. According to *Colossians 3:10* and *Ephesians 4:24*, in what does the image of God consist? (WCF IV/II)
(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
6. Besides having the law of God written in their hearts, man received a specific command. What was it and what was true of them while they kept it? (WCF IV/II)
(1) _____
(2) _____

Lesson #3, Questions continued:

7. As God has done the work of creation, does He also do the work of Providence by upholding, directing, disposing and governing all creatures, actions, and things? (WCF, V/I)

Yes No

8. Because God immutably (unchangeably) and infallibly determines whatsoever comes to pass, does this mean there are no other secondary causes for what comes to pass in the world? (WCF, V/II)

Yes No

9. What two errors are ruled out by the doctrine of God's Providence? (GIW, pg 46, 47)

(1) _____

(2) _____

10. Why does God often leave for a season His own children to temptations and the corruption of their own hearts? (WCF, V/V)

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

11. Does God blind and harden the wicked or do they harden themselves? (WCF, V/VI)

12. Of what does a particular church consist? (Book of Church Order of PCA, 4-1)

13. What are some ordinances Christ has established in His Church? (BCO, 4-4)

(1) _____ (6) _____

(2) _____ (7) _____

(3) _____ (8) _____

(4) _____ (9) _____

(5) _____

14. What is the difference between a mission church and a particular church? (BCO, 5-1)

Lesson #3, Questions continued:

15. Who only can organize a particular church? (BCO, 5-8) _____

16. To what are children of believers entitled as noncommuning members of the church? (BCO, 6-1)

(1) _____

(2) _____

17. What are communing members? (BCO, 6-2)

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

18. To what are communing members entitled? (BCO, 6-4) _____

19. Have extraordinary officers and extraordinary gifts related to new revelation continued in the church to the present? (BCO, 7-1)

Yes No

20. What are the ordinary and perpetual classes of office in the church? (BCO, 7-2)

(1) _____

(2) _____

21. What is the difference of function between Elders and Deacons? (BCO, 7-2)

22. To whom are these offices open according to Scripture? (BCO, 7-2)
