

Westminster Confession of Faith: Session Four

WCF 3 – Of God’s Eternal Decree

“Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’” (Isaiah 46:8-10 NKJV).

I. Defining God’s Decree

- a. WLC 12: “God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will, whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men.”
- b. Characteristics: 1) Wise/free/holy; 2) acts of God’s will; 3) eternal; 4) glorious; 5) unchangeable; 6) efficacious

II. WCF Chapter III

- a. *Defining God’s Decree (3.1) – Isaiah 10:5-7, 12*

God Not the Author of Sin

Creature’s Will is Not Violated

Second Causes Established

- b. *The Basis of God’s Decree (3.2)*

The Basis of God’s Decree is His Own Will and Pleasure

- c. *Predestination (3.3)*

“Predestined” vs. “Foreordained”

- d. *The Effect of Predestination* (3.4)
- e. *Election* (3.5)
- f. *Election in Relation to Salvation* (3.6)

Reformed Theology vs. “Once Saved, Always Saved”

- g. *Reprobation* (3.7)
- h. *The Use of Predestination* (3.8)

Helpful Resources

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (any edition); chs. XVI-XVIII.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2020; pp. 420-465.

Hodge, Archibald Alexander. *A Commentary on the Confession of Faith*. Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1869; pp. 92-113.

———. *Outlines of Theology*. Rewritten and Enlarged. New York, NY: Hodder & Stoughton, 1878; pp. 200-213.

Van Dixhoorn, Chad. *Confessing the Faith: A Reader’s Guide to the Westminster Confession of Faith*. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2014; pp. 43-58.