

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
WCF 14 , sec 2 – “The Parts of Saving Faith”

sec 2. By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein;

A. **Ps 119:160 “The sum of Your Word is truth, & every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.”**

B. → turn to **2 Pet 1:16-21.**

For the Christian who believes God’s Word because of His authority, they “acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth;”

A. – “yielding obedience to the commands,” – In the same chapter (**Jn 14**) wherein Jesus said **“I am the way, & the truth...”(v5)**, He also said, **“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (v15).**

B. – “trembling at the threatenings,” We will account for every careless word (**Mat 12:36**).

C. – “embracing the promises of God for this life, & that which is to come”

We can rest in the **“the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe” (Rom 3:22).**

Sec 2 “... But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, & resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, & eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.” Perhaps you have heard the principal or essential parts of saving faith in Christ include knowledge, assent, & trust. These are synonyms for “accepting, receiving, & resting” mentioned here in section 2:

A. Knowledge (accepting)—

1. One having such knowledge can say, “I know that the Bible teaches that Christ died for sinners.” Even an atheist literary professor can say these words.

2. Even **“...the demons also believe & shudder (James 2:19).”**

3. Despite the fact that mere knowledge without faith cannot save, knowledge is an essential building block of saving faith.

B. Assent (receiving)— You must know the facts of Scripture yet receive this as your own.

1. “I believe Christ died for me.”

2. Neither demons nor unbelievers would say this.

C. Trust (resting) Those having a saving faith should rest upon Christ & His promises.

1. When you suffer ridicule or persecution because of Christ, where do you turn?

2. When you have the loss of a loved one or other great trial, do you still believe & look to Christ for your hope?

3. Even for experienced, devout Christians, it is common to have a wavering trust when undergoing an immense trial; however, those without saving faith will turn away from God altogether when they undergo a great tribulation.

D. The WCF says this “accepting, receiving, & resting upon Christ” is not just for justification; it is for our sanctification as well. → Turn to **James 1:2-4**

1. I personally only thought of knowledge, assent, & trust in terms of justification.

2. Now, I can see a few ways how a steadfast trust in the midst of a trial can produce greater sanctification. **James 1:2-4** teaches us how we can do that.

E. Our faith is strengthened by “...by virtue of the covenant of grace.” **Nehemiah 9:32:**  
“...**God, the great, the mighty, & the awesome God, who keeps covenant & lovingkindness**”

WCF 14, sec 3

sec 3. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; -

A. The end result of Christ’s parable of the soils is that true believers will bear some fruit for the kingdom yet they will have varying degrees of fruit-bearing.

1) Those sown on the wayside, on rocky soil, & among thorns do not bear any fruit, representing unbelievers.

2) **Mat 13:23** “**And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word & understands it; who indeed bears fruit & brings forth, some a hundredfold, some 60, & some 30.**”

3) Jesus says that faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains (**Mat 17:20**) yet that seed needs to be planted in good soil & watered. Surrounding weeds will need to be removed for it to grow into a mustard tree for the kingdom. Some of those trees can be 20 feet tall with a 20 feet diameter. Some remain as shrubs.

B. It is not just the superheroes of the faith that we are to receive. **Romans 14:1** “**Now accept the one who is weak in faith,...**” even though they may have opinions & practices that we are not fond of. Those of weak faith can grow to become strong in faith with prayer, teaching, preaching, guidance, and encouragement.

Sec 3 Even for the true Christian, his or her faith “...may be often & many ways assailed, & weakened, but gets the victory: growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance, through Christ, who is both the author & finisher of our faith.”

A. Here is another example that having an absolute assurance is not to be taken-up as the essence of a saving faith.

1. Even a true believer headed to eternal glory can have a faith that “...may be often & many ways assailed, & weakened” according to the WCF.

2. **Luke 22:31-32** “**Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; & you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.**”

a. This passage can apply to the Christian who goes off to college & doubts God & His Word because of the challenges of an atheistic professor.

b. It can apply to one who is being tempted by sin or even falls into some heinous sin for a time. → Turn to **1 Peter 5:6-11**

B. Although our faith is attacked & wavers at times, ... sec 3 says our saving faith “gets the victory: growing up in many [yet not all] to the attainment of a full assurance, through Christ, who is both the author & finisher of our faith.”

1. **Eph. 6:16** says we are to take “**...up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.**”

2. **1 Jn 5:4** “**For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; & this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.**”

3. **Romans 8:37** “**...we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.**”