Section: Divine Covenants (Covenant Theology)

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q56. What is the Covenant of Redemption?**

The Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit to graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment based on the work required of Jesus. All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.

**Ephesians 1:3-11** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will

**2 Timothy 1:8-10** (NASB) Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

(Further study: John 17:1-5; Acts 4:27-28; Isaiah 53:10; John 6:37-39)

* **Introduction**

Why do you exist?—Why do all of us exist?—Why does anything exist?

What is the purpose of everything?

Why did God create?

These kinds of questions are commonplace…many ask things like this throughout life.

*As Christians*, we should readily know that God created all things for His glory, indeed.

*But what is His particular plan for how He is determined to put His glory on display*?

Tonight’s study brings into focus the answer. The covenant we study *in this lesson* details God’s purpose for creation and how He planned to display His glory.

This week we turn to see and learn about the first *divine covenant*, which is called the **Covenant of Redemption**.

In church history, the Covenant of Redemption is sometimes referred to as the Latin term the *Pactum Salutis,* as well as some other names. Pactum Slautis means Salvation Pact (or Salvation Covenant).

In the Word of Truth Catechism, we find it says:

**Q56. What is the Covenant of Redemption?**

The Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit to graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment based on the work required of Jesus. All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.

We could spend all night looking at the layers of the Covenant of Redemption in Scripture. It’s a grand and beautiful truth. We would see it *revealed* in part in the garden, and we would see it moving things forward through the books of the Old Testament. We would see it in the gospels and the epistles, and we would see it the book of Revelation.

God’s word gives us access to see this amazing plan and decree from several angles in several ways woven through all of Scripture.

In Covenant Theology, it’s critical that we start with this covenant and refer back to this Covenant of Redemption often in our Bible study, ***because*** this covenant sets the stage of all of human history *and eternity*. *This is the foundational covenant that everything else comes from and fits into*.

* **All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan**

Look first at the end of our catechism answer, it says, “All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.”

This **Covenant of Redemption** is foundational and ultimate; it explains so much.

When we understand it, the rest of the story of the Bible and eternity can be properly understood as revealed in the Bible.

“All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.” That’s a huge statement.

“All of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.” This means that everything that happens in creation happens because of this divine plan: The Covenant of Redemption.

All of what we read about in the Bible (past, present, and future) happens because of this covenant.

All of what we read in the Bible serves to fulfill God’s perfect plan of which the focus of this covenant informs us.

I hope you feel the weight of the importance of this covenant.

It means that God *created* because of this covenant.

It means that the fall *happened because* God decreed a plan for the giving of salvation to humans *in need of saving*.

It means the flood and promise to not do it again *exists because* God has decreed a plan that was not finished yet.

It means the temporary choosing of a specific person and his line to protect and develop *happened because* God had decreed a plan yet to be fulfilled and that group was to play a role in bringing about the Messiah of the plan.

It means, most amazingly, that Christ’s first coming to take on flesh to accomplish the gospel work *happened because* God had decreed a plan that hinged on this as the pinnacle and justification of it.

And it also means that the eternal life true believers have and look forward to *is guaranteed because* God has decreed a plan that cannot fail or be annulled.

It means all these things and a whole lot more.

This plan—this decree—defines human history as we know it. It gives us the answer to the foundational “why” questions mankind has. All Christians need to know this Covenant of Redemption. I hope you are hearing how big this is. And we’ll continue to see this through our study.

* **What is the Covenant of Redemption?**

With that, let’s look closer now at what is this Covenant of Redemption.

Our Word of Truth Catechism answer says: “The Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit to graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment based on the work required of Jesus.”

Now I want to tell you upfront that this covenant is different than every other covenant that we’ll look at in these lessons. It’s important that you remember that. This covenant is unique in comparison to the others because it is not a covenant that God made directly with mankind. Rather, it is the covenant that was made within the three Persons of the triune God. All the other covenants we’ll cover after this are made with Adam or those of his *natural* lineage, but not this one. Particular humans benefit by this covenant, but it’s not covenanted with us directly.

Let’s work through this answer and see the reality of it in our Bibles. Starting with the first part:

“The Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation *between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit*…”

* **Before creation**

As we look at various passages later in our study, we will certainly and repeatedly see that the Covenant of Redemption was determined and covenanted before creation, for example in Ephesians 1, we find declarations like,**“**[God] chose us in [Christ] ***before the foundation of the world*** … he ***predestined*** us for adoption … according to the purpose of his will… as a plan *for the fullness of time*…“

With the clarity of all the passages like those in Ephesians 1, any honest reader must affirm Scripture on this point.

Before creation existed—before any humans were alive, before any angels existed, before there was anything made that was made—God was. We’ve studied this in our catechism journey.

God is eternal. God is timeless, having always existed.

God has been the same all-powerful, all-wise, all-sovereign God that He has always been. And He always will be, for He is unchanging.

To expand upon the amazing truth of God’s existence and attributes, consider that:

God has always been the triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit): one God, three Persons. Existing in perfect fellowship.

God has always had perfect and complete knowledge. God’s knowledge is pure and complete and is one eternal and most simple act. That means that God never learns anything, because He knows all things, and He has ordained all things.

God possesses wisdom perfectly and has decidedly ordained all things perfectly, including the best ways to accomplish His decisions.

As the sovereign one, God has ordained—decreed—all that comes to pass.

We learned these things in our catechism journey so far; none of this here is new information for us who have been here.

This is His creation; we live in God’s world. He owns all things, including every person, and He has determined, before creation began, all that will come about.

Therefore, when time did not yet exist, the Covenant of Redemption was unchangeably decreed and covenanted to within the Triune God.

* **Between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit**

Our answer states that this Covenant of Redemption is by and within the triune God. All Persons of the Trinity, in unity, to accomplish the same goal, having covenanted to the same plan, honoring the same decree.

We see this play out and affirmed in their roles in this plan of redemption: Scripture tells us plainly that God the Father chose to give a specific people for redemption; Christ explicitly tells in Scripture that He's doing His work to earn redemption for these specific people; and Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit empowered Christ in His work and regenerates (gives new life) to the same specific chosen people that Christ died for.

While particular roles are highlighted in Scripture, we see the unity of the Godhead in the working of all things, including this Covenant of Redemption.

*You see the beauty and unity of the Trinity at work in this*.

As I said previously, God saw fit to give us glimpses into this divine arrangement (this Covenant of Redemption) in Scripture, we’ll see (or reference) some of these passages throughout our lesson, but let’s look now at an Isaiah passage, using a quote where Sam Renihan brings helpful affirmation when he states in his book, THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST, HIS COVENANT, AND HIS KINGDOM, “The parties of the covenant of redemption are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is evidenced by many passages in the Scriptures where God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit make commitments to one another, with the promise of some kind of reward related to those commitments. The primary source of biblical data is the Servant Song send Isaiah beginning with Isaiah 42.

**Isaiah 42:1-7  (ESV)**

*The Lord's Chosen Servant*

**1**Behold my servant, whom I uphold,  
    my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my Spirit upon him;  
    he will bring forth justice to the nations.  
**2**He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,  
    or make it heard in the street;  
**3**a bruised reed he will not break,  
    and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;  
    he will faithfully bring forth justice.  
**4**He will not grow faint or be discouraged  
    till he has established justice in the earth;  
    and the coastlands wait for his law.

**5**Thus says God, the Lord,  
    who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
    who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people on it  
    and spirit to those who walk in it:  
**6**“I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;  
    I will take you by the hand and keep you;  
I will give you as a covenant for the people,  
    a light for the nations,  
**7**    to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
    from the prison those who sit in darkness.

These verses describe the Servant of Jehovah (Christ Jesus), the Spirit of Jehovah (the Holy Spirit), and Jehovah (God the Father). Jehovah will give the Servant as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations. The Servant will accomplish a task. He has a mission.

In Isaiah 50:4-9, the Servant expresses His willingness to undertake the mission.

…

Jehovah has equipped the Servant for His task, and He has set Himself to fulfill it completely and perfectly because He knows Jehovah will sustain Him. Jesus applied the Servant Songs to Himself in Luke 4:17-21.

…

Gleaning from these passages, the Father and Son are presented as the primary parties of this covenant, but the Holy Spirit is everywhere present. Jehovah promises to supply His Spirit to the Servant to equip and sustain Him for the mission. The Servant declares that the Spirit of Jehovah is upon Him. The Scripture portray, in the mode of a covenant, an intra-trinitarian dialogue between the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit concerning the redemption of an elect people.”

“The Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit…”

Before creation, God planned/ordained/decreed everything, including *this covenant. The rest of creation and the happenings within was* planned/ordained/decreed*,* based on this covenant, to fulfil this covenant.

With that, let’s move on to see more specifically what *this covenant is*.

* + **To graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment**

God planned and decreed: “…to graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment…”

That’s the specific decree that the Covenant of Redemption is highlighting, namely, the plan of God to redeem—to save—specific people from sin and penalty *for Jesus*. Consider the name given to it, it is the Covenant of “*Redemption*”!

Now this has awesome and significant implications. [Implications that we are going to work out in more detail in the next portions of our catechism journey as we study Christology (the study and doctrine of Christ) and Soteriology (the study and doctrine of Salvation). But we need to identify some of these things here as well.]

This answer informs us of several things. First,

* **Redemption from sin and punishment is needed**

This answer implies that human redemption is in fact needed from sin and punishment.

Redemption from enteral punishment is not needed where there are no sinners.

It is the plain teaching of Scripture that we are sinners. All who are of Adam are sinners.

**Romans 3:23**

23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

But with this CoR being a before time—before creation—before the fall decree, we must see that the reality of sin to enter creation was in view before creation, in the Covenant of Redemption. God had decreed (preordained) the reality and effects of sin in creation.

[We studied this in past catechism lessons, such as in our Sovereignty lessons. And we’ve seen it in the historic confessions of the Christian faith. For example, as the 1689 Confession of Faith says, “God hath decreed in himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things, whatsoever comes to pass ...”

Therefore, the fall of mankind into sin was not a surprise to God; rather, it was a part of His eternal, wise, and perfect plan. Nothing comes about that God has not decreed before creation. That means the fall was not a hitch in God’s plan. Rather, God ordained it, and all else that comes about, *as part of His plan*.

And in this study tonight, we come to know that the fall was planned ***because***we see that His plan was to save certain people *from the fall*. There cannot be a plan for redemption made in eternity past without the fall being a *decreed* reality. Remember, redemption will not be needed and is not needed where there are no sinners. So, the reality of sinful humans was in view in the Covenant of Redemption. Therefore, this Covenant of Redemption saves sinners from the eternal wrath they deserve, according to God’s justice.

Next, we must see that grace is the key.

* **By the grace of God**

The plan is to “…to graciously redeem…”

We must believe in our hearts that, outside of a plan/decree/covenant, God doesn’t have to save anyone. Certainly, no one is entitled to redemption. We all deserve hell for our fall in Adam and additionally for our subsequent sin in personal disobedience. Surely, God does not owe fallen man salvation. Christianity, therefore, understands that salvation is *by God’s grace alone*. By grace alone is anyone saved. Without grace, no one is saved.

*Oh, how our God is gracious towards us; we do not deserve His grace*!

So, this plan that God decreed in eternity past is *gracious* in its design.

* **This covenant of redeeming grace is for the chosen ones**

Next, we must see *who* are to be graciously redeemed.

God’s plan is to “…to graciously redeem the chosen ones…”

The Bible, as God’s holy word, most certainly teaches us that God chose who would be saved. It was God’s choice to give His saving grace to whom He wills. Remember, no one deserves salvation.

In eternity past, not based on anything in us or that we would do, God chose us—the ones to be saved—the elect. God having done the choosing is the clear and consistent teaching of Scripture.

**Romans 9:15-16** says, “…‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’ So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.”

This point is critical, and we’ll see this again as we look at some other passages in this lesson, [we’ll also dig deeper into this particular election truth in future lessons].

But note here that the doctrine of Unconditional Individual Election (that is, at times—for some, hard to understand or by fallen man sometimes even hated), does not stand alone as some theological *possibility* or *idea*…no, *it’s anchored in and is confirmed by from all biblical doctrines linked to or concerning salvation*, such as a proper understanding of who God is and how He works, a proper understanding of condition of fallen man, and a proper understanding of God’s wisdom to be glorified in both His wrath and His grace, a proper understanding of where saving faith comes from, and so on. Election is linked to this Covenant of Redemption.

Election is what it is, because the God who is who He is, covenanted before time what He covenanted.

Election is because of and founded in the Covenant of Redemption.

Election doesn’t stand alone, it’s a glorious reality because of the Covenant of Redemption.

We’ll talk more about who these eternally chosen ones are later in our study. It is not everyone from all time, and it is not one specific ethnic group.

Praise God for His election of the chosen ones, for without it, no person would ever be saved. Praise God for this covenant of redeeming grace earned by Jesus for the chosen ones.

At this point, we’ve consider so far the first portion of our answer, “The Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit to graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment…”

* **Based on the work required of Jesus**

And now we see how, (or on what basis), God graciously redeems these chosen ones; next our catechism answer says, “based on the work required of Jesus.”

We’ll explore the importance of this clarity further in the New Covenant lessons coming later, but it’s key for us to see that the *whole plan* of God hinges upon and is possible because of the eternal Son of God, who covenanted to enter into time, take on flesh, and complete a mission, an assignment, a covenant work.

Everything is about Jesus—everything about this plan is dependent upon Jesus. That is why the gospel is what it is; it’s the good news about Jesus. Salvation can be had in Jesus—Jesus alone.

So, our answer here tells us that Jesus had a work to do on which the whole Covenant of Redemption is dependent and focused.

Remember what we said in the first lesson:

When a covenant requires obedience to law/commands in order to receive the rewards it offers, it is “*a* *covenant of works*.”

In a covenant of works, the reward must be earned by completing the work required by the covenant.

So, *if a party must obey law to receive rewards*, it’s a ***covenant of works*** to them.

The Covenant of Redemption required work to be done so that the blessings can be received and enjoyed. Christ *HAD to* perfectly complete His work, and, as we see in the biblical text, He knows He had this work to do—being equal to and united with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus willingly agreed to this work before time began! Therefore, the CoR was a ***covenant of works*** to Jesus.

Renihan made this point, as well as other helpful insights under this consideration, he said, “In the Servant Songs of Isaiah, God the Father gave a mission to His Servant. In fact, the very name “the Servant of Jehovah” is an indicator of this fact. The Father laid the Son under certain obligations or commitments. He commanded Him to become incarnate, to obey the law perfectly, and to offer Himself as a substitutionary sacrifice for a special people. God the Father gave work to God the Son. The Covenant of redemption was a covenant of works. God the Son had to fulfill commands to obtain the blessings of the Covenant.

So, Jesus is a covenanting person, who has a work to complete, on behalf of a particular people (we saw earlier that this CoR was to “to graciously redeem the **chosen ones.**) If you recall back to last lesson, it should be clear, then, that Jesus is appointed as a representative—a Federal Head.

While Jesus is given this work and role in the Covenant of Redemption, in a later lesson we will talk later about how the rewards are given to those He does this work for (the elect).

Continuing to quote a bit of Renihan, “The mission of the Son and its effects will extend to the people represented by the Son. He is appointed a federal head in this covenant. Jesus Himself spoke of this in John 10 17-18. He said, “for this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.” And later in the same chapter, and verses 27-29 Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.” The Father gave a people to the Son. And the Son was commanded to lay down His life for that people as their federal head.”

“God the Son was sent to die for a people. But His mission included much more than simply His death. He was appointed by the Father to be a Mediator for His people, and as a Mediator to be the King, Priest, and Prophet of God's elect.”

“The Covenant of Redemption is a wonderful and wondrous truth. The Father sent the Son on a mission as a federal head of an elect people, constituted Him a prophet, priest, king, sustained Him in the His work, and promised Him a reward of Eternal resurrected glorified life for Himself and all His people in a new creation.” !!!

Praise God! Praise our King, Jesus Christ! The triune God is wise and all powerful, saving, on the basis of Christ alone, all those He ordained to save! How great a God, how great a plan, how great a salvation!

* **Covenant of Redemption further revealed**

Ok, that’s a lot of info. Let’s look at some more helpful passages of Scripture now to see the Covenant of Redemption revealed. Let’s see these layers, these truths carefully woven in the Bible.

As we read these passages, see how our answer lines up with these verses of Scripture.

Consider, **Ephesians 1:3-11**. This is such a beautiful and rich passage. Let me read it, pausing to point out the Covenant of Redemption layers, this is Paul speaking about those God redeems:

**3**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ (There’s a CoR layer: it’s because of Christ, moving on…)

with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,**4**even as he chose us in him **before** the foundation of the world (TWO CoR layers: who did the choosing? God, HE CHOSE US… and when did He make this choice? **before** the foundation of the world—in eternity past, before the fall, before creation! Next it says…),

that we should be holy and blameless before him (CoR layer: Holy and blameless, we aren’t this in ourselves; this talks about our justification—our redemption. Next it says…).

In love **5**he predestined us (TWO CoR layers: Who is the US here? It’s the chosen ones as we saw in verse 4 ready. Ok, and it says predestined. You know what predestined means right? It means destinies determined beforehand—before creation that is. God determined the destiny of these chosen ones before creation, before the fall, before we were born and had done anything good or bad. He predestined US—the chosen ones. Next it says…)

for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ (CoR layer: it’s because of Christ, it’s through Him, it’s by His work. Next it says…),

according to the purpose of his will (CoR layer: this affirms that it was His choice, it was His plan, His decree…all of this is according to the purpose of His will. That’s decree language. Next it says…),

**6**to the praise of his glorious grace (CoR layer: it’s by grace, its gracious! Next it says…),

with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **7**In him (Again, it’s because of Christ. Next it says…)

we have redemption (Again, this plan accomplishes our redemption. Next it says…)

through his blood (Again, it’s because of Christ, based on the work required of Christ. Next it says…),

the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (Again, it’s by grace alone, its gracious…….SEE ALL OF THIS!? SEE THESE LAYERS, THESE CoR TRUTHS? There’s more look, look…Next it says…),

**8**which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight **9**making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose (Again, it’s by His plan, by His decree.),

which he set forth in Christ (Again, it’s because of Christ)

**10**as a plan (Again, it’s by His plan, His decree)

for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

**11**In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined (Again, it’s His choice that was made before time began for a specific people)

according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will (Again, it’s by His plan, His decree.)

Come on, if that doesn’t get you amazed, *nothing should.* See it? It’s all there! The Covenant of Redemption laid out clear as day.

Ok, let’s see it again elsewhere. Look at, again, Paul speaking about believers:

**2 Timothy 1:8-10 (NASB)**

**8**Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, **9**who has saved **us** and called us with a holy calling, not according to *our* works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus *from all eternity* [KJV: before the world began, NIV: before the beginning of time, ESV: before the ages began], **10**but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

There it is again: we see the Covenant of Redemption is the plan and decree made before creation to graciously redeem the chosen ones from sin and punishment based on the work required of Jesus.

That’s a few examples from the epistles; let’s see what insight to this Covenant of Redemption Jesus gives us in the gospel of John. This passage is a portion of what’s called the “High Priestly Prayer,” in which we are given an incredible view of Jesus’ prayer to God the Father, as the work Jesus had to do for the Covenant of Redemption was wrapping up.

**John 17:1-5**

**1**When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, **2**since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. **3**And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. **4**I glorified you on earth, having accomplished *the work* that you gave me to do. **5**And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”

See the layers: Christ is talking about this past tense plan and assignment. Our other passages and many others tell us that this is referencing “before creation.”

Also, we see the *redemption rewards* our answer speaks of, summarized here as: Eternal life.

Also, we see the choice that God made to redeem specific people; Jesus said, “give eternal life to all whom you [the Father has] given him.” These are the chosen ones. It’s not everyone, it’s not a universal invitation, it’s not all humans to ever live. It’s the chosen ones. These are the ones given to Christ, the specific persons (a limited number of people) He died on the cross for.

In verse 4 there, we see Jesus explicitly talk about the “work” that He was given, that He had to do, just like or catechism answer. We see this in other places as well, such as when Jesus is talking about the cross in John 10. He said, “This *charge* I have received from my Father.” (John 10:18) In that we see the Father’s role in commissioning, and Jesus’ role in having a specific work.

And, let us be reminded again, the Holy Spirit, as Renihan says well, “played a very important role in the Covenant of Redemption. The Father promised to sustain and uphold the Son in His mission, and He did this through the Holy Spirit. Jesus was fully conscious of this promise and quoted Isaiah 61 to say that the Holy Spirit of Jehovah was upon Him.

In Luke 1:35 Mary was told that the incarnation would take place by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In Matthew 12:27-28, Jesus said that He cast out demons by the Spirit of God, that is by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In John 3, Jesus said that He speaks the words of the One who sent Him because the One who sent Him gave Him the Spirit without measure.

Hebrews 9:14 says that Jesus offered Himself up through the Eternal Spirit, that is through the Holy Spirit.

So whether it's the incarnation, the miracles, the message, the ministry, or the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, there was no part of His mission in which the Holy Spirit was not helping Him and empowering Him and His human nature to fulfill His commitments and obligations in the Covenant of Redemption.”

Now, we could go to many other passages from the gospel books (John 6, John 10, Luke 10, etc.) where we get insight into the Covenant of Redemption from Christ’s words.

Let’s quickly look at a few other passages:

For context, this next passage is speaking about Christ going to the cross to die…

**Acts 4:27-28**

**27**for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, **28**to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

The testimony of Scripture is clear: God planned and decreed the death of Jesus for redemption to be accomplished. It was God’s hand and plan that predestined this to take place, as we see there in Acts 4.

It was the will of God for Jesus to complete His work and die on the cross, taking on God’s wrath for the sin of the chosen ones, as

**Isaiah 53:10** also tells us:

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

It was the will of the LORD to crush Jesus. Based on what? Based on the Covenant of Redemption. In this covenant, it was the plan of God to bring all of this about. It was the plan and decree of God. **Isaiah 53** says,“The will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.” God’s *eternal, unchanging, wise* will prospers by the power of God and is centered on the work of Jesus.

* **Rewards of the Covenant of Redemption**

Now, we’re going to get into much of this further in later lessons, but while we are here, talking about prospering based on work required of Jesus, consider further some of the *rewards* promised to Him based on His righteous doing of this work.

As we saw, our catechism answer speaks to the reward most applicable *for us*, namely, *gracious redemption for the chosen ones from sin and punishment.* So, let’s briefly elevate that again. With Christ’s success, those He represents, when they are one by one reborn by the Holy Spirit, given saving faith in Jesus, and transferred into His kingdom, have unbreakable grasp of all that that summarizes, glorious things such as, forgiveness, adoption, true joy, and eternal life with the King of kings! Oh, how sweet are the rewards for those Jesus came to save!

Now, consider the rewards *offered* ***to*** *Christ Jesus* in the Covenant of Redemption, in summary, a kingdom and all that is connected to that, is the reward.

In this, all things are given to Christ, all things are made subject to Christ, for Christ has been raised and is seated at the right hand of God. This is Kingdom talk. Do not miss this, the Kingdom is His reward, to have, rule, and reign…He did the work, He earned it, the rewards are His; the kingdom is Christ’s.

In Luke 22:29-30 Jesus declares to His true disciples, “… I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom …”

Jesus is claiming to have a kingdom assigned to Him, given to Him. We see references (directly or indirectly) to Christ’s kingdom throughout Scripture. Indeed, the kingdom was covenanted to Christ in the Covenant of Redemption.

Theologian John Gill detailed some of this Kingdom when said, God “has put all things under [Christ Jesus’] feet … the whole creation and universe of things, the world and its fulness, the earth and all that is therein, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle of a thousand hills; he is heir of the world, and has a right to it, and to dispose of it, not merely as the Creator, but as Mediator; it is put in subjection to him to make use of, and what is in it to subserve his mediatorial kingdom and his glory; when his ends are answered by it, the earth and all that is therein shall be burnt up, and a new earth arise out of it, in which Christ and his people will dwell …

… the Father's delivering all things into his hands, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and rule over all creatures and things.”

The Kingdom is His reward, the Kingdom and all that is within it, including the all creatures. Such good news church: Because he completed the necessary covenant work, the rewards are Christ’s; the Kingdom is Christ’s.

Ultimately, this is about glory. It’s about Who is to be glorified forever…and that is King Jesus. Jesus prayed in John 17, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, … Father, glorify me in your own presence …”

Just think of the prophetic account in Revelation 5:11-13. Listen with Covenant of Redemption ears now…listen with the knowledge that the Kingdom of Christ was the reward for the work assigned to Christ in trinitarian covenant in eternity past! Listen with Covenant of Redemption ears!

11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,

to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might

and honor and glory and blessing!”

13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb

be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

The Covenant of Redemption promised the rewards of Christ being made King over all creation in a particular, everlasting, and glorious way. Everything is all because of Christ, and it is all for Christ.

Now, some closing points from Renihan, “The Son of God committed himself to fulfill a covenant of works on behalf of an elect people. Jesus’ perfect obedience brings His people into a consummated creation, into everlasting life, into perfect righteousness, into unending holiness and never-ceasing obedience to God. Jesus’ covenant was the most difficult, indeed impossible, covenant of them all. And He fulfilled it willingly and perfectly on every level at every moment of every day of His life, a life that continues even now as He sits at the right hand of God the Father ever living to intercede for us. Praise the Son for his obedience.

The Covenant of Redemption is a wonderful doctrine. What the Father planned, the Son accomplish, and the Spirit applies. The result of the Father's commitments, the Son's commitments, and the Spirit’s participation is nothing other than eternal salvation of the people of Christ. And that salvation is mediated to the elect through the New Covenant of Grace.”

Ah, the New Covenant—that is THE Covenant of Grace … that we will have the pleasure of studying in more detail in coming lessons of this series.

* **Application**
* **Worship, Sanctification, Evangelism**

So, How does this help us worship God / what does this mean for our sanctification / how does this lesson spur on evangelism?

(GIVE A LITTLE HN SPACE HERE)

Our God is amazing. He is perfect, wise, gracious, and just. What’s your response to this lesson’s clarity? Awe and humbleness? Are you rightly humbled in how God has planned all things and most importantly planned OUR redemption for His glory before time began? Are you worshipping Him in that He wasn’t reacting like an inept being to a surprise fall and thinking up a plan B? *There is no plan B.* The world as we know it is Plan A. It’s the one and only decreed plan. God didn’t lose control of His creation. He is sovereignly reigning all the affairs of creation. Do these truths humble you since they don’t fit exactly into your natural way of processing things? Are you being informed by the text of Scripture so that you conform your mind to know and love God and His ways?

**Isaiah 55:8-9 (ESV)** tells us:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

(GIVE A LITTLE HN SPACE HERE)

Are you living in this humility and accepting the testimony of Scripture? I hope so. We all have a very real journey of growing in RIGHT knowledge of what Scripture reveals. It’s a real journey. I hope you’re enjoying the journey and taking seriously God’s revelation when it corrects old views.

Consider this, since God has planned an unchanging decree to save His people, then we get to go out into this world and speak the good news of Jesus *without any lack of hope*. We know that God *will save His people*. God has called us into this process to be speaking this gospel. So, we can go with confidence—not in ourselves, but in out God. God has the power and plan to change hearts. He *will do* what He has decreed. Let’s go with confidence and tell others about the God who saves people from sin, calling them to repent and trust in Jesus alone.

Knowing about the Covenant of Redemption should put zeal and loving boldness in our heart.

Finally, I told you upfront that these covenant theology “lessons will significantly benefit you in your understanding of God and His word.” With this next one considered, let’s ask… What does the truth in this lesson mean for my hermeneutic?

* **Bible Reading and Interpretation**

The answer to this is that we must keep this Covenant of Redemption in mind as we read the Bible. This is so important….this is one of the most impactful and helpful hermeneutical things I’ve personally learned. Undoubtably, knowing of the CoR has helped so much. The thing happening in Scripture happen ultimately because of this Covenant.

We could spend all night looking even more at the layers and details of the Covenant of Redemption in Scripture. It’s a grand and beautiful truth. It’s our great God’s truth.

I hope that you see how “all of creation is set in the context of this divine plan.” Everything else in Scripture is a part of this ultimate plan. Everything else has to be understood in the context of THIS plan. Everything else serves this plan. Everything else is bringing us to the consummation of this plan.

When we read the Bible, we must remember what we are reading fits into this ultimate plan. As we go about our lives, we must remember that all of it fits into this ultimate plan. Hopefully you see why this helps us so much in knowing God and His works and being more able to rightly understand the Bible.

The fall plays a specific and decreed role in this plan.

The other covenants we see in Scripture play a specific and decreed role in this plan. And this is where we will focus in our following lessons. In past lessons, we’ve talked a good bit about Adam and the fall, but as I promised in those previous lessons, we will look at it again with the important context we now have.

You’ve heard about the Old Covenant, but in upcoming lessons, we will look to understand it better and to understand its role in relation to the ultimate plan as decreed in the Covenant of Redemption.

You’ve heard about the New Covenant, but in upcoming lessons, we will look to understand it better and to understand its role in relation to the ultimate plan as decreed in the Covenant of Redemption.

We must remember that “*all of what we read about in the Bible happens because of this covenant. All of what we read in the Bible serves to fulfill God’s perfect plan to which the focus of this covenant informs us.”* I hope you feel the weight of the importance of this covenant.

I’m looking forward to our study ahead.

Let’s pray.

TMOC, 11 very short