Of God's Covenant with Man: The Covenant of Works

Westminster Confession of Faith 7.1–2

I. WCF 7.1: God's covenant with man in general

A. First, what is a covenant?

i. O. Palmer Robertson: "A bond in _____, sovereignly administered" (*CoC*, 4).

ii. John Murray: "A sovereign administration of _____ and of promise" (*CoG*, 31).

iii. Meredith Kline: A covenant "is a sovereign administration of the kingdom of God" (*BOC*, 36) that is "enforced in a revelation of law consisting of stipulations and sanctions, both promissory and penal" (*SBA,* 127).

iv. An oath-bound promise/ relationship with _____ and _____.

B. Second, why do we need to be in covenant relationship with God?

i. The _____ distinction is why we need to be in covenant with God.

C. What is the basis of a covenant? Why does God enter into covenant with us?

i. A lot of people (like Murray) assume that the answer is God's _____.

ii. But if you say all covenants are expressions of God's grace, then you lose the distinction between the Covenant of Works and that of Grace, or you deny that one is a covenant.

iii. WCF says that a covenant is an expression of God's _____.

II. WCF 7.2: God's first covenant with man, the covenant of works

A. The Covenant of Works has fallen on hard times in the modern theology.

i. And in part because the _____ distinction has fallen on hard times.

ii. If you _____ Law and Gospel, then you will _____ the Covenants of Works and Grace.

B. How do we know that the Covenant of Works was a covenant and that it required works?

i. Our confession is very clear about this, and church history is clear too.

1. Augustine: "For the first covenant, which was made with the first man, is just this: In the day ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die" (*CoG,* 16.27.1).

ii. Third, and most importantly, these views are grounded in the Bible.

1. The term "covenant" isn't used in Genesis 1–3, but neither is "_____."

2. Covenant isn't used in 2 Sam 7 either, but later passages clarify (Ps 89:3).

3. Hosea 6:7 clarifies that Adam transgressed a _____.

iii. If God's relationship to Adam was in the _____ of a covenant, then it's a covenant.

iv. But what kind of covenant? A covenant based on Adam's _____.

1. If it was based on grace, Adam & Eve would not have been _____.

C. What is the nature of the Covenant of Works?

i. First, with whom was the covenant made? God, Adam, and all his _____.

ii. Second, what were the conditions of the covenant?

1. _____ obedience: Adam had to obey every law in every faculty (Jas 2:10).

2. _____ obedience: Adam had to obey, no one could obey for him.

3. What did Adam have to obey?

a. The cultural mandate (Gen 1:28), the command to work & guard (2:15).

b. The _____ law (10 Commandments), the probationary law (Gen 2:17).

iii. Third, what are the consequences of the covenant?

1. "_____ was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity" as reward.

2. And God clearly said in Gen 2:17 that _____ was the punishment.

D. Is the Covenant of Works still binding?

i. Yes, and in Adam we are all lost in sin and death in the Covenant of Works.

E. Why is the Covenant of Works important?

i. It explains why people are condemned outside of Christ, why we need _____.

ii. It sheds light on the last Adam, who saves us from sin & gives us eternal life.

Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 7, Sections 1–2
Of God's Covenant with Man

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 hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.

2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.