

Reformed Christian Worldview

Core Beliefs of a Reformed Christian Worldview

- ◆ Creation
- ◆ Fall
- ◆ Restoration (redemption, reconciliation, consummation)

Creation

Man reflects the Image of God
by doing the things God did in
creating the world: making,
filling, ordering, etc.

Four Foundational Relationships in the Created Order

- ◆ God created man for relationship with him
- ◆ God created man with skill, dignity and value
- ◆ God created man to work with others
- ◆ God created man to relate to the created order by having dominion over the creation (stewardship)

Fall

Fall

- ◆ A demonic world exists that is at war with God
- ◆ Man Rebelled against God's Authority
- ◆ Evil, Toil, Pain and Suffering distort the whole created world

Result of the Fall

- ◆ Man's relationship with God is broken
- ◆ Man's self-conception is broken
- ◆ Man's relationship with others is broken
- ◆ Man's relationship to the created order is broken

Restoration

Restoration

- ◆ God is working now to restore all things to the created norm through Christ
- ◆ Sinners are restored in their Relationship to God by Redemption
- ◆ Complete Restoration is future
- ◆ How Redemption is Applied to Sinners
 - ◆ Repentance - a change of mind
 - ◆ Faith - an instrument; an empty, withered hand by which the elect sinner reaches out to grasp God's promises in the gospel."

Restored to undertake
Persevering Works

Good Works

Good Works are not Meritorious

Good Works are not Meritorious

1. Perfect Obedience is the minimum standard -
Luke 17:7-10

Luke 17:7-10

7 “Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’? 8 Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’? 9 Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? 10 So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’ ”

Good Works are not Meritorious

2. No person can be justified by his own works -
Romans 3:20

Romans 3:20

For by works of the law no human being will
be justified in his sight

Good Works characterize the restored vessel

1. Good Works are foreordained for the new creature - Eph. 2:10

Good Works characterize the
restored vessel

2. Good works are a result of
slavery to God Rom. 6:22

Rom. 6:22

22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

Good Works characterize the
restored vessel

3. Good works complete saving faith

James 2:18, 22

James 2:18, 22

18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works.

Good works are the result of union
with Christ. - John 15:3-6

John 15:3-6

3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Good Works Require Effort -
2 Peter 1:3-11

2 Peter 1:3-11

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...

5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

10 ... for if you practice these qualities... 11 there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Good Works have to be Encouraged

1. We are to stimulate each other to do good works -
Hebrews 10:24

Hebrews 10:24

and let us consider how to stimulate one another to
love and good deeds

Good Works have to be Encouraged

2. We are fan into flames the gift of God within us
- 2 Timothy 1:6

2 Timothy 1:6

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God

Summary Statement about the Reformed
Doctrine of Good Works

“True faith leads to reformation of heart and
life.”

Thomas Hooker

Perseverance unto Final Restoration

Perseverance is a result of Election

1. Predestined to be conformed to the Image of Christ - Romans 8:28-30

Romans 8:28-30

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Perseverance is a result of Election

2. God completes what he starts -
Philippians 1:6

Philippians 1:6

6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

WCF Statement on Perseverance

Perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father.

The Elect are preserved unto
eternal salvation by God

The Elect are preserved unto
eternal salvation by God

1. The elect persevere because God holds onto them

John 10:27-29

- ◆ 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 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.

2 Thessalonians 3:3

3 But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.

The Elect are preserved unto
eternal salvation by God

2. Jesus Christ is the advocate for the elect -
Romans 8:33-34

Romans 8:33–34

33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

The Elect are preserved unto
eternal salvation by God

2. God provides what is needed to persevere -

2 Peter 1:3-4

2 Peter 1:3-4

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

The Elect are preserved unto
eternal salvation by God

3 An eternal inheritance is guaranteed -

1 Peter 1:3-5

1 Peter 1:3-5

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The Elect are preserved unto
eternal salvation by God

4. Nothing can separate the elect from God's love
- Romans 8:31-32, 38-39

Romans 8:31–34, 38–39

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

WCF Statement on Perseverance

The elect can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

For Further Study

- ◆ Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XVI
- ◆ John Skidmore, "An evaluation of David Bebbington's Thesis that Evangelicalism's Doctrines of Faith and Assurance are Marked by Discontinuity with Puritanism."