

Reformed Christian Worldview

Core Beliefs of a Reformed Christian Worldview

- ◆ Creation
- ◆ Fall
- ◆ Restoration

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; the image of God is distorted but not destroyed
- ◆ 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
- ◆ Complete Restoration is future
- ◆ Sinners are restored in their relationship to God by redemption
 - ◆ Redemption is Applied to Sinners by Repentance and Faith
 - ◆ Men are Restored to undertake Persevering Works

Faith that does not Restore
man's relationship with God

Different types of Faith

- ◆ Saving Faith
- ◆ Faith that does not Save

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:3-9

3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; 4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. 5 Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. 6 But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. 8 And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:3-9

1. Sower – Apostles – Jesus is preparing them for Gospel ministry
2. Seed– The Gospel, which is cast out without pre-judgment
3. Results vary by soil type – the sower casts seed everywhere, but a harvest is only obtained from good soil
4. Soil – Different types of “faith” responses to the Gospel.

Interpretation of The Parable of the Sower
Matthew 13:18-23

Interpretation of The Parable of the good Soil

Matthew 13:23

23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Saving Faith

1. Good Soil

- a) Gospel is heard and understood
- b) Saving Faith always yields fruit
- c) Not all saving faith yields the same fruitfulness

Faith that does not save

Matt 13:13-15

13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." 15 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear.

Interpretation of the seed sown on the path

Matthew 13:18-19

18 "Hear then the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

The Seed sown on the path

1. No understanding
2. Hardened heart from repeated exposure to the word
3. Word taken away

Interpretation of the seed sown on the rocky soil

Matthew 13:20-21

20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

Seed sown on Rocky Soil

Matt 13:20-21

1. Receives the Gospel with joy
2. Endures for a time – transient, temporary, fleeting
3. Not rooted in Christ
4. Falls away, stumbles

Parallel Passage -Romans 11:17,22

...you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others [believing Jews] and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree...

22 Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

Seed sown among the Thorns

Matt 13:22

1. Word is received
2. Love for the world chokes, presses down the word
3. Unfruitfulness

Unfruitfulness - John 15:1-2a,6

1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away... 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

Types of Faith that do not Save

Faith of Assent - James 2:19-20

19 You believe that God is one; you do well.

Even the demons believe—and shudder!

20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

- ◆ Mental assent
- ◆ Unchanged life

False or counterfeit Faith

Matt. 7:21-23

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

A religious life without knowing Christ

- ◆ Profession of faith, “Lord, Lord”
- ◆ Performed Good Works “in his name”
 - ◆ Cast out demons
 - ◆ Miraculous Deeds
- ◆ Caught by Surprise at the Judgment
 - ◆ “Workers of lawlessness”
 - ◆ “I never knew you”

Known by Christ

4 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.

John 10:14

Known by Christ

8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God

Galatians 4:8-9

Known by Christ

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 12

Known by Christ

- ◆ To be known by Christ - to be one of the elect
- ◆ The result of being known by Christ is to have the Love of God that comes from receiving Christ

False or counterfeit Faith

24 He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, 25 but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. 27 And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?' 28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' So the servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' 29 But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

Matt 13:24-30

False or counterfeit Faith

- ◆ Wheat = true believers, planted by God
- ◆ Weeds = false believers, planted by Satan
- ◆ Wheat and weeds grow together until harvest
 - ◆ Wheat is gathered together into God's barn
 - ◆ Weeds are gathered and burned

False or counterfeit Faith

9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. 10 By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

1 John 3:9-10

True Faith

- (1) Those born of God do not practice sin
- (2) Those born of God practice righteousness
- (3) Those born of God love their brother

False or counterfeit Faith

- ◆ There are unbelievers in the Church.
- ◆ Some of them display the most outwardly magnificent gifts.
- ◆ They do not love righteousness.
- ◆ They do not love the brethren.

Examples of Temporary Faith

Judas Iscariot

- ◆ Called as a disciple, one of Jesus' inner circle
- ◆ Had a successful ministry of preaching and healing with the rest of the disciples
- ◆ Secretly stole the money from the disciples' treasury
- ◆ Betrayed Jesus
- ◆ Damned - "woe to the one"

Demas

- ◆ He was part of a missionary team with the Apostle Paul, Luke and Mark c. AD 61 (Col. 4:14 and Philemon 1:23-24)
- ◆ Sometime between the years AD 63-67, Paul wrote a letter to Timothy in which he said, "For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica." (2 Timothy 4:10)
- ◆ Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:15)

The True-Faith Test

2 Corinthians 13:5

5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith;
examine yourselves!

What's on the test?

2 Corinthians 13:5

5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?

Two Types of Evidences of Genuine Faith

- ◆ Inward Tokens
- ◆ Outward Fruit

Inward Tokens

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God

Romans 8:9, 14-16

Inward Tokens

- ◆ Spirit of Christ within you (Romans 8:9)
- ◆ Led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14)
- ◆ Spirit of Adoption - Know that God is your Father (Romans 8:15-16)

Outward Fruit

- ◆ 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
- ◆ 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Outward Fruit

- ◆ Putting to death the deeds of the body
(Romans 8:13)
- ◆ Suffering (Romans 8:17)

Outward Fruit of Suffering

1 Therefore, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross... 4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin

Hebrews 12:1-4

Passing the Test

1. Inward token – Eyes fixed on Jesus
2. Outward Fruit – Striving against sin

A Reformed summary

“The accompaniments to true faith are repentance, fear of God, holiness, and hope of eternal life. These accompaniments are not perfected at conversion but are a life-long activity of those who have been given the gift of faith by the Holy Spirit.”

For Further Study

- A. Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XVIII
- B. George Whitefield, Sermon 23: "Marks of a True Conversion" in Selected Sermons of George Whitefield, Christian Ethereal Library.
- C. George Whitefield, Sermon 42: "Marks of Having Received the Holy Ghost" in Selected Sermons of George Whitefield, Christian Ethereal Library.
- D. George Whitefield, Sermon 43: "The Almost Christian" in Selected Sermons of George Whitefield, Christian Ethereal Library. William Buell Sprague (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1864), University of Michigan Digital Library, Vol.1, 127.
- E. Jonathan Edwards, "A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections" in The Works of Jonathan Edwards (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: The Banner of Truth Trust), Vol. 1, 235.

Discussion

[https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MXtCjemGTJc.](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MXtCjemGTJc)

- ◆ Evaluate the lyrics (only)
 - ◆ What is theologically correct?
 - ◆ Where is it deficient?