



Let's Read *The Institutes* *of the Christian Religion, Class 7*

**Book 2: Of the Knowledge of God the Redeemer
Chapters 12-14**



Chapter Topics

- [Christ is God (Book 1, ch. 13)]
- Christ Had to Become Man in Order to Fulfill the Office of Mediator.
- Christ Assumed the True Substance of Human Flesh.
- How the Two Natures of the Mediator Make One Person.
- To Know the Purpose for Which Christ Was Sent by the Father, and What He Conferred Upon Us, We Must Look Above All at Three Things in Him: the Prophetic Office, Kingship, and Priesthood.

The Necessity of the God-man is tied up with our total lostness.

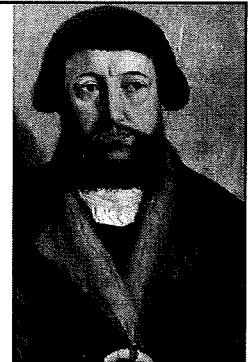
It is of the greatest importance for us that he who was to be our Mediator be both true God and true man.

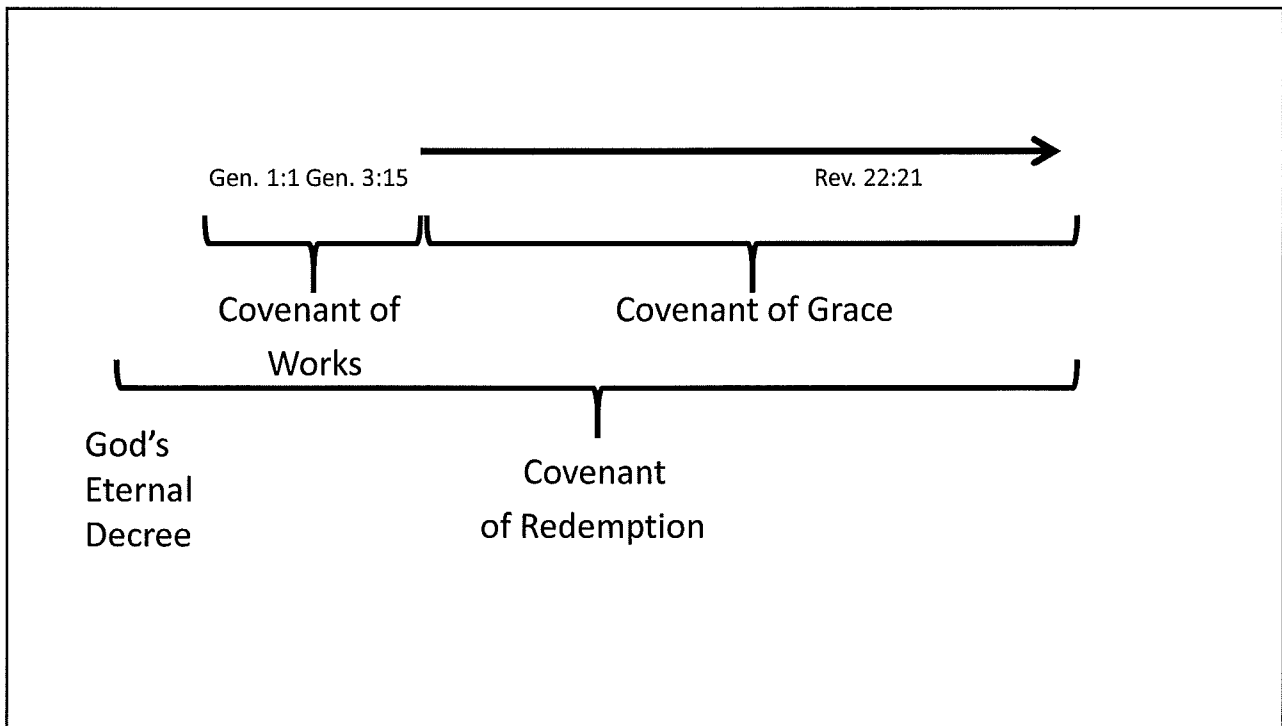
What was best for us, our most merciful Father determined. Our iniquities, like a cloud intervening between Him and us, having utterly alienated us from the kingdom of heaven, none but a person reaching to him could be the medium of restoring peace. But who could thus reach to him? Could any of the sons of Adam? All of them, with their parents, shuddered at the sight of God.

God accommodates himself to our finiteness and spiritual need.

Why did Christ become man?

- This would not have been necessary without the fall.
 - Nothing inherent in Christ or Trinity demanding incarnation.
 - (Not a part of necessary part of creation, per se, as Osiander taught.)
 - The reason was for our redemption (rf. 1 Tim. 1:15) and nothing else.
- But there is a conditional necessary
 - being part of a heavenly decree/determination.
 - The Father's mercy made Christ's action possible, and the Son ungrudgingly takes our nature.
 - The language of a "covenant of redemption" absent although the ideas are here.
 - The Father gives the elect to the Son
 - and the Son redeems them.
 - If we are to be redeemed, this is the way it must be done.





Why did Christ become man?

- A conditional necessary?
 - The condition of our fallenness, it is necessary Christ be our mediator.
 - If we are to be redeemed, this is the way it must be done
vs. the Nominalists – “God could redeem us in any number of ways.”
 - Even unfallen man needed a mediator.

*“Even if man had remained free from all stain,
his condition would have been too lowly for him to reach God
without a mediator.”*

- Mediation as sustenance – the work of the Mediator upholding and ordering unfallen creation.

Why did Christ become man?

- A conditional necessary?
 - Even unfallen man needed a mediator.
 - Mediation as sustenance – the work of the Mediator upholding and ordering unfallen creation.

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. (WCF, 7.1)

- Calvin: “the work of the Mediator”
- WCF: “covenant” of works

Why did Christ become man?

- A conditional necessary?
 - Even unfallen man needed a mediator (We are finite).
 - How much more does fallen man need a mediator (We are fallen).
 - Mediation as reconciliation – the work of the Mediator recovering a rebellious creation.
 - Stages of mediation –
 - Present in the Old Testament in various ways – the promise (Gen. 3:15), the signs/ceremonies, the presence of the angel of the Lord.
 - At the incarnation (NT), He is manifest in the flesh.

In short, since neither as God alone could he feel death, nor as man alone could he overcome it, he coupled human nature with divine that to atone for sin he might submit the weakness of the one to death and that wrestling with death by the power of the other nature he might win victory for us.

Christ as man

- Christ is true man
 - (vs. the Manichees, Marcionites, some Anabaptists (Meno Simons, father of the Mennonites))
 - The presence of feelings, emotions, etc. included
 - The presence of sin excepted
 - Being born of a virgin is the source of authentic humanity.
 - Being born of a sinful woman is not, therefore, the source of his sinlessness.
 - Being born sinless is a miracle of the Father.

The Two Natures of Christ

For even if the Word, in his immeasurable essence, united with the nature of man into one person we do not imagine that he was confined therein. Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended from heaven in such a way that, without leaving heaven, he willed to be born in the virgin's womb to go about the earth and to hang upon the cross. Yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning. (2.13.4; rf. 4.17.30)

- United to but not restricted to the flesh
 - The Word of God becomes incarnate in Jesus
 - but not in such a way that he has no existence also beyond the flesh.
 - As Christ lived on earth, the 2nd person of the Trinity existed fully in Christ but also beyond the flesh.
 - The flesh was not the temporary abdication of the Lord's empire. (rf. Comm. on Lk. 23:43; Jn. 14:12; Acts 1:11; Heb. 1:14; Heidelberg Cat #46-48)

Two Natures/One Person

- Not by confusion of substance but by unity of person.
 - Scr. sometimes speaks only of his humanity
 - Scr. sometimes speaks only of his divinity
 - Scr. sometimes speaks of both together
 - Scr. sometimes attributes to Christ's divinity what more properly applies to his humanity



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