

Covenant² Theology:

Part 1: An Introduction
and the Covenant of Works

Basic Definition of “Covenant”

“Binding agreement between two parties...”

“In the Bible the term is used to describe the action of God on behalf of humankind whereby he agrees to be their God and to bless them on the condition that they fulfill the terms of the agreement, which are faith and obedience...”

The Concise Dictionary of the Christian Tradition, 108-9

Elelements²

The Parties:

- Exodus 20:2
- Leviticus 26:13

Conditions:

- Exodus 19:4-6
- Deuteronomy 6:5
- Leviticus 19:18
- Exodus 20:1-17

The Promises:

- Exodus 6:7
- Leviticus 26:11-12

The Penalties:

- Deuteronomy 28:15

Parties often have representative heads
(i.e. Adam, Christ, etc...)

The Parties: The Greater Party The Lesser Party	The Promises: Blessings of being in the covenant
The Conditions: Stipulations for covenantal faithfulness	The Penalties: Curses for covenantal unfaithfulness

Covenant² Theology

Definition:

“An exposition of the relationship between God and man in terms of Covenants...” (The Concise Dictionary of the Christian Tradition, 109)

Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF), Chapter 7-1:

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.

Covenant of Works

Also known as the Covenant of Life

WCF, Chapter 7-2:

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.

What is the Biblical Evidence of it?

- “Covenant” not used
- Romans 5:12-21
- Hosea 6:7

Is the Covenant of Works Still in Effect?

- 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
- It depends

The Parties:

God (Greater, the Creator)

Humanity (Lesser, represented through Adam)

- Genesis 1:26-30

The Promises:

The Garden of Eden and the continuation of eternal life

- Genesis 2:8-9
- Genesis 2:15-16

The Conditions:

Forbidden to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil:

- Genesis 2:17

The Penalties:

Curse upon the earth, broken image-bearing, death:

- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 3:17-19

Different Terms in the WCF

Covenant of...

- **WORKS:** Contingent upon perfect works of obedience
 - WCF 7-2
- **LIFE:** Eternal life promised
 - WSC 12

