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Response of Saving Faith (14:2)

By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.

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Response of Saving Faith (14:2)

- **Faith rests upon God’s Word**
 - Scripture’s Infallible Authority
 - Not science (e.g. archeology, geology)
 - Not feelings
 - Not miracles
- **Saving Faith believes *all* the contents of God’s Word, not just the red letters**

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1 Thess 2:13, *And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.*

Acts 24:14-15, *But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.*

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Response of Saving Faith (14:2)

- **Saving Faith responds appropriately, diversely to various types of scripture**
 - Commands
 - Threats
 - Promises
- **Principle Acts of Saving Faith:** accept, receive, rest upon Christ alone

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Response of Saving Faith (14:2)

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 - Commands
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- **Principle Acts of Saving Faith:** accept, receive, rest upon Christ alone

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Response of Saving Faith (14:2)

- **The Elements of Saving Faith:** Knowledge, Assent, and Trust
 - **Salvation occurs according to the terms of the Covenant of Grace**
- Gal. 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Faith is Victorious (14:3)

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This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; may be often and many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory; growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.

Faith is Victorious (14:3)

11

- **Diversity of Faith:**

- Both between individual persons, from person to person
- Faith is fixed on the object, not itself

- **Faith Grows:** it is not static, but makes use of the means of grace to increase in strength and love

Heb. 10:22-23, *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful*

Repentance: Necessary Grace (15:1)

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Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the Gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ.

Repentance: Necessary Grace (15:1)

- **Repentance MUST be preached!**
- **Repentance flows out of the New Birth:** it is an evangelical grace that God gives (cf. Luke 24:47-48)

Zechariah 12:10, *And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.*

Repentance: Necessary Grace (15:1)

- **Repentance:** A duty and a grace; believe something re: ourselves and something re: Christ
- **Conversion is first act of New Nature and daily Christian experience**
 - We walk by faith everyday
 - We walk by repentance everyday

John Gerstner: "Constant state of conversion"

Repentance: Necessary Grace (15:1)

- **Repentance and the other evangelical graces**
 - Justification: declaration of innocence (status)
 - Sanctification: becoming holy, more like God
 - Adoption: entry into household (relationship)
 - Repentance: embracing God's declaration and relationship as members of Household of God

Repentance: Defined and Dissected (15:2)

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By it, a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God; and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavouring to walk with Him in all the ways of His commandments.

Repentance: Defined and Dissected (15:2)

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- **Nature of Repentance:** see sin as it is; turn away from sin not simply because of the consequences of sin, but because it is objectively wrong
- **Effect of Repentance:** walk away from sin, life in righteousness
- **More than Asking Forgiveness**

Repentance: Defined and Dissected (15:2)

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- **Psychological and Spiritual Grounding**
 - *True Sense of Sin:* spiritual illumination and renewal of affections (desires) and mind
- Ezekiel 18:30-31, Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?*

Repentance: Defined and Dissected (15:2)

19

- **Psychological and Spiritual Grounding**

- True Sense of God's Mercy in Christ

Ezekiel 36:31-33, Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations. It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord GOD; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. "Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt.

Repentance: Defined and Dissected (15:2)

20

- **Essence of Repentance:** distinguished from mere sorrow for sin, but understands sin rightly

- **Leads to Obedience:** changed relationships, habits, friendships, rejection and embrace

2 Cor. 7:10, For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

Power of Repentance (15:3)

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Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.

Power of Repentance (15:3)

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- **Repentance has now virtue of itself;** neither cause of pardon nor substitute for obedience
- **Justification is by faith:** not by repentance; Christ is the ground of acceptance by God
- **Repentance is necessary:**
 - *necessary work* versus *meritorious work*
 - No salvation without repentance, but repentance does not save

Power of Grace (15:4)

23

As there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation, (b) so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.

Power of Grace (15:4)

24

- **The least sin deserves punishment:** contra Romanist belief in venial sins vs. mortal sins
 - All under condemnation of sin, all commanded to repent;
 - no qualifications or limitations
 - **New Birth:** makes repentance obvious, necessary
- Romans 6:23,** *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

General & Particular Repentance (15:5)

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Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavour to repent of his particular sins, particularly.

General & Particular Repentance (15:5)

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- **Repent not simply of general corruption**

- "forgive us our sins..."
- Do not simply bewail one's innate corruption

"Those who piously content themselves with general confessions of their sinfulness often prove to be the most stubborn sinners" - Chad Van Dixhoorn

General & Particular Repentance (15:5)

27

- **Repent not simply of general corruption**

- **Repent of particular sins particularly**

- Realize we commit individual sins: Name them!
- Turn away from the sins
- Give *evidence* of repentance (e.g. restitution)

No man has any right to presume that he hates sin in general unless he practically hates every sin in particular; and no man has any right to presume that he is sorry for and ready to renounce his own sins in general unless he is conscious of practically renouncing and grieving for each particular sin into which he falls. - A. A. Hodge

Public and Private Repentance (15:6)

As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof; upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy: so, he that scandalizeth his brother, or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession, and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended, who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.

Public and Private Repentance (15:6)

- **Not simply confession to a priest, but to the injured party and before God**
 - **Confess sin to neighbor:** Matt 5:23-24, Jas. 5:16
 - **Confess sin to the Church:** nature of the sin; e.g., of a public nature, scandalous, or committed by one who holds spiritual office

Public and Private Repentance (15:6)

- **Not simply confession to a priest, but to the injured party and before God**
 - **Christian duty to forgive**
 - Christ died for us when we were unrepentant
 - Genuine repentance is a gift of God
- Matt. 18:33,** *And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you*
