

Blueprints for Belief

Laying the Theological Foundations for Constructing Your Faith

Westminster Confession of Faith 10.1-4 – September 24, 2025

1. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds, spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

- **The plan:** “And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” Romans 8:30
- **The method:** “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” - Romans 10:17
- **The result:** “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules” - Ezekial 36:26-27 (regeneration)
- **Summary:** God, in his own timing, calls the elect out of their sin and death into salvation and life found in Christ. He does this primarily through the proclamation of the gospel and the power of the Spirit, resulting in a new heart that freely yet wholly desires to come to Christ and be saved.
- **Illustration:** In Genesis, God speaks and creation comes into existence by the power of his Spirit. In salvation, God speaks to us through the gospel and creates in us a new heart by the power of his Spirit. (God’s calling produces the intended effect)

2. This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man; who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

- “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.” – Ephesians 2:4-5
- “Who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began” - 2 Timothy 1:9
- “You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary.” - Jonathan Edwards

3. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

- “But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”- Luke 18:16

- “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”- John 3:8
- **Summary:** Elect infants who die as babies are saved by Christ through the Holy Spirit, who works when, where, and how he chooses. The same is true for all other elect people who cannot be reached through the preaching of the Word.

4. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved: much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may is very pernicious, and to be detested.

- “The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.” Matthew 13:20-21
- “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12
- Summary: Some who aren’t elect may still hear the preaching of the Word and even experience some influence of the Holy Spirit, but they never truly come to Christ and therefore cannot be saved. Even more, those who do not confess Christ cannot be saved by any other religion or by simply trying to live good lives according to natural reason or their own religious laws.

Objections

“If Effectual Calling is true, then God forces us to come to him.”

- God doesn’t override our will; he **renews it** so that we freely love and follow Him out of desire.
- He opens our eyes to see the beauty of Christ that draws us in.

“If God has already decided who will answer the call, why engage in Evangelism?”

- God ordains the means and the ends (the method and result) of salvation. Scripture commands the gospel to be proclaimed to all. (Great Commission)
- God’s effectual calling gives us hope and confidence that God can save anyone. It should actually boost our evangelism.

Discussion Questions

1. How does this doctrine deepen our view of God’s grace and power?
2. How should we view and engage with non-believers in light of this doctrine?
3. How does God’s effectual call bring assurance of our salvation?