

Blueprints for Belief

Laying the Theological Foundations for Constructing Your Faith

Westminster Confession of Faith 14.1-3 – October 22, 2025

1. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.

[Faith comes from God and the ordinary means of grace are how faith is nourished.]

- Ephesians 2:8-9 – “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
- Romans 10:7 – “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
- Acts 20:32 – “And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

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.

[Saving faith believes God’s Word, but its central focus is trusting Christ Himself.]

- John 1:12 – “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”
- Hebrews 11:13 – “These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar...”

3. 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.

[True faith may waver, but it cannot perish. God preserves and nourishes it by His Spirit through His appointed means.]

- Luke 22:31-32 – “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.”
- Psalm 73:26 – “My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Objections

“Faith must be completed by works of love and participation in the sacraments to become saving.”

Response: Love and obedience flow from faith, but do not form or complete it. Faith receives and rests on Christ’s righteousness. However, as John Calvin said, “We are saved by faith alone, but saving faith is never alone.”

“Faith is the sinner’s free response to God’s offer of grace.”

Response: The sinner’s will is involved in believing, but only after the Spirit has renewed and enabled it to believe.

“Faith alone encourages moral compromise.”

Response: True saving faith is living and fruitful because the same Spirit who grants faith also sanctifies.

“Faith is just a person’s subjective experience.”

Response: True faith is anchored in the certainty of God’s Word and the person of Christ, not our own feelings or experiences.

Discussion Questions

- 1) How does this view of faith challenge our tendency to measure spiritual growth by emotion or effort?
- 2) How can we help people distinguish between faith in *Christ* and faith in their *faith*?
- 3) What has God used to sustain or revive your trust in Him — and how can that shape how we care for others who are struggling to believe?