

Outcome of New Birth

- **Justification, Adoption, Sanctification:**
Exclusively Acts of God for benefit of the elect
- **Sanctification:** work of God He does as well as enables and empowers in the believer
- **Perseverance of the Saints**
 - Grounded in election of God, Covenant
 - Triune work in the salvation of sinners
 - How can we have assurance of salvation?

Real Assurance Possible (18.1)

Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God, and estate of salvation; which hope of theirs shall perish: yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love Him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before Him, may, in this life, be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.

Real Assurance Possible (18.1)

- **Warning re: False Assurance:**
Matthew 7:22-23, *On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

Real Assurance Possible (18.1)

- **Discern true vs. False Assurance by Fruit**

1 John 3:2-3, 14-15 *Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure... We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

Real Assurance Possible (18.1)

- **Scripture promises assurance to the Believer**

Rom 8.16, *For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God*

- **Calvin emphasized on Christian assurance (cf. 3.2.7):**

Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit

Real Assurance Possible (18.1)

- **Scripture promises assurance to the Believer**
- **Scripture commands us to seek full assurance, suggesting it is not essential to faith**
- **Romanism denies the possibility of assurance**

He 6.11, *And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end*

Way, Source of True Assurance (18.2)

This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God: which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.

Way, Source of True Assurance (18.2)

- **Divine Promise of Salvation in Scripture**
 - Not based on feelings
 - Not based on conjecture or deduction
 - Not based on likelihood, etc.
- **Christian assurance, like Christian righteousness is *alien*:**
 - Comes from outside ourselves
 - Because of source it is infallible

Hard Won Assurance (18.3)

This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure; that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance: so far is it from inclining men to looseness.

Hard Won Assurance (18.3)

- **Not Essential to Faith**
 - Assurance of *the* Faith/Truth v. Assurance of Hope
 - Some will never doubt, some will frequently
- **Sincere and true faith exists in degrees**
 - Few in our day have such an examined assurance
 - Christian assurance here is greater than conjecture, but grounded in God

Hard Won Assurance (18.3)

- **Bible Commands Fighting for Assurance:**
2 Peter 1:10, *Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.*
 - **Assurance via ordinary means of grace:** Word, Sacrament, Prayer
- “So a soul that hath tasted of the sweetness and goodness of God in ordinances, nothing will satisfy, but more of that goodness and sweetness” (Thos. Brooks, *Heaven*)

Hard Won Assurance (18.3)

- **Bible Commands Fighting for Assurance**
 - **Assurance via ordinary means of grace**
 - **Genuine Assurance does not lead to sin, but to cultivation of grace and holiness**
- “The promise of assurance and comfort is made over, not to lazy but laborious Christians; not to idle but to active Christians; not to negligent but to diligent Christians” (Thos. Brooks, *Heaven on Earth*)

Assurance Lost, Salvation Secure (18.4)

True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation, by God's withdrawing the light of His countenance, and suffering even such as fear Him to walk in darkness and to have no light: yet are they never so utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may, in due time, be revived; and by the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair.

"If you be kind and obedient to the Spirit, it will not be long night with your souls; but if you rebel and vex him, he will make your life a hell, by withholding his ordinary influences, by refusing to seal you to the day of redemption, and by giving you up too conflict with horrors and terrors. Therefore be at the Spirit's beck and check, and assurance and joy will before long attend you." (Thos. Brooks)

Assurance Lost, Salvation Secure (18.4)

- **Truly converted will never fall away:** but they may lose their assurance
 - Lack of diligence in means of grace
 - Vehement temptation
 - Fall into sin
 - God's will to discipline us and teach us
- **Truly converted may fall into grievous sin**