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James Hadow (1667-1747):
Defender of Orthodoxy?
A Comparative Study



University
of Glasgow



Rakshith Prabhakar

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Master of Theology at the University of
Glasgow in partnership with Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
Some Important Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Dates	5
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	10
Historical Considerations	11
Relevant Scholarship	13
The Scope of This Work.....	14
Method of Approach.....	15
CHAPTER TWO JAMES HADOW IN HIS CONTEXT	19
The Seventeenth-Century Scottish Church	19
James Hadow in the Netherlands	21
Hadow Returns to Scotland	23
James Hadow: A Scottish Theologian of the Eighteenth-Century	24
Hadow and <i>The Marrow</i>	29
CHAPTER THREE COVENANT THEOLOGY	33
The Westminster Standards on the Nature of the Covenant.....	33
The Westminster Standards on the Covenant of Works.....	34
The Westminster Standards on the Covenant of Grace	36
The Westminster Standards and the Covenant of Redemption	39
Hadow on the Covenant of Works	40
Hadow on the Covenant of Grace	44
Hadow on the Covenant of Redemption	45

Assessment	48
CHAPTER FOUR THE NATURE OF FAITH	52
The Westminster Standards on the Doctrine of Faith	52
Hadow on Saving Faith	53
Hadow’s Apologetic Against a False Notion of Faith.....	56
Assessment	58
CHAPTER FIVE THE RELATIONSHIPS OF FAITH	60
The Westminster Standards on the Doctrine of Scripture	60
The Westminster Standards on Faith and Scripture	62
The Westminster Standards on Faith and Repentance	63
The Westminster Standards on Faith, Good Works and Assurance...	66
The Westminster Standards on Faith, Good Works and Holiness	68
Hadow on Repentance and Faith	71
Hadow on Faith, Good Works and Assurance	75
Hadow on Faith, Good Works and Holiness	79
Assessment	81
CHAPTER SIX THE REDEMPTION OF CHRIST.....	88
The Westminster Standards on the Person and Work of Christ	88
The Westminster Standards on Effectual Calling	93
Hadow on The Person and Work of Christ	95
Hadow on Effectual Calling	97
Assessment	98
CHAPTER SEVEN THE LAW OF GOD	101

The Westminster Standards on the Law of God.....	101
Hadow on the Law of God	104
The Law in the Covenant of Works	105
The Law of Christ.....	106
The Law in the Covenant of Grace.....	108
The Law’s Threats and Promises	110
Assessment	112
CHAPTER EIGHT THE CALL OF THE GOSPEL.....	114
The Westminster Standards on the Call of the Gospel.....	114
Hadow on the Call of the Gospel	115
Assessment	118
CHAPTER NINE CONCLUSION.....	121
Context	122
Assurance of Salvation	122
Universal or Particular Redemption	124
A Defender of Orthodoxy?.....	127
Lessons for the Church.....	131
An Orthodox Ministry	131
A Faithful Proclamation of the Gospel Offer	134
BIBLIOGRAPHY	136

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Some Important Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Dates

1645 & 1649		Edward Fisher writes <i>The Marrow of Modern Divinity</i> . ¹ It is a discussion on the doctrine of the atonement and guides the reader between antinomianism and neonomianism.
1690		The Church of Scotland becomes the national church in Scotland. Fifty years after Tobias Crisp's death, his sermons were published. Many regard the works as having a tinge of antinomianism.
1700		Thomas Boston stumbles upon Fisher's <i>The Marrow of Modern Divinity</i> while visiting a parish member. Boston borrows and reads it.
1717	April	At the Presbytery of Auchterarder, William Craig, a young man examined for licensure is asked to affirm the Auchterarder Creed, 'Do you believe that

¹ For a discussion on Edward Fisher as the author of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, see William Edward VanDoodeward, 'The Marrow Controversy and Seceder Tradition: Marrow Theology in the Associate Presbytery and Associate Synod Secession Churches of Scotland, 1733-1799' (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen: 2009), 8–22, https://pureadmin.uhi.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/3078105/William_VanDoodeward_PhD_Aberdeen_2009.pdf.

it is not sound or orthodox that one should forsake sin in order to come to Christ?' He answers, 'No!' The presbytery does not pass the candidate.

May The Assembly denounces the language of the Auchterarder Creed and passes Mr. Craig as a licentiate. Thomas Boston commends *The Marrow* to John Drummond at the Assembly.

1718 The Reverend James Hog of Carnock receives a copy of *The Marrow* from Rev. Webster who in turn received it from Drummond. Arrangements are made for the republication of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*² with Hog writing its preface

1719 April James Hadow delivers the sermon, 'The Record of God and the Duty of Man'³ condemning *The Marrow*, at the Synod of Fife.

May At the General Assembly, the existing 'Committee on Purity of Doctrine' is instructed to inquire into books and

² This thesis regularly refers to *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. For the sake of convenience, the work will hereafter commonly be referred to as *The Marrow*.

³ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mossman, 1719).

pamphlets being circulated within the churches that potentially violate the theology of the Westminster Standards.

1720 May 20 The committee's report condemns *The Marrow* as strongly antinomian. The General Assembly discourages the Assembly's ministers from recommending *The Marrow* in any way. The General Assembly condemned *The Marrow* and those who commended it as antinomians.

1721 Twelve ministers subscribe to *The Marrow* as being sound doctrine and in accordance with confessional standards. These men submit an appeal to the General Assembly titled, 'Representation and Petition.'⁴ In it, they argue that the teachings of *The Marrow* had been misunderstood and that in condemning its actual teaching, the church condemns propositions of Scripture that form the doctrinal standards of the Church of Scotland. The petition is rejected.

⁴ James Hog et al., 'The Representation and Petition of Us Under-subscribing Ministers of the Gospel,' in *A Full and True State of the Controversy Concerning the Marrow of Modern Divinity as Debated Between the General Assembly and Several Ministers in the year 1720 and 1721* (Glasgow: John Bryce, 1773), 9–22.

		The committee submits twelve queries to the twelve Representatives. The Representatives answer the twelve queries. The committee does not submit the Representatives' responses to the General Assembly of 1722.
1722		The Assembly reaffirms its condemnation of <i>The Marrow</i> and the twelve Representatives are rebuked.
1726		A new edition of <i>The Marrow</i> is published with notes by Thomas Boston.
1730		An act of the General Assembly removes the right of recorded dissent.
1731		The General Assembly rules that in the event of a patron's neglect or refusal to exercise the right of appointing a minister, the selection would then be in the hands of landowners and elders not at the exclusion of the parishioners' wishes.
1732	May	Based on the Act of 1730, the General Assembly rejects Ebenezer Erskine's request to record dissent to the Patronage Act.
	October	As moderator of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, Ebenezer Erskine denounces the

Patronage Act as unscriptural and unconstitutional. Members of the synod object and Erskine is censured.

1733

May

The synod's censure is affirmed by the General Assembly. Ebenezer Erskine is joined in protest by William Wilson, minister of Perth; Alexander Moncrieff, minister of Abernethy; and James Fisher, minister of Kinclaven. These ministers are regarded as being in contempt of court. The ministers secede.

December

Although no effective disciplinary action was taken against the Representers the more influential pastoral positions were withheld from them. A few of the Representers who seceded from the Church of Scotland constitute themselves as a new presbytery. Those who seceded would come to be called the Seceders.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

James Hadow (1667–1747) was a minister in the Church of Scotland. He served as a professor at St. Mary’s College of the University of St. Andrews between 1707 and 1747. He is primarily known for his involvement in the controversy over the theology of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*.⁵ Although written in the 1640s, it had been rediscovered by Thomas Boston and its views advocated by several ministers against the admonition of the General Assembly. The subsequent controversy in which Hadow played an important part has become known as the *Marrow Controversy*.

The *Marrow Controversy* has attracted both academic and ecclesial interest in recent years.⁶ Indeed, J.B. Torrance noted that “‘The Marrow Controversy’ ... in itself is from beginning to end a most revealing commentary on Scottish theology.’⁷

⁵ Edward Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (Part I, 1645; Part II, 1649. Reprinted Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2009).

⁶ See William Edward VanDoodeward, ‘The Marrow Controversy and Seceder Tradition: Marrow Theology in the Associate Presbytery and Associate Synod Secession Churches of Scotland, 1733-1799’ (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen: 2009), https://pureadmin.uhi.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/3078105/William_VanDoodewaard_PhD_Aberdeen_2009.pdf; Philip Graham Ryken, ‘Marrow Controversy,’ *Religion Past and Present* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2011), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/religion-past-and-present/*-SIM_13645; Sinclair Ferguson, *The Whole Christ: Legalism, Antinomianism, and Gospel Assurance: Why the Marrow Controversy Still Matters* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016); Stephen G Myers, ‘The Marrow Controversy’ in *The History of Scottish Theology, Volume I: Celtic Origins to Reformed Orthodoxy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), <https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/oso/9780198759331.001.0001/oso-9780198759331-chapter-24>.

⁷ J. B. Torrance, ‘Covenant or Contract? A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland,’ *Scottish Journal of Theology* 23, no. 1 (1970): 59.

Historical Considerations

During the Reformation, the Scottish Church had come to embrace the orthodox Protestant view of justification by grace alone through faith alone. However, in the early eighteenth-century, the ‘Neonomianism’ associated with Richard Baxter had begun to take root. His view entailed that Christ, by satisfying the demands of the Mosaic law, has procured a new law of repentance and faith. This view resulted in a different emphasis in the relationship between the believer’s justification and his works. As the nineteenth-century historian John Brown of Whitburn noted, ‘Towards the end of the 17th century, a refined Arminianism crept into many Scottish pulpits. Even several diligent and good men were tinctured with Mr Baxter’s views, who, by various dangerous notions, about justification, and other points connected with it...’⁸

In the ensuing controversy in the Church of Scotland over *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (the background to the present study) those who condemned the book and its theology believed it encouraged a theological antinomianism, that is that the law no longer had a governing role in the Christian life (which would in turn lead to practical antinomianism). For their part, the defenders of *The Marrow* (known as “The Representers” because of their representation in its defence to the 1721 General Assembly) feared that some of their opponents were in danger of espousing a Baxterian Neonomianism and slipping into forms of legalism.

⁸ John Brown, “Gospel Truth Stated and Illustrated: General Account of the Controversy Respecting the Doctrine of Grace in the Church of Scotland,” in James Hog, Thomas Boston, Ebenezer Erskine, and Ralph Erskine *Gospel Truth Accurately Stated and Illustrated: Occasioned by the Republication of the Marrow of Modern Divinity*, ed. John Brown (Glasgow: Blackie, Fullarton, 1831), 2, <https://archive.org/details/gospeltr00brow/page/8/mode/2up>.

We will see in the following chapters that it was this Neonomianism that the “Representers”—Thomas Boston and his company of men—fought against with the belief that *The Marrow* rightly espoused the Protestant doctrine of justification.

What, then, was the Protestant view of justification by faith alone? John Calvin answered, ‘justified by faith is he who, excluded from the righteousness of works, grasps the righteousness of Christ through faith, and clothed in it, appears in God’s sight not as a sinner but as a righteous man.’⁹

Is there no need, then, for a stronger emphasis to be placed on the necessity of good works in relation to saving faith? Calvin responded,

Christ was given to us by God’s generosity, to be grasped and possessed by us in faith. By partaking of him, we principally receive a double grace: namely, that being reconciled to God through Christ’s blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of a Judge a gracious Father; and secondly, that sanctified by Christ’s spirit we may cultivate blamelessness and purity of life.’¹⁰

Thus faith lays hold of Christ, leading to both the enjoyment of the gift of sonship and the effecting of Spirit-energised good works. The very nature of faith stimulates believers to good works. However, in contrast to faith defined as trust in Christ, the neonomians, perhaps to stress the importance of sanctification, seemed to introduce good works into the very definition of faith. This new definition meant that obedience was not just the *result* of true

⁹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeill, trans., F. L. Battles (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), III.xi.2.

¹⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, III.xi.1.

faith, but it also *occupied the ground space with* faith for divine acceptance and justification.

The second point of relevance in this debate was the role of the law. As John Macleod has noted, there was a failure ‘to take in the meaning or the value of the distinction between the law of God in its special Covenant form and in its form of a preceptive index to the will of God bearing upon man’s obedience.’¹¹ Each side of the controversy, the Representers and those who opposed them, seems to have used the term *law* without respect to the other side’s use of the term. While the Representers were alleged to be antinomians i.e., denying the moral law’s continued relevance for the Christian life, they, in fact, held the orthodox view that those united to Christ by faith go on to keep the law as a path of new obedience. They thus upheld the law’s governing role in the believer’s life. In their view, those who opposed *The Marrow* failed to appreciate the significance of the classical reformed distinction between the first use of the law as a pedagogue and the third use of the law as a guide to the believer’s new obedience. To them, any presentation of the gospel as new law (*neo-nomos*) endangered the free grace of God in the gospel.

Relevant Scholarship

Several works are relevant to our study. In *The Federal Theology of Thomas Boston*,¹² Andrew McGowan examined the theology of Thomas Boston, opening important distinctions between Boston’s covenant theological framework and that of Westminster federalism. Boston was one of the primary Marrow-men that the General Assembly was concerned with. Hadow shared

¹¹ John Macleod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History since the Reformation* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2015), 138–40.

¹² A. T. B. McGowan, *The Federal Theology of Thomas Boston (1676–1732)* (Edinburgh: Paternoster, 1997).

and stimulated some of the General Assembly's concerns.¹³ While McGowan's work focuses on Thomas Boston and Westminster Federalism, this study examines the neglected issue of the relationship between the theology of James Hadow and the Westminster Standards.

Stephen Myers examined the theological framework of Ebenezer Erskine, a prominent Seceder leader.¹⁴ In one sense, Myers does with Erskine what McGowan did with Boston. Together, they enable us to detect both the similarities and differences in the theology of these two contemporaries.

William Edward VanDoodeward's thesis on the Marrow Controversy and the Seceder Tradition provides crucial insights into the events surrounding the controversy, the secession and the life and theology of several prominent figures in Scottish history.¹⁵

These particular works have provided the impetus needed for this thesis concerning James Hadow.

The Scope of This Work

Principal James Hadow believed that he was defending orthodox Christianity as laid out in the Westminster Standards. He played a leading role in arguing that the *Marrow* theology lay outside the orthodox faith. While Myers and McGowan have provided a systematic layout of Erskine's and Boston's theologies, who were both key signatories to the appeal made to the

¹³ David Lachman has observed, "the initial impact of Hadow's comprehensive and magisterial 'Antinomianism of the Marrow... Detected' was probably decisive in shaping the opinions of all but the most critical readers. It was regarded as virtually unanswerable by many and the Presbytery of Brechin even asked the 1722 Assembly to thank Hadow publicly for it." See David Lachman, *The Marrow Controversy* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House, 1988), 480.

¹⁴ Stephen Myers, *Scottish Federalism and Covenantalism in Transition: The Theology of Ebenezer Erskine* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015).

¹⁵ VanDoodeward, op. cit.

General Assembly defending the general orthodoxy of the theology of *The Marrow*, there has been little scholarly examination of Hadow *per se*. Filling this gap should contribute to a more precise reading of the Marrow controversy and perhaps also carry lessons for the church today.

Both Hadow and Boston understood the importance of nuanced theology and its implications for gospel ministry. But their differing interpretations of elements in the Westminster Standards drove a wedge between them. The goal of this thesis is not to resolve any aspect of the Marrow Controversy. Instead, it is to compare the theology of James Hadow to the Westminster Standards to which he subscribed as a Church of Scotland minister. Thus, his theology needs to be examined against the backdrop of those standards. This thesis endeavours to focus on an exposition of various key elements in Hadow's theology as revealed in his published works and to explore their consistency with the teaching of the Confession and Catechisms that had been adopted by the Kirk. Thus, since all parties in the Marrow Controversy formally subscribed to the same theological standards, our question here is not the broader question of whether Hadow's own theological positions were 'right' or 'wrong' in any absolute sense, but whether or not they were fully consistent with the Church's standards of orthodoxy expressed in its own subordinate standards. 'the whole doctrine' of which he had subscribed and, in addition, confessed to 'own the same as the confession of my faith.'¹⁶

Method of Approach

This central question will be explored in four stages. Chapter two examines the historical backdrop to Hadow's emergence as a minister and theologian by looking at his upbringing, education and work as a pastor.

¹⁶ The words quoted are from the ordination formula introduced by the General Assembly in 1711. For a discussion, see Ian Hamilton, *The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House, 1990), 4-5.

Chapters three to eight then comprise a comparative analysis of the Westminster Standards with Hadow's theology in the following areas: covenant theology (chapter three), the nature of faith (chapter four), faith's relationship with other associated doctrines (chapter five), soteriology (chapter six), the relationship between the law of God (chapter seven), and the call of the gospel (chapter eight). Each chapter highlights agreements or disagreements between the Westminster Standards and Hadow. Finally, in chapter nine, we will provide a final assessment of Hadow's consistency with the teaching of his own subordinate standards.

These chapters constitute the most relevant sections in the Confession bearing on the central theological issues expressed in the Marrow Controversy. Opposition to the Marrow theology initiated the trend to expose inconsistencies between *The Marrow* and the Church's confessional standards, and, therefore, also to the Representatives' positions. Much of the literature has followed this trend. In this study, we seek to raise a reverse question, namely whether James Hadow's own teaching was completely consistent with his commitment to the Church's professed standard of 'orthodoxy'. The Marrow controversy tended to pose this question of the Marrow-men but not of Hadow himself.

Given this hitherto unasked question, we have adopted the rudimentary procedure of examining the teaching of a number of relevant themes in the Westminster Standards, noting Hadow's own exposition of these and assessing the extent to which his theology was consistent with the Westminster Standards. By this method—admittedly painstaking at times—we hope to discover the areas of agreement or otherwise between Hadow and the confessional standards to which he formally subscribed.

It would be unsurprising, given Hadow's public commitment to the Westminster Confession, if we were to discover many areas of agreement. But such agreement should not simply be assumed in the specific loci relevant to the Marrow Controversy. In addition, it is a valid question whether there are areas of disharmony between the Confession's teaching and that of Hadow, even of a kind of which Hadow himself may have been unaware, perhaps (wrongly?) assuming that his own views were in complete harmony with the subordinate standards of 'orthodoxy' to which he had subscribed.

In what follows, our methodology will reveal points of agreement and deviation between Hadow's theology and that of the Westminster Standards. Matters of agreement will include God's relationship to humanity through Adam in the covenant of works and to the elect through Christ, Christ's ongoing application of redemption in the elect in his intercessory work, the nature of faith, the grace of repentance and benefit of adoption in Christ and the moral law's ongoing binding nature on all humanity.

But there are also areas where—perhaps unobserved by himself—important differences seem to emerge. As we will discover, Hadow held that the purpose of the covenant of works was for Adam to secure justification for himself and his posterity. He also believed that repentance was necessary before the elect came to faith in Christ, and in addition, that the scope of the gospel call is limited to the elect.

In highlighting the similarities and differences in the conclusions to each chapter, we will assess the reliability of Hadow's own understanding of his theology. The assessments will finally be gathered together in a brief concluding chapter seeking to resolve the issue of whether Hadow was in fact as consistently orthodox as he believed himself to be.

This work focuses on those aspects of Hadow's theology related to the *Marrow* theology. His contributions to the defence of Presbyterianism in response to Episcopalian sentiments and his engagement with the rise of Arianism in the Kirk, while significant, have not been the focus of attention in this work apart from the occasional peripheral glance.

As this thesis analyses Hadow's theology under the lens of the Westminster Standards, the primary sources are the Westminster Confession, the Westminster Larger Catechism and the Westminster Shorter Catechism.¹⁷ Hadow more narrowly engages with the *Marrow* theology in two of his works: *The Record of God and the Duty of Man Therein Required* (1719) and *The Antinomianism of the Marrow of Modern Divinity Detected* (1721). It is in these works that we therefore focus our attention on the question of the consistency of his statements with those of the Westminster Standards.

For clarity and ease of comprehension in what follows, modern punctuation and spelling have been introduced into the quotations. I have replaced the medial *s* (*f*) with the modern *s*; contemporary punctuating practices have been added to reflect Hadow's thoughts more accurately, and spelling has been modernised (e.g., *publick* now reads *public*).

¹⁷ Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2018), 7.1. Henceforth, references to these standards in the text are as follows Westminster Confession (WCF), Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC), and Westminster Shorter Catechism (WSC).

CHAPTER TWO

JAMES HADOW IN HIS CONTEXT

A brief consideration of seventeenth-century Scotland will help provide the context for James Hadow's life and ministry and the proper backdrop for understanding his theology.

The Seventeenth-Century Scottish Church

The late seventeenth-century was a tumultuous time in the political and ecclesiastical life of Scotland. The issue of patronage particularly cast its long and controversial shadow upon the church. The reinstated Patronage Act had from 1662 required all ministers appointed from 1649 onward to acquire patrons.¹⁸

During the period of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), Scots participated in the Bishops' Wars of 1639-1640, the First English Civil War between 1642-1646 and the Second English Civil War in 1648. Scottish Royalists who supported rule by bishops had fought Scottish Presbyterians who supported rule by presbyters. All three wars were fought on the heels of the 1638 National Covenant, which opposed the Charles I-led imposition of a modified English episcopacy, the Book of Canons and the Book of Common Prayer upon the Scottish Church. With conflict outside the kingdom and much internal turmoil, the war-affected Scottish nation desired a reconciliation among the clergy and government officials. In 1669, 1672, and 1679, John

¹⁸ Those ministers who refused to abide by the reinstated act become the Covenanters. Eventually, the Reformed Presbyterian Church would emerge out of this movement. For a brief and helpful treatment of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, see Nancy Elizabeth Clark, 'A History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church' (MA thesis, Butler University, Indianapolis: 1966), <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1299&context=grtheses>

Maitland, First Duke of Lauderdale, sent letters of indulgences to the Covenanters to attempt such a reconciliation. These indulgences invited evicted ministers to return to their parishes under their promise to abstain from political activities. While a number returned, about 150 ministers refused the offer.¹⁹ Those of the Covenanting persuasion lost a number yet remained in the fight.

On June 22, 1680, the Society People, a group of dissenters led by Donald Cargill and their society's military leader, Richard Cameron, posted a declaration in Sanquhar, a burgh south of Glasgow in Nithsdale.²⁰ The declaration was read 'renouncing allegiance to Charles Stuart, declaring war on all who aided and abetted him in his tyranny, and disowning as heir to the throne the Duke of York, "that professed Papist."' In response, the Scottish Privy Council authorised field executions of those bearing arms and who opposed the King.²¹ Thus began the 'Killing Time' that extended from 1680-88.²²

¹⁹ J. H. S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 248-249.

²⁰ The Society People, or Sanquharians or the Hillmen, are more commonly called Cameronians. A faction of the Covenanters, Cameronians are those who followed the radical teachings of Richard Cameron and signed the Sanquhar Declaration of 1680. The reason for their organising in circa 1681 is evident in their long name, 'Societies of Cameronians for the Maintenance of the Presbyterian Form of Worship.' Commenting on the character and influence of the Cameronians, historian Burleigh notes, 'The Cameronians gave the government every excuse to wage war on them and they themselves retaliated. They were extremists whose excesses were condemned by nearly all of their Presbyterian brethren at the time. Nevertheless, though they were but a remnant, their loyalty to convictions more widely shared, their constancy under persecution and their warm if narrow evangelical faith, must be recognized, and without their testimony the victory of Presbyterianism would have been impossible' (Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, 251).

²¹ A privy council is a body that advises the monarch on civil affairs.

²² Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, 251.

James Hadow in the Netherlands

James Hadow was born on August 13, 1667, amid such tumultuous times, in Douglas, Lanarkshire. His father, George Hadow, was a merchant. In 1697 James married Isabel Tullideph, the daughter of William Tullideph, the Principal of St. Leonard's College.²³ After Isabel died in about 1705, Hadow married Margaret Forrester. Together, they had eight children, including George (1712–1780), who would later serve as Professor of Hebrew at St. Mary's College between 1748 and 1780.²⁴

In 1684 Hadow travelled to Utrecht for higher education, partly due to the persecution of the Covenanters and the appeal of the quality of theological education in the Netherlands. While there, he met many English exiles and Scottish Covenanters fleeing persecution. It was probably under the tutelage of John Howe (who had been Oliver Cromwell's chaplain), as well as Matthew Meade, and his son, Samuel Meade,²⁵ that Hadow published two Latin theses in 1685 and 1686.²⁶ At Utrecht, Hadow also studied Hebrew and theology under the distinguished theologian Petrus van Mastricht.²⁷

²³ St. Leonard's College was founded in 1512 as The College of Poor Clerks of the Church of St Andrews. The college is now affiliated with the University of St. Andrews.

²⁴ William Garden Blaikie, 'James Hadow' in *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: MacMillan, 1890), 23:437.
https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Hadow,_James.

²⁵ Geoffrey F. Nuttall, 'English Dissenters in the Netherlands 1640–1689,' *Nederlands Archief Voor Kerkgeschiedenis / Dutch Review of Church History*, n.s., 59, no.1 (1978): 50, www.jstor.org/stable/24038385.

²⁶ These theses were disputations. On the importance of disputations as part of the curriculum at the University of Utrecht, Broeyer notes, 'Joined with his utterances about the acquisition of knowledge on polemizing, [Franciscus Burman (1628–79)] brought up the academic disputations. He considered these to be of great use because they helped the students to obtain frankness of speaking, nourished their interest, provided them with a better insight and prepared them, moreover, for a good performance in debates and adversaries.' Broeyer, 'Theological Education,' 128.

²⁷ Petrus van Mastricht (1630–1706), followed his professor in theology at Utrecht, Gisbertus Voetius, to teach Hebrew and theology. Like Voetius, van Mastricht was a theologian whose predisposition was one of ecclesial theology rather than academic theology (to

In 1688, William Cleland, a covenanting colonel who had fled to the Netherlands to escape persecution, returned to Scotland with many exiles and acted as an agent for William of Orange.²⁸ Prince William recognised many of these exiles for supporting the English Revolution. The Dutch-educated Scots were given prominent positions in society. Historian Esther Mijers points out, ‘In the re-established Scottish Kirk as well, Dutch-educated Scots played a role of major importance. Half of the Kirk’s moderators in the 1690s had been in the United Provinces. The principals of Edinburgh, Gilbert Rule and William Carstares, of Glasgow, William Dunlop and of St. Andrews, James Hadow, had all been exiles and students at Utrecht.’²⁹

In Utrecht, James Hadow would have met his Scottish compatriot, future co-presbyter at the Synod of Fife, and first opponent in the Marrow Controversy, James Hog of Carnock. It is unclear what the nature of their

make a modern distinction). Voetius placed more value on homiletics and practical theology than his predecessor Antonius Walaeus. Like Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht wrote theology for the benefit of the church as the title of his works on systematic theology reveal: *Theoretical-Practical Theology*. Professor Franciscus Burman, like his colleague van Mastricht, valued the learning of the original languages and Latin. As an adherent of Johannes Coccejus, ‘he preferred to use a system in which the natural order of the Holy Scripture dominated, that is to say the order of the covenants (*oeconomia foederum*) between God and man. He thought it regrettable that this order was seriously upset in most systems in which the dogmatic tenets (*loci communes*) formed the pattern one by one. In spite of that objection Burman mentioned several dogmatic works of another character as valuable [such as] *Institutio Christianae Religionis* by Calvin, a work that in his opinion could not be praised highly enough.’ Broeyer continues, ‘Franciscus Burman (1628–1679) was noted for placing importance on disputations. Broeyer points out, ‘Just as Voetius, Burman found it important to be acquainted with the points on which there was disagreement with adherents of other theological and philosophical convictions. It was necessary to read books on the existing controversies. In this connection it is nice to take note of his remarks on the way in which these should be studied. It was wrong, Burman stated, to get to know the disputed issues from quotations. One had to extract those points of issue from the sources themselves (*ex ipsis fontibus*), from the authentic writings of adversaries.’ Broeyer ‘Theological Education,’ 127–8. <https://doi.org/10.1163/187607505X00074>.

²⁸ Thomas Finlayson Henderson, ‘William Cleland’ in *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: MacMillan, 1890), 11:28.

[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Cleland,_William_\(1661%3F-1689\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Cleland,_William_(1661%3F-1689)).

²⁹ Esther Mijers, *News from the Republic of Letters: Scottish Students, Charles Mackie and the United Provinces, 1650–1750*, ed. Andrew Colin Gow, vol. 161 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 118.

relationship was in the Netherlands. The immediacy of Hadow's public response to Hog's prefaced re-publication of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* in *The Record of God and the Duty of Man Therein Required* (1719) almost inevitably raises the question of whether it was harmonious or not.³⁰

During his education at Utrecht, James Hadow worshipped at the English Reformed Church in Amsterdam in the latter part of John Best's ministry (he served the congregation from 1655 to 1696). The English consistory was very particular about who ministered in the Utrecht English Reformed Church. As a result, Hadow undoubtedly sat under the influence of orthodox Reformed preaching during his time in the Netherlands.³¹

Hadow Returns to Scotland

Together with his nephew Thomas Cleland (son of the aforementioned William Cleland), Hadow returned to Scotland in 1688, soon after, or perhaps even on the same voyage as, William of Orange. Crowned as King on April 11, 1689, William provided a Protestant monarchy that afforded Scotland relative political stability.

Meanwhile, William Carstares, a Scottish exile who had developed a friendship with William of Orange, used his political capital and personal connections to set up university chairs in the Dutch style.³² Along with raising finances, he was able to recruit Dutch-educated pupils to fill these positions. Two of his brothers-in-law, William Dunlop and Joseph Drew, became principals of Glasgow University and St. Leonard's College at St. Andrews

³⁰ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mossman, 1719).

³¹ Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 219-221.

³² Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, 261.

respectively.³³ Carstares was likewise familiar with Hadow's Dutch education and his theological calibre, which would eventually work in Hadow's favour.

James Hadow: A Scottish Theologian of the Eighteenth-Century

Tobias Crisp (1600-1643) was an English clergyman who was suspected of deviations from Reformed orthodoxy, particularly as that orthodoxy would be encapsulated in the Westminster Standards published soon after his death. The main point of concern was Crisp's alleged antinomianism.

While Crisp appears to have been orthodox in affirming the third use of the law, the underlying point of concern was his teaching on eternal justification—the notion that the elect were justified in eternity (and therefore that justification preceded faith) as opposed to the Reformed doctrine that a person is justified by faith in Christ at his conversion. Alongside eternal justification, Crisp taught the orthodox doctrine of double imputation—that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the elect and correspondingly the elect's sins are imputed to Christ. But the coupling of eternal justification and double imputation gave rise to concerns from many pastors who feared that Crisp's theology provided the groundwork for licentiousness—a fear that since people are eternally justified and their sins are not theirs but paid for eternally, it became possible for present actions to be viewed as not morally significant.³⁴

In the time that Crisp's preaching was followed or feared for unorthodoxy, John Saltmarsh (d. 1647), who served as a chaplain in General Fairfax's army, was charged with antinomianism by Richard Baxter, a fellow

³³ Anne Skoczylas, 'The Regulation of Academic Society in Early Eighteenth-Century Scotland: The Tribulations of Two Divinity Professors,' *The Scottish Historical Review* 83, no. 216 (2004): 172-173, www.jstor.org/stable/25529790.

³⁴ That he did not preach licentiousness is seen in his sermon on John 8:36. See Tobias Crisp, 'Christian Liberty No Licentious Doctrine' in *The Complete Works of Tobias Crisp* (Grace-Ebooks.com), 1:122-42. https://www.grace-ebooks.com/library/Tobias%20Crisp/TC_Christ%20Alone%20Exalted%20Vol%201.pdf.

chaplain during the First English Civil War. Saltmarsh, like Crisp, held to the doctrine of eternal justification. But, unlike Crisp, Saltmarsh more openly embraced a form of antinomianism. Reflecting on Saltmarsh's influence, Baxter observed, 'I found that they [i.e., the soldiers] were just falling in with Saltmarsh that Christ hath repented and believed for us, and that we must no more question our faith and repentance than Christ.'³⁵

Commenting on Baxter, J. I. Packer notes: 'His study of Saltmarsh, however, revolutionized his own thought; for he began to see that Saltmarsh's gospel was an inescapable deduction from two doctrines he held himself—limited atonement and justification before faith.'³⁶ Baxter eventually denied double imputation and, in its place, held a double righteousness of the believer—a legal righteousness wherein Christ obeys the law according to the covenant of works, and a gospel righteousness that is the believer's obedience to God's law. Thus, justifying faith came to combine 'Faith [in Christ and his righteousness] as the principal part; Obedience as the less principall.'³⁷

Into this theological quagmire present in the British churches, James Hadow returned from his education in the Netherlands. About a year after his return, Crisp's sermons were published by one of his sons much to the vexation of the British churches. Thus, when James Hog wrote the preface to *The Marrow of Modern Divinity's* republication without its sections on the ten commandments, it must have seemed as though antinomianism had finally crept into the Scottish churches and required a swift response. Principal Hadow shared Baxter's concern about antinomianism.

³⁵ Richard Baxter, 'Of the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness' in *A Treatise of Justifying Righteousness in Two Books* (London: Princes- Arms and Golden Lion in St Paul's Church Yard, 1676), 21. <https://archive.org/details/treatjustif00baxt/page/n59/mode/2up>

³⁶ James Packer, *The Redemption & Restoration of Man in the Thought of Richard Baxter: A Study in Puritan Theology* (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2003), 204.

³⁷ Packer, *Redemption*, 259.

More positively, Presbyterianism finally gained ascendancy in Scotland in 1690. In 1692, the same year that Hadow lost his brother Thomas at the Battle of Steenkerque, he was ordained to the second charge in the parish of Cupar, Fife, being translated to the first charge two years later. In 1699, he assumed the chair of divinity (as second master) at St. Mary's College. While there, he was also appointed rector on fourteen occasions between 1706 and 1747.³⁸ Finally, in 1707, Hadow became the Principal of St Mary's College.³⁹

The position Hadow now occupied gave him a platform for influence in the Church of Scotland. During his ministry, he published six works, two before the period of the Marrow controversy and four following it. His first two works were a defence of Presbyterianism against Episcopalianism: *Remarks upon the Case of the Episcopal Clergy and Those of the Episcopal Persuasion Considered As to Granting Them a Toleration and an Indulgence* (1703),⁴⁰ and *A Survey of the Case of Episcopal Clergy and those of the Episcopal Persuasion; the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of Scotland Anent the Sacrament of Baptism Vindicated from the Charge of Gross Error Exhibited in a Print Called 'The Practice and Doctrine of the Presbyterian Preachers about the Sacrament' Examined* (1704). These were published anonymously. Possibly, he considered the defence of the pamphlets' subject matter worthy of readers' attention without respect to their author's credentials. Alternatively, he may have wanted to avoid engagement beyond his published responses—or perhaps both; we cannot be sure.

³⁸ In Hadow's day, the Rector was the titular head of the University.

³⁹ Skoczylas, 'Regulation of Academic Society,' 176. Here, Skoczylas notes that the St. Andrews Presbytery records of 1707 and 1708 demonstrate concerns about getting enough qualified candidates to fill vacant divinity chairs.

⁴⁰ [James Hadow], *A Survey of the Case, of the Episcopal Clergy, and of Those of the Episcopal Persuasion* (Edinburgh: George Mosman, 1703).
<https://books.google.co.in/books?id=neNhAAAaAAJ&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

Whatever the case may be for the anonymity of his earlier works, Hadow openly identified himself in his responses to the Marrow controversy. Following the republication of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* in 1718, he preached a sermon at the Synod of Fife in April 1719— ‘The Record of God and the Duty of Man’—in which he condemned the teaching of *The Marrow*. The General Assembly’s Committee on Purity of Doctrine sided with Hadow’s assessment. Historians have recognised how instrumental Hadow now became in raising charges against the Marrow-men.⁴¹ He further elaborated his opposition to *The Marrow* in his 1721 publication, *The Antinomianism of the Marrow of Modern Divinity Detected, wherein the Letter to a Private Christian about Believers Receiving the Law as the Law of Christ is Specially Considered*.⁴²

Hadow’s final publications were related to his concern over the doctrine of the Trinity, particularly in view of the Arian tendencies of John Simson, Professor of Divinity at the University of Glasgow:⁴³ *An Enquiry into Mr Simson’s Sentiments about the Trinity from His Papers in Process* (1730),⁴⁴ and *A Vindication of the Learned and Honourable Author of the History of the Apostles’ Creed from the False Sentiment which Mr Simson Has Injuriously Imputed to Him* (1731).⁴⁵

Hadow was selective of the matters with which he engaged. It could be argued that he not only had no desire to court personal publicity (as seen in the

⁴¹ D.C. Lachman, ‘James Hadow,’ in Nigel M. de S. Cameron, ed., *The Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (London: InterVarsity, 1993), 384.

⁴² James Hadow, *The Antinomianism of the Marrow of Modern Divinity Detected* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1721).

⁴³ The Simson case is thoroughly documented in Anne Skoczylas, *Mr Simson’s Knotty Case: Divinity, Politics, and Due Process in Early Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001).

⁴⁴ James Hadow, *An Enquiry into Mr Simson’s Sentiments about the Trinity from His Papers in Process* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1730).

⁴⁵ James Hadow, *A Vindication of the Learned and Honourable Author of the History of the Apostles’ Creed from the False Sentiment which Mr Simson Has Injuriously Imputed to Him* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1731).

anonymous publication of the first two works), but also that, most importantly, he cared deeply about doctrines he believed were vital to the Reformed faith, but under attack—hence his works against the Marrow-men’s perceived tendencies to antinomianism and Professor Simson’s evident Socinianism and Arianism.

James Hadow valued scholarly discourse and placed a high value of civility in it. He had already written in 1703:

though I abhor all violation of tender consciences in the sacred concerns of the worship of God, it being always my fixed judgement that persuasion and not persecution is the proper mean of propagating true religion... I shall therefore give you my reflections on some of the pamphlets that plead for a toleration in the present circumciate case, chiefly concerning myself that appeared in public called, *The Case of the Episcopal Clergy &c.* Seeing the author thereof is the first who published to the world their grounds of separation ... This author is earnest in recommending to us love, charity, and a spirit of meekness, and it were indeed to be wished that the present debates were managed with less rancour and passion.⁴⁶

From this it seems clear that Hadow viewed himself as a man of conviction who chose his battles carefully and, that as a professor of theology trained in the Gomarist school at Utrecht, he desired both the purity and peace of the Kirk. He did not involve himself in matters that were paramount to the Covenanters (although he was probably sympathetic to fundamental covenanting concerns). He seems to have plotted a middle course in holding

⁴⁶ [James Hadow], *A Survey of the Case of the Episcopal Clergy, and of Those of the Episcopal Perswasion* (Edinburgh: George Mosman), 1703, 2–3, <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=neNhAAAAcAAJ&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

together the peace, purity and unity of the church along with political harmony in Scotland. He sought to honour his alma mater's code of civility in discourse.⁴⁷

In view of the fact that in the year of his ordination (1692) he had lost his brother Thomas at the Battle of Steenkerque (during the Thirty Years' War), he was hesitant to share either Thomas's or his nephew Douglas's combative convictions. He deliberately committed himself to patient and careful discussion. In contrast to some of the Covenanters, he desired civility; and rather than 'rancour and passion,' he wanted 'love, charity, and spirit of meekness.' The blunt opinion of John Macleod was that

Hadow, while not by any means like the later Moderates, was of the compromising, mediating tendency, which, while it professed a high regard for sound doctrine, was yet not at all prepared to put up a fight for the rights of the Christian people for which the old Reformed divines stood.⁴⁸

This notwithstanding, Hadow's public opinions were given in relation to high-priority concerns. So, what was it in *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* with which Principal James Hadow saw it necessary to engage?

Hadow and *The Marrow*

When *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* was republished in 1718 with a preface by James Hog,⁴⁹ Hadow had used the opportunity to preach at the Synod of Fife on April 7, 1719, to refute what he perceived were its errors.

⁴⁷ See footnote 3 on page 18 for a note on the value of civil scholarly discourse at Utrecht.

⁴⁸ Macleod, *Scottish Theology*, 151.

⁴⁹ Edward Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (St. Edmonton: Still Waters Revival Books, 1991), 7.

That a majority of the Synod shared his sentiments is apparent in the dedicatory note to the published sermon: ‘To the Right Reverend, the Moderator, and the Reverend and the worthy ministers and elders of the Synod of Fife. This sermon published at their desire is humbly offered by James Hadow.’⁵⁰

At the General Assembly the following month, the *Marrow* was submitted to the *Committee on Purity of Doctrine* for review. The subsequent General Assembly of 1720 received the committee’s report, which condemned *The Marrow* as strongly antinomian in sentiment. As a result, ministers were instructed not to recommend the book. In this way, those who subscribed to the doctrines of the book were also condemned as sharing its purported antinomianism.⁵¹

In 1721, twelve ministers submitted a ‘Representation and Petition.’ The ministers (‘The Representers’) were James Hog of Carnock, Thomas Boston of Ettrick, John Bonar of Torphichen, John Williamson of Inveresk and Musselburgh, James Kid of Queensferry, Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, Ebenezer Erskine of Portmoak, James Wardlow and Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline, Henry Davidson of Galashiels, James Bathgate of Orwell, and William Hunter of Lilliesleaf. In the petition, they argued that the teachings of *The Marrow* had been misunderstood. Further, they argued that in condemning

⁵⁰ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mossman, 1719), 4.

⁵¹ General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, ‘The Act of the General Assembly Concerning a Book entitled, ‘*The Marrow of Modern Divinity*’ in *A Full and True State of the Controversy Concerning the Marrow of Modern Divinity as Debated between the General Assembly and Several Ministers in the Year 1720 and 1721* (Glasgow: John Bryce, 1773), 2–8.

The Marrow's teachings the church was simultaneously condemning elements of its own doctrinal standards.⁵² The committee rejected the petition.

In the same year, perhaps in response to the perceived adamance of the subscribers of *The Marrow*, Hadow published 'The Antinomianism of the Marrow of Modern Divinity Detected', exposing and condemning what he believed were the offending tenets of the book. He defended the Assembly's decision against the Representers' allegations and denied that by objecting to the doctrine of the free offer of the gospel to all, the majority party was objecting to the theology of the Westminster Standards. Hadow's preface stated, '[T]his church doth steadfastly maintain the sovereignty, freedom and efficacy of grace; but according to the gospel revelation, without extending it to all and everyone; and without prejudice toward the justice of God, and the satisfaction and merit of Christ ...'⁵³

In all his works, Hadow believed himself to be expounding and defending the theology of the Church of Scotland as encapsulated in the Westminster Standards, even if this meant opposing fellow ministers who espoused and defended the teachings of *The Marrow*.

This context gives rise to our fundamental questions: whether, and to what extent, Hadow's own theology was identical to that of the Westminster Standards. In pursuing an answer to this question, the chapters that follow will state and compare the theology of the Westminster Standards with the published theology of Hadow in the areas of covenant theology, faith and its

⁵² James Hog et al., 'The Representation and Petition of Us Under-subscribing Ministers of the Gospel,' in *Full and True State of the Controversy*, 9–22.

⁵³ James Hadow, *The Antinomianism of 'The Marrow of Modern Divinity' Detected: Wherein the Letter to a Private Christian, about Believers Receiving the Law, As the Law of Christ, Is Specially Considered* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1721), iii.

associated doctrines, the redemption of Christ, the nature of God's law and the call of the gospel.

CHAPTER THREE

COVENANT THEOLOGY

Prominent Reformed theologians like Petrus van Mastricht had trained James Hadow at Utrecht. Like them he held to a system of covenant theology. This chapter will examine the covenant theology of the Westminster Standards and then focus on Hadow's views on the covenants of works, grace and redemption before comparing the two expositions.

The Westminster Standards on the Nature of the Covenant

The first paragraph of the Westminster Confession's treatment on the covenant of works provides the context for understanding its use of the term *covenant*:

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.⁵⁴

A covenant expresses God's choice to relate to humanity.

Why is this 'voluntary condescension on God's part' so important? Because of the difference between the nature of God and the nature of man—a point underlined by the Confession's earlier description of God as 'infinite in being and perfection . . . eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute . . .' (WCF 2.1). In his nature, God is 'in and of

⁵⁴ *The Westminster Confession*, 7.1.

himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient' (WCF 2.2). Further, 'all things are open and manifest; his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain' (WCF 2.2). These superlative attributes of God, particularly his absolute aseity and independence from the created, mark God as a being unto himself.

In contrast to the nature of God, humanity is a species of 'reasonable creatures' who 'owe obedience to him as their Creator' (WCF 7.1). This presupposes a necessary and essential relationship between God and man. Humanity does not possess the superlative attributes of God. Yet, he 'created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image' (WCF 4.2). Because man is made after God's image and owes obedience to his creator, man's nature in some respects mirrors his creator. There is a natural distance between the two beings because of God's superlative character and man's comparatively subordinate character. The great 'distance between God and the creature' explains why, apart from 'some voluntary condescension on God's part,' there was no way for man to relate to him (WCF 7.1). However, God did indeed relate to man by an act of 'voluntary condescension on his part' which is 'express[ed] by way of covenant' (WCF 7.1).

The Westminster Standards on the Covenant of Works

The first covenant that God 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' (WCF 7.2). The covenant of works is comprised of five parts for each of which the Confession provides scriptural support.

1: The first covenant was a covenant of *works*. Adam failed to keep it for himself and his posterity, but this does not diminish the responsibility of those who have not believed in Christ to fulfil its requirement for perfect obedience.

2: The goal of the original covenant was life, but, instead, the breach of it brought its opposite, death (Romans 5:12). Had Adam not fallen from his natural state, he would have received life (WCF 7.2). Instead, he ‘made himself incapable of life by that covenant [the covenant of works] ...’.

3: This life was given by God by way of promise. In ‘the first covenant... life was *promised* to Adam’ (WCF 7.2; emphasis added). After the fall, Adam forfeited the promise to this life because ‘by his fall [he] made himself incapable of life by that covenant [of works]’ (WCF 7.3).

4: The condition of attaining this life was by works, i.e., ‘upon condition of perfect and personal obedience’ (WCF 7.2; cf. 19.1). However, Adam disobeyed God: ‘Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit’ (WCF 6.1).

5: Adam was the person to whom the promise was made and was to act as the covenantal representative for ‘his posterity’ (WCF 7.2). Hence the Confession, following Romans 5:12-21, seeks to establish that it was not only Adam who would experience the consequences of his action—life for obedience and death for disobedience—but also all his descendants after him (WCF 6.3).

Further, the Confession enumerates various effects of the fall brought about by Adam’s disobedience to his obligations in the covenant of works: ‘By this sin (i) they fell from their original righteousness, (ii) lost their communion with God, so (iii) became dead in sin, and (iv) wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body’ (WCF 6.2). Consequently, since

Adam and Eve were ‘the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation’ (WCF 6.3). Thus ‘all that proceed from them... are conceived and born in sin’ (WLC Q26). In sum, all that was true of Adam in his fallen condition is true of everyone descended from him. Like the first parents, humanity incurs the punishments of this life and the life to come in their naturally sinful condition.

Is there then no hope? The Westminster divines responded, ‘the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace’ (WCF 7.3). How did the Divines view this covenant?

The Westminster Standards on the Covenant of Grace

Adam’s fall from grace brought about the ‘threatened death upon the breach of [the covenant of works]’ (WCF 19.1). With such a fallen human race, God established another covenant:

Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe (WCF 7.3).

There are several parts to the nature of the covenant of grace that are worth examination.

1: The ‘Lord was pleased’ to offer life (WCF 7.3). God made another covenant not from any external compulsion to save sinners but out of his own good pleasure. This point is made even more precisely in the Larger

Catechism: ‘Doth God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery? God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Works; *but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it*, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Grace’ (WLC Q30; emphasis added). In the covenant of works, man was required to obey God perfectly in order to attain life but failed to do so. In contrast, in the covenant of grace, man receives life offered freely because of God’s ‘mere love and mercy’ (WLC Q30). ‘The Lord was pleased’ (WCF 7.3) to offer life to sinners.

2: Faith is necessary. The next chapter will examine the doctrine of faith in detail, but one pertinent point needs mentioning here. In the covenant of works, the means to attain life was personal and perfect obedience. But in the covenant of grace, it is through faith in Jesus Christ as the perfect federal representative (Christ as the mediator will be discussed in chapter five). He is the new federal head who has now fulfilled the covenant of works and receives its promises. He thus takes the central place in the covenant of grace, whose benefits are received by faith in him.

3: The Holy Spirit is given to the recipients to make eternal life actual. The Holy Spirit enables ‘them [to be] willing and able to believe’ (WCF 7.3). The Larger Catechism elaborates on this work of the Holy Spirit.

How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant? The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, *promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the*

evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation. (WLC Q32; emphasis added).

We should note here the emphasis that the Holy Spirit is promised and is given to the beneficiaries of the covenant of grace. He works ‘faith with all other saving graces’ (WLC Q32, i.e. ‘justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them’). Beneficiaries of the covenant of grace ‘are made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured, by the application of them unto us, which is the work especially of God the Holy Ghost’ (WLC 58). As a result, the Holy Spirit ‘enables[s] them unto all holy obedience’ (WLC Q32) as ‘the evidence of the truth of their faith,’ in ‘thankfulness to God,’ ‘and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.’

Further, the Westminster Standards note that the covenant of grace ‘was differently administered in the time of the law and in the time of the gospel’ (WCF 7.5). However, there was not a different means for salvation during the time of the law, i.e., the Old Testament. Old Testament beneficiaries of the covenant of grace were saved by ‘faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins and eternal salvation’ (WCF 7.5). During this epoch, the mode of the Holy Spirit’s operation was ‘by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances’ (WCF 7.5). These were types of the one to come in that they were ‘all fore-signifying Christ to come’ (WCF 7.5) which the Holy Spirit used ‘sufficient[ly] and efficacious[ly]... to build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah’ (WCF 7.5).

Now,

Under the gospel, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fulness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the New Testament. There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations (WCF 7.6).

The life that is given under the gospel is made possible through the Holy Spirit's ministry of applying the work of Christ's redemption in and to the elect alone. Adam was the federal head of the entire human race in the covenant of works, but Christ is the federal head of those whom he 'elected ... to everlasting life' (WSC Q20; WLC Q13). To the elect alone, God gives 'his Holy Spirit to make them willing and able to believe' (WCF 7.3).

One further dimension of covenant theology needs to be mentioned here: the question of a covenant of redemption.

The Westminster Standards and the Covenant of Redemption

The Westminster Standards do not explicitly teach a covenant of redemption (i.e., a pre-temporal covenant within the life of God himself).⁵⁵ However, since the Confession speaks of a pre-temporal commitment within

⁵⁵ John Fesko discusses this matter at some length. Summarising, Fesko notes, 'The covenant of redemption is another example of a doctrinal teaching that was not addressed directly by the Standards but left as an orthodox extra-confessional matter, like the differing views on the relationship between the covenant of works and the Mosaic covenant.' John Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards: Historical Context and Theological Insights* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publications, 2014), 166.

the Godhead, in the present writer's view, the idea of a covenant of redemption—if not the term—is present nonetheless.

The Confession states: 'It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, *to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only-begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man*, the Prophet, Priest, and King; the Head and Saviour of his Church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world; unto whom he did, *from all eternity, give a people to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified*' (WCF 8.1; emphasis added).

The Confession clarifies this: God the Father chose 'his only-begotten Son' (WCF 8.1) to act as the mediator between God and man. What the Confession and the Larger Catechism 30 establish is that there is a precursor to the covenant of grace. The Father gave specific persons, the elect, to the Son to be redeemed in time, 'from all eternity' (WCF 8.1). This is the concept, if not the terminology, of a covenant engagement. The covenant of grace then was introduced closely following the fall of Adam, but its ultimate foundation lies in eternity with Christ appointed as the federal head of God's elect.⁵⁶

Hadow on the Covenant of Works

Hadow held that the covenant of works God made with Adam was a covenant made not only with him but with all his descendants. Adam was the covenant head of the entire human race. Through him God intended to fill the earth with his image-bearers.

The condition of this covenant was that Adam was to avoid eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil so that—in Hadow's

⁵⁶ That the notion of the covenant of redemption was believed to be consistent from the first days of the Confession is pointed out by Fesko when he examines David Dickson's works. See Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 165–6.

view—he might attain to justification before God. In Hadow’s words, ‘all in an unregenerated state . . . are under a standing unabrogated obligation of the covenant of works to seek justification of and a right to eternal life by their own perfect and personal obedience.’⁵⁷ Hadow believed that this need to attain justification by a perfect obedience was not only true of fallen Adam and his fallen posterity, but also applied to Adam’s prelapsarian state. Hadow clarified: ‘The Law in its full compass and extent comprehends all the obligations of the covenant of works. It obliged our first parents to perfect personal obedience, as their righteousness, and the condition of their obtaining right unto the promised eternal and celestial life.’⁵⁸ However, Adam lost his right standing before God and the right to life due to his one act of disobedience.⁵⁹ We see here that Hadow viewed the condition of Adam’s obedience in his pre-fall state to be unto justification.

What, then, is the state of Adam’s posterity? God created Adam to be the federal head of the entire human race. His obedience to the covenant of works was to be on behalf of all his children. He was to receive the wages for his perfect obedience to the covenant of works, namely, justification, for himself as well as all his children.⁶⁰ However, in light of his disobedience, Adam lost his right to a state of blessedness with God.

⁵⁷ James Hadow, *The Antinomianism of ‘The Marrow of Modern Divinity’ Detected: Wherein the Letter to a Private Christian, about Believers Receiving the Law, As the Law of Christ, Is Specially Considered* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1721), 66.

⁵⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 64-65.

⁵⁹ Stephen Myers has helpfully pointed out this same contrast between Ebenezer Erskine and James Hadow. See Stephen Myers, *Scottish Federalism and Covenantalism in Transition: The Theology of Ebenezer Erskine* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 50-51.

⁶⁰ That Adam’s obedience was for justification also stands apart from earlier Scottish theologians such as Robert Rollock (1555–1599) and Johannes Scharpius (1572–1648). Speaking of Scharpius’s view on the covenant of works, Fesko points out, ‘The covenant of works is the covenant that God makes on the basis of man’s perfect obedience and gives the reward of eternal life, which is captured in the biblical statement “Do this and live” (Lev. 18:5).’ J. V. Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 136.

After the fall, Adam's descendants are still responsible for living by the same covenant obligations to attain justification. As Hadow noted, 'the Law as it is the Law of Works, obliges men to seek righteousness for justification in their own personal obedience.'⁶¹ By his failure to attain righteousness by obeying God perfectly, Adam entered a state of curse and was dead towards God. This curse also fell on his posterity. On the state of fallen humanity, Hadow commented, 'man[kind], by the entry of sin, is destitute of eternal life, and all claim to it. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23); all have failed to attain the glory of eternal life, which God promised in the first covenant, and are in a most miserable estate, dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath by nature.'⁶²

The covenant of works obliges children of Adam to live under its stipulations with the knowledge that they can never attain the blessing of justification before God and, therefore, receive only the sanctions of the covenant. This placed Adam's descendants in a hopeless state. The plight of a sinner before a just and holy God is indeed dreadful. A child of Adam is a lost sinner. His every descendant is obliged to seek justification by perfect obedience but due to the fall cannot attain such justification and is trapped by the curse of the fall. The unregenerate who have never heard the gospel, Hadow believed, 'are under a standing unabrogated obligation of the covenant of works to seek justification and a right to eternal life by their own perfect and personal obedience.'⁶³

However, there is a difference in what the unregenerate are obligated to do if they have heard the message of the gospel. Hadow states, 'The gospel obligeth sinners to renounce their own righteousness and to betake themselves

⁶¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 124.

⁶² James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1719), 8.

⁶³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 66.

unto the righteousness of the blessed surety Jesus Christ for their justification.’ Consequently, ‘men in an unregenerate state, are, by the command of the gospel brought under the latter obligation. Therefore, [they] are no more under the former, of the covenant of works, which in so far is abrogated or antiquated.’⁶⁴ Further,

the Covenant of Works, as to its formal obligation, *Do and Live*, is not still standing in full force, but abrogate with respect to all to whom the gospel is sent... the unregenerate are under the standing curse and penal sanction of this broken covenant; and that they are not freed from it, till, in obedience to the gospel call, they fly to the Mediator’s righteousness.⁶⁵

Hadow clearly states that the obligation of the covenant of works is repealed only if the gospel call is obeyed.

Hadow makes it plain that he sees the unregenerate sinner under both the terms and the curse of the covenant of works as a child of Adam. In the proclamation of the gospel and obedience to the call of the gospel, the effect of the curse of the covenant of works is not immediately, but somewhat gradually removed. As he says, it ‘is not still standing in *full* force.’⁶⁶

Hadow’s understanding of the covenant of works forms the foundation for his understanding of the covenant of grace.

⁶⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 66-67.

⁶⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 67.

⁶⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 67, emphasis added.

Hadow on the Covenant of Grace

God has ‘laid up in Christ the Mediator’ the gift of eternal life, and has ‘put [it] into his hand, with all stores of grace requisite thereunto.’⁶⁷ The Lord Jesus Christ is the only surety and mediator of God’s elect. Elect sinners receive God’s gift of life ‘by and through him.’ Further, this life is ‘made effectual to lost sinners’ by Christ’s grant to them.⁶⁸ By his life, suffering, and death, Christ met the law’s demands, satisfied divine justice in the elect’s stead and purchased eternal redemption and righteousness for them. Unlike the ‘first Adam,’ who did not gain righteousness and lost the right to life for himself and his posterity in the first covenant, eternal life ‘is better secured’ for the believer today because it is ‘in the Son.’⁶⁹

Now, ‘God the Father hath appointed his Son to be the Saviour of the World,’ and, ‘[eternal] life is in him as its author.’⁷⁰ Likewise, ‘[T]he Lord Jesus Christ is the only surety and mediator of the elect sinners and their only Saviour by price and ransom.’ Christ is the only qualified mediator on account of ‘his expiatory death and sufferings, and meritorious obedience [which] has magnified the law, satisfied justice in their room, and brought everlasting redemption and righteousness.’⁷¹

How did Christ achieve such salvation for sinners? Hadow answered, ‘by this perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, He has fully answered in their stead and place the demand of the law, as it is a Covenant of Works—both as to the obedience required for [the] right to life and the punishment threatened in case of failure.’⁷² Hadow pointed out that the sins of Adam’s

⁶⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 11.

⁶⁸ Hadow, *Record*, 11.

⁶⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

⁷⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, ii.

⁷¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, iii.

⁷² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, iv.

descendants are not only against the law but also against the gospel. Christ has ‘fully satisfied God’s justice for all their sins against law and gospel—both before and after their believing, fully appeased his wrath, and purchased complete reconciliation with all grace and glory for them.’⁷³

For whom did Christ die—for all or for the elect only? Hadow’s view is that ‘all whom God has ordained unto life and for whom Christ [has] become propitiation, all those, and those only, he also effectually calleth by his Word and Spirit in his own time out of a state of sin and death into a state of grace and life.’⁷⁴ The extent of Christ’s atonement is limited to the elect only in that Christ ‘effectually applies and gives out his purchased salvation unto all for whom he hath procured it.’⁷⁵

But when did God devise his plan to save sinners? And who will indeed be the beneficiaries of such salvation? The following section contains Hadow’s answer within his exposition of the Covenant of Redemption.

Hadow on the Covenant of Redemption

Hadow believed that the covenant of grace finds its antecedent in an eternal covenant—the covenant of redemption.⁷⁶ Commenting on the words of the apostle John, ‘God has given us eternal life’ (1 Jn. 5:11), he points out that he planned to give this eternal life ‘in the past time, as [these words] import a

⁷³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, iv.

⁷⁴ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

⁷⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

⁷⁶ Herman Witsius (1636–1708) and his contemporary Peter van Mastricht (1630–1706) are noted as among the chief Reformed theologians of the seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed Church. Herman Witsius’ *The Economy of the Covenant Between God and Man* written in Latin and published in 1677 had begun to garner attention in the divinity halls of Europe as well as eventually inform Scottish federalism. Having studied under both eminent Reformed theologians at Utrecht, Hadow probably developed his covenant theology under their influence.

purpose in God of saving lost sinners.’⁷⁷ This ‘past time’ refers to eternity, not the time of the created order before the believer’s conversion.

It is in eternity that God predestined some to life. In Hadow’s view, Romans 8:30⁷⁸ indicates that the subjects of predestination in eternity past are the same subjects of glorification in eternity future. The certainty ‘that eternal life shall be surely and actually conferred upon all those to whom God has designed it’ is based on the time placement of that divine choice—in ‘past time,’ viz., in eternity past.⁷⁹

Can the recipients of eternal life by divine choice in eternity past be altered? No, ‘the immutable counsel of God’ governs the number of those who receive eternal life.⁸⁰ Further,

this gift of eternal life is not given to all and every one of fallen mankind: For all are not brought into the possession of it, neither have all a right to it by justification and adoption, neither is the absolute promise which is declarative of the eternal purpose of God, made unto all. For though it be sometimes purposed indefinitely, yet it is to be understood as made to God’s elect, whom he hath given unto the Son, and who shall come unto him ... and to Christ’s sheep, of whom he saith, John. x. 27, 28. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.⁸¹

Because God’s counsel is immutable, it not only governs the number but also guarantees that the full number will receive eternal life. Here, Hadow’s pastoral theology comes into view. Part of his concern is that ministers of the

⁷⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 9.

⁷⁸ ‘Moreover, whom he did predestinate—they also he glorified’

⁷⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 9.

⁸⁰ Hadow, *Record*, 9.

⁸¹ Hadow, *Record*, 10.

gospel should find encouragement that God makes sure that those appointed to eternal life will indeed receive it because he has made ‘a declaration’ to that effect.⁸² Because the promise is ‘made to believers only, exclusively of others,’ all those appointed to believe God will undoubtedly receive eternal life.⁸³

What motivated God to secure the salvation of sinners? ‘This miserable condition, and the bringing us into eternal happiness, is from God alone; so he is not moved thereto from the consideration of any good thing in us, but *of his own love and mercy he gives eternal life.*’⁸⁴ Because ‘all have failed of attaining the glory of eternal life, which God promised in the first covenant, and are in a most miserable estate, dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath by nature,’ their works cannot gain any merit before God.⁸⁵ God’s choice of sinners to receive eternal life is ‘of his own love and mercy.’⁸⁶

In summary, Hadow argued that in failing to abide by the stipulations of the covenant of works, Adam was unable to attain justification before God. Instead, he received the sanctions of the covenant for himself and his posterity. In the covenant of grace, a definite group of sinners, who are God’s elect according to the pretemporal covenant of redemption, are saved by the Lord Jesus Christ through his atonement on the elect’s behalf in time.

⁸² Hadow, *Record*, 10.

⁸³ Hadow, *Record*, 11.

⁸⁴ Hadow, *Record*, 10, emphasis added.

⁸⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 10.

⁸⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 10

Assessment

From this explication of the covenant theology of the Westminster Standards and Hadow, we can affirm several points of agreement and disagreement.

Covenant of Works. Hadow agreed with the Westminster Standards that God established a covenant of works with Adam. Adam acted as the federal head of the entire human race. All humanity would inherit the rewards of his perfect obedience to the covenant. Likewise, Hadow agreed with the Westminster Standards that all humanity would inherit the punishment of Adam's disobedience to the covenant prescriptions. Like the Confession, Hadow believed that the covenant of works still stands in respect to those who have not believed in Christ. They remain obligated to its requirement for perfect obedience.⁸⁷ Hadow also agreed with the Confession's notion that life was a grant, a promise of God. The terms and the curse of the covenant of works still rest on fallen humanity until they flee to Christ.

Nevertheless, there is a difference between Hadow's understanding of the covenant of works and that of the Westminster Standards, apparent in his statement that 'the Law as it is the Law of Works, obliges men to seek righteousness for justification in their own personal obedience.'⁸⁸ The practice of perfect obedience, for the purpose of attaining justification, applied to Adam (before and after the fall) as well as it does now to fallen humanity.

⁸⁷ This point is particularly clear from question 93 of the Larger Catechism: 'What is the moral law? The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, direction and *binding every one to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto*, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man: *promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it*' (WLC Q93; emphasis added).

⁸⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 124.

There is indeed agreement between Hadow and the Westminster Standards that, in light of the fall and without faith in Jesus Christ as the only mediator, fallen humanity is obligated but fails to attain righteousness by the law.⁸⁹ The point of difference is the goal of perfect obedience under the covenant of works as it applied to sinless Adam. Hadow noted that our first parents were to ‘seek justification of and a right to eternal life by their own perfect and personal obedience.’⁹⁰

However, the Confession says the purpose of perfect obedience under the terms of the covenant of works was not Adam’s justification (as he was already created in righteousness, WCF 4.2; 6.1) but to receive the ‘life [that] was promised’ (WCF 7.2). Whereas the Westminster Standards’ view of the goal of Adam’s perfect obedience was life eternal beyond the probationary period for him and his posterity, for Hadow, the goal of Adam’s perfect obedience was to attain a right standing before God. This would imply that, in some sense, Adam was not in right standing or in a state of blessing before God during his probationary period. There is, however, no indication in Hadow’s writings that he knew that this was an addition to, and perhaps also a subtle deviation from, the specific statements of the Confession.

Further, Hadow’s view was in danger of transforming the way God had ordained for Adam to enjoy life into a condition he needed to fulfil for his basic acceptability or being justified before God. According to the Standards, he was already created in righteousness and, as such, was accepted in fellowship with God.

⁸⁹ While it may not be completely clear in the Confession’s wording itself that the covenant terms and conditions apply to today’s fallen human race apart from Christ, it is made clear in Galatians 3:12 being attached to WCF 7.2: ‘And the law is not of faith: but “The man that doeth them shall live in them.”’

⁹⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 66.

Covenant of Grace. Here Hadow appears to have been at one with the Westminster Standards. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. Hadow expanded on the impact of Christ's mediatorial work in that 'his expiatory death and sufferings, and meritorious obedience has magnified the law, satisfied justice in their room, and [has] brought everlasting redemption and righteousness.'⁹¹ Hadow also agreed with the Confession that the redemption of Christ applies only to 'all whom God has ordained unto life.'⁹²

Covenant of Redemption. Hadow's theology here is also very similar in substance to that of the Westminster Standards. Hadow, however, describes explicitly the pretemporal arrangement of the Triune God to save sinners as a 'covenant of redemption.' We have seen that the substance of such an arrangement is indeed present in the Standards themselves. Hadow pointed out that God promised eternal life 'in the past time,' because these words 'import a purpose in God of saving lost sinners.'⁹³ Likewise, the Westminster Standards say that God chose Jesus Christ to be the mediator to whom he gave specific persons 'from all eternity ... to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified' (WCF 8.1).

Two points of difference thus emerge between Hadow's teaching and that of the Standards. Whether a pretemporal commitment between the Father and the Son to save the elect should be designated a 'covenant' has been much discussed. Perhaps more significant in our context is Hadow's view that obedience was required from Adam *for* justification. This implies that God's acceptance of him was conditioned upon his obedience, rather than his obedience arising from God's fundamental acceptance of him. This raises the question whether this unrecognised 'conditionalism' is, in its own way, a form

⁹¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, ii, iii.

⁹² Hadow, *Record*, 12.

⁹³ Hadow, *Record*, 9.

of 'legalism' and may well have made it virtually inevitable that Hadow would see the Marrow theology as 'antinomian.'⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Lachman has observed, "The absolute or conditional nature of the Covenant of Grace was the subject of prolonged and heated debate in the Reformed community from the 1640's through the end of the century. In the late seventeenth century some Reformed divines insisted on this opposition to Baxterianism. Good works are necessary in those who are justified and are to be saved, but they are not necessary in having a procuring effect on a sinner's justification and salvation. In opposition to this other Reformed Divines referred to the Covenant of Grace as conditional. In some the difference was little more than one of terminology, referring only to God's method and order of bestowing covenant blessings. But with the emergence of Baxterianism in reaction to the Antinomianism of the 1640's some began to conceive of the Covenant of Grace as more less properly conditional." In this sense, it appears that Hadow's theology was infected by a conditionalism improper to the theology to the Westminster Standards. See Lachman, *The Marrow Controversy*, 486-487.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NATURE OF FAITH

The benefits of the Covenant of Grace are received by faith. Therefore, we now turn our attention to analysing and assessing Hadow's teaching on the nature of faith—again against the background of the theology of the Westminster Standards to which his ordination vows had committed him and to which he seems to have genuinely believed he adhered.

The Westminster Standards on the Doctrine of Faith

What are the acts of saving faith? The Confession answers, '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' (WCF 14.2).

Three actions together constitute saving faith, the first of which is 'accepting.' Fundamental to the act of accepting is intellectual knowledge that all humanity has fallen in Adam. As elucidated in WCF 7.1-3, all his descendants are under the terms and conditions of the covenant of works. But, in Christ, the 'personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man' (WLC Q93) have been fully satisfied. Christ alone is the 'mediator and life and salvation [are only] by him' (WLC Q32).

A further act of saving faith is that of 'receiving ... Christ' (WCF 14.2). This involves an understanding of the knowledge gained about Christ and the action therefrom of welcoming the gift offered.

Thirdly, saving faith is that ‘resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life’ (WCF 14.2). Having gained and comprehended the truths of the redemption that Christ has purchased, one must place one’s trust in him for salvation.⁹⁵

Hadow on Saving Faith

Hadow noted that the believer’s faith in Christ and experiential union with Christ go hand-in-hand: ‘That which is required of us in order to our having the Son, or our union with and interest in him is faith, as is evident from John iii. 36. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,” &c. of which afterwards.’⁹⁶ Principal Hadow held that there are two different forms of faith, of which only one has the mark of redemption.

Analysing the different kinds of faith requires first examining Hadow’s understanding of the nature of faith. ‘What are [the] acts of faith which give us an interest in the Son and eternal life through him?’⁹⁷ Firstly, Principal Hadow recognised the notion of *historical faith*.⁹⁸ Historical faith is ‘assent of the mind’ to the truths of Scripture, particularly the truths of the gospel message, ‘faith unto the truth of this record of God.’ Does the gospel message itself demand such assent? Hadow replied, ‘We are bound by its divine authority to receive it as Truth.’⁹⁹ In Hadow’s view, without this, ‘there can be no justifying, saving faith.’¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Faith is usually described in Reformed theology as constituted by *cognitio* (knowledge), *assensus* (assent to the facts), and *fiducia* (trust).

⁹⁶ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1719), 13.

⁹⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 16.

⁹⁸ Hadow himself does not use this term. But his description of ‘assent of the mind,’ as he calls it, is descriptive of the term *historical faith* as delineated by classic Reformed theology.

⁹⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 16.

¹⁰⁰ Hadow, *Record*, 16.

What, then, is justifying or *saving faith*? It must contain historical faith or, in Hadow's words, an 'assent of the mind'¹⁰¹ to the truths of Scripture in general and the gospel message in particular. However, historical faith alone cannot save a person. After all, even 'the devils believe with this faith of assent.'¹⁰² Faith in Christ is more than intellectual assent to the saving truths of Christ, 'however firm [the assent] may be.'¹⁰³

The first action of saving faith is accepting, the act whereby a sinner believes 'in Christ for [the] remission of sins through his name.'¹⁰⁴ A sinner must feel the holiness and severity of God's holy law, his breaking of the covenant of works by his relationship to his federal head, Adam, and, consequently, his position under the curse of the law. Additionally, the sinner must accept that Christ obeyed the law perfectly and so satisfied its demands. Hadow appealed to 1 Timothy 1:15 to confirm his point here, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' Hadow observed, 'Not merely is this saying itself worthy of acceptance, but the thing contained and proposed in the saying, viz. that Jesus Christ came to save sinners. And therefore, Christ as come on this design, must be accepted by faith.'¹⁰⁵ In other words, the accepting action of saving faith is more than historical faith. It not only accepts the truthfulness of the proposed tenets but also owns them.

The second action of saving faith is receiving. What must a believer receive? Three things: the atonement of Christ's sacrifice (Hadow references Romans 5:11); the 'abundance of grace' and 'the gift of righteousness.'¹⁰⁶ Hadow seems to understand 'abundance of grace' to refer to God's work of

¹⁰¹ Hadow, *Record*, 16.

¹⁰² Hadow, *Record*, 20.

¹⁰³ Hadow, *Record*, 19.

¹⁰⁴ Hadow, *Record*, 19.

¹⁰⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 20.

¹⁰⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

establishing peace with hostile sinners (Romans 5:1).¹⁰⁷ ‘The gift of righteousness’ refers to Christ’s attaining for believers a righteous standing before God. Christ is the sum and substance of God’s ‘abundance of grace’ and ‘the gift of righteousness.’¹⁰⁸ Everyone who hears the call of the gospel is to give assent to the truths of the gospel and to Christ himself as ‘the relief of perishing sinners.’¹⁰⁹ Thus, each person is to receive Christ and rest upon him. Not receiving Christ is tantamount to unbelief. Saving faith alone is the hand by which Christians receive Christ. But Hadow was quick to add that this act of faith that clings to Christ does not in itself contain saving efficacy. That resides exclusively in Christ and his righteousness.

The third action of saving faith is trusting. The act of ‘trusting and staying upon the Lord ... is expressed by looking, coming to Christ, flying for refuge, laying hold on the hope set before us, and embracing the promises.’¹¹⁰

In summary, then, for Hadow, the believer’s justification is based solely on the imputation of ‘the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto [the elect] ... which being received and rested on by faith is accepted of God as performed by their surety in their stead and imputed to them for their redemption and righteousness.’¹¹¹ Because it is saving faith that justifies a believer, Hadow denotes faith as ‘justifying faith.’¹¹² And to it, God effectually calls the sinner in the gospel.

¹⁰⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

¹⁰⁸ Hadow, *Record*, 21; cf. Romans 5:17.

¹⁰⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

¹¹⁰ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

¹¹¹ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

¹¹² Hadow, *Record*, 23.

Hadow's Apologetic Against a False Notion of Faith

Further light is shed on Hadow's doctrine of faith by his engagement with some of the erroneous views of faith plaguing the church of his time. Although the English Parliament in 1652 ordered the ceasing of circulation and burning of existing copies of the Racovian Catechism that expounded Socinian theology which in Hadow's day still exercised some influence in the Scottish Kirk.

Socinianism was a non-Trinitarian movement that developed during the 16th and 17th centuries in the Polish Reformed Church under the influence of Lelio Sozzini (who corresponded with Calvin) and his nephew Faustus Sozzini. The resulting church was called the Ecclesia Minor. Although the Kirk had protected itself from the glaring doctrinal deviations of the Ecclesia Minor, the more subtle doctrinal differences still needed to be tackled. A different doctrine of faith—a Socinian one—had managed to infect the Kirk. Indeed, John Simson, then Professor of Divinity at the University of Glasgow, who was himself accused of Arian leanings by the Glasgow Presbytery, claimed that Arianism was not as significant a problem to the Kirk as Socinianism.¹¹³

Hadow was wary of the Socinian influence on the church. Interestingly, rather than focus on their anti-trinitarian theology, he chose to engage with their doctrine of faith in a sermon he preached at the Synod of Fife.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ See Mark Elliott and David Fergusson, eds., *The History of Scottish Theology, Volume II: From the Early Enlightenment to the Late Victorian Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 45–46; and Thomas Ahnert, *The Moral Culture of the Scottish Enlightenment, 1690–1805* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

¹¹⁴ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mossman, 1719). In 1730, James Hadow defended orthodox Trinitarianism against John Simson, professor of Divinity at the University of Glasgow in a pamphlet titled, *An Enquiry into Mr Simson's Sentiments about the Trinity from His Papers in Process* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1730).

Concerning the doctrine of faith, the Racovian Catechism says:

You include then in that faith to which alone and in reality salvation is ascribed, not only trust, but obedience also? I do so: partly because the thing itself shows that he who has conceived a firm and confident hope of eternal life, which Christ has promised to those alone who obey him, must be impelled to yield him obedience, in as much as immortality is a blessing that no one can knowingly and willingly despise it, or not so esteem it as to give himself to obey Christ with the view of attaining it, what can this excellent faith avail him? And partly because faith, unless obedience follow, when life is continued after faith has been embraced, has no power to effect our salvation, as James expressly testifies (chap. ii. 26), as we have already seen, who also says (ver. 21. &c.) that Abraham likewise was justified by works, and that by these ‘his faith was made perfect, and the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.”’ Now if piety and obedience, when life is continued after the acknowledgement of Christ, be required as indispensable to salvation, it is necessary that the faith to which alone and in reality salvation is ascribed, or which alone is necessarily followed by salvation, should comprehend obedience.¹¹⁵

Hadow summarily rejected the Socinian view of faith, ‘Socinians will have this act of faith with our own personal obedience comprehended in it to be that righteousness upon account whereof we are justified before God.’¹¹⁶ He referred to the Westminster Standards: ‘our Confession of Faith 14.2 asserts, “That the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving and

¹¹⁵ The Polish Brethren, *The Racovian Catechism: With Notes and Illustrations, Translated from the Latin; to Which Is Prefixed a Sketch of the History of Unitarianism in Poland and the Adjacent Countries*, trans. Thomas Rees (London: Richard and Arthur Taylor, 1818), 32. <https://archive.org/details/racoviancatechis00rees/page/322/mode/2up>.

¹¹⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 16.

resting upon Christ alone for justification.”¹¹⁷ Thus, in denying a place for personal obedience in justifying faith, Hadow defended an orthodox understanding of saving faith.

Assessment

Our assessment here can be relatively brief since at these points there is evident harmony between the theology of James Hadow and the Westminster Standards.

In terms of *polemic*, Hadow’s rejection of Socinian teaching was clearly in keeping with the concerns of the Westminster Divines. By rejecting the Socinian insistence on obedience as a constituent of saving faith, Hadow defends Westminster’s exposition of the doctrine of faith. And his positive statements are in harmony with the Westminster Standards’ view that saving faith involves *accepting* as true that in Christ alone are pardon for sin and righteousness to be gained, *receiving* as gift the Christ offered in the gospel, and *resting* upon Christ alone for the benefits of the redemption purchased by him.

In terms of *exposition*, Hadow makes distinctions that are not specifically articulated by the Confession. He distinguishes between historical faith and saving faith.¹¹⁸ While the intellectual awareness of truth is included in the Confession’s use of ‘knowledge,’ the possession of knowledge *alone* Hadow specifically denotes as ‘historical faith’. He also holds that *pathos* is present in ‘saving faith’ from its birth. But these additional nuances are

¹¹⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 16-17.

¹¹⁸ Hadow uses a common distinction. William Perkins (1558-1602) speaks of faith as a common faith, a knowledge of truth and assent to it) and saving faith. It is about the former that Hadow denotes historical faith. For Perkins on faith see William Perkins, “An Exposition of the Creed” in *The Works of William Perkins: Volume 5*, ed. Ryan Hurd (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), 9-15.

developments, not contradictions, of the Confession's teaching. At this point, then, the substance of Hadow's theology of faith remains consistent with the Westminster Standards. Saving faith is not only an intellectual awareness of truth but a personal accepting, receiving and trusting in Christ.

What this degree of harmony does not clarify, however, is the relationship of faith, good works and assurance—an issue that lay at the heart of the Marrow Controversy. To that, we must turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RELATIONSHIPS OF FAITH

The previous chapter examined the doctrine of faith as set forth by the Westminster Standards and understood by Principal James Hadow. Faith, however, has its relations with other essential truths of the gospel message. This chapter concerns itself with examining those relationships.

First, the doctrine of revelation according to the Westminster Standards must be considered. This will in turn involve examining the doctrines of scripture, repentance, good works, assurance and holiness.

The Westminster Standards on the Doctrine of Scripture

God has revealed himself to humanity through ‘the works of creation and providence’ (WCF 1.1). Creation and providence ‘manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable’ (WCF 1.1). This knowledge of God made accessible and perceivable through nature is sufficient to render fallen humanity ‘inexcusable’ (WCF 1.1). As the Confession’s reference to Romans 1:19–20 illuminates, the inexcusability is in respect of God’s covenantal relationship as humanity’s Creator.¹¹⁹ However, this knowledge through nature is ‘not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation’ (WCF 1.1). It is for this express purpose that although God first revealed this salvation through ‘divers manner[s]’ (WCF 1.1), he has now ‘commit[ted] the same wholly unto writing, which maketh the holy Scripture to be most necessary’ (WCF 1.1).

¹¹⁹ While the Westminster Assembly acceded to Parliament’s demand for ‘proof texts’ only reluctantly, since they believed their theology was much more broadly biblical, the texts nevertheless indicate their thinking.

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments bear the mark of God's authority. The fact that the author of Scripture is 'God (who is truth itself)' (WCF 1.1) forms the basis of such authority.¹²⁰ Scripture needs no human authority to approve it. This mark of God's authority that is innate to Scripture is the reason it 'ought to be believed and obeyed' (WCF 1.1).¹²¹

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the holy Scripture; and *the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God;* yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts. (WCF 1.5)¹²²

However, as the Confession goes on to make clear, it is the internal testimony and persuasion of the Holy Spirit alone that makes one appreciate such proofs whereby Scripture demonstrates itself to be God's word.

The Confession then lays out the central place Scripture ought to occupy in the life of the church. 'The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture.' While some things are left 'to be ordered by the light of

¹²⁰ Historical theology calls this the doctrine of self-authentication.

¹²¹ Historical theology calls this the doctrine of self-attestation.

¹²² Emphasis added.

nature and Christian prudence,' they are still to be informed by 'the general rules of the word' (WCF 1.6).

Whereas those tenets that are 'necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other,' the Confession acknowledges that not all tenets of Scripture are 'alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all' (WCF 1.7). Nevertheless, in matters of theological disagreement, the final appeal ought not to be to 'decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits' (WCF 1.10) but to Holy Scripture. Consequently, those less 'plain' and less 'clear' parts of Scripture (WCF 1.7) ought to be understood 'by other places that speak more clearly' because the 'infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself' (WCF 1.9).

The Westminster Standards on Faith and Scripture

In speaking of faith's relationship to Scripture, the Confession notes, 'All [the books of the Old and New Testaments] are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life' (WCF 1.2). Because the Word of God is to form the basis of one's 'faith and life,' one's conscience is bound to God as he has revealed himself in his Word. The Confession states: 'God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship. So that to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience; and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also' (WCF 20.2).

The Confession sets forth a few crucial points in relating the doctrine of faith to Scripture; these point out the intrinsic connection of the human

conscience to God's law. For this reason, the catalogue of violations of the first commandment includes 'making men the lords of our faith and conscience' (WLC Q105). Secondly, because God alone is 'the Lord of the conscience' (WCF 20.2), all consciences are to be calibrated to God's will as revealed in God's word. And thirdly, those matters 'of faith or worship' (WCF 20.2) demand careful attention. And the Confession specifies the reason: because 'to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience.' Further, to demand an uninformed assent to and trust in such doctrines 'destroy[s the] liberty of conscience, and reason also' (WCF 20.2).

The Westminster Standards on Faith and Repentance

That faith and repentance go together is implied in the very placement of the treatment of these doctrines in the Confession. Chapter 14 deals with the doctrine of saving faith, while Chapter 15 deals with the doctrine of repentance.

Indicating the inseparability of faith and repentance, the Confession notes, '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' (WCF 15.1). Likewise, question 153 of the Larger Catechism notes the dual action of those who wish to escape God's wrath and curse:

What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law? That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*, and the diligent use of the outward means whereby

Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation. (WLC 153; emphasis added)

What does ‘repentance toward God’ entail?

Firstly, the repenting sinner has a new attitude towards sin. There is a profound sorrow about sin and felt anguish for transgressing the law of God. In the Confession’s words, the repenting sinner has a ‘sight of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God’ (WCF 15.2). Additionally, ‘in apprehending his mercy in Christ,’ the sinner is moved to mourn over his sins.

Secondly, there is a new direction: The sinner, seeing both his sin and the mercy of God, ‘turn[s] from them all [his sins] unto God’ (WCF 15.2).

Thirdly, the repenting sinner ‘purpos[es] and endeavour[s] to walk with him in all the ways of his commandments’ (WCF 15.2).¹²³

Such repentance does not cancel sin or induce God to offer forgiveness. Repentance is ‘not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof’ (WCF 15.3). Instead, pardon for sin ‘is the act of God’s free grace in Christ.’ However, the act of repentance is ‘of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.’ The grace of pardon is inextricably linked to exercising the grace of repentance. Only a repenting sinner may receive the promise of God’s pardon for sin.

¹²³ Question 87 of the Shorter Catechism summarises repentance unto life, condensing the Confession’s definition: Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience’ (WSC Q87).

Paragraph 15.4 of the Confession then briefly states that there is no sin so small that it eludes God's damnation. Nor is there any sin too great for God to deliver his promise of pardon when the grace of repentance is exercised. In paragraph 15.5, the duty of repentance is summarised. Because no sin eludes damnation, the grace of repentance must be in relationship to particular sins: '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.'

Finally, in paragraph 15.6, the Confession notes that the scope of repentance must cover the scope of sin.¹²⁴ The Confession notes, '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.'

In summary, this repentance is an evangelical grace' (WCF 15.2). It is a 'saving grace' (WSC Q87), as is faith (WSC Q86). Both faith and repentance arise out of the occasion of the grant of God's mercy to sinners in the gospel. As such, both faith and repentance may be rightly called evangelical and saving graces.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ This phraseology is borrowed from Dr Guy Prentiss Waters in his class lectures on the doctrine of repentance in the Westminster Standards at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi (USA).

¹²⁵ For these reasons, R.T. Kendall is not careful enough when he comments, "The Westminster divines do not explicitly state that repentance is the condition of the new covenant. But they should have; for this is virtually what they finally say. While the Westminster divines never intended to make works the ground of salvation, they could hardly have come closer" [R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 1997), 205].

The Westminster Standards on Faith, Good Works and Assurance

Having examined the nature of faith and its relationship to repentance in the life of the Christian, the Confession then sets forth the relationship between faith, good works and assurance. The divines first note the relationship between faith and assurance when addressing the doctrine of saving faith. Confession 14.3 notes, ‘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 thus varies in its strength, but, when present in full strength, it provides a full assurance of salvation to the believer.

But can a believer attain such full assurance in their earthly lives?

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 a state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed (WCF 18.1).

It is important to note here that although hypocrites and unregenerate people can deceive themselves into falsely believing their favourable condition before God, this error does not preclude the regenerate from the possibility of attaining genuine assurance. Neither is this sense of assurance merely illusory. Far from it being ‘a bare conjectural and probable persuasion

grounded upon a fallible hope, [it is] an infallible assurance of faith' (WCF 18.2).

But how can this sense of assurance be *infallible*? Because the assurance of faith is 'founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, [and] 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 for the day of redemption' (WCF 18.2).

The major question for us in this context is: Does this infallible assurance of faith, then, belong to the essence of faith? The Confession seeks to provide a biblically informed, carefully nuanced and pastorally sensitive answer: '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.'

This same point is repeated in Larger Catechism Q81: 'Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain [it]; and, after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions; yet they are never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.' And, according to Confession 18.4, to say that a believer may lose their sense of assurance by neglect is to imply that assurance is in fact a basic component of saving faith. Yet, the Westminster Standards are quick to note some of the reasons why it is not always experienced in the life of the believer.

However, this is no reason to despair. For genuine believers are 'never 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 meantime, they are supported from utter despair.’ Assurance once lost can be regained by the Christian since the seed of faith from which the believer’s assurance germinates is ‘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’ (WCF 18.3).

The Larger Catechism clarifies what is meant by ‘ordinary means’: these are ‘all his ordinances; especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation’ (WLC Q154).

Thus, by pursuing these ordinary means ‘it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure’ (WCF 18.3). The resulting benefits are ‘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.’ To the concern that this assurance of faith can accommodate loose moral living, the Westminster divines are quick to add that because it involves the diligent employment of the ordinary means of grace, it is far ‘from inclining men to looseness.’

The Westminster Standards on Faith, Good Works and Holiness

The Westminster Standards underline that sin can contribute to a lack of assurance of salvation. What then is the relationship between faith and holiness? Although a justified person can never lose his salvation (WCF 17.1), good works and holiness of life remain necessary features of the justified life. Such good works ‘are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith’ (WCF 16.2). Saving faith shows its life through the fruit of good works and, in so doing, enables a Christian to ‘glorify God and enjoy him forever’ (WSC Q1).

By them ‘believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life’ (WCF 16.2). Put succinctly, good works demonstrate faith.

The Confession carefully guards its doctrine in a number of ways. It emphasizes that the ability to do good works ‘is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ,’ requiring ‘an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure’ (WCF 16.3). Again, within the context of deviant views of the Spirit’s operations, the Divines add that believers are not ‘to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.’

In addition, any notion of supererogatory merit is roundly rejected: ‘They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do’ (WCF 16.4). Believers cannot attain perfect holiness on this side of eternity, and so they ought to continue striving for it through the power of the Spirit.

Nor do good works make any contribution to the grounds for justification before God: ‘We cannot, by our best works, merit pardon for sin, or eternal life, at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins’ (WCF 16.5). When Christians perform good works, ‘we have done but our duty and are unprofitable servants’ (WCF 16.5; cf. Lk 17:10). And ‘because, as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit; and as they are

wrought by us, they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.'

However, this vigorous rejection of attributing a false role to good works is coupled with the reassurance that a believer's good works are acceptable to God through faith: 'the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him.' Although the Christian's good works still bear the marks of their imperfection, God 'looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere' (WCF 16.6).

How, then, are the good works of unbelievers to be viewed? The Confession's answer is instructive in pointing out and clarifying faith's relationship to good works. 'Works done by unregenerate men, although, for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others; yet, *because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner, according to the word; nor to a right end, the glory of God;* they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God. And yet their neglect of them is more sinful, and displeasing unto God' (WCF 16.7; emphasis added).

The Confession here recognises that some works outwardly conform to God's commands. Consequently, they are 'of good use both to themselves and others' (WCF 16.7). Further, neglecting those outward duties 'is more sinful.' Thus, some works help in promoting civic righteousness, and all are obligated to perform them, but they do not aid in gaining merit of righteousness before God because man's sinfulness always taints them and renders them deficient before him. Only the works of regenerate people can be acceptable because only those proceed from a heart purified by faith, in conformity to God's word, proceeding out of faith and performed to the right goal: the glory of God. The unregenerate cannot perform works that bear these marks.

Having examined the relationships of faith according to the Westminster Standards, we turn now to Hadow's understanding of them.

Hadow on Repentance and Faith

For Hadow, 'Faith and repentance [are] to be joined together.'¹²⁶ He cites two passages to prove his point. In Acts 20:21 Paul 'taught repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.' Second, he refers to Jesus' words in Mark 1:15, 'Repent ye and believe the gospel' as 'our Saviour's order.'¹²⁷ Since Hadow's doctrine of faith was examined earlier, an examination of his teaching on repentance will enable us to establish his view of their connection.

Hadow held that repentance is 'requisite in order unto the remission of sins.'¹²⁸ Here, clearly, the wording 'requisite unto' serves as an allusion to 'The Auchterarder Creed' that sparked the Marrow Controversy in the first place. In what sense does the language of 'requisite' imply a deeply embedded conditionalism in how the gospel of God's grace is presented or (in the eyes of the Marrow Brethren) distorted?¹²⁹

Hadow noted, '[T]he evangelical grace and duty of repentance goeth before pardon of sin in God's method of bestowing them ... Remission of sin is a consequent blessing annexed unto repentance by divine promise.'¹³⁰ It is because the promise of forgiveness is attached to the 'grace and duty of

¹²⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 38.

¹²⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 50.

¹²⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 50–51.

¹²⁹ See further p. 73 fn. 135 below.

¹³⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 50–51.

repentance' that 'ministers, in preaching the gospel, may, and ought to call sinners to repent and forsake their sins.'¹³¹

For Hadow, therefore, repentance precedes faith, although it is also true that God has promised to forgive those who repent, and this promise serves as encouragement for sinners to repent. 'Repentance, or forsaking of sin, hath the promise of pardon annexed unto it, and the duty is enforced from the encouraging promise of this gracious benefit following thereon.'¹³² God's promise reminds the sinner of his duty. Referring to Isaiah 55, Hadow noted,

In the beginning of this chapter, the market of free grace is opened with a call to everyone that thirsteth, *to come without money and without price*. And in v.7, the offer of mercy is extended to the wicked and unrighteous. But that the doctrine of grace might not be reproached, as if it gave any encouragement to impenitent sinners to expect pardon, the wicked are required to forsake their way, else they come not within the compass of this gospel-promise of pardoning mercy.¹³³

In summary, 'In Scripture, repentance is not only put before, in the proper order, and hath pardon as a consequent blessing annexed to it by divine promise. But it is also held forth to be of such necessity in order unto remission of sins that none may expect to obtain this blessing without it.'¹³⁴ In the above sentence, Hadow echoes the language of Confession 15.3, '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 it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.' Some have detected here in Hadow a tendency to make repentance, and the

¹³¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 51.

¹³² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 53.

¹³³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 53.

¹³⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 58.

evidence for it in remorse for sin, the *condicio sine qua non* of the minister's offer of Christ as the one in whom the hope of salvation is to be found.¹³⁵ However, what the Confession does not appear to do here is to emphasise the order of repentance and faith in the manner that Hadow does.

As to the character of repentance, Hadow notes that all who come to Christ repenting

must have a principle of spiritual life, and flowing therefrom, a spiritual sight and sense of the evil of sin, its filth and hatefulness in the sight of God. [The one repenting is to see sin's] contriety to the law, its demerit, guilt, and power, with the dreadful curse denounced against it and wrath due to it. [They are to have] a spiritual sight and sense of their lost and undone state in themselves, their utter inability to deliver themselves out of that miserable condition, utter insufficiency of all creatures to give them any relief, and of the absolute and indispensable necessity of a mighty Saviour to ransom them by price, and redeem them by power.¹³⁶

A repenting sinner experiences a 'dislike and grief for sin as offensive to God and as the source and spring of all misery.'¹³⁷ It is for this reason that the repentant sinner will develop a 'high esteem of the Lord Jesus as a complete and sufficient Saviour worthy of all acceptation, and able and willing to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him.'¹³⁸

However, the duty of the sinner to repent does not imply that he can work repentance of his own volition. On the contrary, 'this forsaking and

¹³⁵ This conditionalism has been noted as a variant of preparationism. See William VanDoodewaard, "Theological Contours of the Controversy" in *A New Divinity: Transatlantic Reformed Evangelical Debates During the Long Eighteenth Century* (Gottingen: Vandehoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 45-48.

¹³⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, ix-x.

¹³⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, x.

¹³⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, x.

returning are not acts of man's free will produced by his own natural powers, nor a [mere] law-work, but they are fruits of the renewing Spirit and acting of the new creature. [T]hey are even repentance unto life seeing they have, by divine promise, pardoning mercy annexed unto them.'¹³⁹ In addition to effecting repentance in a sinner's heart, the Holy Spirit also gives God's promised forgiveness and life that are attached to the duty of repentance. Hence Hadow, following the Confession in 16.1 identified repentance as an evangelical grace; the duty, when effected by the Spirit's power, leads to life.

What, then, is the connection between the evangelical graces of repentance and faith? Hadow answers, 'The end and design of this turning or repenting is that they might receive forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ.'¹⁴⁰ He insists that 'faith in Christ doth not exclude repentance from being likewise requisite unto their receiving the forgiveness of sins.'¹⁴¹

Are repentance and faith 'felt' experiences of the believer? Hadow replied, '[A] man may have true repentance and faith also, and consequently may be truly justified before God, who yet walketh in darkness as to his knowledge of his having these evangelical graces in himself.'¹⁴² Thus, one may indeed possess the evangelical graces of faith and repentance and yet not feel his possession of them.

Having noted how Hadow precludes good works from occupying ground space with saving faith yet views repentance as necessary for enjoying forgiveness, we must now ask: what relationship does he see between saving faith and good works? And, in his view, how do they relate to the believer's

¹³⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, x.

¹⁴⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 52.

¹⁴¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 52–53.

¹⁴² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 50.

assurance of salvation? The issues surrounding the *Marrow* controversy are closely tied to these questions.

Hadow on Faith, Good Works and Assurance

At several junctures in his works *The Record of God* and *Antinomianism Detected*, Hadow maintained that the believer's assurance of salvation is not an essential constituent of his faith. In contrast to the perceived error of *The Marrow*,¹⁴³ he points out that assurance is not 'in the nature and essence of that faith which the gospel requireth of all its hearers.'¹⁴⁴

Hadow defines assurance as the 'persuasion that we shall have life and salvation by Christ. [It] implieth a like persuasion that we are pardoned, justified and adopted through Christ.'¹⁴⁵ However, this assurance in Hadow's mind logically follows a person's interest in the benefits of pardon, justification and adoption in Christ. Because 'a man must be pardoned before he can be verily persuaded that he is so, unless he presume and deceive himself.'¹⁴⁶

Hadow further clarifies his position in noting that it was indeed this that disconcerted him in *The Marrow*'s definition. He comments on *The Marrow*'s treatment of Acts 16:31: 'Then [Evangelista] gives his gloss on these words of the Apostle, "*Believe [on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved]... That is (saith he) be verily persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is yours, and that you shall have life and salvation by him, that whatsoever Christ did for the*

¹⁴³ The eighteenth-century grounds for the condemnation of *The Marrow* continue to be treated as accurate. See Andrew L Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Scottish Church (1688–1843): The Age of the Moderates* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1973), 37.

¹⁴⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 20.

¹⁴⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 30.

¹⁴⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 30.

redemption of mankind, he did it for you.” And in the foot of the page, there is marked upon this, *A Definition of Faith* (sic).¹⁴⁷

Hadow pointed out that Evangelista is indeed discussing justifying faith. ‘All the acts that he ascribes to faith, such as receiving Christ, apprehending him in the heart by faith, knowing and believing; he explains to be a sinner’s persuading himself of his particular interest in Christ and his purchased salvation. For in giving the sense and meaning of this gospel-call, *Believe, etc.*, [Evangelista] says, *be verily persuaded.*’¹⁴⁸ According to Hadow, Evangelista ‘makes the act of saving faith, as an answering unto the object proposed to be a firm persuasion thereof.’¹⁴⁹ Such a definition of faith would then make assurance of salvation an imperative of the gospel to the hearer. But, ‘the act of assurance is not required of every one that hears the gospel. Neither is every man to whom the way of salvation is proposed thereby bound directly to believe that Christ is his, that he hath remission of sins, and that eternal life belongs to him in particular. For this is not true of every one of the hearers of the gospel.’¹⁵⁰

Further, Hadow was uncomfortable with what he perceived to be a hint of universal redemption in such statements in *The Marrow*. Hadow remarked, ‘I think it unsound to build this upon the foundation of an universal redemption and gift of promise of eternal life made unto all men or to assert that ministers of the gospel have warrant from the record of God to tell every one of their hearers that Christ is dead for him.’¹⁵¹

Given what Hadow perceived as problematic in his understanding of *The Marrow*’s placing assurance in the definition of faith, the question arises: what

¹⁴⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 25.

¹⁴⁸ Hadow, *Record*, 26.

¹⁴⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 26.

¹⁵⁰ Hadow, *Record*, 31.

¹⁵¹ Hadow, *Record*, 28.

was Hadow's view of the doctrine of assurance? Turning the Synod members' attention to the passage at hand in 1 John 5:13, Hadow commented, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." Here, their assurance or knowing that they have eternal life doth presuppose their believing on the Son of God, and therefore is a consequent of this faith, and not the essence of it.'¹⁵²

In Hadow's view, therefore, the logic of the apostle John himself in 1 John 5 is that one might be a believer and yet not have 'attained unto the knowledge of their having eternal life.'¹⁵³ Hadow saw this as the logic of the apostle Paul too: Referring to Galatians 2:16, he observed, 'the Spirit of God doth not give witness to an untruth. But we are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ... Therefore, justifying faith is before adoption, and consequently, assurance of our sonship is not essential to this faith.'¹⁵⁴ Thus, 'justifying faith goes before these benefits in order of nature and therefore must be prior unto and distinct from the true assurance of them. Faith goes before pardon, which is promised upon believing.'¹⁵⁵

Seeing that the Apostle John, in Hadow's view, placed assurance of salvation logically and experientially consequent to faith in Christ, Hadow encouraged believers to follow John's counsel in seeking assurance: 'Therefore, throughout this epistle, he gives many marks whereby they might come to know that they were believers and born of God.'¹⁵⁶ Indeed, 'This knowledge then and persuasion is attainable, and it is the duty of a believer to endeavour it and seek after it. Yea, I shall say further that this faith of assurance is necessary, not only unto believer's comfort but also for the right

¹⁵² Hadow, *Record*, 29.

¹⁵³ Hadow, *Record*, 29.

¹⁵⁴ Hadow, *Record*, 30.

¹⁵⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 30.

¹⁵⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 29.

performing of several duties he is called to in the course of new obedience according to the gospel.’¹⁵⁷

According to Hadow, if assurance is part of the experience of faith, there is no need for proof because faith carries the grant of assurance in itself. However, seeing that it is not a part of the direct act of faith in Christ but the fruit of faith, as the apostle John does, so he encourages believers to pursue assurance for their own gospel comfort and gospel obedience.

Was this understanding consistent with the Westminster Standards? Referring to Confession 14.2, Hadow noted that ‘the principal acts of saving faith are said to be “accepting, receiving and resting on Christ alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life.” He viewed the statement of Confession 14.3 as saying that assurance of faith is the fruit of saving faith and not part of the definition of faith itself: “this faith in many grows up to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ.” He cemented this point by referring to Confession 18.3, again noting, “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.” And therefore, according to our Confession, a man may be a true believer and yet want this assurance.’¹⁵⁸

Hadow also believed that embracing *The Marrow* would be dangerous to the church because it ‘leads to an universal redemption.’ And, so, ‘ministers would be thereby engaged to tell their hearers that Christ is dead for every one of them without exception, which would be going beyond their commission.’¹⁵⁹ Such a proclamation by ministers would further tend to ‘a

¹⁵⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 22.

¹⁵⁸ Hadow, *Record*, 33-34.

¹⁵⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 32.

more gross universalism... That God by absolute promise hath given eternal life to all who live under the gospel.’¹⁶⁰

At a pastoral level, all within the visible church will presume to have the privilege of assurance of salvation as long as they were within the bounds of hearing the gospel. On the one hand, this would then tend ‘to the encouraging of self-deceiving hypocrites... that all is well with them when really it is not so.’¹⁶¹ On the other hand, ‘it tends to the discouragement of such who may be true believers; but through temptations or desertions, cannot attain unto an assurance of their particular interest in Christ and his salvation. For such persons by this doctrine must conclude against themselves that because they want this assurance, therefore, they have no saving faith at all.’¹⁶²

Hadow on Faith, Good Works and Holiness

While justified sinners ‘shall never fall from the state of justification and title therein obtained to eternal life,’ nevertheless, the place of the moral law in the believer’s life cannot be removed.¹⁶³ Because the moral law bears ‘the authority of God the Creator who gave it, [it] constantly binds them to hate and avoid all sin, to make conscience of every duty and to follow holiness in heart and life.’¹⁶⁴ Likewise, ‘personal holiness and good works are so indispensably required in the justified while they live in this world in order unto their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal salvation hereafter.’¹⁶⁵ Obedience to the moral law is essential to the holiness of the justified in

¹⁶⁰ Hadow, *Record*, 32.

¹⁶¹ Hadow, *Record*, 32.

¹⁶² Hadow, *Record*, 32-33. A similar point is made in Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

¹⁶³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xi.

¹⁶⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

¹⁶⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xi.

Scripture's view because without holiness 'none shall see the Lord or be meet to partake in the inheritance of the saints in light.'¹⁶⁶

Hence, it is true that believers' disobedience to God's law does not put their justification in jeopardy because 'God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified so that they shall never come into actual condemnation.'¹⁶⁷ However, using the language of Confession 11.5, Hadow simultaneously notes that believers can sin and so 'fall under God's fatherly displeasure and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.'¹⁶⁸ Simply put, our sin affects our sense of assurance.

When speaking of the use of the law of God in the believer's life, Hadow noted that the moral law bears 'the awful authority of God as he is sovereign Lord Creator.'¹⁶⁹ As such, 'the threatenings and promises thereunto annexed are appointed to be restraints against sin and ties and encouragements unto holiness. And when all these [threats and promises of the law] are taken into the gospel dispensation, with a commandment unto men to repent of their sins in order unto the obtaining the pardon of [the sins] and a denunciation of wrath against the impenitent, they become a fence set by God about [or, around] the offer of his mercy and grace in the gospel, whereby it is armed and guaranteed against contempt and reproach.'¹⁷⁰

In summary, then, while straying from the path of holiness does not endanger the believer's justification, it rightly invites God's fatherly displeasure, which is experienced by the believer in losing 'the light of his

¹⁶⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xi–xii.

¹⁶⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

¹⁶⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

¹⁶⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 99.

¹⁷⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 99.

countenance.’¹⁷¹ The sense of God’s fatherly goodness is withheld when believers are entangled in sin. When the believer loses ‘the light of his countenance,’ he loses a *felt* assurance of fatherly goodness. However, by confessing his sin, the believer’s faith is renewed to continue practising good works and cultivating personal holiness.

Assessment

It is now possible to draw a comparison and contrast between Hadow’s teaching and the Standards to which he was formally committed. In the first place, there is an evident similarity in their understanding of the nature of faith. Hadow held to the notion of an historical faith in which there is both a knowledge of the truth and mental assent to it. Without such an assent, one cannot have justifying faith. However, he was quick to add that saving faith in Christ is ‘more than a bare assent unto the truth of his being the Messiah, however firm it may be.’¹⁷² Saving faith has three dimensions. The believer must accept that in Christ alone is ‘remission of sins through his name; receive Christ’s atonement for the sinner’s sins; and trust him by ‘coming to Christ, flying for refuge, laying hold on the hope set before us, and embracing the promises.’¹⁷³ Here Hadow and the Westminster Standards are at one.

Secondly, there are significant similarities—but also noticeable differences—between Hadow and the Standards in their exposition of the relationship between repentance and faith. Both note that faith and repentance are evangelical graces. Repentance is not a result of a believer’s work but the

¹⁷¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

¹⁷² Hadow, *Record*, 19.

¹⁷³ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

work of the Holy Spirit. There is also agreement that there can be no forgiveness without repentance.

However, a significant difference is found in Hadow's stress on the order: repentance first and faith second. This, he insisted, is 'our Saviour's order.'¹⁷⁴ Again, 'In Scripture, repentance is not only put before, in the proper order, and hath pardon as a consequent blessing annexed to it by divine promise. But also it is held forth to be of such necessity in order unto remission of sins that none may expect to obtain this blessing without it.'¹⁷⁵

While the Westminster Standards do not explicitly discuss the relationship of repentance and faith in the *ordo salutis*, two things are characteristic of their teaching: (i): neither faith nor evangelical repentance exists apart from the other; (ii): the beginnings and continuing of repentance are always contextualised by faith. For instance, the Scriptures are to be 'the rule of faith and life' (WCF 1.2) or 'faith and obedience (WLC Q3), the reading and preaching of which are to be received with 'faith and love' and are designed to evoke in believers 'faith and reverence' (WCF 1.5). This placing of repentance *within* the context of faith is similarly brought out in the very ordering of the chapters of the Confession: Chapter 14, 'Of Saving Faith', is followed by Chapter 15, 'Of Repentance Unto Life.'

In the previous chapter, we observed that Hadow was keen to exclude obedience as a constituent of faith against the Socinians. However, his insistence on repentance being a prior condition of faith, warrants asking the question if perhaps a milder variant of the Socinian error may have infected Hadow's theology. While the Socinians were charged with obedience as a constituent of faith, it is indeed probable that Hadow could be charged with a

¹⁷⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 50.

¹⁷⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 58.

conditionalism in insisting on a certain level of obedience before coming to faith in Christ.¹⁷⁶

Thus, whereas Hadow may have agreed that the evangelical graces of repentance and faith are to be considered together and not separately: ‘faith in Christ doth not exclude repentance from being likewise requisite unto their receiving the forgiveness of sins,’¹⁷⁷ the Westminster Standards consistently present the grace of repentance not only in connection with the grace of faith, as Hadow himself does, but, in distinction from him, the Standards specifically and consistently present it within the context of the believer’s actual exercise of saving faith in Christ.

The relationship between saving faith and assurance, and the ancillary question of whether Confession 18.3 is consistent with Calvin’s statement in *Institutes* III.2.7 that faith is a sure and certain knowledge of God’s benevolence towards us, have been extensively discussed.¹⁷⁸ Two considerations are relevant here: First, it is wise to remember that the Confession was a consensus document produced essentially by a committee. A variety of views on the subject of assurance can be found in the Puritan literature. But second, there is a tendency to overlook the fact that Calvin was defining the nature of faith, the Confession speaks of the experience of

¹⁷⁶ See footnote 137.

¹⁷⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 52–53.

¹⁷⁸ For a 19th century discussion see William Cunningham, ‘The Reformers and the Doctrine of Assurance’ in *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1866), 111-148. Aspects of this subject are developed especially in Joel R. Beeke, *The Quest for Full Assurance* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1999). The extent of the discussion to 1990 is indicated by his extensive bibliography, pages 311-379). Also of interest in this context are Beeke’s comments on Alexander Comrie, who was converted and catechised by Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine and who, while serving as a minister in the Netherlands, became a key figure in the *Nadere Reformatie*. See Joel R. Beeke, ‘Does Assurance Belong to the Essence of Faith? Calvin and the Calvinists,’ *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 5, no. 1 (1994): 65-66. See also Jonathan Master, *A Question of Consensus: The Doctrine of Assurance after the Westminster Confession* (1517 Media, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2015). For a different perspective see M. Charles Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology. The Doctrine of Assurance* (Edinburgh; The Handsel Press, 1996).

assurance. Calvin himself notes this difference in the very chapter of the *Institutes* in which he provides his definition.¹⁷⁹ On the fluctuating experience of the assurance of faith, his view is virtually echoed by the Confession of Faith:

Surely, while we teach that faith ought to be certain and assured, we cannot imagine any certainty that is not tinged with doubt or any assurance that is not assailed by some anxiety. On the other hand, we say that believers are in perpetual conflict with their own unbelief. Far, indeed, are we from putting their consciences in any peaceful repose, undisturbed by any tumult at all.¹⁸⁰

Thus, in terms of the Marrow Controversy, since the issue was faithfulness to the Confession's teaching, it might have been a better tactic for the Representers to have focused on interpreting the reformed tradition itself rather than arguing issues of the biblical nature of their convictions.

We also find important points of agreement between Hadow and the Westminster Standards on faith's relationship with assurance. Firstly, Hadow's statement that the assurance of faith is not 'in the nature and essence of that faith which the gospel requireth of all its hearers' appears to agree with the Confession's words: 'This infallible assurance doth not *so belong to the essence of faith*' (WCF 18.3), as though it were impossible to have saving faith yet not experience assurance.¹⁸¹ Secondly, Hadow notes that a justified believer's sins may affect the believer's *felt* assurance of God's fatherly goodness, although they do not put his or her justification in jeopardy because

¹⁷⁹ See *Institutes* III. 2. 15, 16, 17.

¹⁸⁰ *Institutes* III. 2. 17.

¹⁸¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 20.

‘God doth continue to forgive the sins of them that are justified so that they shall never come into actual condemnation.’¹⁸²

There is also substantial agreement between Hadow and the Standards on the relationship between faith, good works and holiness. As Hadow noted, ‘personal holiness and good works are so indispensably required in the justified while they live in this world in order unto their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal salvation hereafter.’¹⁸³ And, this is in harmony with the Confession’s affirmation that good works are indispensable to the Christian life as ‘having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life’ (WCF 16.2).

There is one particular aspect of faith’s relationship with assurance that requires consideration. Hadow noted that saving faith comprises three acts: accepting, receiving and resting on Christ alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life.’¹⁸⁴ He saw the believer’s assurance of salvation as a consequence of saving faith, seeing that it ‘does not so belong to the essence of faith.’ As a result, the believer’s sense of assurance may vary.¹⁸⁵ Hadow certainly held that his opposition to *The Marrow* was grounded in the Westminster Standards.¹⁸⁶

We may, however, ask: Does the Confession indeed preclude assurance of salvation from the definition of faith? Was he right to insist that assurance of salvation is not a component of saving faith? After all, while addressing the nature of saving faith the Confession speaks of assurance of salvation. Confession 14.3 states, ‘This faith is (different in degrees,) weak or strong; may be often and many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory:

¹⁸² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

¹⁸³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xi.

¹⁸⁴ Hadow, *Record*, 33.

¹⁸⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 33.

¹⁸⁶ WCF 18.3; cf WLC Q81.

growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance, through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith' (emphasis added). This statement may also be understood to imply that just as faith (in its principal acts of accepting, receiving and resting on Christ alone) varies in degrees, so assurance varies in degrees. If the variation of the acts of faith directly affects a variation in the believer's assurance of salvation, there seems to be a sense in which assurance is indeed implicit in this definition of faith. If so, then the combination of chapters 14 and 18 in the Confession may suggest that the Westminster Divines recognised the difference between faith *defined* and faith *experienced*. This explanation would be harmonious with the Confession's definition that the 'principal acts of saving faith' namely, 'accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification...' may be experienced by the believer 'weak[ly] or strong[ly]... often and many ways assailed and weakened' (WCF 14.3). Thus, the spark of assurance is present in the act of faith in Christ as it rests upon him. However, as the weakness or strength of faith varies, so will it be with the believer's awareness of assurance of the faith that he possesses.¹⁸⁷

If this is indeed the case, it suggests that Hadow may have missed some of the pastoral sensitivities the Westminster Divines captured in the Standards. They took care to produce a document of faith that provides sufficient clarity on the definite articles of faith while inclusive of the subtle differences present in the Assembly. Hadow, therefore, may have failed to read chapter 18 of the Confession together with chapter 14 and, therefore, failed to recognise what is implicit in their combination. His view that assurance is *no part* of saving faith would therefore stand in some tension with the statements of the Confession and fail to take into account that in chapter 18 the Confession is not *defining* faith (as it had done in chapter 14) but *describing the experience of the*

¹⁸⁷ As noted above, this was the view of Calvin. See also p.83 and especially fn. 178.

believer. This, in turn, might help to explain why two parties (Hadow and the Marrow-men) both believed their teaching was consistent with the subordinate standards of the Kirk.

CHAPTER SIX

THE REDEMPTION OF CHRIST

For James Hadow, faith and virtue benefit a believer only through Jesus Christ. This chapter will examine his understanding of the redemptive work of Christ against the background of the classical reformed orthodoxy of the Westminster Confession.

The Westminster Standards on the Person and Work of Christ

What is the identity of Jesus Christ? The Westminster Standards answer,

The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man (WCF 8.2).

Jesus Christ is here identified as 'the Son of God,' and 'the second person in the Trinity.' His divine nature is identical to that of God the Father: 'being very and eternal God, [he is] of one substance, and equal with the Father.' This eternal Son assumed 'man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin.' All that constituted true human nature was present in the humanity of Jesus. His humanity underwent all the natural wear-and-tear on the body and soul

resulting from life in a fallen world. He bore the same human nature as any human being, excepting sin.

To this end he was ‘conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance’ (WCF 8.1). Consequently, the person of Jesus Christ possesses the divine nature, as he is God, but, also now, a human nature. He is ‘very God and very man, yet one Christ.’ As such he is ‘the only mediator between God and man.’

Why must the mediator be both God and man? The Larger Catechism Q40 answers, ‘that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us as the works of the whole person.’ Because Jesus is God, his work as the only mediator between man and God is ‘accepted of God for us.’ Because Jesus is human, his work as the only mediator between God and man may be ‘relied on by us.’

In chapter seven, the Confession provides the context in which God has made a way of rescue for sinful humanity. ‘The distance between God and the creature is so great’ that apart from ‘some voluntary condescension on God’s part’ they would ‘never have any fruition of [God] as their blessedness and reward’ (WCF 7.1). This voluntary condescension God has ‘been pleased to express by way of covenant’ (WCF 7.1). Following the failure of the first covenant with Adam, God ‘was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace’ (WCF 7.3). As we have already seen in chapter three, God made this second covenant with Jesus Christ.

Questions 38 and 39 of the Larger Catechism draw together Scripture’s teaching on why the mediator must be divine and human. ‘It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death, give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience, and intercession; and to satisfy

God's justice, procure his favour, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation' (WLC Q38).

But it was also, 'requisite that the Mediator should be man, that he might advance our nature, perform obedience to the law, suffer and make intercession for us in our nature, have a fellow-feeling of our infirmities; that we might receive the adoption of sons, and have comfort and access with boldness unto the throne of grace' (WLC Q39).

Thus, in order that God might receive the work of Christ as our mediator, the divinity of Jesus Christ was necessary to bear the infinite wrath of God and the immense power of death in our human nature, satisfying divine justice meted out against elect sinners and in its place attaining God's favour, in order to bring them to the state of glory. Simultaneously, the incarnation ensured that the mediatorial work of the person of Christ was carried out in human nature. In that humanity, he obeyed the law, suffered in the stead of elect sinners and intercedes for them. Consequently, as beneficiaries of Christ's redemption, sinful humanity receives 'the adoption of sons' (WLC Q39).

Paragraph 8.1 of the Confession summarises the work of Jesus:

It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only-begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King; the Head and Saviour of his Church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world; unto whom he did, from all eternity, give a people to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified (WCF 8.1).

Jesus is here identified as God's 'only-begotten Son.' As the appointed mediator in his two natures, Jesus serves three offices, 'Prophet, Priest, and King' as 'the Head and Saviour of his Church.' He is the sole inheritor of all that is God's and will in the last day exercise God's righteous judgment. To this Jesus, God has also 'from all eternity give[n] a people to be his seed.' It is through Christ's mediatorial work that God seeks to save 'his seed,' those who are 'redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.'

What has Christ achieved in his work as a mediator? The Confession answers,

To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by his word and Spirit, overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to his wonderful and unsearchable dispensation (WCF 8.8).

Christ as the mediator for God's seed purchases redemption, which includes eternal life. As the Larger Catechism notes, 'The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and *life and salvation* by him' (WLC Q32, emphasis added). This 'life and salvation' (WLC Q32) is purchased 'by the blood of Christ' (WLC Q152).

The Confession also notes that Christ applies this purchased redemption. In 'effectually apply[ing]' the purchased redemption, Christ makes 'intercession for them (i.e., elect)' (WCF 8.8). Question 55 of the Larger Catechism summarises this work:

Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth, declaring his will to have it applied to all believers; answering all accusations against them, and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings, access with boldness to the throne of grace, and acceptance of their persons and services.

Here the link between Christ's intercession in heaven and the believer's conscience on earth is noteworthy. Christ's pleading for believers in heaven against just accusations against believers' sin has a direct correlation to the believer's peace and conscience here on earth based on 'the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth.'

Further, not only does Christ's application of the work of redemption effectually provide peace of conscience but also access to God and the acceptance of not only their persons but also their service. Elsewhere, the Confession notes that the 'perseverance of the saints depends ... upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ' (WCF 17.2). In this manner, Christ effectually applies the work of redemption in his ongoing intercessory work.

In his mediatorial work, Christ applies his work of redemption to the elect in his intercession as well as in 'persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by his word and Spirit' (WCF 8.8). Question 32 in the Larger Catechism further elaborates on the work of Christ by the person of the Holy Spirit. He is given to them 'to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.'

As the victorious representative of fallen humanity, Jesus Christ as mediator of the second covenant is the sole means through whom God ‘provideth and offereth to sinners’ his grace. This grace is multifaceted in that it comprises of ‘life and salvation’ and the Holy Spirit ‘to work in [the elect] that faith, with all other saving graces’ as well as obedience and gratitude (WLC Q32).

Through his perfect obedience, Jesus Christ has ‘purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him’ (WCF 8.5). The Holy Spirit, then, ensures that ‘all those whom the Father hath given unto [Christ]’ will indeed attain that ‘everlasting inheritance’ (WCF 8.5). Thus, the interconnected nature of the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of Christ’s application of his purchased redemption in the elect is made clear.

The Westminster Standards on Effectual Calling

What is effectual calling? The Confession answers,

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 (WCF 10.1).

The Confession here notes that God calls people ‘out of that state of sin and death’ they are born into and translates them to the state of ‘grace and

salvation.’ He does this ‘by Jesus Christ.’ As noted previously, this translation is part-and-parcel of the grace of God, which the Holy Spirit applies. It entails ‘enlightening their minds... renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ.’ God does this through ‘his word and Spirit’ in such a manner that ‘they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.’

The Confession points out two pertinent issues here. Firstly, when God effectually calls, he does so in a manner that the elect ‘come most freely.’ Further, in God’s drawing them to himself ‘the will of the creature’ is ‘rather established’ (WCF 3.1).

Secondly, the Confession addresses the question of who comprises those who are effectually called: ‘All those whom God hath predestinated unto life’ (WCF 10.1). What is predestination? ‘By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death’ (WCF 3.3). Does this number change in time? No. ‘God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass’ (WCF 3.1).

What is the basis of God’s decree of predestination? God decrees some to eternal life not ‘because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions’ (WCF 3.2). Nor is God’s decree based on ‘any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto’ (WCF 3.5). Rather, it finds its origin ‘before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will’ (WCF 3.5).

What is the relationship between effectual calling and justification? The Confession answers, ‘Those whom God effectually calleth he also freely justifieth’ (WCF 9.1). Those who receive the grace of effectual calling and those who receive the grace of justification are identical. What is justification? Question 70 of the Larger Catechism answers, ‘Justification is an act of God’s free grace unto sinners, in which he pardoneth all their sins, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone’ (WLC Q70).

Further, the Confession observes that this justification is itself decreed of God: ‘God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect’ (WCF 11.4). God’s decree of justification, the work of Christ, and the faith of believers are interrelated: For the elect, ‘Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification’ (WCF 11.4). However, the elect ‘are not justified until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them’ (WCF 11.4).

Against the background of this confessional template, how did Hadow understand the person and work of Christ as the heart of God’s story of the redemption of sinful humanity?

Hadow on The Person and Work of Christ

Hadow held an orthodox doctrine of Christ. But how did he expound John’s statement, ‘He that hath the Son hath life?’¹⁸⁸ Hadow explains: ‘To have the Son, is to be united to him, and have interest in him as mediator.’¹⁸⁹ From 1 John 5:12, he extracts three salient features of this union: There is an

¹⁸⁸ 1 John 5:12.

¹⁸⁹ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1719), 13.

‘inseparable connection betwixt an interest in Christ, and a right to eternal life.’¹⁹⁰ Further, out of his love and grace, the Father has given life to sinners, all the while entrusting ‘the dispensing all grace and glory unto Christ the mediator.’¹⁹¹ Furthermore, Hadow stresses that the Father has appointed Christ to be the only means of attaining the grace of eternal life.¹⁹²

What does it mean for Christ to be the author of life?

First of all, taking life in Christ to refer to salvation, Hadow states that Christ is ‘the author of eternal salvation ... by purchase and effectual application.’¹⁹³ He is so first by purchase—at the cost of his blood.¹⁹⁴ This leads to various benefits for the believer: ‘pardon from sin,’ ‘deliverance from wrath,’ ‘a right to’ eternal life, and ‘even the [benefit of the] grace of faith itself.’¹⁹⁵

Secondly, Christ is the author of life by an ‘effectual application.’¹⁹⁶ He ‘effectually applies and gives out his purchased salvation unto all for whom he hath procured it.’¹⁹⁷ Christ’s sacrifice is effectual in accomplishing its intended goal: the redemption of sinners. Because he intercedes for them ‘he is also able to save for all time all those who draw near to God through him, [because] he lives to intercede on their behalf’ (Hebrews 7:25). He then sends his Spirit ‘to convince and renew them’ by persuading them of the truthfulness of the message of Christ concerning his salvation and enabling them to trust in Christ through whom they are made anew in their inner being.¹⁹⁸ The aim and

¹⁹⁰ Hadow, *Record*, 13.

¹⁹¹ Hadow, *Record*, 13.

¹⁹² Hadow, *Record*, 13.

¹⁹³ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

¹⁹⁴ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

¹⁹⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

¹⁹⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

¹⁹⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

¹⁹⁸ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

telos of this work of redemption is to ‘prepare them for the purchased glory.’¹⁹⁹ Hadow cites John 16:13–14 to establish the second and third of these applications of Christ’s redemption.²⁰⁰ For Hadow, then, there is a distinct, yet fluid, congruity between Christ’s ongoing intercessory work in the heavens and the Spirit’s work of applying Christ’s redemption in believers on earth into their resurrected state.

A further benefit of faith in the person and work of Christ by the Spirit is adoption. Through Christ’s redemption, believers are reckoned children of God. Expounding Romans 8:16, Hadow notes, ‘When the [Holy] Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, it is supposed that we are truly children; for the Spirit of God doth not give witness to an untruth.’²⁰¹ Indeed, such an experience where a believer experiences his sonship in Christ is an aspect of the believer’s enjoying ‘the light of his countenance’ in a sense of assurance.

Thus, Christ’s death is the only hope of atonement and propitiation for lost sinners. He has secured redemption and remission of sins for the elect and through his intercessory work applies that redemption in them.

Hadow on Effectual Calling

According to Hadow, God ‘effectually calleth the elect... by ‘infusing into them a supernatural principle of spiritual life, powerfully determining and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ by invincible grace, and causing them to accept, receive, and rest on him as he is offered in the gospel for

¹⁹⁹ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

²⁰⁰ ‘Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you’ (John 16:13–14).

²⁰¹ Hadow, *Record*, 12.

righteousness and salvation.²⁰² Thus, God's call in the gospel achieves its intended purpose: the salvation of elect sinners.

In Hadow's words (clearly using the wording of Confession 10.2), '[This] effectual calling is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything previously existing or foreseen in the sinner, who is altogether passive, until, being quickened by the Holy Ghost, he is thereby enabled to answer the call, and embrace the grace offered and conveyed to him in the gospel.'²⁰³ Further, this effectual calling leads to a believer's justification: 'those whom God effectually calls he also freely justifies.'²⁰⁴ Thus, it is God's call that effects in sinners a drawing to Jesus that they may be justified in him.

Assessment

From this examination of the redemption of Christ and all that is entailed in effectual calling, several points of agreement between Hadow and the Westminster Standards emerge. First, Hadow agreed with the Westminster Standards that there is an 'inseparable connection betwixt an interest in Christ, and a right to eternal life.'²⁰⁵ God the Father has given the work of 'dispensing all grace and glory unto Christ the mediator.'²⁰⁶ Hence, the Father has appointed Christ to be the only means of attaining the grace of eternal life for humanity.

²⁰² James Hadow, *The Antinomianism of 'The Marrow of Modern Divinity' Detected: Wherein the Letter to a Private Christian, about Believers Receiving the Law, As the Law of Christ, Is Specially Considered* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1721), iv-v.

²⁰³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, v. Hadow frequently employs the rhetorical tactic of using the language of the Confession whereby he seeks to convey the impression that his teaching is undoubtedly the teaching of the Kirk's standards.

²⁰⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, v.

²⁰⁵ Hadow, *Record*, 13

²⁰⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 13.

Principal Hadow also agreed with the Westminster Standards that Christ is the author of life by purchase. Hadow then listed benefits that Christ purchased for believers: forgiveness of sin, deliverance from divine wrath, eternal life, a right to eternal life, all grace necessary to attain that eternal life fully, and the grace of faith.²⁰⁷ In the language of the Westminster Standards, God gives to the elect a mediator in Jesus Christ and to have ‘life and salvation by him’ to receive ‘faith with all other saving graces’ (WLC Q32).

Hadow further agreed with the Westminster Standards that as the mediator of God’s elect Christ applies the work of redemption to the elect by his ongoing intercession for them.²⁰⁸ In the language of the Larger Catechism, ‘Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven’ (WLC Q55). Further, Christ applies his work of redemption by sending his Holy Spirit. Again, in the language of the Larger Catechism, God ‘promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces’ (WLC Q32).

A commendable point in Hadow’s understanding of the redemption purchased by Christ is his focus on the grace of adoption that Christ applies to believers through his Spirit. Hadow asserted that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the reality of the believer’s state before God the Father: that he is indeed a child of God.

In relation to effectual calling, Hadow noted that God saves the elect by ‘infusing into them a supernatural principle of spiritual life, powerfully determining and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ by invincible grace, and causing them to accept, receive, and rest on him as he is offered in the gospel for righteousness and salvation.’²⁰⁹ This coheres with the language of

²⁰⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 13.

²⁰⁸ Hadow, *Record*, 12-13.

²⁰⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, v.

the Confession: God ‘effectually draw[s the elect] to Jesus Christ’ ‘by his word and Spirit’ (WCF 10.1). He does not draw people by violating their wills but by ‘renewing their wills’ (WCF 10.1).

Hadow also noted, using the Confession’s own language, that effectual calling and justification are both acts of God: ‘[T]hose whom God effectually calls he also freely justifies.’²¹⁰ He thus appears to be in widespread agreement with the Westminster Standards on the application of Christ’s redemption.

We can conclude then that Hadow sought to hold to a doctrine of Christ and salvation that was faithful to the Westminster Standards. Hadow also acknowledged that the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit to the believer’s adoption is indeed a real experience.

²¹⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, v.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE LAW OF GOD

To understand the believer's movement from the state of sin to the state of grace, it is necessary to examine how the law of God makes sin apparent.

The Westminster Standards on the Law of God

While the nature and the relevance of God's law to the Christian life are laid out in different parts of the Westminster Standards, chapter 19 of the Confession expounds the topic in great detail, noting in the first instance that it was given to Adam in the form of 'a covenant of works' (WCF 19.1). This 'law of God [was] written in their hearts' (WCF 4.2). Giving this law to humanity's first representative Adam 'bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it' (WCF 19.1).

The law of God was not annulled by Adam's fall. It 'continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables' (WCF 19.2). In 19.3, the Confession notes its multi-dimensional nature. For example, 'Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth diverse instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament' (WCF 19.3).

Old Testament believers had no other means of salvation apart from Christ. Not only did the ceremonial law prefigure Christ, thus excluding all other modes of salvation, since Christ is the substance captured in the shadows of the ceremonial law, ‘The justification of believers under the Old Testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament’ (WCF 11.6).

In addition, God gave to Israel as his Old Testament people ‘as a body politic... sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people; not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require’ (WCF 19.4). Thus, under the New Testament, all the ceremonial laws are repealed, and the laws for a theocratic civil state are now put aside only to inform us today on principles of ‘general equity’ in the church as well as in the world (WCF 19.4).

If the law of God is not annulled, then it must be only the moral law that is still in effect. What is the place of the moral law in the era of the New Testament? Paragraph 19.5 answers, ‘The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that, not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it. Neither doth Christ, in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation’ (WCF 19.5).

Thus, the moral law is binding on all humanity. Under the dispensation of grace, this neither decreases nor is made void. Instead, the moral law serves as ‘a rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty; it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives; so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin, together

with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of His obedience' (WCF 19.6).

Of what particular use is the moral law to the unregenerate? The Larger Catechism responds, 'The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their consciences to flee from wrath to come, and to drive them to Christ; or, upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof' (WLC Q96).

Likewise, there is a particular use of the moral law for the regenerate. Larger Catechism 97 notes that the moral law binds the believer to Jesus Christ but not in the same manner as Adam was bound to the moral law under the covenant of works. Because Christ has borne their covenantal failings in respect of the moral law, believers 'are neither justified nor condemned' by the moral law. However, besides 'the general uses thereof common to them with all men, it is of special use, to show them how much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and enduring the curse thereof in their stead, and for their good; and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness, and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule to their obedience.'

Furthermore, the moral law is useful to believers in that it helps

to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin: and the threatenings of it serve to shew what even their sins deserve; and what afflictions, in this life, they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law. The promises of it, in like manner, shew them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof: although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works. So as, a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the

other, is no evidence of his being under the law, and not under grace (WCF 19.6).

Are these uses of the moral law for the believer opposed to the grace of the gospel under the new covenant? Paragraph 19.7 responds negatively, affirming instead that the relevance of the moral law ‘sweetly compl[ies] with’ the ‘grace of the Gospel.’ The believer experiences ‘the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.’

Thus, the law has a threefold use. Question 95 of the Larger Catechism helpfully summarises the discussion. The moral law is (i) ‘to inform them of the holy nature and the will of God, and of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly;’ (ii) ‘to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives;’ and (iii) ‘to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery, and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience.’

Hadow on the Law of God

One of the significant allegations against *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* and those who defended its teaching was the charge of antinomianism. Thus, in *The Antinomianism of ‘The Marrow of Modern Divinity’ Detected*, Hadow delineated ‘twelve positions’ of the law of God that he believed contrasted with the perceived errors of *The Marrow*. We can consider them under four headings for convenience.

The Law in the Covenant of Works

Hadow agreed with *The Marrow* that there exists a distinction between ‘the matter and form of the covenant of works.’²¹¹ Hadow noted, ‘The law then as matter of the covenant of works, distinct and severed from its form, is what [the author of *The Marrow*] calls the moral law and law of creation. [T]he ten commandments being the substance of the law of nature engraven in the heart of man in innocency before it received the form of the covenant of works.’²¹² There was agreement then that the law of God existed in the fabric of the human heart as a part of God’s creative activity before it took the specific written form of the Ten Commandments.

As such, the law of God binds all humans to God as covenant creatures in Adam. Now, in Adam’s fall, humanity relates to God as sinful creatures. Further, the sinner’s relationship to the law of creation is not dissolved when he becomes a believer. Though now a justified sinner, he is ‘still under the law as the commanding will of his Creator and Sovereign Lord.’²¹³ All sins retain their status as being ‘transgressions of the law of his Creator, which is indispensably binding upon all Adam’s posterity.’²¹⁴ Hadow noted elsewhere that the ‘law of creation’ cannot be ‘deprive[d] ... of all penal sanction.’²¹⁵ The children of Adam who violate the law of the covenant of works violate the law of creation because the covenant of works is ‘but accessory unto this law.’²¹⁶ Except for ‘the death and satisfaction of our blessed Redeemer

²¹¹ James Hadow, *The Antinomianism of ‘The Marrow of Modern Divinity’ Detected: Wherein the Letter to a Private Christian, about Believers Receiving the Law, As the Law of Christ, Is Specially Considered* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1721), 86.

²¹² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 86.

²¹³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 16.

²¹⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 16.

²¹⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 82.

²¹⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 82.

interposed,' sins continue to have 'guilt annexed to them,' and sinners 'deserve eternal wrath, which would be actually inflicted.'²¹⁷

The Law of Christ

A point of interest is Hadow's treatment of what he called, 'The Law of Christ.' Hadow noted that it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is 'Judge, Law-giver and King; and therefore, there are laws prescribed by him unto men, according to which they ought to serve him.'²¹⁸ Hence, Hadow referred to God's law as *the law of Christ* and individually as the *laws of Christ*.²¹⁹

Since the moral law was not introduced only at the coming of Christ but was engraved in 'the heart of man in his first creation,'²²⁰ naturally, 'the moral law or law of nature ... [is] of perpetual obligation upon all men at all times and in every state [or, condition of man].'²²¹ Since the law of nature is present at creation, it 'is necessarily taken into the dispensation of grace, and so it becomes the law of Christ.'²²² Thus, the law of nature does not lose its original binding authority on the elect when they have partaken of the redemption in Christ.

The 'Law of Christ' is not a way to gain justification before God.²²³ However, the inability to keep the law for justification does not mean that

²¹⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 16.

²¹⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

²¹⁹ Hadow used the phrases 'laws of Christ' and 'Law of Christ' interchangeably. Hadow noted, 'the law of the ten commandments as it is the matter of the covenant of works is the same with the law of the ten commandments, as it is the matter of the law of Christ.' Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 87. Thus the believer receives the structure of the law as 'the Law of Christ,' while its constituent laws might be referred to as 'the laws of Christ.' It may be that he terms it 'the law of Christ' because *The Marrow* has a treatment under the head 'The Law of Christ.'

²²⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73–74.

²²¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²²² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²²³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

believers are not to keep the law for ‘other ends.’²²⁴ In fact, the law of Christ serves as a path to holiness for the justified sinner:

Believers in their justification are freed from the revenging wrath of God and actual condemnation. [They shall] never fall from the state of justification and title therein obtained to eternal life. Yet, personal holiness and good works are so indispensably required in the justified while they live in this world in order unto their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal salvation hereafter that without them none shall see the Lord or be meet to partake the inheritance of the saints in light.²²⁵

Hadow takes his exposition of ‘the law of Christ’ a step further. It includes ‘the institutions of worship in the gospel and all the ordinances thereof.’²²⁶ It includes ‘the commands to repent and believe.’²²⁷

How is it that these commands are part of the law of Christ? ‘For if God had not purposed to reconcile an elect world to himself in Christ, such commands had never been given to fallen mankind.’²²⁸ The nature of a commandment requires it to be regarded as a ‘law.’ According to Hadow, every aspect of the salvation of the elect – gospel ordinances and the commands to repent and believe – constitute the law of Christ. Thus, all those who hear the commands are to receive them as ‘Christ’s positive laws given by revelation,’ and they ‘are to be observed in obedience to his authority’ and so receive eternal life.²²⁹ Likewise, when the gospel is proclaimed, the hearers

²²⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²²⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xi.

²²⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

²²⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

²²⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

²²⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

are called to ‘all the duties of holiness in heart and life, in obedience to the moral law and gospel institutions.’²³⁰

The Law in the Covenant of Grace

In the covenant and dispensation of grace, the moral law does not lose its original authority. Instead, it ‘receives the additions of many motives and encouragements, which it had not in its original constitution, whereby obedience to its commandments is powerfully enforced.’²³¹ These motives and encouragements are ‘the manifestations of the love, mercy and grace of God, in sending his own Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour of lost sinners.’²³²

Further, ‘the redeeming love and condescending grace of the blessed mediator’ supplies encouragement and power to obey.²³³ Christ’s ‘taking upon him[self] man’s nature, becoming a surety for sinners, humbling himself, and giving obedience to the law even unto the cursed death’ positively instils love for him in the heart of the believer.²³⁴ Christ’s ‘purchasing all spiritual and eternal benefits of grace and glory,’ his ‘perfect pattern, and [example] of obedience to this law in his own life in the flesh for our imitation, and the like’ serve as additional ‘motives and encouragements.’²³⁵

All this, for Hadow, points to the fact that the moral law is reinforced rather than rescinded in the dispensation of grace. To make matters clear, according to Hadow, ‘the law of mutual love’ in Galatians 6:2²³⁶ and John

²³⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²³¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²³² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²³³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²³⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²³⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²³⁶ ‘Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.’

13:34²³⁷ reinforces the claim that the moral law is the law of Christ.²³⁸ In sum, ‘the law of the Ten Commandments as it is the matter of the covenant of works ought to be a rule of life to a believer.’²³⁹

Furthermore, in coming to Christ, believers are released from the covenant of works in two senses. They are neither under the ‘formal obligation, *do and live*,’ nor are they required to ‘perform perfect, personal obedience for their obtaining [a] right to eternal life.’²⁴⁰ Consequently, those who repent and trust in Christ are ‘freed from [the law’s] curse’ as it pertains to the covenant of works.²⁴¹ This is because ‘it shall not be inflicted on them, who have fled to Christ for their refuge.’²⁴² However, all those who have heard the gospel and choose unbelief ‘remain under the curse of the broken covenant of works and wrath of God for all their actual transgressions.’²⁴³ Further, they are ‘under gospel vengeance.’²⁴⁴

Do believers in the dispensation of grace possess the power to keep God’s law in themselves? Hadow’s response is that sinners ‘in themselves are impotent and averse by reason of inherent corruption’ to obey the law of Christ.²⁴⁵ But the regenerate ‘are enabled and inclined to give obedience’ to the law of God, in that ‘There is a promise made unto the elect of the Spirit to subdue the dominion of sin, to implant in them a principle of spiritual life, and

²³⁷ ‘A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.’

²³⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²³⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 87.

²⁴⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75, emphasis original.

²⁴¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁴² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁴³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁴⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁴⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

habits of grace.’²⁴⁶ The Spirit supplies promised energy for obedience to the sinner in the latter’s translation into the dispensation of grace.

Finally, believers owe obedience not only when they have a sense of ‘the felt love of God,’ but also when that felt experience is lacking.²⁴⁷ One of the experiences of a believer is that of God’s fatherly displeasure. Hadow noted (echoing WCF 11.5), ‘God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified so that they shall never come into actual condemnation. Yet, by their sins, they may fall under God’s fatherly displeasure and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them.’²⁴⁸ They are called to exercise the evangelical graces and the laws of Christ—to repent and believe. During times when ‘the felt love of God’ is not experienced and thus no longer serves as motivation for obedience, the gospel of ‘the love of God in Christ unto sinners of mankind,’ ‘the authority of the law-giver,’ and ‘the promises and threatenings attached to the laws’ may serve as motivation to believers to continue to keep the laws of Christ.²⁴⁹

The Law’s Threats and Promises

Hadow considered the gospel call to repentance and faith as an element in the ‘laws of Christ.’ Arising from such a consideration, he affirmed that the laws of Christ have attached to them promises concerning the believer’s earthly life as well as the life to come.²⁵⁰ These promises serve as ‘encouragements to obedience.’²⁵¹

²⁴⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁴⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 77.

²⁴⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, xii.

²⁴⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 77.

²⁵⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²⁵¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

Whereas promises of the blessings of obedience aid in the ‘great gain’ of ‘godliness,’ threats against failure to keep God’s law also serve believers as encouragements to holiness.²⁵² Sinners persistent in their unbelief can fall prey to the temptation of neglecting ‘Jesus Christ the Lord Redeemer, his offers of grace, and his holy and righteous laws.’²⁵³ As the moral law bears the authority of Christ as sovereign God, Hadow further observed that the law’s penal sanctions are not only applicable to unbelievers, but to believers also: ‘The threatenings are also directed unto them [i.e., believers] [and] are of use to excite in them an holy reverence unto God, the sovereign law-giver, who is a consuming fire, and a solicitous fear of the evils threatened, which makes them watchful against sin.’²⁵⁴

When these threats and promises of the law are taken into the gospel dispensation, they serve as a fence set by God around ‘the offer of his mercy and grace in the gospel, whereby it is armed and guaranteed against contempt and reproach’.²⁵⁵ For this reason, God confronts sinners ‘with most terrible threatenings of wrath and vengeance to be inflicted in time and through eternity.’²⁵⁶

Apart from repentance from sins and faith in Christ, there is no ‘remission of sins.’²⁵⁷ Thus ‘the transgressions of believers (though in a justified state) are truly sins and bring on them a liableness unto the deserved and threatened punishment from the penal sanction of the law.’²⁵⁸ However, believers have ‘a relief provided against the actual inflicting of that punishment’ by the ‘satisfaction of Christ.’²⁵⁹ This relief is experienced by

²⁵² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²⁵³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²⁵⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²⁵⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 99.

²⁵⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²⁵⁷ Hadow, *Record*, 21.

²⁵⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

²⁵⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 76.

‘the means appointed,’ namely, ‘repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.’²⁶⁰

Assessment

There is a general agreement between Hadow and the Westminster Standards on the law of God. Hadow agreed with the Westminster Standards that the law of God was first written upon the heart of man. Consequently, the law of God is always binding upon all humanity. Under the dispensation of the gospel, Hadow pointed out that one of the features of the law is to provide many ‘motives and encouragements’ to induce the believer to obedience.²⁶¹ While not using the phrase ‘the three uses of the law,’ Hadow agreed with them as listed in question 95 of the Larger Catechism.

Hadow also appears to agree with the Westminster Standards that the institutions of worship were different in the Old Testament and the New. There is, however, one point where Hadow went beyond the specific teaching of the Westminster Standards. He stated, ‘the institutions of worship in the gospel and all the ordinances thereof are a part of the law of Christ.’²⁶² The Westminster Standards do not describe these ordinances of the gospel specifically as ‘the law of Christ.’

For Hadow, this law of Christ also comprised of ‘the commands to repent and believe.’²⁶³ The Westminster Standards do affirm the imperative nature of the terms *repent* and *believe*. But they lack Hadow’s repeated description of these imperatives as ‘the law of Christ.’ Hadow’s use of the term ‘law’ to refer to matters not thus denoted by either Scripture or the

²⁶⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 77.

²⁶¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 74.

²⁶² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

²⁶³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 73.

Confession raises the question of whether in reacting against perceived antinomianism he was himself in danger of seeing the evangelical graces of repentance and faith in more legal terms. The significance of Hadow's way of defending orthodox Christianity will be revisited in chapter nine.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CALL OF THE GOSPEL

In the previous chapter, we drew attention to Principal Hadow's insistence that the call to repent and believe, which applies to all the hearers of the gospel, is part of 'the law of Christ.' This brief chapter will focus on this gospel call.

The Westminster Standards on the Call of the Gospel

In chapter three, our discussion of the Westminster Standards' covenant theology included reflections on its view of the nature of the gospel call. The Confession notes, 'Man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace; *wherein He freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ*; requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe' (WCF 7.3; emphasis added). What the Confession makes clear here is that the scope of God's free offer of 'life and salvation' is the same as the scope of those who came under the covenant of works: all humanity (WCF 7.3). This life is situated in Jesus Christ. The means of receiving this life and salvation is 'faith in [Jesus Christ].' To whom is the call of the gospel issued? To Adam's sinful race is the Confession's answer.

Does this mean that all people within the church of Christ are saved? The Westminster Standards make a helpful distinction between the visible church and the invisible church. In speaking of the visible church, question 61 of the Larger Catechism points out that 'All that hear the gospel, and live in the [visible church], are not saved.' Yet one of the benefits of belonging to the

visible church is that both the regenerate and the unregenerate who comprise the visible church receive the ‘offers of grace by Christ to all members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come unto him’ (WLC Q63). Thus, the Westminster Standards set forth a free offer of the gospel to all of Adam’s fallen race and to all within Christ’s church, both the regenerate and the unregenerate.

Hadow on the Call of the Gospel

When speaking of the law of Christ, Hadow remarked on its obligatory nature in relationship to the hearers of the gospel—whether or not they are believers. He noted, ‘The Laws of Christ both moral and positive bring an obligation upon all to whom the gospel is sent.’²⁶⁴ Thus, when the unconverted hear the gospel, they are called to obey the law of Christ, particularly to repent and to believe in him. Further, when the gospel is proclaimed, its hearers are called to ‘all the duties of holiness in heart and life, in obedience to the moral law and gospel institutions.’²⁶⁵

Hadow thus adamantly maintained that the gospel, when proclaimed, carries with it a command—a command to embrace the message. The gospel calls the sinner to believe that Christ is the only Saviour and to rest in him alone for salvation. Negatively, Hadow argued that the gospel does not call the sinner to believe that ‘Christ is his and hath died for him in particular.’²⁶⁶ Neither is the sinner called to believe that ‘God hath loved him and pardoned his sins.’²⁶⁷ Nor is the sinner in the propagation of the gospel called to believe in universal salvation, ‘that Christ hath purchased redemption for every one of

²⁶⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁶⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 75.

²⁶⁶ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

²⁶⁷ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

mankind without exception, and for him in particular, and that [therefore] he shall be saved by him.²⁶⁸ Why would these statements not be true of God's call to the sinner in the gospel? Because 'these are not things revealed in the Word and commanded to be believed by every hearer of the gospel.'²⁶⁹ For Hadow, before coming to faith no person may lay a personal claim to knowing God's love for him in particular because the Scriptures do not reveal particularly those who are saved.

What does God propose then in the call of the gospel? '[T]he thing proposed is the testimony of God concerning Christ the Saviour and the method of salvation through him.'²⁷⁰ Therefore, when the sinner hears the gospel, the laws of Christ—repent and believe—bind his conscience. The gospel compels the hearer to act in three ways: firstly, the sinner is called 'to give his assent to the truth revealed;'²⁷¹ secondly, he is called to give 'his consent unto the way of relief and salvation proposed to him;'²⁷² thirdly, and most importantly for Hadow, 'to accept and receive Christ. [He is] to rest on him alone for salvation as he is offered in the gospel.'²⁷³ These are verifiable truths of the gospel to which Scripture bears witness and move the sinner to trust in Christ. It is only these revealed truths that may bind his conscience as they are laws of Christ and so compel the sinner to receive the gospel.

How does the sinner make these grand truths his own? By faith.

Faith justifies a sinner, not because of any intrinsic worth in itself nor because of the other graces which do always accompany it. [It is not even by] the gracious actings and good works which are the fruits of it

²⁶⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

²⁶⁹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

²⁷⁰ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

²⁷¹ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

²⁷² Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii.

²⁷³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, viii–ix.

... [Faith] is an instrument by which he receives and applies Christ and his righteousness for pardon and acceptance.²⁷⁴

For Hadow, those who display repentance may receive the offer of pardon in the gospel. He also saw the promise of blessing as being conditional, based upon obedience to gospel duties. Hadow noted,

as to the conditional promise; He that believeth shall be saved, it is made to believers only, exclusively of others. And so the apostle shows in the following twelfth verse [of John 5], *He that hath not the Son, hath not life* ... Thus [God] hath given his gospel and ministers to publish it; his calls, exhortations, commands, promises, threatenings, and all gospel ordinances to be the means of conveying it.²⁷⁵ The promises of saving grace are ‘restrict[ed] to a number of mankind appointed unto eternal life.’²⁷⁶

Hadow’s view of the offer of the gospel is clearest in his *A Review of a Conference betwixt Epaphroditus and Epaphras*. Hadow here was opposing the perceived universalism in *The Marrow’s* approach to the offer of the gospel to all.

The Marrow saith, that God of his free love to mankind lost, hath made a deed of gift and grant unto them all. You tell us, that, ‘no more can be understood, than so much as layeth a ground-work for these offers of Christ in the gospel; and that no other deed of gift is understood save that which is necessary to support the eternal truth, viz. Whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Here I can

²⁷⁴ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, ix.

²⁷⁵ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1719), 11; emphasis original.

²⁷⁶ Hadow, *Record*, 35.

conceive a grant made unto all that hear the gospel; but it is conditional, asserting the connection betwixt faith as the mean and salvation as the end; and promising life to him that believeth; but he that never believeth hath hereby no right or claim to salvation, because he is not within the terms of the promise ... if this deed of gift be absolute, making over Christ and all his purchased benefits in an absolute promise ... I want to be further informed, whether you hold this absolute promise to be made to the elect only, or to all that hear the gospel? If it be made to the elect only, then it conveys a right to none else, but the elect; neither can they lay claim to it as belonging to them, while they are in an unregenerate state.²⁷⁷

None can lay claim to the promises of saving grace except those who are elect of God, who have been regenerated. The grace of the gospel is extended to those who evidence repentance and faith in Christ. ‘These assertions, we conceive, are agreeable to the holy Scriptures, and the doctrine of this Church, contained in the Confession and Catechisms.’²⁷⁸

Assessment

We have seen that Hadow’s tendency to designate points of doctrine concerning the gospel call or gospel worship as the ‘law of Christ’ went beyond the way the Westminster Standards presented the same points of doctrine. However, this served as a spear to thrust against what he interpreted as *The Marrow*’s antinomianism.

²⁷⁷ James Hadow, *A Review of a Conference betwixt Epaphroditus and Epaphras: Wherein the Very Reverend Principal Hadow’s Sermon, Preached before the Synod of Fife, April 7th 1719, Is Fairly Enquired Into* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1719), 50–51.
https://books.google.co.in/books?id=q9rBvjr6wckC&pg=PA3&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false.

²⁷⁸ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, pp. xii–xiii.

There are several discrepancies between Hadow's understanding of the gospel call and that of the Westminster Standards. That Christ is the only method of salvation is agreed upon. Nevertheless, Hadow was very concerned that the Marrow-men's use of universal language indicated that Christ's redemption effectually applied to all. He was also concerned that *The Marrow* was advocating an embracing of the gospel devoid of repentance and faith by the hearer of the gospel. His concern here was *The Marrow's* perceived universal redemption. In opposing what he perceived as their error, however, he insisted that the promises of the gospel were made to believers only and not indiscriminately to the hearers of the gospel.

In opposing *The Marrow*, Hadow noted, 'The Marrow saith, that God of his free love to mankind lost, hath made a deed of gift and grant unto them all.'²⁷⁹ Hadow inquired, 'I want to be further informed, whether you hold this absolute promise to be made to the elect only, or to all that hear the gospel?'²⁸⁰ He further noted, 'as to the conditional promise; He that believeth shall be saved, it is made to believers only, exclusively of others.'²⁸¹ Whereas in the Westminster Standards the scope of the gospel call is all who are constituted under the covenant of works, Hadow limits the scope of the gospel call to the constituents of the covenant of grace. In this, he deviated from the Westminster Standards by affirming that the promises of the gospel are not to be offered to all its hearers but to those only who exhibit the evangelical grace and duty of repentance.

If the language of *The Marrow* elicited such a response from Hadow, surely he should have asked the same question of the Westminster Standards. For it notes that, although the visible church is comprised of the regenerate

²⁷⁹ Hadow, *Review of a Conference*, 51.

²⁸⁰ Hadow, *Review of a Conference*, 50–51.

²⁸¹ James Hadow, *The Record of God and Duty of Faith therein Required* (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1719), 11; emphasis original.

and the unregenerate, yet one of the benefits of belonging to it is that these all receive ‘offers of grace by Christ to all members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come unto him’ (WLC Q63). There is no record of Hadow’s examination of this question from the Larger Catechism.

According to the Westminster Standards, the promise may be made to all. But the promise is received by only those who repent and believe. Those to whom the gospel promise is made and those who receive it are not co-extensive. Thus, it seems that Hadow confused the offer of the promise with its efficacy; the offer of salvation for all should they believe, and the effect of salvation in the elect alone. The Westminster Standards, however, set forth the notion of a gospel call that is issued to all in saying that the covenant of grace was one ‘wherein He freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ’ (WCF 7.3).

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

While a number of previous studies have focused on the Marrow Controversy and the right interpretation of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, the focus of this thesis has been on the theology of Principal James Hadow as the primary protagonist in the debate over the Marrow theology. More specifically, it has posed a hitherto unexplored question: While Hadow saw himself as a defender of orthodoxy, how faithful was his teaching to the subordinate standards to which he subscribed and which he believed he was defending?²⁸² To probe for answers, we have employed the elementary procedure of laying bare the teaching of the Westminster Standards in key areas on which Hadow published and comparing his own teaching with them.

Hadow was self-consciously seeking to defend the Kirk against what he and others believed were the major errors of *The Marrow*, including the perceived antinomianism of its Scottish supporters. He sought to defend the Kirk from within its own framework of orthodoxy. This, certainly, was his own interpretation of his actions: ‘These assertions, we conceive, are agreeable to the holy Scriptures, and the doctrine of this Church, contained in the Confession and Catechisms.’²⁸³ And we have seen that in pursuing his goal he regularly made use of the persuasive rhetorical device of citing or employing the very language of the Westminster Confession, thus sending

²⁸² Mitchell and Struthers note, it was not until 1693 that subscription to the Confession was required of ministers: “... do further statute and ordain, that no person be admitted or continued for hereafter to be a minister or preacher within this church, unless that he ... do also subscribe the Confession of Faith... declaring the same to be the confession of his faith, and that he owns the doctrine therein contained to be the true doctrine, which he will constantly adhere to.” See Alex Mitchell and John Struthers, “Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines (1643-1652).” (Edinburgh, William Blackwood and Sons, 1874), 422, archive.org/details/minutesofsession00west/page/422/mode/2up?view=theater&q=subscribe.

²⁸³ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, pp. xii–xiii.

very clear signals to his hearers and then his readers that *his* was the teaching that represented orthodox Calvinism.

Context

In assessing Hadow's work, it may be helpful briefly to recap on its specific context. In 1717, William Craig, a candidate for licensing in the Presbytery of Auchterarder, after some reflection, had declined to affirm what became known as 'The Auchterarder Creed': 'It is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ.' Following an appeal to the General Assembly, the sentiments of the 'Creed' were condemned as 'unsound and most detestable.'²⁸⁴ That decision, and the reactions it provoked, caused a tectonic shift that would eventually divide the Church of Scotland.

Assurance of Salvation

On May 20, 1720, with the help of 'The Committee for Preserving the Purity of Doctrine in this Church,' the General Assembly condemned *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* for stating: 'wherefore, as Paul and Silas said to the jailor, so say I unto you, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;"—that is, be verily persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is yours, and that you shall have life and salvation by him; that whatsoever

²⁸⁴ 'Act Discharging Presbyteries to Use Any Formula in Licensing Probationers, and Ordaining or Admitting Ministers, but Such as is or Shall Be Agreed Unto by the General Assembly, with a Reference to the Commission of the Presbytery of Auchterarder's Carriage in That Matter' in *Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1638-1842* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Printing & Publishing Company, 1843), <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/church-scotland-records/acts/1638-1842/pp513-519#h3-0011>.

Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you.’²⁸⁵ The Assembly’s view was that statements such as this appeared to suggest that the ‘knowledge, belief, and persuasion, that Christ died for me, and that he is mine, and that whatever he did and suffered, he did and suffered for me... [are] included in the very essence of that justifying act of faith.’²⁸⁶

As we argued in chapter five, however, the Confession’s *definition of faith* (in chapter 14) appears to give some place to a spark of assurance since it speaks of saving faith as ‘growing up in many to the attainment of a *full* assurance...’ Assurance is faith *growing up*, a seed coming to its fruition—and therefore not something wholly separate from the exercise of faith. Later, however, in chapter 18, the Confession is not *defining faith* but *describing experience*, and as Calvin had earlier done, it makes clear that *the experience of faith* is not necessarily identical with *the definition of faith*.

Thus, one could define faith to include assurance while denying that assurance is so part of the believer’s faith that if assurance is absent, then saving faith itself must be absent. Indeed, it appears that this was the concern of the supporters of the Marrow – to elicit in believers with no felt assurance a persuasion that they were indeed Christ’s by apprehending him by faith.

The General Assembly cited paragraph 18.1 of the Confession to oppose the doctrine of *The Marrow* concerning assurance. However, in the same paragraph, the Confession notes, ‘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 a state of grace*, and may

²⁸⁵ Edward Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2009), 132.

²⁸⁶ Commission on Purity of Doctrine, Query VIII, ‘Queries Agreed Unto by the Commission of the General Assembly, and Put to those Ministers Who Gave in a Representation and Petition Against the 5th and 8th Acts of Assembly 1720, with the Answers Given by these Ministers to the Said Queries’ as published in Edward Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2009), 371.

rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed' (WCF 18.1; emphasis added).

Hadow's view not only carried the issue in his day, but has continued to be seen as an accurate understanding of the Confession's teaching. Part of the response of the Marrow-men, who certainly viewed themselves as committed to the Westminster Standards, was to argue that since there were notable orthodox theologians who shared their view of doctrines being examined by the General Assembly, the Westminster Assembly could not have intended to contradict it. The result was some degree of talking past each other. And it is likely little attention was given to the diversity of views that were present in the Reformed tradition on aspects of the doctrine of assurance

The consequence, however, was that, out of a fear that antinomianism might infect the church, the General Assembly drove a wedge between members of the Assembly. Where the Confession could have been interpreted at the least as accommodating of both views, Hadow's interpretation was accepted as iron-clad orthodoxy.

Universal or Particular Redemption

An additional major charge Hadow (and the Assembly following him) brought against *The Marrow was* that it proposed a universal redemption accomplished by Christ. In particular the Act of the General Assembly condemned the following language: 'The Father hath made a deed of gift and grant unto all mankind, that whosoever of them all shall believe in his Son shall not perish.'²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ James Hog, et al, 'Queries Agreed Unto by the Commission of the General Assembly, and Put to those Ministers Who Gave in a Representation and Petition Against the 5th and 8th Acts of Assembly 1720, with the Answers Given by these Ministers to the Said Queries'

This again raises the question of whether the members of the Assembly had made a careful and sensitive scrutiny of the Westminster Standards or focussed on a few specific statements. For in condemning this statement, the General Assembly appears to have overlooked and, perhaps unconsciously, contradicted question 32 of the Larger Catechism: ‘The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he *freely provideth and offereth* to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him’ (WLC Q32, emphasis added).

The General Assembly, Principal Hadow, and the Marrow-men were in fact all in agreement that Christ died for the elect only.²⁸⁸ But Hadow and following him the Assembly appear to have been resolutely opposed to the notion of stating that Christ died for humanity without the qualification that it was for the elect only.

This debate raises several questions. One is the broad issue of the language used in Scripture to represent the manner in which the gospel was preached by the apostles themselves. Another is the remarkable emphasis in the earlier Scottish reformed tradition on ‘the free offer of the gospel’. Is there not freedom in orthodox reformed theology for a free offer of the gospel

as published in Edward Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2009), 371.

²⁸⁸ Thomas Boston, one of the twelve Representatives and proponents of *The Marrow*, held to *limited atonement*. Boston noted, ‘Our Lord Jesus is the actual and eventual Saviour of the elect only, in whose room and stead only he died upon the cross, according to the eternal compact passed between him and the Father, in the covenant of grace, otherwise called the covenant of redemption; for these are not two, but one and the same covenant. Thus the apostle calls him “the Saviour of the body,” Eph. v. 23. that is, of the elect, who make up the body whereof he was appointed the head from eternity, and in whose name he contracted with the Father in the eternal covenant.’ Thomas Boston, ‘Christ the Saviour of the World. A Sermon Preached Immediately before the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper, at Ettrick, June 7, 1724’ in *The Complete Works of the Late Rev. Thomas Boston, Ettrick*, vol. 6, ed. Samuel McMillan (London, 1853), 297.
[http://www.digitalpuritan.net/Digital%20Puritan%20Resources/Boston,%20Thomas/Works%20\(vol.6\)%20Ind%20Titles/\[TB\]%20Christ%20the%20Saviour%20of%20the%20World.pdf](http://www.digitalpuritan.net/Digital%20Puritan%20Resources/Boston,%20Thomas/Works%20(vol.6)%20Ind%20Titles/[TB]%20Christ%20the%20Saviour%20of%20the%20World.pdf).

without the express limitation that Christ died for the elect only or that God has ordained only the elect to be the beneficiaries of Christ's redemption? As noted earlier, question 32 of the Larger Catechism allows for such an offer. Additionally, paragraph 7.3 in the Confession notes that God 'freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved' (WCF 7.3). Undoubtedly, the Westminster Standards present a free offer of the gospel while at the same time recognizing that only the elect will accept it.

However, do the Westminster Standards allow for a universal redemption in any sense? Reformed theologians held to somewhat differing views of the redemptive work of Christ. John Fesko summarises the two views. On the one hand, there were significant theologians 'who admit the universal sufficiency of Christ's satisfaction but deny its application to all' such as Calvin, Ursinus and Witsius.²⁸⁹ By contrast, there were 'Those who hold that Christ died solely for the elect'—holding that the redemption accomplished was sufficient only for those for whom it would prove to be efficient—such as William Ames and Franciscus Gomarus.²⁹⁰

At the Synod of Dort (1618–19), as Fesko indicates, '[Edmund] Calamy and the British delegation at Dort, then, affirmed a non-Amyraldian

²⁸⁹ J. V. Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards: Historical Context and Theological Insights* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 191.

²⁹⁰ Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 191.

hypothetical universalism.’²⁹¹ That view was also expressed later at the Westminster Assembly (1643-1652).²⁹²

If this is the case, *The Marrow*’s proposition to offer the gospel freely for all was certainly within the boundaries set by the Westminster Standards. In contrast, Hadow and the 1720 General Assembly (who seem to have shown little interest in the composition of the Standards in their historical context) pushed for strict particularism, expressed in a particular way, to a degree that the Westminster divines themselves may have been unwilling to do. From the vantage point of Hadow’s strict particularism as applied to the hearers of the gospel, the Marrow-men appeared unorthodox. But the accusations levelled against them—which they vigorously denied in their defence of their position—tended to foist a narrowness of interpretation onto the Westminster Standards and pave the way for the eventual schism within the Church of Scotland.

A Defender of Orthodoxy?

The above reflections lead us back to the *principalis quaestio* of this thesis: Was James Hadow a defender of orthodoxy? Certainly, as we have seen, he had considerable influence on the Church of Scotland in the eighteenth-century. And with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity and church

²⁹¹ Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 195. Amyraldian hypothetical universalism is the view that affirms ‘the universal sufficiency of Christ’s satisfaction and argue that it is applied in some sense to all but only effectively for the elect’. This is in distinction from universalism of the Remonstrants at the Synod of Dort who affirmed the ‘universal satisfaction for every person, believer and unbeliever alike.’ Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 191.

²⁹² It is worth noting Fesko’s opinion that ‘the Standards lean in the direction of strict particularism, given the absence of the sufficiency-efficiency distinction. But neither are they written in such a manner as to preclude or proscribe hypothetical universalism.’ Fesko, *Theology of the Westminster Standards*, 202. In distinction, however, Chad Van Dixhoorn holds that, “Paragraphs 6 and 7, when read together, clarify that even subtle forms of seventeenth-century hypothetical universalism are excluded in chapter 3 considered as a whole” [Chad Van Dixhoorn, *Confessing the Faith: A Reader’s Guide to the Westminster Confession of Faith* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2016), 7414, Kindle].

government, he was instrumental in helping to preserve the theological orthodoxy of the church.²⁹³ We have also seen the evident harmony between his analysis of faith as comprising knowledge, assent and trust and that of the Westminster Confession. He defended orthodoxy against a rising tide of teaching that was essentially Socinian.

Further, we have also seen that Hadow's covenant theology was consistent with the Westminster Standards. We have argued that while the Westminster divines gave no special treatment to the covenant of redemption, Hadow's exposition of the pretemporal arrangement between the Father and the Son to save the elect as covenantal is consistent with the *substance* of the Standards' teaching. It is unfortunate (to say the least) that, out of fear of the implications, and despite the assurances of the Marrow-men, he did not allow a similar theological liberty of expression to them.²⁹⁴

However, despite the Kirk's acceptance of Hadow's critique of *Marrow* theology, we have argued that he deviated from the Standards in a number of ways. In the area of covenant theology, we noted that where the Confession stated that, having been 'endued' at his creation with 'righteousness, and true holiness' (WCF. 4.2), the purpose of Adam's obedience under the terms of the covenant of works was to *receive* life, Hadow stated that the goal was his

²⁹³ See [James Hadow], *A Survey of the Case, of the Episcopal Clergy, and of Those of the Episcopal Perswasion* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1703); James Hadow, *An Enquiry into Mr Simson's Sentiments about the Trinity from His Papers in Process* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1730); and James Hadow, *A Vindication of the Learned and Honourable Author of the History of the Apostles' Creed from the False Sentiment which Mr Simson Has Injuriously Imputed to Him* (Edinburgh: John Mosman and Company, 1731).

²⁹⁴ Lachman has helpfully noted that Hadow's tendency to disallow this liberty was present also in the General Assembly: "Coupled with an unfamiliarity with much of earlier Reformed thought and considerable warmth of temper, such a view of Reformed Orthodoxy explains how the Assembly could read back into the Confession and Catechisms what it considered to be its true development, the late seventeenth century tendency to Legalism and Neonomianism. [Thus] the General Assembly's interpretation of the Confession and Catechisms was as a result more narrow and exclusive than the Westminster Divines had intended." See Lachman, *The Marrow Controversy*, 489-490.

justification before God. This condition for pre-fall Adam's justification introduces an atmosphere of legalism into the covenant of works before the fall. Subtle though it may be, there is, surely, a real difference between the spirit of the obedience of the person who is already righteous (in that sense 'justified') and that of the person whose obedience is required *in order that he may be counted righteous* (and thus 'justifiable'). Seen through these lenses it is understandable that *The Marrow* teaching on the role of God's law may have appeared virtually antinomian. Hadow's approach to subtle distinctions seems to have been one of suspicion.

We have also indicated that Hadow's *ordo salutis* stressed some form of priority of repentance over faith. With no sensitivity to the flexibility of the varied use of 'repent' and 'believe' he insisted that this was 'our Saviour's order.'²⁹⁵ To insist on repentance before one is to hear the gospel very clearly reflects a preparationist sentiment.²⁹⁶ David Lachman thus notes that for Hadow "pardon is conditional on repentance [making] repentance the condition of justification."²⁹⁷ In this matter too Hadow seems to have given no reflection to the way the Standards frequently relate the enjoyment of all graces, including repentance, to faith in Christ, or to the way the Confession orders its chapters to deal first with faith and only then with repentance. Again, this element of inflexibility in Hadow's thinking seems to have further coloured Hadow's view of the *Marrow* theology that he already regarded as tainted with antinomianism.

²⁹⁵ Hadow, *Antinomianism*, 50.

²⁹⁶ VanDoodewaard has further observed, "While Hadow viewed repentance unto salvation as a fruit of God's gracious work, his approach to understanding and describing the place of conviction of sin and repentance in the morphology of conversion appeared similar to that of Baxterian and subsequent Neonomian thought" (VanDoodewaard, *A New Divinity*: 45).

²⁹⁷ Lachman, *The Marrow Controversy*, 454.

Furthermore, to denote the exhortations to repent and believe as the *laws* of Christ and the ordinances of the gospel as the law of Christ suggests more than a mere semantic choice. He might have wished to justify the introduction of such language in the face of the perceived antinomianism of *The Marrow*; but in arguing that this produced greater definitive clarity he prejudiced the case in a way that would make *The Marrow* theology appear less orthodox, accentuating this by his deliberate use of the Confession's language to prove his point against *The Marrow*.

This tendency—which Hadow seems to have regarded as providing greater definitive clarity—also appears in his understanding of the scope of the gospel call. In the Westminster Standards the scope of the gospel call encompassed all under Adam's broken covenant of works. But Hadow limits the scope to the constituents of the covenant of grace, i.e., to the elect only, and that after they have exhibited repentance. By thus limiting the *recipients* of the promise to the *respondents* to the gospel, he himself deviated from Westminster orthodoxy and from the noble Scottish tradition of 'free offer' preaching.²⁹⁸

Hadow's drive for precision therefore had—to put the best complexion on it—unintended negative consequences for his own theology. For him, a believer's taking an inventory of good works by way of self-examination was not a viable means of attaining assurance of salvation because such an examination can be deceitful. But, in adopting this view Hadow ignores the Confession's two accompanying means of assurance—the Spirit's witness and the Scripture's promises. While he recognises the experience of assurance and the necessity of pursuing it, he unguardedly rejects the organic relationship

²⁹⁸ See, e.g., Donald John MacLean, *James Durham (1622-1658) And the Gospel Offer in its Seventeenth Century Context* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015).

between faith and assurance that we have seen appears to be embedded in the Confession's statements in chapters 14 and 18.

To this extent, Hadow emerges as an *opponent* rather than an *exponent* of orthodoxy. To his credit he was an able defender of Presbyterian polity and helped ward off both Socinianism and Arianism. But, in the areas discussed above, in the context of the Marrow Controversy, he appears to have been less sensitive to some important nuances of the Westminster Standards and the Reformed tradition than were the Marrow-men.

It is also the case that Hadow tended to engage the issues exclusively from a distance, by public preaching and publication, rather than personally. It might be hoped that, had he done the latter, a happier consensus might have been reached with the Marrow-men within the framework of Westminster orthodoxy. If so the Church of Scotland might have avoided the fever pitch of alienation that subsequently developed. But that remains among the 'What if' questions of ecclesiastical history.

Lessons for the Church

In bringing this study to a conclusion it is worth asking if these events from the early eighteenth-century are of merely antiquarian interest or whether they carry any lessons for the church three centuries later.

An Orthodox Ministry

Firstly, there are valuable lessons to be learned from Hadow as a pastor. In principle, he valued intelligent and reasonable discourse. Though he held to Covenanting tendencies, in comparison to the Covenanters' often violent language and actions, he stands out as a moderate. As a result, he was able to exercise considerable influence in the Scottish church. Whatever our final

judgment on his theology and his role in the Marrow Controversy may be, this desire for intelligent, reasoned discourse about ideas and matters affecting the life of the church is one worth emulating in the new world order dominated by social media. Ministers today should find an example in Hadow's principle to pay keen attention to the well-being of their congregations and their broader associations. That principle remains a valuable one for ministers and indeed all Christians who engage in public discourse in any medium. Especially in matters particularly degenerative to the church and that touch on the vitals of Christianity, or in areas of the distinctives of one's tradition, it is important to seek not only the *purity* of the doctrine and practice of the church, but also its *peace*.

By way of contrast, however, Hadow serves also as a negative example, illustrating a pitfall that continues to recur in the reformed tradition in both doctrine and practice. The Westminster Standards, while affirming that Christ's redemption is effectually applied to the elect alone, insist that the call of the gospel is to be issued to all of Adam's sinful race. By contrast, Hadow argued that such a 'free offer' of Christ was no part of reformed orthodoxy.

This notion was further anchored in his mind when he (mistakenly) held that the Marrow-men were advocating both antinomianism and universal redemption— notions that were indeed at odds with the Westminster Standards. He thus placed himself in opposition to fellow preachers who were neither antinomians nor universal redemptionists but, in fact, earnest preachers of the gospel.

What this unfortunate episode of Hadow's life demonstrates is a need for careful reflection and a deepening understanding of the subordinate standards to which the individual is committed—in the case of orthodox presbyterian churches, the Westminster Standards.

In this context, a lack of understanding or embracing of the theology of the Westminster Standards leads to two major problems. One is that certain doctrines present in the Standards may be ignored or unintentionally misrepresented (such as the case with Hadow's structuring of repentance and faith). A second problem arises if there is an insistence on further boundaries beyond the Standards (such as Hadow's precluding assurance from the definition of saving faith). When this happens, artificial standards of orthodoxy are almost inevitably imposed.

With respect to the first problem, the church today still faces theological ambivalence concerning the place of the law in the believer's life allowing for the seed of antinomianism to germinate within evangelicalism. In relation to the second problem, presbyterian churches have struggled with the quest for greater clarity and certainty by insisting on additional boundary markers that go beyond the specific statements of the Westminster Standards (but often are presented as in accord with them).

This is evidenced in Hadow's views on the free offer of the gospel which, as we have argued, drew boundary lines beyond and indeed ultimately opposed to the Westminster Standards. Yet, opposition to 'the free offer of the gospel' continues to be present in the contemporary reformed church. It is point worth etching into our understanding of ministry that the fact that a person of reformed convictions insists on a particular expression of doctrine does not of itself make that expression of doctrine orthodox.

But how can the church guard orthodoxy today? Within Presbyterianism, one practical way might be for churches to have the Westminster Standards periodically read privately and publicly affirmed by their ministers to their presbyteries. This practice could afford ministers the opportunity to re-visit their confession of faith and embrace its theology more

fully. Additionally, by this practice, ministers would have the opportunity to reflect on and state to their presbyteries any concerns they had. Such a practice might help ensure purity of doctrine but also provide a context that might aid in preserving both the unity of the church and the preservation of the liberty of conscience of the ministers of the gospel.

A Faithful Proclamation of the Gospel Offer

Hadow believed the promises of the gospel belong to the elect who demonstrate their election and this in turn influenced his understanding of how the gospel should be preached. It created fertile soil for legalism and a form of hyper-Calvinism. In contrast to the preaching of the Marrow-men, the substance of Hadow's teaching suggested to them that the gospel required obedience to Christ before coming to him for rescue. As we have seen, with respect to this issue, the Marrow-men seem to have been more in tune with the spirit of the Westminster Divines than Hadow was.

Preachers of the gospel today will find better encouragement in the preaching of the Marrow-men than in the teaching of James Hadow. The spirit of the Westminster Standards breathes more easily in the atmosphere in which they offered Christ to all: since God 'freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him' (WCF 7.3). This is borne out by the Minutes of the Westminster Assembly on December 7, 1646. After debate on the question, 'What ground or warrant have you, being a sinner, to believe in Christ?' the Divines answered, 'The ground of my believing in Christ is God's offer of Him in His word to me as well as to any other man, and His

commanding me to believe in Him, as well as to believe or obey any other thing in His word.²⁹⁹

The last word may be left with Ralph Erskine (1685-1752), one of the most notable of the Marrow-men:

Let Arminians maintain at their peril their universal redemption; but we must maintain at our peril the universal offer. Necessity is laid upon us, and woe unto us if we preach not this gospel to every creature. Christ is so far given to all people that hear the gospel, that it is warrantable for them to receive the gift.³⁰⁰

Erskine here echoes the words of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:16. He also exemplifies the spirit of 2 Corinthians 5:19-20:

In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

May this earnestness and zeal be the hallmarks of all preaching in all the churches— in Scotland, in India, and, indeed, in all the earth, until the Lord returns fully and finally to establish his reign.

²⁹⁹ Westminster Assembly, *The Minutes of the Westminster Assembly* (William Blackwood and Son: Edinburgh, 1874), 309,

<https://archive.org/stream/minutesofsession00west#page/n5/mode/2up>.

³⁰⁰ John Brown, *Gospel Truth Stated and Illustrated*, 385,

<https://archive.org/details/gospeltr00brow/page/8/mode/2up>.

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