

# PCA Takes a Stand: Federal Vision and New Perspectives on Paul

**Editor's note:** Instead of our usual "In Case You're Asked" page where we respond to some of your questions, we have decided to use this page to pass on to you an action taken by the 2007 General Assembly regarding a theological issue that the church was asked to study and respond to. The entire report will be in the Minutes of this year's Assembly, but because of the importance of the issue, we wanted our readers to have a copy of the declaration portion of the report. The following is a list of recommendations passed by the Assembly and the declaration portion of that report.

## Recommendations

That the General Assembly commend to Ruling and Teaching Elders and their congregations this report of the Ad Interim Committee on New Perspectives on Paul and Federal Vision for careful consideration and study.

That the General Assembly remind the Church, its officers and congregations of the provisions of *BCO* 29-1 and 39-3 which assert that the *Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly*, while "subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inerrant Word of God, "have been adopted by the PCA "as standard expositions of the teachings of Scripture in relation to both faith and practice."

That the General Assembly recommend the declarations in this report as a faithful exposition of the Westminster Standards, and further reminds those ruling and teaching elders whose views are out of accord with our Standards of their obligation to make known to their courts any differences in their views.

That the General Assembly remind the Sessions and Presbyteries of the PCA that it is their duty "to exercise care over those subject to their authority" and "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the Church" (*BCO* 31-2; 13-9f).

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## Declarations

In light of the controversy surrounding the NPP and FV, and after many months of careful study, the committee unanimously makes the following declarations:

- The view that rejects the bi-covenantal structure of Scripture as represented in the Westminster Standards (i.e., views which do not merely take issue with the terminology, but the essence of the first/second covenant framework) is contrary to those Standards.
- The view that an individual is "elect" by virtue of his membership in the visible church; and that this "election" includes justification, adoption and sanctification; but that this individual could lose his "election" if he forsakes the visible church, is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
- The view that Christ does not stand a representative head whose perfect obedience and satisfaction is imputed to individuals who believe in him is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
- The view that strikes the language of "merit" from our theological vocabulary so that the claim is made that Christ's merits are not imputed to his people is contrary to the Westminster Standards.

- The view that “union with Christ” renders imputation redundant because it subsumes all of Christ’s benefits (including justification) under this doctrinal heading is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
- The view that water baptism effects a “covenantal union” with Christ through which each baptized person receives the saving benefits of Christ’s mediation, including regeneration, justification, and sanctification, thus creating a parallel soteriological system to the decretal system of the Westminster Standards, is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
- The view that one can be “united to Christ” and not receive all the benefits of Christ’s mediation, including perseverance, in that effectual union is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
- The view that some can receive saving benefits of Christ’s mediation, such as regeneration and justification, and yet not persevere in those benefits is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
- The view that justification is in any way based on our works, or that the so-called “final verdict of justification” is based on anything other than the perfect obedience and satisfaction of Christ received through faith alone, is contrary to the Westminster Standards.