

Theology Simply Explained — WSC8 “God Sovereignly Carries His Purpose Out”

Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 8—especially explaining how God sovereignly carries out His own purposes, because He is a (the) true and living God.

Q8. How doth God execute His decrees? ***God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.***

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Our shorter, catechism question this week is number eight how death god execute is decrees The answer is god executes with his degrees and the works of creation and providence. It would have been. Perhaps one step. Uh, more definitive If they asked, How are the degrees of god executed? Leaving the Passive.

So that the active god executeth would be even more highlighted. But the Diistic idea. Or even polytheistic idea. That there is some other agent apart from god himself. Who executes his degrees. I was so far from the mind of the assembly that they wouldn't even think to ask it that way.

And so we do have the question and the active voice, how dust god execute is degrees. And this shows that not only does God purpose within himself, but There is no one else to do it. Until the Act of creation and indeed creation is not merely. An act. God executed is decrees in the works of creation and providence.

Creation itself is a work. God does not. Uh, create in a moment things, which have potential within themselves to independently of him develop on their own. No creation itself is a work of god. This is very clear. In genesis 1. And genesis 2, especially in genesis 1. As we see.

God himself. Taking time and creating the different parts of his creation. Precisely militating against what has now come to be known as the evolutionary idea. Uh, that god. Somehow created. Uh, a single thing with the potential to actualize itself into the diversity. That we see That idea is. Opposite, the word works here.

When it says, god executed his degrees in the works, Of creation. And providence later on, we'll see. The distinction that the catechism properly draws between justification is an act of god's free grace. Uh singular. Uh, in a moment. And done entirely. Uh, by god himself and sanctification is a work of god's free grace.

Something that happens over time something in which God employs Uh, secondary causes.

So even here by the active voice, god executed and the word works. Instead of the word act, you have a recognition of what the holy spirit was. Emphasizing. In describing god's creative work, as he did for us in genesis chapter 1 and what god himself was emphasizing. By taking.

That time and doing it that way. Or their secondary causes. Uh, yes, within each day. Yeah, on the particular day for instance he makes the earth to bring forth etc. And yet. There is the emphasis on. The persistent personal. Act of god. Uh, to the point that there's actually some of the work of god's providence.

Within the work of god's. Creation. Establishing that after he has created all things and pronounced them very good. That the same god who, Uh, did that in those six days is the one who is ruling and superintending. Indeed, by the same spirit So that we have at the beginning of the creation work.

The spirit of god brooding or hovering brooding is a better word. I think over the waters. And then all that god. Does in his sovereign providence in his superintending. He does by the work of his spirit as we've just finished. Um, Considering in Psalm 104 which shifts from the work of creation to the work of providence and emphasizing the Activity of god's spirit and especially the activity of god's spirit even in sustaining those who are not just second causes, but who even have their own independent will?

So that there is such a thing as evil, but the evil is a function of the evil creature and their evil intent, doing evil actions, But you have a superior and sovereign superintending, that is too intentions that are off that are operational at the same time. Which as god's intention and god is good and god, intends good and God does good.

And so you have especially the spirit of god. Carrying out. Uh, the Work of god, god communicates himself by the word. The sun, who proceeds. Um, sorry. Who is Um, Eternally begotten of the father. He does nothing without him. He does everything through him. We have that and multiple accounts of the creation, which will probably revisit when you come to what is the work of creation?

Uh and yet it is by the spiritu proceeds from the father and the son that the sun is the one through whom. The father carries everything out, so that there is a fellowship and a delight and a mutual adoration. Um, Uh, within the godhead in all of his work.

As he either. Uh, works in creation or works in providence. And so, what's happening here is The decrees of god, god purposing within himself. Only according to his own good pleasure. Only according Uh, to his own council. Um, within himself and then the one mind of god. Remember the father's son and holy spirit.

Having the same substance meaning they're not multiple minds. In god, there is one. Uh, one mind. In god.

That he carries out this purpose himself. That nothing is left to. An independency of the creatures. In fact, as we've heard recently in Psalm 104, Uh, the independency of the creature. Is an impossibility. Because he's a creature. God is infinity eternal and unchangeable in his being all other things.

Our finite, temporal and affected and changing in. Uh, they're beings. And so, A wonderful emphasis, then that it's not only god, who purposes things in his decree. But it must be god. Who executes his decree, he does not hand over the execution of his decree to one of the creatures.

No, he himself. Doesn't father. Son and holy spirit himself. Uh, does it? And wherever the, uh, Wherever there are creatures used. As secondary causes. Or have an instrumental role, even with their own. Willing and acting still it is god. Executing his decrease. And one important application of that to us.

Is that it belongs to us to love? And obey. And serve. But not to execute. The efficacy or the carrying out or the executing of god's decrees, Does not belong to us. You and i do not have to make the will of god happen. And we must not take it on ourselves.

Uh, to pursue that. And even more comforting. You and i cannot stop. The degree of god from happening. Praise god, because you and i are weak and you and i are wicked. And if it was possible for a creature to alter or hinder, the will of god, the purpose of god, the degree of god, we would But we can't.

And so, when we sin, We confess the sinfulness. Of what we have done. And if it brings harm to others, We confess that we have harmed, others. And yet we do

not lose hope or despair. Because we know, That the other intention. Was the one that was the super.

Intention. That god was still good. God still had purposed. Good. God still did good. So, it doesn't free us from our responsibility. And it doesn't free us from our grief. But it would be A. Great arrogance. On our part. To think that we had somehow messed up. The decretive will of god.

Because, We had disobeyed the perceptive. Well of god. We, we ought not. That take. So much for ourselves either prospectively. Or retrospectively. Now there's a lot more work to do. On what is the work of creation? What is the work of providence? And We'll get to those when we come.

To those questions. Um, but it is very important here. That we note that it is god. The executed his degrees. In the works. Of creation. And providence.