

# Communicant membership vow #3

**Last weeks:** Proto-Presbyterians → Presbyterians (1560) → American Presbyterians (1789) →

Orthodox Presbyterians (straight teaching via elders) (1936) → Grace OPC (1971)

**This week:** Communicant membership vow #3 → **Next weeks:** Vows 4–5

## Communicant church membership process

Review → Interview → Take vows publicly (profession of faith)

### 1. God's revelation

*Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, and its doctrine of salvation to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?*

2 Peter 1:16–21 2 Timothy 3:16–17 Luke 24:25–32

### 2. God's revelation of himself

*Do you believe in one living and true God, in whom eternally there are three distinct persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—who are the same in being and equal in power and glory, and that Jesus Christ is God the Son, come in the flesh?*

John 14:6 Acts 4:12 Matthew 28:18–20

### 3. God's revelation of good news

*Do you confess that because of your sinfulness you abhor and humble yourself before God, that you repent of your sin, and that you trust for salvation not in yourself but in Jesus Christ alone?*

Romans 3:23 Matthew 22:37–40 Romans 6:23

## Deep dive into vow #3: Sin and salvation

### Sin (“your sinfulness” = you alone)

- Definition
  - WSC 14: *Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.*
  - 1 John 3:4: *“Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.”*
  - Sins of omission and sins of commission are both forms of lawlessness and rebellion
  - Exodus 20:1–17 summarizes the law and Jesus further summarizes the law in Matthew 22:37–40
- Scope
  - Romans 3:23: *“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* See also Ecclesiastes 7:20, Mark 7:21–23.
  - James 2:10: *“Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.”*
  - Isaiah 64:6: *“We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.”*
  - Original sin
    - WSC 18: *The sinfulness of that estate wherein man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.*
    - Psalm 51:5: *“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”*  
See also Romans 5:12, 3:10–18, Ephesians 2:1–3
    - *“It is because we rejected the doctrine of original sin that we on the Left were always being disappointed; disappointed by the refusal of people to be reasonable [...] by the failure of true Socialism to arrive, by the behavior of the nations and politicians [...] above all, by the recurrent fact of war.” —C. E. M. Joad*

- Result
  - Sin → death (including second death: Revelation 2:14, 20:6, 20:14, 21:8)
  - Rebellion and lawlessness in response to the true and living God = a lie of a life then death; see John 8:44
    - *“In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”* —God in Genesis 2:17 → Genesis 6:5
    - James 1:15: *“Desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”*
    - Romans 6:23: *“For the wages of sin is death...”*
  - WSC 19: *All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.*

## Salvation (“Jesus Christ alone”)

- The Savior
  - Romans 6:23: *“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
  - Galatians 4:4–5: *“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”*
  - 1 Corinthians 5:21: *“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*
  - 1 John 4:10: *“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*
    - *“What is ‘propitiation’? It is the removal of divine wrath through the satisfaction of divine justice. This is the essence of Jesus’ substitutionary work for his people: by bearing their guilt, he turned away God’s wrath.”* —Jeremiah Montgomery
    - *“Jesus’ substitutionary work provides the only grounds on which sinners can be justified: forgiven of their sins and accepted as righteous in God’s sight. It is only by the substitutionary death of God’s Son that sinners can become sons of God.”* —Jeremiah Montgomery
- Your Savior
  - From *the* Savior to *your* Savior!
  - *“Do you abhor and humble yourself before God, repent of your sin, and trust for salvation in Jesus Christ alone?”* (excerpts from vow #3)
  - Genesis 3:10; Judges 13:22; Isaiah 6:5; Peter in Luke 5:8; Peter, James, and John in Matthew 17:6; John in Revelation 1:17 and 22:8; Luke 23:30 and Revelation 6:16; David in Psalm 51:1–4; Romans 7:24; 1 Timothy 1:13–15 → Job 42:5–6 and vow #3
  - *“Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling”*
  - Result
    - **Justification (Romans 3:21–5:21)** WSC 33: *“Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.”*
    - **Adoption (Romans 8:12–17)** WSC 34: *“Adoption is an act of God’s free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.”*
    - **Sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11)** WSC 35: *“Sanctification is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.”*
    - **Glorification (1 Corinthians 15:35–38)**

*“For those who would learn God’s ways, humility is the first thing, humility is the second thing, and humility is the third thing.”*  
—Augustine

*“...so that no human being might boast in the presence of God [...] so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”* —1 Corinthians 1:29, 31 \*  
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