

Double Preparation in the Soteriology of Herman Witsius(1636-1708)

Hyo Nam Kim

(Seoul Bible Graduate School of Theology, Adjunct Professor,
Historical Theology)

- I. Introduction
- II. Herman Witsius and His Doctrine of Regeneration
- III. Doctrine of Faith in Witsius's Theology
- IV. Doctrine of Preparation in Witsius's Theology
- V. Conclusion

[Abstract]

The doctrine of preparation, known as a distinctive Puritan understanding of conversion, was shared by other Reformed orthodox theologians. Nevertheless, it has been subjected to various controversies regarding human role for preparation. Although any study on other continental Reformed theologians would be helpful for the correct understanding of the matter, it is regretful that the Nadere Reformatie divines' understanding of the issue was almost neglected. The goal of this essay is, therefore, to expound Witsius's understanding of the preparation and to prove that this preparation is not human meritorious work, but God's work for conversion. Moreover, the Puritan doctrine of preparation is not different in essence from Witsius's, despite some seemingly different points. His idea of regeneration had two-fold meaning: the first moment of infusing divine life into a soul and the manifestation of the infused life. For the former, the humanity can't contribute meritoriously. He believed that saving faith had two faculties, the intellect and the will, both of which must be renewed by the Holy Spirit. Thus, intellectual change always takes place after regeneration. Whereas the Puritans taught the preparation to come before regeneration, Witsius's concept of regeneration made him regard the same process both as coming after the first sense of regeneration and eventually as preparation for saving faith completed with the change of the will. There is another preparation preceding the first regeneration. According to him, this is totally divine work on the souls of the elect for their regeneration by preventing the elect from committing fatal sin and helping them to understand divine truth by regenerating their intellect. Therefore, in his understanding

of the double preparation concept, no appreciation of the human contribution to regeneration in its narrower sense was made.

Key Words: Herman Witsius, Preparationism, Puritans, Regeneration, Faith, Conversion

논문투고일 2021.07.31. / 심사완료일 2021.09.06. / 게재확정일 2021.09.08.

I. Introduction

Puritans, especially the New English Puritans, widely accepted the concept of preparation for conversion or regeneration. They asserted that the elect sinners' hearts should be prepared for salvation before conversion, in that, when sinners' hearts are still filled with sin and love for sin, they are not in a suitable state to be united with Christ, who is holiness itself. This means that for biblical salvation, the hearts of sinners should be prepared by experiencing the emotional separation from sin before conversion or having true faith. It has been controversial among scholars, however, because the term "preparation" sounds like giving any meritorious role to sinners for their salvation.

Scholars such as Joel R. Beeke, E. Brook Holifield, Charles E. White, W. K. B. Stoever, and Robert Middlekauff basically accepted the position that the concept of preparation accommodates human role, not human merit, in salvation.¹ They

¹ Joel R. Beeke, *Prepared by Grace, for Grace* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013); Robert Middlekauff, *The Mathers: Three Generations of Puritan Intellectuals 1596-1728* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 233-34; Charles E. White, "Were Hooker and Shepard Closet Arminians?" *Calvin Theological Journal* 20, no. 1 (1985): 41; W. K. B. Stoever, *'A Faire and Easie Way to Heaven': Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 110. With a careful analysis on various Reformed orthodox theologians including the Puritans on both sides of Atlantic Ocean and a couple of Dutch divines, Joel Beeke and Paul Smalley clearly proves that the concept of preparation does not make any room for human merit in God's salvific plan for sinners. Middlekauff obviously rejects the notion that the New England Puritans regarded preparation as a stage where sinners could perform any meritorious action for salvation without assistance from God. According to him, they consistently taught that an elect sinner was able to perform "evangelical preparation" only with the help of the Holy Spirit. Middlekauff's view on preparation is seconded by Holifield, who

never considered sinners to be absolutely passive objects, who were to be totally prepared by God for salvation. Sinners must use their will and participate in the process of their salvation, but it excludes any idea that human merit can contribute to their own salvation or “oblige God to respond with grace” to their exertions.²

Over against this first view on Puritan preparation concept, there are also scholars who claim that the Puritans who held preparation concept went farther in the direction of Arminianism than an orthodox Reformed theology could permit. Perry Miller and R. T. Kendall are the most eminent exponents

believed that no human action could oblige God to bestow saving grace on humanity. Middlekauff also states that everything that has the appearance of being “man’s preparation for conversion” is essentially made possible by God. Rejecting Pettit’s argument that the preparationists insisted on “baptismal efficacy,” which enabled sinners to prepare themselves for salvation, he demonstrates that no New England minister regarded the sacrament itself as efficacious. Charles E. White also agrees that preparation concept does not ascribe a natural ability to humanity in course of salvation. He holds that “Hooker, Shepard, and Cotton were not speaking of a bridge of preparation built by human effort but of the bridge of grace built by the Word of God.” White argues that God’s sovereignty does not conflict with human responsibility, but rather that these are in harmony with each other throughout the Scriptures. In his book *A Faire and Easie Way to Heaven*, Stoever contends that in the covenant of grace, a distinction must be made between the necessity of persisting in the moral law and works-righteousness. He argues, therefore, that the covenant of grace embodies the continuity of the moral law but not of works-righteousness. Although the moral law persists in the covenant of grace, it conducts its work as a manifestation of God’s good will, which we should follow as His children and not as a condition for justification. Moreover, according to Stoever, the reason some scholars regard the mutual obligation in the covenant of grace as works-righteousness because they fail to correctly understand the meaning of “conditionality” in the covenant of grace. Contending that “exclusion of merit from justification was not synonymous with exclusion of human faculties from participation in conversion,” he reconciled human obligation with God’s sovereignty by way of the scholastic doctrine of multiple causality.

² David Hall, “On Common Ground,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 44 no. 2 (1987), 208.

of this view.³ As George Marsden points out, while Miller negated former images of the Puritans, he insisted that the Puritans were “spokesmen for Renaissance and disciples of Erasmus and Colet,” rather than “dogmatic Calvinists.” By using “the logic of a Humanist” (such as Ramism) as a method, Marsden continued, the Puritans went beyond the position with which the Reformed tradition could agree.⁴ This view on Puritan preparationism is deeply rooted in his misunderstanding of Puritan covenant concept, especially the covenant of grace. Accordingly, Miller concludes that the biblical notion of a covenant between God and humanity put humans in a “bargaining position” with their Creator.⁵ Appraising Thomas Hooker as a theologian who “fully developed a teaching of preparation for faith prior to regeneration,”⁶ R. T. Kendall described Hooker’s preparation idea as “a bold exhortation to men in their natural state.”⁷ Moreover, he explained that faith is obtained by the act of human will, and that Hooker’s doctrine of faith is voluntaristic from start to finish.⁸ This view, however, was seriously countered by some scholars such as Richard A. Muller⁹ and Paul Helm.¹⁰

3 Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson, *The Puritans* (New York: American Book Company, 1938; R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 1997).

4 George Marsden, “Perry Miller’s Rehabilitation of the Puritans: A Critique,” *Church History* 39, no. 1(1970), 95.

5 Miller, *The Puritans*, 284.

6 Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 123.

7 Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 131.

8 Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 138.

9 See Richard A. Muller’s two articles regarding the relationship between the intellect and the will within faith, “*Fides and Cognitio* in Relation to the Problem of Intellect and Will in the Theology of John Calvin,” *Calvin Theological Journal* vol. 25 no. 2

Thus far, we have seen various understandings of Puritan concept of the prepared heart for salvation. However, although Dutch Reformed theologians of the seventeenth century have been widely regarded as parallel to the Puritans in many respects and they played a crucial role in the development of

(1990): "The Priority of the Intellect in the Soteriology of Jacob Arminius," *Westminster Theological Journal* vol. 55 no. 1 (spring, 1993). Richard A. Muller criticizes his understanding of faith. He maintains that Kendall so misunderstood "Calvin's language of faith as *cognition*" that his "attempt to create a contrast between Calvin's thought and the voluntaristic leanings of later Reformed theology must also be reassessed and, most probably, set aside." In addition, refuting Kendall's idea of voluntarism, which is essentially connected to the Arminian sense of preparationism, Muller argues that voluntaristic tendency in the Reformed theology does not have fundamental relationship to "preparationism" and ought to be viewed as "resident Augustinianism."

- 10 Paul Helm, *Calvin and the Calvinists* (Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth, 1982), 52–61. Paul Helm also opposes Kendall's view on preparationism. Helm points out in his book, *Calvin and the Calvinists*, that Kendall's misunderstanding of the functions of the will and the intellect in relation to faith caused a distorted view of voluntarism and concludes that this distorted voluntaristic view led him to see Puritan preparationism as Arminian voluntarism in which man prepares himself for regeneration or conversion. See also W. Stanford Reid's review of Kendall's *Calvin and English Calvinism* in *Westminster Theological Journal* vol. 43 (1980)162; George W. Harper, "Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649: A Review Article," *Calvin Theological Journal* vol. 20 no. 2 (November 1985), 259–260. Harper and Reid stand in the same line with Helm with regard to this issue. Evaluating as oversimplification Kendall's dichotomy in which "one defined by the intellectualist view that faith has to do with knowledge and is thus essentially passive, and the other defined by the voluntarist understanding that faith is an action of the will and thus necessarily involves human agency," Harper argues that this underlies Kendall's misunderstanding of Puritan preparation concept as Arminian voluntarism. In addition, Reid also contends that although Kendall "refers to Calvin's concept of the renewal or regeneration of the will, he elsewhere quotes Calvin as saying that 'the will is effaced' (p. 26ff). But Calvin explicitly says, as one reads further in the paragraph, that it is not abolished in the sense of being destroyed, but is made anew, 'not meaning that the will now begins to exist, but that it is changed from an evil to a good will.'" Then he concludes that "it seems a little strange that they should be ranged on the side of Arminius against Calvin, for they did not hold that the unregenerate will could ever rest in the promises of God in Christ Jesus."

the Reformed theology since the seventeenth century, it is regretful that their understanding of conversion has been relatively neglected by scholarship. Moreover, among the various conversion models suggested, the concept of preparation for salvation has been almost exclusively researched within the field of Puritan studies. The main goal of this essay is, therefore, to attempt to demonstrate how seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed orthodox divines understood conversion in relation to the concept of preparation by turning our attention to one of leading Dutch divines of *Nadere Reformatie*, Herman Witsius. In this essay, by exploring his doctrine of conversion, we will see, first, that like many Puritans he has also the concept of preparation for salvation, that is, double preparation both for faith and regeneration; second, that unlike the Puritans, he insists that the first sense of preparation, which is quite identical with Puritan idea of preparation, is not prior to regeneration, but the effects of regeneration; third, that the second sense of preparation is entirely God's work within the souls of the elect; and finally that thus these preparations do not give any meritorious credit to natural human ability in any way.

II. Herman Witsius and His Doctrine of Regeneration

1. Herman Witsius and His Magnum Opus

The primary reason why Witsius was chosen for this study is

his theological position among the Reformed orthodox theologians. Witsius was one of the representative *Nadere Reformatie* divines whose theology retains some distinctive elements of two most important theological parties in the seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed churches. As a theological student, he had a great privilege to study under Hoornbek, Voetius, Maresius and Essenius at the universities of Groningen, Leiden, and Utrecht. After many years of his pastoral ministry in four churches, he began teaching ministry at Franeker University in 1675, then moved to the University of Utrecht in 1680, and finally finished his teaching career at the University of Leiden as the successor of the younger Friedrich Spanheim. He has been widely known for his attempt to reconcile the disciples of Gisbertus Voetius and Johannes Cocceius, both of whom were most influential Reformed theologians representing two different theological lines in the Netherlands at his time.¹¹ It is his *magnum opus*, *De oeconomia foederum Dei hominibus libri quatuor* (1675)¹² that clearly shows such a mediatory character of his theology between Cocceian federalistic theology and Voetian Reformed scholastic theology. He sought to reduce tension between the two divided lines of theology in among Dutch Reformed theologians.¹³ He made use of certain Cocceian methods while preserving essential contents of Voetian theology.

11 See Joel R. Beeke, "The Life and Theology of Herman Witsius" in Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man*, trans. William Crookshank, 2vols., vol. 1(Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010), 8–9.

12 The title of its English translation is *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man*, trans. William Crookshank, 2vols., vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010) and this paper will use this English translation.

13 Beeke, "The Life and Theology of Herman Witsius," 12.

Witsius comments in his introduction of the book, “the enemies of our church...secretly rejoice that there are as many and as warm disputes amongst ourselves, as with them. And this, not very secretly neither: for they do not, nor will ever cease to cast this reproach upon us; which, I grieve to say is not so easily wiped away. O! how much better would it be to use our utmost endeavours, to lessen, make up, and, if it could be, put an end to all controversy!”¹⁴ While this work was written in part for the reconciliation of the Cocceians and the Veotians, main opponents Witsius intended to attack here were Roman Catholics, Arminians, Socinians, and such Dutch Protestants as Hugo Grotius who had tried to undermine one of the most important Reformation tenets, “*sola scriptura*.” In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Witsius became so influential in the Reformed circle that his work on divine covenant became “a standard in the Netherlands, Scotland, England, and New England.”¹⁵

De oeconomia foederum Dei is composed of four books: book one deals with the Covenant of Works; book two was written on the so-called the *pactum salutis*; book three treats the Covenant of Grace in time with emphasis on *ordo salutis*; and lastly, book four focuses on “covenant ordinances throughout the Scriptures.”¹⁶ Even though Witsius seems to claim, as its titles shows, that it comprehends a whole body of divinity, it focuses on describing the entire process of human salvation from the Fall of Adam by the break of the prelapsarian covenant to the divine plan of restoration

14 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, 1:21-22

15 Beeke, “The Life and Theology of Herman Witsius,” 20.

16 Beeke, “The Life and Theology of Herman Witsius,” 13.

beginning with the eternal intra-Trinitarian covenant and completing by the Covenant of Grace with its blessings, that is, the *ordo salutis*. This implies that his theological system was founded upon his personal interest in human salvation.¹⁷

2. The General Definition of Regeneration

Witsius deals with the concept of preparation for salvation in his section on regeneration. He also uses the terms “conversion” and “regeneration” interchangeably in relation to the idea of preparation for salvation. When he reflects on this issue, he seems to have thought that the idea of preparation could be more clearly expounded in the doctrine of regeneration than to other doctrines such as the doctrines of conversion and faith. In this sense, we need first to take a look at how Witsius thinks of regeneration.

Witsius explains the mysterious nature of regeneration by referring to human birth. He delineates it vividly: “But here all things are deep, and wrapt up in mystery. Who can unfold to us the secrets of his own corporal birth? Who can distinctly declare, in what manner he was poured out like milk, and curdled like cheese within the bowels of his mother?”¹⁸ Immediately after this, he defines “regeneration” as “supernatural act of God, whereby a new and divine life is infused into the elect person spiritually dead, and that from the incorruptible

¹⁷ Dealing with the Covenant of Grace, which is the main theme of the work, in the Book 3, Witsius dedicated more than 90% of space to expounding the elements included in the *ordo salutis* as the benefits promised to those in the covenant.

¹⁸ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 1.

seed of the word of God, made fruitful by the infinite power of the Spirit.”¹⁹ We can draw from the above definition four crucial aspects with regard to his understanding of regeneration: the subject and object of regeneration, the way of regeneration, the state before and after regeneration, and the means of regeneration.

Witsius affirms that regeneration is totally performed by God, on the elect and that it is also by the power of the Spirit that the natural man could be regenerated. In addition, because even the elect, prior to regeneration, is spiritually dead; it is also true that he or she cannot contribute anything to animating his or her spiritual life. This leads us to the fact that regeneration is performed solely by God in the souls of the elect; whereas, the elect is totally passive as far as regeneration is concerned. Therefore, God is the subject of regeneration, and the elect is its object. From this, human condition prior to regeneration is naturally brought forth.

Before regeneration, even the elect is put in the state of spiritual dead where no life is found. As it is hopeless to find any motion in the dead human body, so in the elect spiritually dead there can be no perceived motion of life in its own. Regeneration is God’s work to change this desperate situation by infusing divine life into the elect with the infinite power of the Spirit. When God infuses divine life into the spiritually dead elect, he achieves this spiritual work by means of the word of God. This divine word is implanted as a seed. Finally, this seed of God must be “made fruitful by the infinite power of the

19 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 1.

Spirit,” since this seed is “the incorruptible seed.” Although, “at times, it seem to perform any things that have a principle of life,” he notes, “but resembles those automatical or artificial motions by which statues, ingeniously framed, counterfeit living animals.”²⁰

3. Impossibility of the Third State

As seen in the definition of regeneration, the state of our soul prior to regeneration is spiritually destitute and dead. By regeneration this dead soul is moved to a new state, which is fruitful. Thus, Witsius makes clear that there is “no intermediate state between the regenerate and unregenerate.”²¹ He specifies and confirms it as follows:

[O]ne is either dead or alive; has either the spirit of the flesh and the world, or the Spirit of God actuating him; is either in the state of grace, or in the state of malediction; either the child of God, or of the devil; either in the way to salvation, or damnation. There neither is, nor can be any medium here. The holy scripture divides all mankind into two classes, sheep and goats, . . . and compares their goings to two ways; whereof the one, which is broad, leads to destruction; the other, which is narrow, to life.²²

This desperate condition of the elect prior to regeneration and the impossibility of the third state naturally lead us to the

²⁰ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 5.

²¹ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 8.

²² Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 8.

conclusion that “there are no preparations antecedent to the first beginning of regeneration.”²³ He thoroughly excludes any possibility of human contribution to regeneration by calling it “a new generation,” “a resurrection,” and “a creation.”²⁴ However, even though these images clearly show that humanity cannot do anything for their own regeneration, it is “the victory of God” which discovers both the nature of regeneration and the fact that human beings are not able to prepare themselves for regeneration. The former three terms suggested by Witsius with regard to regeneration do not take into account the existence of sin and its resistance to God’s will “in the children of disobedience” ruled by devil. Thus, he argues that regeneration should be most clearly understood in terms of God’s victory over the devil governing the fallen human nature. Accordingly, “all these operations of God tend to exclude, as far as possible, all preparations from the beginning of our regeneration.” Because regeneration is totally God’s work to conquer sin and devil by infusing a new life into our spiritually dead bodies.²⁵

4. Two Kinds of Regeneration

In the earlier sections we defined regeneration and looked at the impossibility of human preparation for regeneration, but we need to explain Witsius’s usage of the term “regeneration” more specifically in order to correctly understand his concept of

23 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 9.

24 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 9.

25 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 9.

preparation for regeneration. Even if he excludes any preparation for regeneration from the fallen humanity, he uses the term “preparation” for regeneration in his work.

Witsius holds that a new life, which was put into the elect by regeneration, may be considered in two ways:

Moreover, this spiritual life may be considered, either by way of faculty, and in the first act, in the usual language of the schools; or by way of operation, and in the second act. In the former respect, it is that inward constitution of the soul whereby it is fitted to exert those actions which are acceptable to God in Christ, by the power of the Spirit uniting in to God: whether such actions immediately flow from that principle, or whether they lie concealed for some time, as fruits in their seed. In the latter respect, it is that activity of the living soul by which it acts agreeably to the command of God and the example of Christ.²⁶

Witsius here intends to say with regard to regeneration in the first action that when corrupt man is regenerated by God, the faculty of his soul is also changed at the same time. In this sense, “regeneration is accomplished in a moment.”²⁷ “In the instant he begins to live, he is born again.”²⁸ Although the regenerate does not show any external movement, only if truly regenerated, the faculty of his or her soul was changed at the moment of regeneration and has capability to exert actions “acceptable to God in Christ.” Regeneration in the second act, according to Witsius, points to the state in which the activity of

²⁶ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 7.

²⁷ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 7.

²⁸ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 7.

the changed faculty emerges. Moreover, he holds that “there are various degrees of regeneration in the second act.”²⁹ Although this activity is too small that we cannot perceive it, or the regenerate at most exerts some slender, initial, and infantile operations, those who show evidences “are to be ranked among the regenerate.”³⁰ What is more, Witsius reaffirms this division of regeneration into two kinds:

Sometimes it is blended with sanctification, and by regeneration is understood that action of God, whereby man, who is now become the friend of God, and endowed with spiritual life, acts in a righteous and holy manner, from infused habits. . . . But sometimes regeneration denotes the first translation of a man from a state of death to a state of spiritual life; in which sense we take it.³¹

As expressed in this passage, it generally means the latter notion of regeneration when he makes mention of regeneration. This corresponds with the aforementioned regeneration in the first act. This happens at the moment God infuses divine life into the elect as the first act of passing from death to life. He also insists that regeneration can sometimes be blended with the concept of sanctification. It points to “the manner” or “infused habits”³² in which spiritual life infused earlier manifests itself as in regenerated infants. He goes on even to say that “by regeneration, they mean the state of passive justification.”³³

29 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 7.

30 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 7.

31 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

32 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

III. Doctrine of Faith in Witsius's Theology

1. Faculty and Result of Faith

Not only the Reformed tradition, but also Catholic scholastic theologians such as Thomas Aquinas defined that faith was a matter of will as well as intellect.³⁴ Witsius does not differ from them in this issue, writing that: “the soul denotes the essence: the understanding that very essence, as it apprehends: the will, the same with that intelligent essence tending to enjoy the thing known, or understood.”³⁵ Therefore, Witsius believes that both the intellect and the will should be affected by God's grace for the elect to have true faith.³⁶

Although he does not explicitly show which faculty plays a primary role in one's faith, insofar as this issue is concerned, he seems to favor Calvin's view on the relationship between the intellect and the will within faith. As Muller argues, Calvin's “soteriological interest creates, in the doctrine of faith itself, an emphasis on the primacy of the will in the cognitive act” although “his language of faith as *cognitio* tends to balance intellect and will.”³⁷ After the Fall, the change of the intellect

³³ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

³⁴ See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, Ila Ilae, q. 2, art. 2; q. 4, art 2; cf. Muller, “Intellect and Will in the Theology of John Calvin,” 211.

³⁵ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 5.

³⁶ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 27.

³⁷ Muller, “Intellect and Will in the Theology of John Calvin,” 224.

no longer guarantees that of the will. In other words, the Fall affected both parts of the soul, the intellect and the will, so that the will does not necessarily follow the good perceived by the intellect. Thus, in order to arrive at true faith, there must be not only the change of the intellect but also of the will.

Witsius describes “the natural process of faith” to perceive more thoroughly its entire nature and manner.³⁸ He summarizes this process as follows:

Faith comprehends the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of Christ in the light of grace, the truth of which mystery the believer acknowledges with full assent of mind, on the authority of the testimony of God. And not only so, but he is also in love with that truth, exults therein and glorifies God; he likewise ardently desires communion with Christ, that the things which are true in Christ, may be also true to him for salvation; wherefore, when Christ is offered to him by the word and Spirit, he receives him with the greatest complacency of soul, leans and rests upon him, and gives and surrenders himself to him; which done, he glories that Christ is now his own, and most sweetly delights in him, reposing himself under the shadow of the tree of life, and satiating himself with its most delicious fruits.³⁹

Among those stages, he admits that some of them go before faith; that “other acts belong to the very form or essence of faith”; and that “others are accidental, which agree only to a confirmed and strengthened faith.”⁴⁰ Both “the knowledge of the

38 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 7.

39 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 26.

40 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 27.

revealed truth” and “a pious affection of the will towards God,” belongs to the first category.⁴¹ In other words, the changes of the intellect and the will must precede faith. Accordingly, Witsius holds that both faculties of faith must be changed by grace for the elect to get true faith.

His view on this relationship between the intellect and the will can be confirmed by his distinction of saving and false faith. After defining true, saving faith, Witsius goes on to explain two kinds of false faith: historical faith and presumptuous faith. His description of historical faith is “a naked assent to the things contained in the word of God, on the authority of God, by whom they are asserted, but without any pious motion of the will.”⁴² The first aspect this definition clearly shows is that this historical faith includes the knowledge of the truth and that one assents to that knowledge. This knowledge is not limited to “the historical part of Scripture,” but it “may extend to the precepts, doctrines, promises and threatenings.”⁴³ We may acknowledge that an intellectual change happened, because it is possible only by the change of the intellect for fallen humanity to know and ascend to the spiritual knowledge “on the authority of God.”⁴⁴ The problem is, however, that this faith cannot lead people to practice. In other words, they cannot lay hold of the truth revealed by grace “without any pious motion of the will,” that is volitional change in their hearts.

41 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 27.

42 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 28.

43 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 28.

44 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 28.

According to Witsius, those who have a presumptuous faith seem, beyond assent to the truth revealed, to exult in the known and acknowledged truth, to make profession of it, and bring forth “many emotions in the hearts, and actions in the life, which exhibit some appearance of piety.”⁴⁵ However, he also classifies this faith as false because this faith does not have true knowledge of truth. Witsius presents four reasons why the temporary faith differs from the saving faith, but all four reasons are more or less related to the fact that this faith has some serious problems with the knowledge of the truth. Accordingly, a presumptuous faith does not have real knowledge of the truth although it shows the external, temporal change of the will. Taken together, Witsius maintains that there should be the change of the will along with that of the intellect by the Holy Spirit for the elect to have saving faith.

2. Faith and Regeneration

Witsius makes it clear in the chapter dealing with “faith” that faith is the result of the first regeneration. He starts this chapter by noting that “we now proceed to explain the nature of true Faith in God by Christ, which is the principal act of that spiritual life implanted in the elect by regeneration.”⁴⁶ From this statement we can draw a conclusion that faith comes after regeneration in its narrower sense, and that Witsius actually distinguishes regeneration from faith as a different

⁴⁵ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 29.

⁴⁶ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 1.

entity. What then is the “faith” which he mentions here? We have already seen in the previous section that he believes that faith is composed of two faculties, that is, the intellect and the will, and argues that both faculties ought to be changed by God’s grace so that the elect may have true, saving faith. So, saving faith, coming after regeneration, can be said the result of the change of both faculties. In other words, the moment that saving faith comes into the souls of the elect can also be regarded as the moment that the will of the elect is changed by God’s grace, since it was already implied in the fact that Witsius believed that the intellect changed earlier than the will. When does he think the moment the intellect is changed by God’s grace? In this regard, he writes “[T]hat by the ministry of the word, and other operations of God’s special providence towards them, many evident principles of divine truth are understood by the *natural mind*, and also imprinted on the *natural memory*, the meditation of which, immediately after they are regenerated, conduces very much to the confirmation of their faith.”⁴⁷ What he is dealing with in this sentence is God’s preparatory works within the elect before regeneration. Witsius holds that God starts working on the intellect of the elect even before they are regenerated. As clearly mentioned, the subject which understands many principles of divine truth by God’s help is the “*natural mind*” of humanity; the object on which God imprints those principles is the human “*natural memory*.” This clarifies that the intellectual change by God’s grace happens prior to the narrower sense of regeneration. He

⁴⁷ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 15.

adds that this intellectual change will play a very important role in confirming faith after regeneration. That is to say, intellectual change occurs within the elect before their first regeneration, and then saving faith would be completed with the change of the will by the help of the principles of divine truth which have been already received by the elect before regeneration. Accordingly, Witsius intends to say with regard to faith and regeneration that faith and regeneration is separated from each other, and that the change of the intellect precedes regeneration, whereas the change of the will goes after regeneration.

IV. Doctrine of Preparation in Witsius's Theology

1. False Concepts of Preparation

As representing his view on preparations for regeneration, Witsius makes it clear that the aforementioned regeneration in the first act cannot prepare human beings. He continues to introduce false views of preparation for regeneration. He first deals with the semi-Pelagian false concept of preparation. He explains this concept as:

A man comes to the grace whereby we are regenerated in Christ by a natural faculty; as by asking, seeking, knocking; and that, in some at least, before they are born again, there is a kind of repentance going before, together with a sorrow for sin, and a

change of the life for the better, and a beginning of faith, and an initial love of God, and a desire of grace.”⁴⁸

Even though, differing from that of Pelagians, this view does not contend that a person could make one-self worthy to receive God’s grace, yet they believed that “they were an occasion by which God was moved to bestow his grace.”⁴⁹ In other words, they maintain that “the mercy of God is such, that he recompenses this very small beginning of good with this illustrious reward.”⁵⁰ In the same vein, Witsius argues, “the Remonstrants are likewise mistaken,...” because they believed that “some work of man...goes before his vivification; namely, to acknowledge and bewail his death, to will and desire deliverance from it; to hunger, thirst, and seek after life: all which, and a great deal besides, is required by Christ in those whom he will make alive.”⁵¹ He refutes those contentions in this way: First, “since our nature is become like an evil tree, after having eaten of the forbidden fruit,” all fruits we can produce are “evil and unacceptable to God,” and thus we cannot prepare ourselves for “the grace of regeneration.”⁵² Second, “it has been found that they who in appearance were in the best manner disposed for regeneration, were yet at the greatest distance from it.”⁵³ Third, “on the other hand, they who had not even the least appearance of any preparation...went into the kingdom of

⁴⁸ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 10.

⁴⁹ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 10.

⁵⁰ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 10.

⁵¹ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 10.

⁵² Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 10.

⁵³ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 10.

God before those who were civilly righteous and externally religious.”⁵⁴ Therefore, Witsius asserts that no human action prior to regeneration can make any contribution to his or her regeneration at all.

2. Witsius’s View on the Nature of Preparation

In the previous section we saw that Witsius denies any human preparation for regeneration with his/her own volition. Nevertheless, we can also see him use the concept of preparation in his work. Before examining his view on the concept of preparation, we need to see his understanding of the Puritan concept of preparation for regeneration or conversion. For this purpose, he introduces the common preparation concept of two leading English Puritans, William Perkins and William Ames. Affirming their idea of preparation, he describes their view in this way:

There have been likewise some among ourselves who have spoken of preparations to regeneration or conversion; but in a quite different sense from the favourers of Pelagianism. In persons to be regenerated they have assigned, 1st. A breaking of the natural obstinacy, and a flexibility of the will. 2. A serious consideration of the law. 3. A consideration of their own sins and offences against God. 4. A legal fear of punishment, and a dread of hell, and consequently a despairing of their salvation, with respect to any thing in themselves.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

⁵⁵ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

It looks similar to the semi-Pelagian description of preparationism. But there is a big difference between them. Before explaining the differences, he cites Perkins's comments on preparation for conversion to make the difference skarker:

1st. "There are some external works ordinarily required of men before they are brought to a state of regeneration or conversion, which are wont sometimes to be freely done, sometimes freely omitted by them: as going to church, hearing the word preached, and the like. 2dly. There are some internal effects, previous to conversion, or regeneration, excited by the power of the word and Spirit in the hearts of those who are not yet justified: as the knowledge of the will of God, sense of sin dread of punishment, anxiety about deliverance, some hope of pardon."⁵⁶

It is "the second" which needs to be focused on in relation to our purpose. Perkins clearly mentions that preparations come before regeneration or conversion, "excited by the power of the word and Spirit in the hearts of those who are not yet justified." Witsius writes why Perkins's view differs from the false views as follows:

1st. That they are not for having these things to proceed from nature, but profess them to be the effects of the spirit of bondage, preparing a way to himself for their actual regeneration. 2dly, That they are not for God's bestowing the grace of regeneration from a regard to, and moved by occasion of, these preparations, much

⁵⁶ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

less by any merit in them; but they imagine that God, in this manner, levels a way for himself, fills up vallies, depresses mountains and hills, in order the better to smooth the way for his entrance into that soul.⁵⁷

He maintains in this passage that Perkins's understanding of preparation is not derived from the human nature, but from the spirit of bondage. Here the spirit of bondage does neither mean the work of devil nor the work of the human nature, rather this work for our salvation leads us to cry for mercy. Although it is often darkened, blackened, and made legal in a great measure by other agencies, which do not aim at our benefit, this should be regarded as altogether the work of the Spirit of God. However, this also does not mean that the Puritans thought these preparations to be the effects of conversion. The spirit of bondage is performed in the elect prior to conversion by the Holy Spirit as one of His works in order to lead them to acknowledge the necessity of saving grace of God. Witsius believes, therefore, that the Puritans insisted that all preparations are brought about by God before regeneration for the grace of regeneration to enter into the hearts of the elect.

In his evaluation of the preparation alleged by Perkins, we can see Perkins's understanding of preparation in relation to faith:

Yet they [the Puritans] call them rather preparations for grace, than the fruits and effects of grace; because they think that even the reprobate may go as far as this: and they affirm, "that these

57 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

antecedent effects, produced by the power of the word and Spirit in the minds of men, may be, and in many usually are, stifled and entirely extinguished through the fault of the rebellious will.”⁵⁸

Witsius reports that the Puritans regarded those preparatory motions as “preparation for grace,” not “the fruits and effects of grace.” We can see this in their thoughts that although these antecedent motions are brought forth by the power of the word and Spirit in the *minds*, that is, the intellect, of men, they may disappear because of the rebellious *will* which is not affected by the saving grace of the Spirit. Accordingly this argument implies that some people could go through preparatory experiences and the change of the intellect, but not be converted, because their will was not changed by God’s grace. When we think this in relation to Witsius’ understanding of faith, it could be reasonably drawn that the reprobate may experience the same external preparatory process as the elect by means of God’s grace, but they cannot have true faith because this grace, which changed the intellect, was not saving faith, which causes a volitional change within a human heart. This draws a conclusion that Perkins’s preparation concept, which Witsius introduces here, does not sharply differentiate from conversion, or regeneration from faith. Therefore, the concept of preparation in the theology of Perkins and Ames can be regarded as preparation for conversion, regeneration or faith.

Unlike the Puritans, however, Witsius sees those preparations as the effects of regeneration: the regeneration in the first act,

⁵⁸ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

which is “the first translation of a man from a state of death to a state of life.”⁵⁹ He clearly reveals his view on preparation in the following way:

But we really think they argue more accurately, who make these, and the like things in the Elect, to be preparations to the further and more perfect operations of a more noble and plentiful spirit, and so not preparations for regeneration, but the fruits and effects of the first regeneration: for as these things suppose some life of the soul, which spiritually attends to spiritual things, and are operations of the Spirit of God when going about to sanctify the Elect, we cannot but refer them to the Spirit of grace and regeneration.⁶⁰

He explains why all the motions that the Puritans call preparations for regeneration are not the actual preparations for regeneration, but the effects of regeneration. He argues that these things are not the actions of spiritually dead souls, but the operations of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the regenerate. Although he generally agrees on the Puritan preparation concept, he disagrees with them on the location of those motions.

As seen above, the reason why the Puritans regarded the motions that precede conversion or regeneration as indeed preparatory for conversion is that “even the reprobate may go as far as this.”⁶¹ However, Witsius distinguishes those in the elect and in the reprobate. He insists that although those

59 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

60 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

61 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

motions of the reprobate are indistinguishable from that of the elect, there exists fundamental, essential differences between them. He maintains that:

They are only the same materially, but not formally. Reprobates also have some knowledge of Christ, some taste of the grace of God, and of the powers of the world to come. Yet it does not follow, that the knowledge of Christ, as it is in believers, and that relish of grace and glory they have, is not the gift of the Spirit of grace and of glory. And indeed, the things mentioned by Perkins, and the other British divines, are not preparations for regeneration in the reprobate: either from the nature of the thing, or the intention of God.⁶²

The difference between them is not in degree, but in essence. In this sense, he thought that the Puritans made a mistake. For Witsius, the Puritans seemed to have thought that because the reprobate, who cannot experience regeneration, sometimes show the same motions of preparation as that which the elect do, these motions themselves could not precede regeneration. However, Witsius contends that those motions of the reprobate are not preparation for regeneration “either from the nature of the thing, or the intention of God” because “however great these things may appear to be,” they are still under the realm of spiritually dead,⁶³ and because “no intention of God can be rendered void.”⁶⁴ Thus he concludes that “all these things be in another manner in the Elect than in the reprobate.”⁶⁵

⁶² Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

⁶³ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

⁶⁴ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

3. Preparation for Faith? Preparation for Regeneration?

How then can those motions be called preparation? What is this preparation for? To answer these questions, we need to take a look once again at his understanding of regeneration and faith. We already saw that Witsius introduced two kinds of regeneration. In a narrower sense, regeneration refers to the first translation from a state of spiritual death to a state of life; in a wider sense, this term is blended with the notion of sanctification.⁶⁶ In addition, there can be no preparation before regeneration in its narrower sense. Therefore, we may draw a conclusion that the motions, called preparation for regeneration by Perkins, would happen somewhere within the boundary of regeneration in its wider sense. When it comes to faith, we already mentioned that, in accordance with the idea of Calvin and his descendants, Witsius also seems to believe that two faculties of faith, the intellect and the will, must be changed by the grace of God for the elect to have true, saving faith. Furthermore, intellectual change of the elect can occur even before regeneration, but volitional change always occurs after regeneration.

This can also be explained through two steps. First, he seems to argue that the so-called “preparation” mentioned by the Puritan preparationists refers to the same spiritual motions within the soul of the elect as the motions for “the acting of

65 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 11.

66 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

complete faith,”⁶⁷ which is posterior to regeneration in the theology of Witsius. He writes that “a knowledge of divine truths, a sense of misery, sorrow for sin, hope of pardon, &c. go before any one can *fiducially lay hold on* Christ.”⁶⁸ The motions described in the above statement are very similar to those in the Puritan concept of preparation for regeneration, and those motions precede saving faith which “fiducially lays hold on Christ.” Moreover, for the Puritans preparatory motions precede regeneration, whereas Witsius’s model of preparatory works begin after regeneration as a result of regeneration and continue until the elect have saving faith. For this reason, he notes, “there are some effects of the Spirit after regeneration, by which he usually prepares them for the actings of complete faith.”⁶⁹ Accordingly, we prove that Witsius sets forth the so-called preparation as the preparation for saving or complete faith.

What then is the saving or complete faith? The second step is supposed to answer this question. Dealing with faith, as we saw earlier, Witsius starts by identifying faith as “the principal act of that spiritual life implanted in the elect by regeneration.”⁷⁰ This reaffirms that faith comes after regeneration. In addition, he analyzes the natural process of faith. As summarized earlier, this process shows in what order saving faith forms within the regenerate. According to this order, faith starts with “the knowledge of the thing to be believed.”⁷¹ Since then, this

67 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

68 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

69 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 12.

70 Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 1.

knowledge to be believed develops throughout several stages into complete saving faith by way of regeneration⁷² There are two important points we should pay attention to in this process: First, this process for saving faith as a whole looks similar to so-called preparation process which comes after regeneration in its narrower sense. Second, this process is the process in which the will of the elect's soul is changing. If we read each stage of this process, we can clearly find that as this stage proceeds, the knowledge and the understanding of divine truth penetrates more and more deeply into human affections and will. That is to say, the first step of saving faith, intellectual change, of the elect goes beyond mere knowledge and a naked assent to that knowledge all the way to "the love of the truth,"⁷³ "to a hunger and thirst after Christ,"⁷⁴ and "eventually to a receiving of Christ the Lord for justification."⁷⁵ Therefore, in the theology of Witsius so-called preparation is not preparation for regeneration which comes before regeneration, but preparation for faith, or saving faith, which is completed after regeneration.

There is another kind of preparation in the theology of Witsius. This preparation is not for faith, coming after the narrower sense of regeneration, but for regeneration, preceding the first regeneration. He states:

But we must not here omit, that the Elect, before their actual regeneration, are honoured by God with various, and those indeed

⁷¹ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 8.

⁷² Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 8-26.

⁷³ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 17.

⁷⁴ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 18.

⁷⁵ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 7, 19.

very excellent privileges above the reprobate, which are intended, according to the purpose of God, to be subservient for promoting their regeneration in his appointed time.⁷⁶

It is very clear in this passage that God does special works for His elect before their first regeneration and that these works are closely related to promoting their regeneration. Thus, it may be called preparation for regeneration in somewhat different sense from the Puritan concept of preparation for regeneration. For all preparatory motions for regeneration mentioned by the Puritans, Witusius regards them as coming after regeneration, whereas these divine motions not only precede regeneration, but their nature also differ from that of the Puritans. Witsius argues that all this benevolent work of God occurs to the elect only. Here are three things God does in relation to this preparation:

1st. That God often preserves them from those abase and scandalous crimes which are repugnant to common humanity, and that by some assistance of light, of divinity, of conscience, and civil honesty, with an accession of some grace operating internally, and laying a restraint on the wickedness of their nature. 2dly. That all and every one of them, who are brought to the acknowledgment and the common illumination of the Gospel, are kept from the sin against the Holy Ghost. 3dly. That by the ministry of the word, and other operation of God's special providence towards them, many evident principles of divine truth are understood by the natural mind, and also imprinted on the natural memory, the meditation of which, immediately after they are

⁷⁶ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 15.

regenerated, conduces very much to the confirmation of their faith.⁷⁷

According to the above passage, what God does in this preparation is divided into two kinds: First, in the passive sense God restrains the elect from committing fatal sin; second, in the active sense God helps the elect to understand divine truths by changing or regenerating their intellect. However, although God prepares *the elect* for regeneration through these works, so that it can be regarded as preparation for regeneration, Witsius does not omit to say that these works “do not, of their own nature, dispose man for regeneration.”⁷⁸ Therefore, those works of God prepare the elect for the narrower sense of regeneration “from the intention of God, than from the virtue of the thing,” and thus can “remotely be called preparations.”⁷⁹ In addition, these divine works should be regarded as the preparatory grace of God in a different sense from that of the Puritans who regarded as preparatory grace of God what comes after regeneration in the theology of Witsius.

V. Conclusion

To understand Witsius’s concept of preparation, we should start with his two-fold regeneration concept. He divides regeneration into two kinds. One points to the moment God

⁷⁷ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 15.

⁷⁸ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 15.

⁷⁹ Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants*, I, 6, 15.

infuses divine life into the elect as the first act of passing from death to life; the other to the concept which is blended with the concept of sanctification in which spiritual life infused earlier manifests itself. After defining two regeneration concepts, he clearly confirms that for the former there can be no possibility of human contribution to regeneration, because prior to regeneration, even the elect are also spiritually dead such that they cannot move themselves by their own power.

His understanding of regeneration needs to be considered along with his understanding of faith for our purpose. Following the Reformed tradition, he believed that faith consists in two faculties, namely the will and the intellect. Both faculties should be regenerated by God's grace for the elect to have true, saving faith. Whereas Kendall's misunderstanding of the relationship between the intellect and the will in relation to saving faith led him to think that the Puritans regarded faith as an act of the human will, Witsius maintains that not only the intellect but also the will must be renewed by the Holy Spirit for saving faith. Furthermore, separating faith from the narrower sense of regeneration, he writes that God renews the intellect prior to the moment of narrower sense of regeneration and the intellectual change by God's grace always happens after regeneration.

Witsius's concept of preparation ought to be considered in this context. The Puritans mostly thought the preparation process to come before regeneration or conversion. Witsius's concept of regeneration, however, gets him to regard the same process both as coming after the first sense of regeneration and

eventually as preparation for saving faith which is completed with the change of the will during the wider sense of regeneration. However, this does not completely exhaust his concept of preparation. There is yet another preparation he mentions, which precedes the first regeneration. This preparation is not a human work bringing forth regeneration in any way. Rather this is totally God's work for the elect for their regeneration by means of preventing the elect from committing fatal sin, and helping them to understand divine truth by regenerating their intellect.

It is obvious, therefore, that like the Puritans, a very influential, representative Dutch theologian, Herman Witsius, also believed and taught that believers somehow need to be prepared for conversion or regeneration, though by God. In Witsius's understanding of double preparation, we cannot see any appreciation of human contribution to regeneration in its narrower sense. His preparation for faith is almost identical with the preparatory process of Puritan concept of preparation. Unlike them, however, he thought such preparation process to be preparation for saving faith, which is completed after the first regeneration, rather than for the regeneration. Thus, any human action seen in that process is not of natural human nature, but of a regenerated soul. With regard to his preparation for regeneration, all preparatory works are not derived from natural human nature, but from the Holy Spirit who prepares the elect for regeneration. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn from Witsius's soteriology that his concept of double preparation in no way compromises God's

sovereignty in relation to human salvation and also that the elect sinners are not simply dead objects upon which God solely works, but they actively participate in preparing their hearts for salvation not for regeneration, but for faith.

[Bibliography]

- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa theologiae*. Lyon: Lugduni, 1562.
- Beeke, Joel R. and Paul Smalley. *Prepared by Grace, for Grace: The Puritans on God's Ordinary Way of Leading Sinners to Christ*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013.
- Caughy, Christopher Earl. "Puritan Responses to Antinomianism in the Context of Reformed Covenant Theology:1630-1696 Ph.D. diss. Dublin: Trinity College, 2013.
- Hall, David. "On Common Ground," *The William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 44 no. 2 (1987), 193-229.
- Harper, George W. "Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649: A Review Article," *Calvin Theological Journal* vol. 20 no. 2 (November, 1985), 255-262.
- Helm, Paul. *Calvin and the Calvinists*. Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth, 1982.
- Kendall, R. T. *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*. Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 1997.
- Marsden, George. "Perry Miller's Rehabilitation of the Puritans: A Critique." *Church History* 39, no. 1(1970), 91-105.
- Middlekauff, Robert. *The Mathers: Three Generations of Puritan Intellectuals 1596-1728*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Miller, Perry and Thomas Johnson, *The Puritans* (New York: American Book Company, 1938).
- Muller, Richard A. "Fides and Cognitio in Relation to the Problem of Intellect and Will in the Theology of Johna Calvin," *Calvin Theological Journal* vol. 25 no. 2 (1990), 207-224.
- _____. "The Priority of the Intellect in the Soteriology of Jacob Arminius." *Westminster Theological Journal* vol. 55 no. 1 (spring,

1993), 55-72.

Pettit, Norman. *The Heart Prepared*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1989.

Ramsey, D. Patrick. "Meet Me in the Middle: Herman Witsius and the English Dissenters." *Mid-America Journal of Theology* vol.19 (2008).

Reid, W. Stanford. "Review on Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649." *Westminster Theological Journal* vol. 43 (1980), 155-164.

Stoever, W. K. B. *'A Faire and Easie Way to Heaven': Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1988.

White, Charles E. "Were Hooker and Shepard Closet Arminians?" *Calvin Theological Journal* 20, no. 1 (1985), 33-42.

Witsius, Herman. *The Economy of the Covenants between God and Man: Comprehending a Complete Body of Divinity*, 2vols. London, 1822.

[초록]**헤르만 비치우스의 구원론에 나타난 이중 준비교리**

김효남

(서울성경신학대학원대학교, 역사신학, 외래교수)

준비교리는 청교도 특유의 회심론으로 널리 알려져 있다. 하지만 이 교리는 17세기 유럽의 많은 개혁파 신학자들이 공유하던 것이었다. 그 밖에도 불구하고 이 교리 속에 있는 인간의 역할에 관하여 많은 논쟁이 있었던 것이 사실이다. 이에 대한 바른 이해를 위해서는 청교도 뿐 만 아니라 헤르만 비치우스와 같은 대륙 개혁파 신학자들의 견해를 살펴보는 것이 도움이 될 것이다. 뿐만 아니라 청교도들의 준비교리와 비교할 때, 네덜란드 제2종교개혁 신학자들이 가진 준비교리에 대해서는 거의 연구가 이루어지지 않았다. 그러므로 이 논문의 목적은 비치우스의 준비교리에 대해서 살펴보고, 이 준비가 인간의 공로적인 역사가 아니라 회심을 위하여 사람의 마음을 개간하는 하나님의 은혜로운 사역임을 증명하는 것이다. 또한 청교도 준비교리가 비치우스가 제시하는 것과 몇 가지 다른 점이 있어 보이지만 본질적으로는 다르지 않다는 것을 증명하고자 한다. 그는 이중적인 중생 개념을 가지고 있었다. 첫째는 신적인 생명이 영혼에 심겨지는 것이고, 둘째는 심겨진 생명이 나타나는 것이다. 첫 번째 의미의 중생에서 인간은 어떤 공헌도 하지 못한다. 또한 그는 구원얻는 믿음에 지성과 의지라는 두 개의 기능이 있다고 믿었다. 그리고 구원을 위해서는 이 둘이 반드시 갱신되어야 한다고 믿었다. 그러므로 지적인 변화는 언제나 중생 이후에 일어난다. 청교도들은 준비가 중생 혹은 회심 이전에 온다고 보았으나 비치우스는 자신의 이중 중생 개념으로 말미암아 그 동일한 과정이 첫 번째 중생 이후에 오며, 결국에는 두 번째 의미의 중생 과정 중에 일어나는 의지의 변화와 더불어 완성되는 구원얻는 믿음을 위한 준비가 된다고 보았다. 비치우스에 따

르면, 이것은 전적으로 중생을 위해서 택자의 영혼에 행하시는 하나님의 사역이며, 이때 하나님은 택자들이 치명적인 죄를 범하지 않도록 방지하시거나 그들의 지성을 중생시키심으로 신적인 진리를 이해할 수 있도록 도우신다. 그러므로 비치우스의 이중적 준비 개념에는 좁은 의미의 중생을 위한 그 어떤 인간 편의 공로도 포함하지 않고 있음을 알 수 있다.

키워드: 헤르만 비치우스, 준비론, 청교도, 중생, 믿음, 회심

