

REFORMATION CHART

	Rome	Confessional Protestant
Nature/Grace	Creation “participates in Being,” which is God. Grace perfects nature. Creation <i>per se</i> is in need of grace.	Humans are only analogues to God. Grace renews fallen nature. Creation <i>per se</i> is good and was corrupted only by sin.
Authority	God is the source through the church by her living tradition and Scripture.	God is the source through the Scripture to the church so that the Scripture is read in and with the church but it alone is the norm for life and doctrine.
Hermeneutics	Scripture is old law (Moses) and new law (Christ).	All Scripture contains law (“do”) and gospel (“done”). The Reformed express the law/ gospel dichotomy in the covenants of works (law) and grace (gospel).
Sin	A fall from original grace and the result of the concupiscence natural to creatures. Sin created the need for more grace. The effects of sin do not prevent our cooperation with grace toward final justification.	A free, unnatural act of willful disobedience to God’s law. Sin results in depravity and inability to cooperate with grace.
Salvation	A grace given through the church enabling us to overcoming finitude and consequent sin.	Deliverance from sin, death, and the devil.
Merit	Condign (intrinsically worthy) merit is wrought within sinners by the Spirit and congruent merit is imputed graciously to sinners in view of their best efforts.	The condign merit of Christ’s obedience is imputed to sinners who have no intrinsic merits. There is no congruent merit.
Grace	A gift from the Holy Spirit, by which “he shares his divine life,” that is infused into sinners sanctifying them.	Free, unmerited or demerited divine favor toward sinners.
Justification	The process of being made intrinsically righteous through grace and cooperation with grace, occurring in two stages, initial and final. Initial justification is received at baptism. Final justification recognizes intrinsic righteousness which is the result of grace and cooperation with grace and occurs at the judgment.	A definitive divine declaration of forgiveness of sins and righteousness on the basis of Christ’s righteous obedience and death imputed to sinners. There is no distinction between initial and final justification.
Faith	A measure of sanctity, one of three virtues (the others being hope and love) created within the righteous. With hope and love it is gradually infused into the soul and exists partially in this life as the sinner cooperates with grace.	A grace whereby sinners are granted true knowledge of and trust in Christ the Savior, and are righteous, accepted, and saved by God for Christ’s sake. Faith’s virtue is not intrinsic but rests in Christ and his alien righteousness. It is the only instrument of justification.
Our Good Works	Necessary for justification.	Logically and morally necessary as fruit and evidence of justification, but not as the ground or instrument of justification.