**CHRISTOLOGY**

**Week 7 – Christ the Priest**

Westminster Shorter Catechism:

**Q. 25. How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?**  
A. Christ executes the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

Duties of a priest:

* Atonement “…to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.” Heb 5:1
* Mediator (of the “Old Covenant”)
  + They function as Israel’s representative in the presence of God
  + Teaching role – ministry of the Word
  + Pronounce the benediction on Israel
  + High priest was responsible for the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement
* The whole priestly system is dependent on the obedience and mediation by sinful human beings. Mediator (of the “New Covenant”)
  + Representative (active obedience) – Christ’s fulfillment of the law as the second Adam “fulfilling all righteousness” (Mt 3:15) is ours by faith and union with Him.
  + His humanity is a necessary doctrine to have a mediator between man and God who can identify perfectly with both.

Can we say Jesus is a priest?

* Jesus didn’t qualify to be a priest in Israel

After the order of Melchizedek (Heb 7:17, Ps. 110:4)

* He is declared a “priest of the God Most High.”
* He pronounces the benediction on Abram
* Melchizedek is the priest of the Abrahamic covenant
* He is “King of Salem” (cf. Is. 9)
  + King v. Priest in OT Israel
  + Zechariah combines the two offices
* Jesus never claims “priestly” status in Israel
  + What are his qualifications/claims that make the passage in Hebrews more than mere speculation?
    - He claims a special status to the temple (Mt 12:6, Mk 14:57-58)
    - Claims that he fulfills the rituals of the temple
    - Makes his teaching central to the feasts (Jn 7, Lk 22)
    - Makes intersession for his people
    - He regards his sacrifice as the inauguration of the New Covenant
    - Departs from his disciples with a benediction (Lk 24:51, Jn 20:19)
* Part of that representation is through atonement, but another part is through obedience. Part of Christ’s “sacrifice” is his submission to the will of God in all things.

Christ as the 2nd Adam

* Theme developed by Paul in Rom 5:12-21 “For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”
  + When we talk of Christ as the 2nd Adam we need to know - Who is Adam?
    - A son of God
    - Made in the image of God
    - …but Christ is something new (e.g. life of obedience)
  + Representative of man before God
    - * As THE human being he is the federal head of humanity. His sin altered the reality of what we know as humanness.
      * What we need is a return to God’s intention in the creation of man as his “image” 🡪 New creations in Christ
* Incarnational Atonement
  + The incarnation is a key component of atonement in itself.
    - What is clear is that God, at the moment of his incarnation, acts on human nature, transforms it and heals it. (Macleod, p. 213)
* Christ did not just give us a “clean slate” (moral neutrality is not enough)
  + Rom 5:19 [**19**](http://biblehub.com/romans/5-19.htm)For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.

Christ’s ongoing Priestly work

* The work of the high priest would require the constant shedding of blood.
  + High priest’s intercession would occur once every year
* Christ’s intercession is the source of our salvation.
  + His priestly work in its entirety makes him a worthy advocate on our behalf.
  + What does his intercession look like?
* His benediction

He makes us a royal priesthood

* Peter describes us as “living stones” which make up a spiritual house. It is important to recognized that our inclusion in the “temple” or “spiritual house” that is built on Christ, the cornerstone, is what denotes us as priests. Peter also makes clear that we are a priesthood, not priests, as our inclusion is dependent on our union to the spiritual house.
* Christ’s priesthood is what gives value to our priestly work.
  + We make intercession
  + We offer pious living
  + We offer sacrifice