

Summary of Christian Doctrine

Part IV

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Editor's Note: For a more in-depth look into theology, we suggest purchasing Louis Berkhof's, "Manual of Christian Doctrine" (Eermans, Grand Rapids, 2001) and of course Berkhof's, "Systematic Theology" (Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 2000). These volumes are indispensable in any Christian's library.

Table of Contents:

- Part I: Introduction
 - Chapter 1 - Religion
 - Chapter 2 - Revelation
 - Chapter 3 - Scripture
- Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation
 - Chapter 4 - The Essential Nature of God
 - Chapter 5 - The Names God
 - Chapter 6 - The Attributes of God
 - Chapter 7 - The Trinity
 - Chapter 8 - The Divine Decrees
 - Chapter 9 - Creation
 - Chapter 10 - Providence
- Part III: The Doctrine of Man in Relation to God
 - Chapter 11 - Man in His Original State
 - Chapter 12 - Man in the State of Sin
 - Chapter 13 - Man in the Covenant of Grace
- Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ
 - Chapter 14 - The Names and Nature of Christ
 - Chapter 15 - The States of Christ
 - Chapter 16 - The Offices of Christ
 - Chapter 17 - The Atonement Through Christ
- Part V: The Application of the Work of Redemption
 - Chapter 18 - The Common Operation of the Holy Spirit: Common Grace
 - Chapter 19 - Calling and Regeneration
 - Chapter 20 - Conversion: Repentance and Faith
 - Chapter 21 - Justification
 - Chapter 22 - Sanctification and Perseverance

Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ

Chapter XIV: The Names and Nature of Christ

1. The Names of Christ. The most important names of Christ are the following:

a. Jesus. This is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, Jos. 1:1; Zech. 3:1, or Jeshua, Ezra 2:2. Derived from the Hebrew word 'to save,' it designates Christ as the Saviour, Matt. 1:21. Two types of Christ bore the same name in the Old Testament, namely, Joshua the son of Nun and Joshua the son of Jehozadak.

b. Christ. This is the New Testament form for the Old Testament 'Messiah,' which means 'the anointed one.' According to the Old Testament, prophets, I Kings 19:16, priests, Ex. 29:7, and kings, I Sam. 10:1, were anointed with oil, which symbolized the Holy Spirit. By this anointing they were set aside for their respective offices, and were qualified for them. Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit for the threefold office of prophet, priest, and king. Historically, this anointing took place when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and when He was baptized.

c. Son of Man. This name, as applied to Christ, was derived from Dan. 7:13. It is the name which Jesus generally applies to Himself, while others seldom use it. While it does contain an indication of the humanity of Jesus, in the light of its historical origin it points far more to His superhuman character and to His future coming with the clouds of heaven in majesty and glory, Dan. 7:13; Matt. 16:27, 28; 26:64; Luke 21:27.

d. Son of God. Christ is called 'the Son of God' in more than one sense. He is so called, because He is the second Person of the Trinity, and therefore Himself God, Matt. 11:27, but also because He is the appointed Messiah, Matt. 24:36, and because His birth to the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:3.

e. Lord. Jesus' contemporaries sometimes applied this name to Jesus as a form of polite address, just as we use the word 'sir.' It is especially after the resurrection of Christ that the name acquires a deeper meaning. In some passages it designates Christ as the Owner and Ruler of the Church, Rom. 1:7; Eph. 1:17, and in others it really stands for the name of God, I Cor. 7:34; Phil. 4:4, 5.

2. The Natures of Christ. The Bible represents Christ as a Person having two natures, the one divine and the other human. This is the great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, I Tim. 3:16.

a. The two natures. Since many in our day deny the deity of Christ, it is necessary to stress the Scripture proof for it. Some old Testament passages clearly point to it, such as Isa. 9:6; Jer. 23:6; Micah 5:2; Mal. 3:1. The New Testament proofs are even more abundant, Matt. 11:27; 16:16; 26:63, 64; John 1:1, 18; Rom. 9:5; I Cor. 2:8; II Cor. 5:10; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 19:16. The humanity of Jesus is not called in question. In fact, the only divinity many still ascribe to Him is that of His perfect humanity. There is abundant proof for the humanity of Jesus. He speaks of Himself as man, John 8:40, and is so

called by others, Acts 2:22; Rom. 5:15; I Cor. 15:21. He had the essential elements of human nature, namely, a body and a soul, Matt. 26:26, 38; Luke 24:39; Heb. 2:14. Moreover, He was subject to the ordinary laws of human development, Luke 2:40, 52, and to human wants and sufferings, Matt. 4:2; 8:24; Luke 22:44; John 4:6; 11:35; 12:27; Heb. 2:10, 18; Heb. 5:7, 8. Yet though He was a real man, He was without sin; He did no sin and could not sin, John 8:46; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 9:14; I Pet. 2:22; I John 3:5. It was necessary that Christ should be both God and man. It was only as man that He could be our substitute, and could suffer and die; and only as sinless man that He could atone for the sins of others. And it was only as God that He could give His sacrifice infinite value, and bear the wrath of God so as to deliver others from it, Ps. 40:7-10; 130:8.

b. The two natures united in one Person. Christ has a human nature, but He is not a human person. The Person of the Mediator is the unchangeable Son of God. In the incarnation He did not change into a human person; neither did He adopt a human person. He simply assumed, in addition to His divine nature, a human nature, which did not develop into an independent personality, but became personal in the Person of the Son of God. After this assumption of human nature the Person of the Mediator is not only divine but divine-human; He is the God-man, possessing all the essential qualities of both the human and the divine nature. He has both a divine and a human consciousness, as well as a human and a divine will. This is a mystery which we cannot fathom. Scripture clearly points to the unity of the Person of Christ. It is always the same Person who speaks, whether the mind that finds utterance be human or divine, John 10:30; 17:5 as compared with Matt. 27:46; John 19:28. Human attributes and actions are sometimes ascribed to the Person designated by a divine title, Acts 20:28; I Cor. 2:8; Col. 1:13, 14; and divine attributes and actions are sometimes ascribed to the Person designated by a human title, John 3:13; 6:62; Rom. 9:5.

c. Some of the most important errors concerning this doctrine. The Alogi and the Ebionites denied the deity of Christ in the early Church. This denial was shared by the Socinians of the days of the Reformation, and by the Unitarians and Modernists of our day. In the early Church Arius failed to do justice to the full deity of Christ and regarded Him as a demi-God, while Apollinaris did not recognize His full humanity, but held that the divine Logos took the place of the human spirit in Christ. The Nestorians denied the unity of the two natures in one Person, and the Eutychians failed to distinguish properly between the two natures.

To memorize. Passages to prove:

a. The deity of Christ.

Isa. 9:6. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Jer. 23:6. "In His days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness."

John 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Rom. 9:5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever."

Col. 2:9. "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God"

b. The humanity of Christ.

John 8:40. "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I heard from God."

Matt. 26:28. "Then said He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: abide here and watch with me."

Luke 24:39. "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself'. handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having."

Heb. 2:14. "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

c. The unity of the Person.

John 17:5. "And now, Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

John 3:13. "And no one hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven."

I Cor.2:8. "Which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

For Further Study:

a. In what respect was Joshua the son of Nun a type of Christ; and in what respect Joshua the son of Jehozadak? Zech. 3:8, 9; Heb. 4:8.

b. What do the following passages teach us respecting the anointing of Christ? Ps. 2:2; 45:7; Prov. 8:23 (cf. Auth. Ver.), Isa. 61:1. c. What divine attributes are ascribed to Christ? Isa. 9:6; Prov. 8:22-31; Micah 5:2; John 5:26; 21:17. What divine works? Mark 2:5-7; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16, 17; Heb. 1:1-3. What divine honor? Matt. 28:19; John 5:19-29; 14:1; II Cor. 13:14.

Questions for Review

1. Which are the most important names of Christ? What is the meaning of each?
2. What elements are included in Christ's anointing? When did it take place?
3. Whence is the name 'Son of Man' derived? What does the name express?
4. In what sense is the name 'Son of God' applied to Christ?
5. What different meanings has the name 'Lord' as applied to Christ?
6. What Bible proof is there for the deity and humanity of Christ?
7. What is the nature of the Person of Christ, divine, human, or divine-human?
8. How can the unity of the Person of Christ be proved from Scripture.?
9. What are the main errors respecting the Person of Christ?

Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ

Chapter XV: The States of Christ

We often use the words 'state' and 'condition' interchangeably. When we speak of the states of Christ, however, we use the word 'state' in a more specific sense, to denote the relation in which He stood and stands to the law. In the days of His humiliation He was a servant under the law; in His exaltation He is Lord, and as such above the law. Naturally these two states carried with them corresponding conditions of life, and these are discussed as the various stages of these states.

1. The State of Humiliation. The state of humiliation consists in this that Christ laid aside the divine majesty which was His as the sovereign Ruler of the universe, and assumed human nature in the form of a servant; that He, the supreme Lawgiver, became subject to the demands and curse of the law. Matt. 3:15; Gal. 3:13; 4:4; Phil. 2:6-8. This state is reflected in the corresponding condition, in which we usually distinguish several stages.

a. The incarnation and birth of Christ. In the incarnation the Son of God became flesh by assuming human nature, John 1:14; I John 4:2. He really became one of the human race by being born of Mary. This would not have been true, if He had brought His humanity from heaven, as the Anabaptists claim. The Bible teaches the virgin birth in Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:34, 35. This wonderful birth was due to the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, who also kept the human nature of Christ free from the pollution of sin from its very inception, Luke 1:35.

b. The sufferings of Christ. We sometimes speak as if the sufferings of Christ were limited to His final agonies, but this is not correct. His whole life was a life of suffering. It was the servant life of the Lord of Hosts, the life of the sinless One in a sin-cursed world. Satan assaulted Him, His people rejected Him, and His enemies persecuted Him. The sufferings of the soul were even more intense than those of the body. He was tempted by the devil, was oppressed by the world of iniquity round about Him, and staggered by the burden of sin resting upon Him,-- "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Isa. 53:3.

c. The death, of Christ. When we speak of the death of Christ, we naturally have in mind His physical death. He did not die as the result of an accident, nor by the hand of an assassin, but under a judicial sentence, and was thus counted with the transgressors, Isa. 53:12. By suffering the Roman punishment of crucifixion He died an accursed death, bearing the curse for us, Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13.

d. The burial of Christ. It might seem as if the death of Christ was the last stage of His sufferings. Did He not cry out on the cross, "It is finished"? But these words probably refer to His active suffering. His burial certainly was a part of His humiliation, of which He as Son of God was also conscious. Man's returning to the dust is a punishment for sin, Gen. 3:19. That the Saviour's abode in the grave was a humiliation, is evident from Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27, 31; 13:34, 35. It removed for us the terrors of the grave.

e. The descent into hades. The words of the Apostolic Confession, "He descended into hades," are variously interpreted. Roman Catholics say that He went down into the Limbus Patrum, where the Old Testament saints were confined, to release them; and the Lutherans that, between His death and resurrection, He went down to hell to preach and to celebrate his victory over the powers of darkness. In all probability it is a figurative expression to denote (1) that He suffered the pangs of hell in the garden and on the cross, and (2) that He entered the deepest humiliation of the state of death, Ps. 16:8-10; Eph. 4:9.

2. The State of Exaltation. In the state of exaltation Christ passed from under the law as a covenant obligation, having paid the penalty of sin and merited righteousness and eternal life for the sinner. Moreover, He was crowned with a corresponding honor and glory. Four stages must be distinguished here.

a. The resurrection. The resurrection of Christ did not consist in the mere re-union of body and soul, but especially in this that in Him human nature, both body and soul, was restored to its original beauty and strength, and even raised to a higher level. In distinction from all those who had been raised up before Him He arose with a spiritual body, I Cor. 15:44, 45. For that reason He can be called "the first fruits of them that slept," I Cor. 15:20, and "the firstborn of the dead," Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5. The resurrection of Christ has a threefold significance: (1) It was a declaration of the Father that Christ met all the requirements of the law, Phil. 2:9. (2) It symbolized the justification, regeneration, and final resurrection of

believers, Rom. 6:4, 5, 9; I Cor. 6:14; 15:20-22. (3) It was the cause of our justification, regeneration, and resurrection, Rom. 4:25; 5:10; Eph. 1:20; Phil. 3:10; I Pet. 1:3.

b. The ascension. The ascension was in a sense the necessary completion of the resurrection, but it also had independent significance. We have a double account of it, namely, in Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-11. Paul refers to it in Eph. 1:20; 4:8-10; I Tim. 3:16, and the Epistle to the Hebrews stresses its significance, 1:3; 4:14; 6:20; 9:24. It was a visible ascent of the Mediator, according to His human nature, from earth to heaven, a going from one place to another. It included a further glorification of the human nature of Christ. The Lutherans have a different view of it. They conceive of it as a change of condition, whereby the human nature of Jesus passed into the full enjoyment of certain divine attributes, and became permanently omnipresent. In the ascension Christ as our great high priest enters the inner sanctuary to present His sacrifice to the Father and begin His work as intercessor at the throne, Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:14; 6:20; 9:24. He ascended to prepare a place for us, John 14:1-3. With Him we are already set in heavenly places, and in His ascension we have the assurance of a place in heaven, Eph. 2:6; Jol1n 17:24.

c. The session at God's right hand. After His ascension Christ is seated at the right hand of God, Eph. 1:20; Heb. 10:12; I Pet. 3:22. Naturally, the expression 'right hand of God' cannot be taken literally, but should be understood as a figurative indication of the place of power and glory. During His session at God's right hand Christ rules and protects His Church, governs the universe in its behalf, and intercedes for His people on the basis of His completed sacrifice.

d. The physical return. The exaltation of Christ reaches its climax, when He returns to judge the living and the dead. Evidently His return will be bodily and visible, Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7. That He will come as Judge is evident from such passages as John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16; II Cor. 5:10; II Tim. 4:1. The time of His second coming is not known to us. He will come for the purpose of judging the world and perfecting the salvation of His people. This will mark the complete victory of His redemptive work. I Cor. 4:5; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:4; I Thess. 4:13-17; II Thess. 1:7-10; II Thess. 2:1-12; Tit. 2:13; Rev. 1:7.

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The state of humiliation:

Gal. 3:13. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Gal. 4:4, 5. "But when the fulness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Phil. 2:6-8. "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

b. The incarnation:

John 1:14. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

Rom. 8:3. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

c. The virgin birth:

Isa. 7:14. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

Luke 2:26. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God."

d. The descent into hades:

Ps. 16:10. "For Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol (hades, Acts 2:27); neither wilt Thou suffer Thy holy one to see corruption."

Eph. 4:9. "Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?"

e. The resurrection:

Rom. 4:25. "Who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification."

I Cor. 15:20. "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep."

f. The ascension:

Luke 24:51. "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and was carried up into heaven."

Acts 1:11. "Who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This same Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have beheld Him going into heaven."

g. The session:

Eph. 1:20. "Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places."

Heb. 10:12. "But He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

h. The return:

Acts 1:11. Cf. above under f.

Rev. 1:7. "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him."

For Further Study:

a. What does the Old Testament tell us about the humiliation of Christ in the following passages: Ps. 22:6-20; 69:7-9; 20:21; Isa. 52:14, 15; 53:1-10; Zech. 11:12, 13.

b. What was the special value of Christ's temptations for us? Heb. 2:18; 4:15; 5:7-9.

c. How do the following passages prove that heaven is a place rather than a condition? Deut. 30:12; Josh. 2:11; Ps. 139:8; Eccl. 5:2; Isa. 66:1; Rom. 10:6, 7.

Questions for Review

1. What is meant by the states of the Mediator?
2. How would you define the states of humiliation and exaltation?
3. What took place at the incarnation?
4. How did Christ receive His human nature?
5. What proof have we for the virgin birth?
6. How was the Holy Spirit connected with the birth, of Christ?
7. Were the sufferings of Christ limited to the end of His life?
8. Did it make any difference how Christ died?
9. What different views are there respecting the descent into hades?
10. What was the nature of Christ's resurrection? What change did He undergo?
11. What was the significance of the resurrection?
12. How would you prove that the ascension was a going from place to place?
13. What is its significance, and how do Lutherans conceive of it?

14. What is meant by the session at God's right hand? What does Christ do there?
15. How will Christ return, and what is the purpose of His coming?

Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ

Chapter XVI: The Offices of Christ

The Bible ascribes a threefold office to Christ, speaking of Him as Prophet, Priest, and King.

1. The Prophetic Office. The Old Testament predicted the coming of Christ as a prophet, Deut. 18:15 (comp. Acts 3:23). He speaks of Himself as a prophet in Luke 13:33, claims to bring a message from the Father, John 8:26-28; 12:49, 50; 14:10, 24, foretells future things, Matt. 24:3-35; Luke 19:41-44, and speaks with singular authority, Matt. 7:29. It is no wonder, therefore, that the people recognized Him as a prophet, Matt. 21:11, 46; Luke 7:16; 24:19; John 6:14; 7:40; 9:17. A prophet is one who receives divine revelations in dreams, visions, or verbal communications; and passes these on to the people either orally or visibly in prophetic actions. Ex. 7:1; Deut. 18:18; Num. 12:6-8; Isa. 6; Jer. 1:4-10; Ezek. 3:1-4, 17. His work may pertain to the past, the present, or the future. One of his important tasks was to interpret the moral and spiritual aspects of the law for the people. Christ functioned as prophet already in the Old Testament, I Pet. 1:11; 3:18-20. He did it while He was on earth, and continued it by the operation of the Holy Spirit and through the apostles after the ascension, John 14:26; 16:12-14; Acts 1:1. And even now his prophetic ministry continues through the ministry of the Word and the spiritual illumination of believers. This is the only function of Christ which is recognized in modern liberal theology.

2. The Priestly Office. The Old Testament also predicted and prefigured the priesthood of the coming Redeemer, Ps. 110:4; Zech. 6:18; Isa. 53. In the New Testament there is only a single book in which He is called priest, namely, Hebrews, but there the name is found repeatedly, 3:1; 4:14; 5:5; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1. However, other books refer to His priestly work, Mark 10:45; John 1:29; Rom. 3:24, 25; I Cor. 5:7; I John 2:2; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18. While a prophet represented God among the people, a priest represented the people before God. Both were teachers, but while the former taught the moral, the latter taught the ceremonial law. Moreover, the priests had the special privilege of approach to God, and of speaking and acting in behalf of the people. Hebrews 5:1, 3 teaches us that a priest is taken from among men to be their representative, is appointed by God, is active before God in the interests of men, and offers gifts and sacrifices for sins. He also makes intercession for the people.

The priestly work of Christ was, first of all, to bring a sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament sacrifices were types pointing forward to the great sacrifice of Christ,

Heb. 9:23, 24; 10:1, 13:11, 12. Hence Christ is also called "the Lamb of God," John 1:29, and "our passover," I Cor. 5:7. The New Testament speaks very clearly of the priestly work of Christ in numerous passages: Mark 10:45; John 1:29; Rom. 3:24, 25; 5:6-8; I Cor. 5:7; 15:3; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18; I John 2:2; 4:10; Rev. 5:12. The references are most frequent in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 5:1-10; 7:1-28; 9:11-15, 24-28; 10:11-14, 19-22; 12:24; 13:12.

Besides bringing the great sacrifice for sins, Christ as priest also makes intercession for His people. He is called our parakletos by implication in John 14:16, and explicitly in I John 2:2. The term means 'one who is called in to help, an advocate, one who pleads the cause of another.' The New Testament refers to Christ as our intercessor in Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; I John 2:1. His intercessory work is based on His sacrifice, and is not limited, as is sometimes thought, to intercessory prayer. He presents His sacrifice to God, on the ground of it claims all spiritual blessings for His people, defends them against the charges of Satan, the law, and conscience, secures forgiveness for everything justly charged against them, and sanctifies their worship and service through the operation of the Holy Spirit. This intercessory work is limited in character; it has reference only to the elect, but includes all the elect, whether they are already believers or still live in unbelief, John 17:9, 20.

3. The Kingly Office. As Son of God Christ naturally shares in the universal dominion of God. In distinction from this we speak of a kingship that was conferred on Him as Mediator. This kingship is twofold, namely, His spiritual kingship over the Church, and His kingship over the universe.

a. His spiritual kingship. The Bible speaks of this in many places, Ps. 2:6; 132:11; Isa. 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2; Zech. 6:13; Luke 1:33; 19:38; John 18:36, 37; Acts 2:30-36. The kingship of Christ is His royal rule over His people. It is called spiritual, because it relates to a spiritual realm, is established in the hearts and lives of believers, has a spiritual end in view, the salvation of sinners, and is administered by spiritual means, the Word and the Spirit. It is exercised largely in the gathering, the government, the protection, and the perfection of the Church. This kingship as well as the realm over which it extends is called in the New Testament "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven." In the strict sense of the word only believers, members of the invisible Church, are citizens of the kingdom. But the term 'kingdom of God' is sometimes used in a broader sense, as including all who live under the proclamation of the gospel, all who have a place in the visible Church, Matt. 13:24-30, 47-50. This kingdom of God is on the one hand a present, spiritual reality in the hearts and lives of men, Matt. 12:28; Luke 17:21; Col. 1:13; but on the other hand a future hope, which will not be realized until the return of Jesus Christ, Matt. 7:21; Luke 22:29; I Cor. 15:50; II Tim. 4:18; II Pet. 1:11. The future kingdom will be essentially the same as the present, namely, the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of men. It will differ, however, in that it will be visible and perfect. Some are of the opinion that this kingship of Christ will cease at His return, but the Bible would

seem to teach explicitly that it will endure forever, Ps. 45:6; 72:17; 39:36; 37; Isa. 9:6; Dan. 2:44; II Sam. 7:13, 16; Luke 1:33; II Pet. 1:11.

b. His universal kingship, After the resurrection Christ said to His disciples: "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth." Matt. 28:18. The same truth is taught in I Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:20-22. This kingship should not be confused with the original kingship of Christ as the Son of God, though it pertains to the same realm. It is the kingship of the universe entrusted to Christ as Mediator in behalf of His Church. As Mediator He now guides the destiny of individuals and nations, controls the life of the world and makes it subservient to His redemptive purpose, and protects His Church against the dangers to which it is exposed in the world. This kingship will last until the victory over the enemies of the kingdom of God is complete. When the end is accomplished, it will be returned to the Father. I Cor. 15:24-28.

To memorize. Passages pointing to:

a. Christ as prophet:

Deut. 18:18. "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

Luke 7:16. "And fear took hold on them all; and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and God hath visited His people."

b. Christ as priest:

Ps. 110:4. "Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Heb. 3:1. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus."

Heb. 4:14. "Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession."

c. His characteristics as priest:

Heb. 5:1, 5. "For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins... So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a high priest, but He that spake unto Him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee."

d. His sacrificial work:

Isa. 53:5. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Mark 10:45. "For the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His soul a ransom for many."

John 1:29. "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

I Pet. 2:24. "Who His own self bare sins in His body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness."

I John 2:2. "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the whole world."

e. His intercessory work:

Rom. 8:34. "It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Heb. 7:25. "Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

I John 2:1b. "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

f. Christ as King of Zion:

Ps. 2:6. "Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

Isa. 9:7. "Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever."

Luke 1:32, 33. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

g. Christ as king of the universe:

Matt. 28:18. "And Jesus came to them and spake to them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth."

Eph. 1:22. "And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church."

I Cor. 15:25. "For He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet."

For Further Study:

a. What do the following passages tell us respecting the nature of the prophetic work? Ex. 7:1; Deut. 18:18; Ezek. 3:17.

b. What Old Testament types of Christ are indicated in the following passages: John 1:29; I Cor. 5:7; Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 8:3-5; 9:13, 14; 10:1-14; 13:11, 12?

c. What do the following passages teach us respecting the kingdom of God? John 3:3, 5; 18:36, 37; Rom. 14:17; I Cor. 4:20.

Questions for Review

1. What threefold office has Christ?
2. What is a prophet, and what proof is there that Christ is a prophet?
3. How did Christ function as prophet in various periods of history?
4. What is a priest in distinction from a prophet? How did their teaching differ?
5. What Scriptural proof is there for the priestly character of Christ?
6. What are the characteristics of a priest?
7. What was the nature of Christ's sacrificial work? How was it foreshadowed in the Old Testaments?
8. In what does the work of Christ as intercessor consist?
9. For whom does Christ intercede?
10. What is the spiritual kingship of Christ, and over what realm does it extend?
11. How is the present kingdom of Christ related to His future kingdom?
12. How long will His spiritual kingship last?
13. What is the nature and purpose of His universal kingdoms?
14. How long will this last?

Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ

Chapter XVII: The Atonement Through Christ

There is one part of Christ's priestly work that calls for further consideration, namely, the atonement.

1. The Moving Cause and Necessity of the Atonement. It is sometimes represented as if the moving cause of the atonement lay in Christ's sympathy for sinners. God in His anger, it is said, was bent on the sinner's destruction, but the loving Christ steps in between and saves the sinner. Christ receives all the glory,

and the Father is robbed of His honour. The Bible teaches us that the atonement finds its moving cause in the good pleasure of God, Isa. 53:10; Luke 2:14; Eph. 1:6-9; Col. 1:19, 20. It is best to say that the atonement is rooted in the love and justice of God: love offered sinners a way of escape, and justice demanded that the requirements of the law should be met, John 3:16; Rom. 3:24-26. Some deny the necessity of the atonement, and hold that God could have pardoned the sinner without receiving any satisfaction. The Bible teaches however, that a righteous and holy God cannot simply overlook sin, but reacts against it, Ex. 20:5; 23:7; Ps. 5:5, 6; Nah. 1:2; Rom. 1:18, 32. Moreover, He had pronounced the sentence of death upon the sinner, Gen. 3:3; Rom. 6:23.

2. The Nature of the Atonement. The following particulars should be noted here:

a. It served to render satisfaction to God. It is often said that the atonement served primarily, if not exclusively, to influence the sinner, to awaken repentance in his heart, and thus to bring him back to God. But this is clearly wrong, for if a person offends another, amends should be made, not to the offender, but to the offended party. This means that the primary purpose of the atonement was to reconcile God to the sinner. The reconciliation of the sinner to God may be regarded as its secondary purpose.

b. It was a vicarious atonement. God might have demanded a personal atonement of the sinner, but the latter would not have been able to render it. In view of this fact God graciously ordained that Christ should take the place of man as his vicar or substitute. Christ as our vicar atoned for the sin of mankind by bearing the penalty of sin and meeting the demands of the law, and thus wrought an eternal redemption for man. For that reason we speak of the atonement as a vicarious atonement. The offended party Himself made provision for the atonement in this case. The Old Testament sacrifices prefigured the atoning work of Christ, Lev. 1:4; 4:20, 31, 35; 5:10, 16; 6:7; 17:11. We are taught that our sins were laid upon Christ, Isa. 53:6, He bore them, John 1:29, Heb. 9:28, and gave His life for sinners, Mark 10:45; Gal. 1:4; I Pet. 3:18.

c. It included Christ's active and passive obedience. It is customary to distinguish a twofold obedience of Christ. His active obedience consists in all that He did to observe the law in behalf of sinners, as a condition for obtaining eternal life; and His passive obedience in all that He suffered in paying the penalty of sin and discharging the debt of His people. But while we distinguish these two, we should never separate them. Christ was active also in His suffering, and passive also in His submission to the law. Scripture teaches us that He paid the penalty of the law, Isa. 53:8; Rom. 4:25; Gal. 3:13; I Pet. 2:24, and merited eternal life for the sinner, Rom. 8:4; 10:4; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4-7.

3. The Extent of the Atonement. Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Arminians of every description regard the atonement of Christ as universal. This does not mean that in their estimation all men will be saved, but merely that Christ

suffered and died for the purpose of saving all without any exception. They admit that the intended effect is not achieved. Christ did not actually save, but made salvation possible for all. Their actual redemption is dependent on their own choice. Reformed Churches on the other hand believe in a limited atonement. Christ suffered and died for the purpose of saving only the elect, and that purpose is actually accomplished. Christ not merely made salvation possible but really saves to the uttermost every one of those for whom he laid down His life, Luke 19:10; Rom. 5:10; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:7. The Bible indicates that Christ laid down His life for His people. Matt. 1:21, for His sheep, John 10:11, 15, for the Church, Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25-27, or for the elect, Rom. 8:82-35. If the Bible sometimes says that Christ died for the world, John 1:29; I John 2:2; 4:14, or for all, I Tim. 2:6; Tit. 2:11; Heb. 2:9, this evidently means that He died for people of all nations of the world, or (in some instances) for all kinds or classes of people.

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The cause of the atonement.

Isa. 53:10. "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand."

Col. 1:19, 20. "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross."

b. Vicarious atonement.

Isa. 53:6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Mark 10:45. "For the Son also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

II Cor. 5:21. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

I Pet. 2:24. "Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness."

c. Active obedience and the gift of eternal life.

Matt. 3:15. "But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

Matt. 5:17. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."

Gal. 4:4, 5. "But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

John 10:28. "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Rom. 6:23. "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

d. Limited atonement.

Matt. 1:21. "And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins."

John 10:26-28. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Acts 20:28. "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flocks, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the Church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood."

For Further Study:

- a. What is the difference between atonement and reconciliation?
- b. How do the following passages prove the vicarious nature of Old Testament sacrifices? Lev. 1:4; 3:2; 4:15; 16:21, 22.
- c. Does John 17:9 teach us anything respecting the extent of the atonement?

Questions for Review

1. What was the moving cause of the atonement?
2. Why was the atonement necessary?
3. What was the primary purpose of the atonement?
4. What is the difference between personal and vicarious atonement?
5. How was Christ's vicarious atonement prefigured in the Old Testament?
6. What Scripture proof is there for it?
7. What is the difference between the active and passive obedience of Christ?
8. What did each one of these effect?
9. What difference of opinion is there respecting the extent of the atonement?

10. What is meant by universal atonement, and who teach it?
11. What is limited atonement, and what Scripture proof is there for it?
12. What objections are raised against this, and how can they be answered?

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