

I. CHRIST: THE HOLY HIGH PRIEST

A. A priest is devoted to God in holiness and by His work brings others into fellowship with God

1. **The OT priest had three main functions** (his qualifications: only from Levi; must come properly prepared).
 - a. He offered blood sacrifices for himself and for the people on the Altar of Burnt Offering.
 - b. He offered incense (with coals from the Altar of Burnt Offering) on the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place and interceded for the people.
 - c. He obtained and bestowed blessings from God upon the people. This he did for the 12 Tribes of Israel whose names were written on his breastplate.
2. **In our relationship with God, a priest is necessary.**
 - a. Priests are necessary because God is holy, and we are a sinful people. Without a priest no fellowship with God and no access to God are possible. God taught this thru the OT system of priests.
 - b. Priests are necessary because to obtain favor with God the priest must offer a sacrifice. The one who offers the sacrifice must be appointed by God Himself. No one can offer a sacrifice without such authorization.
 - c. Priests represent the people. God will not have all the people come to Him, but will hear a representative. That representative must be from among the people, Heb. 5:1-3.

B. CHRIST HAS THREEFOLD FUNCTION AS PRIEST: HE OFFERS, HE INTERCEDES, HE BLESSES

1. His priesthood generally

- a. Christ has a superior priesthood b/c He is after the order of Melchizedek instead of Aaron (Levi).
- b. There are in Scripture only two legitimate priestly orders: Melchizedek and Aaron. Melchizedek appears in Gen. 14:18-20; and God promises to make Christ a priest after M's order in Ps. 110.
- c. Melchizedekian priesthood superior to Aaron, 1) M. was first; 2) M. was superior to Abraham (and therefore to Aaron and Levi) because Abraham gave M. tithes (Heb. 7:4-7, 9), 3) M. is a type of the everlasting, undying priesthood of Christ (Heb. 7:3, 8). 4) Christ became priest not by the law but by a solemn oath of God (Heb. 7:21, 28). *Only Christ has the priesthood after M's order* [contra Mormonism].
- d. The fact that God promises a priesthood according to M proves the inferiority of Aaron's priesthood: Christ is a sinless priest, an eternal priest, an unchangeable priest.

2. First, Christ, the High Priest, offers a sacrifice which is in every way superior to the OT sacrifices.

- a. First, He *is* the sacrifice. That makes His sacrifice, the Eternal Son of God suffering in our flesh, of infinite value, compared to the thousands of animal sacrifices of the OT (Heb. 10:4)
- b. Second, unlike the priests of the OT, who were sinners themselves, Christ offers no sacrifice for Himself. He is the pure, sinless, spotless priest (Heb. 7:27).
- c. Third, Christ offered only one perfect one for all time sacrifice. No further sacrifice is required by God (Heb. 10:11-12).
- d. Fourth, Christ's sacrifice actually takes away sin; it actually secures salvation and restores God's people to fellowship with Him. This is because it is 1) atonement, 2) redemption, 3) substitution, 4) reconciliation, 5) propitiation, 6) satisfaction (explain these terms).
- e. Because we believe in substitutionary atonement we reject other views of the atonement. **We reject the governmental view** [Christ's died merely to display God's justice]; we **reject the moral view** [Christ died as an example of sacrificial love to melt our hearts].

3. Second, on the basis of that sacrifice, Christ, the High Priest makes intercession.

- a. In the OT, the priest would first offer the sacrifice, then take some of the coals from that altar, and offer incense in the Holy Place. The two acts, atonement and intercession, are inseparable. And the two acts are performed for the same people.
- b. The Intercessor we have is all powerful and majestic, sitting at God's Rt. Hand; but lest we might be terrified by His Majesty, we are reminded that He is merciful and sympathetic (BC 26; Heb. 2:17-18, 4:14-16, 5:2)
- c. Christ's intercession is 1) continuous (Heb. 7:25), 2) authoritative (Christ does not plead as beggar but with the dignity of Son of God), 3) effectual (John 11:42), 4) particular (the priest only interceded for the

12 tribes of Israel, Jesus only intercedes for the elect, John 17:9). No other intercessor can be admitted because no other intercessor (Mary, the saints) has a sacrifice on which to plead, Rom. 8:34).

d. To intercede is to pray for someone, that God would bless and bestow the benefits of salvation upon him. To intercede is to answer the accusations lodged against us by the devil (Rom. 8:33-34). By His intercession He sanctifies our prayers and services (I Pet. 2:5). By His intercession He obtains for us every blessing that we need (John 17, etc).

4. Third, in His work as High Priest, Christ blesses us (to “bless” is to speak good of and upon us).

a. One of the qualities of a priest is mercy. Heb. 5:2. Christ is the supremely merciful priest because He is the merciful God and esp. because He knows our weaknesses by virtue of His human nature. Heb. 4:15-16

b. Since Christ is such a merciful high priest, we have every reason to come to Him.

II. CHRIST THE ETERNAL KING

A. The calling of a king in the Bible was twofold

1. First, a king led God’s people, and was called to rule them wisely by the Word of God. Few kings did this. Kings in the OT were called shepherds, because of their calling to lead, guide, protect and feed the flock.
2. Second, kings fought battles against the Lord’s enemies (kings were warriors) and maintained discipline among the people.
3. Third, kings protected the people of God from their enemies and assured their safety.

B. Jesus Christ is King in a twofold sense, His rule of power and His rule of grace.

1. Generally: God ordained Christ to be King in eternity. He was born of the royal tribe of Judah, of the royal line of David.
2. By His rule of power, He is sovereign over all men and angels, both good and evil. His rule of power esp. concerns His rule over the wicked, Ps. 2:9, Dan. 7:13-14.
3. By His rule of grace, He rules, protects and provides for the citizens of His spiritual kingdom, and rules us by His grace and HS through the Word.
4. Christ’s Kingdom is not of this world and is therefore a spiritual kingdom (John 18:36-37). It was foreshadowed by the office of patriarch, then Judge, then king in the OT

C. Christ’s Work as King

1. Christ defeats God’s and the Church’s enemies and protects His Kingdom from Satan.

- a. He did that upon the earth by His miracles. They were testimony to the power He had as God’s appointed king, esp. His casting out demons proclaimed His Kingship.
- b. He did that on the cross when He went to battle against the enemies of sin, death, hell and the devil (Col. 2:15).
- c. The battle which the Lord fought and which we are called to fight is spiritual, and the commander of the battle is a spiritual king (Acts 3:15, Heb. 2:10, Eph. 6:11-12, II Cor. 10:3-5).

2. Christ builds the kingdom of God by destroying the kingdom of the devil.

- a. He does that by gathering, defending and preserving His Church and every member.
- b. He does that by ruling in the hearts of His people, subduing them unto Himself, and causing them to obey Him out of thankfulness. Thus citizens of His Kingdom obey Him, submit to Him, love Him, serve Him, are loyal to Him and seek all good from Him.
- c. This citizens of this kingdom are described in Matt 5, entrance into the kingdom is by regeneration (John 3) or by being translated by God from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13, I Peter 2:9), the privileges of this kingdom are peace, righteousness and joy (Rom. 14:17).
- d. The kingdom of God manifests itself in the earth as the Church to whom Christ gives the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16, 18). The Kingdom of Christ is not the Christianizing of the world, claiming the inner city for Christ, eradicating poverty, etc. The Kingdom is built by preaching and the sacraments and the exercise of Christian discipline.