

“WCF 8: Christ the Mediator”

(Lesson Three: Salvation Accomplished and Applied; Communion of Attributes)

WCF 8.5 The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself, which He, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of His Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him.

V. Main Idea: Christ, through His work, saved all the Father has given Him.

A. He fully satisfied His Father’s justice.

1. Through His obedience: “For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19).
2. Through His death: “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it” (Heb. 9:14-16).
3. He has perfected us: “For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified” (Heb. 10:14).
4. His death was an offering to God: “And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma” (Eph. 5:2).
5. It was meant to propitiate or satisfy God’s justice against us: “Whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. *This was* to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25, 26).

B. He also brought about reconciliation and purchased for the elect an everlasting inheritance in His kingdom.

1. He reconciled us to the Father: “For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven” (Col. 1:19, 20).
2. And gave us an inheritance consisting of eternal life and citizenship in His kingdom.
 - a. “Even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life” (John 17:2). Remember that eternal life is a new relationship with the Father, not just length of days.
 - b. “And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:12-15).

3. But He has done this only for His elect: “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will” (Eph. 1:11).

WCF 8.6 Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after His incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof, were communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein He was revealed and signified to be the Seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world being yesterday and today the same, and for ever.

VI. Main Idea: The benefits of Christ’s work were applied to Old Covenant believers.

A. The work of redemption was not actually worked out until Christ came into the world.

1. Salvation was purposed by God from all eternity:
 - a. “All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8; NKJV).
 - b. “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity” (2 Tim. 1:8-9).
2. But it wasn’t actually accomplished until God’s time.
 - a. “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy *place*” (Dan. 9:24).
 - b. “But now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10).
 - c. “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4, 5).

B. But its blessings were communicated to His elect in all ages through promises, types and sacrifices.

1. There has only ever been one way of salvation.
 - a. “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).
 - b. This was true of the Old Covenant believers, as well as the New: “But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. *This was* to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Rom. 3:21-26).
 - c. “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad” (John 8:56).

2. Though Christ had not come yet, God granted grace to Old Covenant believers through different means:
 - a. Promises:
 - (i) Promise: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel” (Gen. 3:15).
 - (ii) Fulfillment: “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4,5).

 - b. Types:
 - (i) Type: “Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, ‘Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover *lamb*’” (Ex. 12:21).
 - (ii) Fulfillment: “Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are *in fact* unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed” (1 Cor. 5:7).

 - c. Sacrifices:
 - (i) Sacrifice: “The second he shall then prepare as a burnt offering according to the ordinance. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it will be forgiven him” (Lev. 5:10).
 - (ii) Fulfillment: “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. . . . Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified” (Heb. 10:4, 11-14).

- d. Other examples include: The Seed of Abraham (Gen. 22:18), Shiloh (49:10), the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12-13), the Shoot of Jesse (Isa. 11:1-5).

WCF 8.7 Christ, in the work of mediation, acts according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself: yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.

VII. Main Idea: The communion of attributes: Jesus uses both; whatever can be said of either nature can be said of Christ.

A. Christ, being both God and man, in His work of mediation, acts according to both natures.

1. It was His divine nature that upheld His human nature when He offered Himself as an atonement for sin: “For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9:13, 14).
2. But it was His human nature He sacrificed on the cross to make the atonement: “For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18).

B. However, because Christ possessed two natures, sometimes in Scripture something that is true of one nature is said to be true of Christ when spoken of from the point of reference of His other nature.

1. As God, He is said to have purchased us with His blood: “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28).
2. As man, He is said to be in heaven, while also on earth: “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John 3:13; NKJV).
3. As man, He is also said always to have been the same: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

WCF 8.8 To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, He doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same; making intercession for them; and revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by His Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit; overcoming all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.

VIII. Main Idea: Christ makes sure that all He did His work for will receive its benefits.

A. Christ applies redemption to all His people.

1. "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day" (John 6:37-39).
2. "Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd" (John 10:15, 16).

B. Christ intercedes for us.

1. "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world" (1 John 2:1, 2).
2. "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us" (Rom. 8:33, 34).

C. He opens our eyes to the meaning and glory of His Word.

1. "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:13-15).
2. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him" (Eph. 1:7-9).
3. "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word" (John 17:6).

D. He changes our hearts by His Holy Spirit to cause us to believe and obey.

1. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever" (John 14:16).
2. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).
3. "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the

spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh – for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Rom. 8:9-14).

E. He governs us by His Word and Spirit.

1. “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth” (John 17:17).
2. “For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Rom. 15:18, 19).

F. He overcomes all our enemies.

1. “The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’” (Ps. 110:1).
2. “For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death” (1 Cor. 15:25, 26).
3. “‘But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,’ says the LORD of hosts” (Mal. 4:2, 3).
4. “For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you” (Rom. 16:19-20).