

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS

WEEK 25

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

QUESTION 25: *How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?*

ANSWER: Christ executeth 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.

MONDAY

Praise: Sing Psalm 110

Scripture: Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Key Thought: *Jesus Christ is the true priest.*

Questions:

- ☞ What is the function of a priest?
- ☞ Why must there be a mediator between God and men?
- ☞ Why was the Old Testament priesthood insufficient?
- ☞ How was the priesthood of Jesus perfect?
- ☞ Is there a need for any priests between God and men today?

Prayer

Notes: The second office that Christ executes as our Redeemer is the office of priest. This week we will examine the particulars of that office more closely. Make sure that your children understand the purpose and function of priests in the Old Testament. Explain to them that the priests were appointed to stand between God and the people, offering sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins. Show them how man's sinfulness and God's holiness and justice made it necessary for there to be a mediator between them, and that the institution of the priesthood was a great act of mercy on God's part, showing His willingness to provide forgiveness for fallen mankind. Discuss how the Old Testament priesthood was still not sufficient by itself to remove the sins of the people, but that it looked forward to the perfect priesthood of Jesus Christ. Explain to your children how Jesus fulfilled the office of priest, both in offering the perfect sacrifice and in actually becoming the perfect sacrifice for us. Show them that since Jesus has perfectly accomplished the purpose of the priesthood, there is no need for any man to stand between God and men today. Pray together, thanking God for the sacrifice of Christ, our Great High Priest.

TUESDAY

Praise: Sing Psalm 110

Scripture: Read Hebrews 9:1-28

Key Thought: *As priest, He offered up Himself.*

Questions:

- ☞ What kinds of sacrifices did the Old Testament priests offer?
- ☞ What was it about these sacrifices that made them unable to actually take away the sins of the people?
- ☞ What was it about the priests that made them unable to truly cleanse the people from their sins?
- ☞ How did Jesus make both the priest and the sacrifice perfect?

Prayer

Notes: As our perfect priest, the Lord Jesus Christ offered up Himself to redeem His people. The focus of our attention today is the activity of Jesus as our high priest. Show your children that the Old Testament sacrifices fell short of actually accomplishing redemption because they were insufficient on both sides of the altar. The animals, however blemish-free they may have been, we're still only animals, and therefore they could not provide true atonement for the sins committed by men. Likewise, the priests were sinful men who could not provide redemption since they themselves needed to be redeemed. Explain that Jesus provided the perfect sacrifice by making up what was lacking on both sides. Instead of the blood of animals, He offered Himself as a perfect substitute for sinful men. This is sometimes called His "passive obedience," as He submitted to the will of God and became the "Lamb without blemish" for us. Then, Jesus made up what was lacking in the priesthood by playing the role of the priest as well as the sacrifice, and offering up Himself. Since He was the perfect Son of God in the flesh, His offering was not hindered in its effectiveness. This part of the priestly work of Jesus is sometimes called His "active obedience," as He actively placed Himself upon the altar of sacrifice for our sins. Praise God for this remarkable provision and pray for a growing appreciation for the work of Christ as the Lamb of God and the great High Priest.



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 110

Scripture: Read Isaiah 53:1-12

Key Thought: *As priest, He satisfied divine justice.*

Questions:

- ☞ What penalty did God prescribe for sin?
- ☞ Was this a just penalty? Why?
- ☞ Could God simply forget the penalty? What part of God's character requires that the penalty for sin must be paid?
- ☞ What does it mean to say that the death of Jesus satisfied divine justice?

Prayer

Notes: The *Catechism* affirms that Christ offered Himself up to satisfy divine justice. This points us to the doctrine of “atonement,” or “propitiation.” Show your children that God had clearly prescribed the death penalty for disobedience to His Word in the garden. Since God was the author of Adam’s life, eternal separation from His grace was a just penalty for rejecting Him. The justice of God would not allow Him to simply ignore sin or to fail to punish wickedness. The penalty had to be paid. Explain that the satisfaction of divine justice means that Jesus submitted to the punishment for our sins and took every bit of the penalty we deserved upon Himself. By pouring out His just wrath against our sin upon Jesus, God’s perfect justice was satisfied—the penalty was paid—and we were cleared before God of our transgressions. Challenge your children to consider the amazing grace of a God who would take the consequences of our sin upon Himself in order to grant us forgiveness. Pray that God would deeply impress your hearts with this truth and enable you to live each day in humble gratitude for His self-sacrificing mercy.

 THURSDAY

Praise: Sing Psalm 110

Scripture: Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Key Thought: *As priest, He reconciled us to God.*

Questions:

- ☞ How did sin affect man’s relationship with God?
- ☞ How did it affect God’s view of man? Was God right in this?
- ☞ How did it affect man’s view of God? Was man right in this?
- ☞ What does it mean to be “reconciled”?
- ☞ Who initiated the process of reconciliation? Who finishes it?

Prayer

Notes: The work of Christ as our great high priest has a twofold effect. First, it satisfies divine justice. Second, it reconciles us to God. The first effect is negative—the wages of sin are paid. The second effect is positive—the relationship between God and man is restored. Remind your children of the effect of sin upon the relationship between God and man. Point out the effect from both perspectives. God was turned against man in anger for his rebellion, which was the proper response of a Holy God who had been offended by sin. Man was turned against God in fear and hatred, which was the wicked response of a rebellious creature. Explain what it means to be reconciled, and show your children that the relationship between God and man is reconciled entirely at the will and pleasure of God. Man did not seek God, but God in Christ sought to be reconciled to man and accomplished redemption “while we were yet sin-

ners.” It is truly amazing to consider the grace of God in reconciling us to Himself in spite of our wicked and selfish hearts! This is also to be a model for every Christian to follow when it comes to reconciliation between one another.



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 110

Scripture: Read 1 John 1:5—2:2

Key Thought: *As Priest, He continually intercedes for us.*

Questions:

- ☞ What does it mean to say that Christ “makes intercession”?
- ☞ For whom does Christ intercede?
- ☞ What accusations are brought before God against us?
- ☞ How does Christ answer these accusations?
- ☞ How should you respond to Christ as your advocate?

Prayer

Notes: In the offering of Himself as the perfect sacrifice, Jesus satisfied divine justice and reconciled us to God. He is now exalted to the right hand of God, where His priestly work continues as He makes continual intercession for us before the Father. Our acceptance before God depends entirely upon the work of Christ, apart from whom we would be immediately condemned for our sins. Explain to your children what the word “intercession” means, and help them to see that Jesus stands before the Father, as it were, answering every charge brought against His elect on the grounds that He has already paid the penalty for each transgression. Jesus does not act as an advocate for every sinner, but only for those who are His by sovereign election. He is a terrifying judge against the wicked, but an advocate for His chosen sheep. Understanding the role of Christ as our advocate should also increase our hatred for sin in our lives, as it brings before us the reality of the personal penalty paid by Him for each transgression in order to secure forgiveness for us. No one who truly loves Jesus could take sin lightly knowing that each act of sin, whether by omission or commission, had to be specifically covered through His suffering in our place. Praise God together for the intercession of Christ, and ask Him to increase your appreciation for the role of our High Priest as advocate before the Father on your behalf.



Note: Only five lessons per week are included. You are encouraged to lead your family in worship seven days a week. On weekends, you may want to review or build upon the lessons from the previous week, discuss the sermon from Sunday morning, or work on questions from the Catechism or memory verses. These lesson suggestions are intended to provide a simple framework for parents to build upon. You are not limited to this content. The habit of morning and evening family worship is the biblical ideal. We hope you can use these lessons as a starting point for the development of a blessed practice of family worship in your home.