

Week 9- The Work of Christ- Office of Priest

Key Doctrine : “Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people, and in making continual intercession for them.” Westminster Larger Catechism Q. 44

Scripture Reading:

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever. Hebrews 7:26-28

Etymology of the word Priest:

Priest- Kohen (750 times). “A person consecrated to serve a deity” . The word is most often found in connection with holiness, altar, and sacrifice. In the Greek Septuagint of the OT & NT the Greek word for Priest is Hierous and is related to the word sacred (heiros) and sacred place or temple (hieron). The NT associates the priesthood with that which is holy (hagios) and with sacrifice (thysia).

1. Christ's priestly office foreshadowed in the OT

A. Aaron

- a. Selected by God

Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. Exodus 28:1

- b. Regular Men
- c. Beautifully adorned-

And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.... For Aaron's sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them for glory and beauty. Exodus 28:2, 40

- d. Priestly Work (Exodus 29:38-42)

- Offer Sacrifices

- Intercession-

You shall take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. Exodus 28:9-10

B. The priesthood of Melchizedek

a. Priest of the most high

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God most high. And he blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who was delivered your enemies into your hand!” And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. Gen. 14:8-20.

b. From the city of Salem

c. Unknown lineage (Hebrews 7:3)

d. Held the office of **Priest & King**

Questions:

- What caught your attention regarding the Old Testament office of priest?
- Where might we find Grace in the OT office of priest and of the sacrificial system?

2. Specific Prophecies

A. Throne would be everlasting

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: *“You are a priest forever...” Psalm 110:4*

Fulfilled in Jesus:

*The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his **priesthood permanently, because he continues forever**. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:23-25*

B. Unite Office of King and Priest.

According to the Old Testament, one expectation for the office of priest was that the Messiah would reunite it with the office of king.

The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies ... The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:2-4).

Fulfilled in Jesus:

Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? ¹² For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. ¹³ For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. Hebrews 7:11-14

C. Kingdom of priests

As we saw in Genesis 2:15, humanity began in the Garden of Eden by serving in a priestly capacity. So, it shouldn't be surprising that in our restoration after the fall into sin, redeemed humanity would once again serve as God's priests. And in fact, this is specifically prophesied in places like Exodus 19:6 and in Isaiah:

...but you shall be called the priests of the Lord; they shall speak of you as the ministers of God: you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast. Isaiah 61:6

Fulfilled in Jesus:

As just one example, listen to these words about Jesus from Revelation:

[He] has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and

Father (Revelation 1:6).

3. Jesus as the Great and final High Priest

A. The Priestly order of Aaron

- a. Selected by God

And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed....Heb. 5:4-5

- b. Sympathetic High Priest

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15

- c. Beautifully adorned

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. Hebrews 1:3

B. The Priestly order of Melchizedek-

4. Jesus' Priestly Work

A. Offerings

- a. Jesus as sacrifice-

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 1 John 4:10

- b. Jesus the one and final sacrifice

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:10

- **Propitiation**

Christ offered himself as a sacrifice to appease the anger of God against sinners by bearing the wrath himself.

Whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. Romans 3:25

- **Redemption**

Refers to rescuing people from loss, slavery, or death by the payment of a price or ransom.

Galatians 3: 13-14 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— ¹⁴ so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit^[a] through faith.]

- **Reconciliation**

Involves a change of attitude and relationship from enmity and estrangement to friendship and harmony.

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Romans 5:10

4. Intercession

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. John 17:14-15