

# The Westminster Confession of Faith

## Lesson 30: Of Christ the Mediator (¶ 8.7–8.8)

High Plains Fellowship PCA

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### Introduction

Having addressed the covenants in Chapter 7, we are now reaching the doctrinal “mountaintop” in Chapter 8. Much of what follows in the rest of the Confession is “details”—the *outworking* of the Mediatorial office of Christ in relation to his elect.

In the last two paragraphs, there is some “housekeeping” to do in Paragraph 7 (showing that there is never confusion of the *human* and divine *natures* of Christ) after which we come to the “mountaintop” of Paragraph 8 where we see Christ working in time and space to fulfill his office, build his church, and subdue his enemies.

### Opener

- How does it affect our understanding of salvation if we view it from the perspective of personal experience rather than the perspective of the eternal Trinity? Which *seems* more important to us? Which is *actually* more important? Why?

### WLC Q&A #57

Q57: What benefits hath Christ procured by his mediation?

A57: Christ, by his mediation, hath procured redemption,[1] with all other benefits of the covenant of grace.[2]

1. **Heb. 9:12** - And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy places once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

2. **2 Cor. 1:20** - For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes. Therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.

- the verb tense is important here—Christ has *procured* redemption, though its application has a future fulfillment in his ongoing mediatorial work
- see Heb 9:12—“once for all” is essential language; there is one true sacrifice that is effectual for all the elect for all time
- the term “effectual” shows up more than once in WCF 8.8—by which we understand the atonement is not a *potentiality* but a *certainty*; Christ’s work always accomplishes what it intends; his promises never fail (see 2 Cor 1:20 footnote)

- Arminian theology sees the atonement as *potential* for all but *certain* for none

“Our Standards . . . very explicitly teach that Christ, as mediatorial Priest, made expiation and purchased salvation for certain definite persons.”<sup>1</sup>

- the covenant of grace includes justification, but goes much further to include other “graces”
- *adoption as sons* is one of the “extras”—which makes the redeemed saints co-heirs of the kingdom of God with Christ the firstborn Son

### WCF 8.7–8.8

7. Christ, in the work of mediation, acteth according to both natures; by each nature doing that which is proper to itself;<sup>a</sup> 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.<sup>b</sup>

a. **Heb 9:14** - 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? **1 Pet 3:18** - For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring you to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

b. **John 3:13** - And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. **Acts 20:28** - 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. **1 John 3:16** - By this we have known love, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

- we make this distinction to avoid any possibility of confusing the human and divine natures of Christ; since he is one person, he may be referred to in his works according to either nature

“Christ’s mediatorial work concurrently involves both natures.”<sup>2</sup>

“All mediatorial acts are therefore to be attributed to the entire person of the Theanthropos—God-man. And in the whole of his glorious person is he to be obeyed and worshiped by angels and men.”<sup>3</sup>

8. To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same;<sup>a</sup> making intercession for them,<sup>b</sup> and revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation;<sup>c</sup> effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit;<sup>d</sup> 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.<sup>e</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hodge, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Williamson, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Hodge, p. 152.

a. **John 6:37, 39** - All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will never cast out. . . . Now 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 10:15-16** - Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, which are not from this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

b. **Rom 8:34** - 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. **1 John 2:1-2** - 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.

c. **John 15:13, 15** - "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. . . . 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 17:6** - "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." **Eph 1:7-9** - In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our transgressions, according to the riches of His grace which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Him.

d. **John 14:16** - "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, that He may be with you forever." **John 17:17** - "Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth." **Rom 8:9, 14** - 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. . . . For as many as are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. **Rom 15:18-19** - For I will not be bold to speak of anything except what Christ has brought about through me, leading to 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 all around as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. **2 Cor 4:13** - But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak. **Heb 12:2** - Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

e. **Psa 110:1** - Yahweh says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I put Your enemies as a footstool for Your feet." **Mal 4:2-3** - "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. And 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 Yahweh of hosts. **1 Cor 15:25-26** - For He must reign UNTIL HE HAS PUT ALL HIS ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET. The last enemy to be abolished is death. **Col 2:15** - Having disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them in Him.

- consider the tie between *time* and *eternity*: the incarnation of Christ is the outworking of the eternal, immutable decree of God

"Christ died with the purpose of executing the decree of election."<sup>4</sup>

"Christ, as mediatorial King, seated at the right hand of God, applies the redemption he had effected as Priest to the proper subjects of it."<sup>5</sup>

- redemption is effectually *applied* and *communicated* to the redeemed by what actions?

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<sup>4</sup> Hodge, p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> Hodge, p. 153.

- in what way is the mediatorial work of Christ ongoing?
- what is “effectual persuasion”? does it take the place of personal choice? can it be resisted? (Chapter 9 addresses the topic of man’s “free will” in its fourfold state)
- how did Christ “overcome” us when we were yet enemies of God? how does he now overcome those who are his enemies and ours? (see Psalm 2)

“The satisfaction rendered by Christ . . . has forever removed out of the way all legal obstacles to God’s saving any man he wills to save. . . . It is effectually applied precisely to those persons to whom the Father and the Son will to apply it.”<sup>6</sup>

### Concluding Thoughts

- It was necessary for God the Son to become fully man in order to carry out the work of mediator and surety.
- The mediatorial work of Christ ensures that all whom God chooses in the decree of election are saved and secured in time.

### Upcoming Lessons

- Beginning June 11, Wes O’Neill will be undertaking a study called “The Peace Maker”.

### Resources & Bibliography (new items added to the top of the list / older items removed)

- *Systematic Theology*, Louis Berkhof, 1949. (PDF version [here](#))
- *The Confession of Faith*, A. A. Hodge, 1869.
- *The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes*, G. I. Williamson, 1964.
- *Roman Catholicism*, Loraine Boettner, 1962. (online version [here](#); PDF version [here](#))

All scripture quotations are *Legacy Standard Bible* (LSB) unless otherwise noted.  
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<sup>6</sup> Hodge, p. 155.