

What We Believe: Knowing and Loving our Doctrines
 Adult Sunday Studies 2023-24
 18 | The Church

WHERE REDEMPTION IS APPLIED: TOTAL CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

Review - from Revelation and Who is God... to Creation, Humanity and our Sin... to the Redemption in Christ, secured by His Person and Work through the states of Humiliation and Exaltation in his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and waiting consummation... aka we're moving from Redemption Accomplished to Redemption Applied

The "Logic" of the Larger Catechism

- **What?** - 57 - "What benefits hath Christ procured by his mediation? **A.** Christ, by his mediation, hath procured redemption, with all other benefits of the covenant of grace."
- **How?** - 58 - "How do we come to be made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured? **A.**... by the application of them unto us, which is the work especially of God the Holy Ghost."
- **Who?** 59 - "Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ? **A.** Redemption is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath purchased it; who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe in Christ according to the gospel."
- **Who else?** 60 - "Can they who have never heard the gospel, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in him, be saved by their living according to the light of nature? **A.** They who, having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they profess; neither is there salvation in any other, but in Christ alone, who is the Savior only of his body the church."
- **Who specifically?** 61 - "Are all they saved who hear the gospel, and live in the church? **A.** All that hear the gospel, and live in the visible church, are not saved; but they only who are true members of the church invisible."

The Visible and Invisible Church

- **What is the visible church?** 62 - “A. The visible church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion, and of their children.”
 - **63. What are the special privileges of the visible church?** A. The visible church hath the privilege of being under God's special care and government; of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies; and of enjoying the communion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation, and offers of grace by Christ to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come unto him.
- **64. What is the invisible church?** A. The invisible church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head.
 - **65. What special benefits** do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ? A. The members of the invisible church by Christ enjoy *union and communion with him in grace and glory.*
 - **66. What is that union** which the elect have with Christ? A. The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace, whereby they are *spiritually and mystically, yet really and inseparably, joined to Christ as their head and husband;* which is done in their effectual calling.

Remembering who Christ is, with whom we have union

1 | The Three Offices [From the Larger Catechism]:

- **Prophet** – “in his revealing to the church, in all ages, by his Spirit and Word, in divers ways of administration, the whole will of God, in all things concerning their edification and salvation.”
- **Priest** – “in his once offering up himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people, and in his making continual intercession for them”
 - OT requirements of a priest included: a man chosen to represent men before God (Aaron always bore before the Lord a breastplate with the

names of all the tribes of Israel – Exod. 28); chosen of God as a special election (Num. 16.5, Heb. 5.4); holy and consecrated to the Lord (Lev. 21.6-8, Exod. 39); must have a right to draw near to Yahweh and to bring near sacrifices (Lev. 16.3-15); must have an acceptable sacrifice to offer (Heb. 8.3)

- **King** – “in calling out of the world a people to himself, and giving them officers, laws, and censures, by which he visibly governs them; in bestowing saving grace upon his elect, rewarding their obedience, and correcting them for their sins, preserving and supporting them under all their temptations and sufferings, restraining and overcoming all their enemies, and powerfully ordering all things for his own glory, and their good; and also in taking vengeance on the rest, who know not God, and obey not the gospel.”
 - *He is never only one and not the others* - “When he teaches, he is always a priestly and kingly prophet. When he offers sacrifice or intercession for sin, he is always a prophetic or royal priest”. – AA Hodge

The relevance of these three stretch **from the OT types, to Jesus’ life and into the life of the church**. Just as there is a once-for-all aspect to Jesus' role, there is a continual role. Now we continue to experience Jesus as Prophet through biblical preaching and teaching; Jesus as Priest through sacramental presence and prayer; Jesus as King through church government and Christ's providence and power over our lives.

ON THE CONTINUED ROLES OF CHRIST IN THE CHURCH

Total Christ Church and Spirituality

| Gospel-Centered | Missional |
|---|-----------|
| Christ our Prophet (Confessional) - Word | |
| Christ our Priest (Sacramental) - Sacrament | |
| Christ our King (Communal) - Discipline | |

Total Christ Church and Spirituality*

| | Gospel-Centered | Missional |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Christ our Prophet | Gospel of grace; preaching; revelation; humble submission to Word | Preaching in our language; translation; understandable in context; at all times |
| Christ our Priest | Once-for-all sacrifice; Jesus intercedes on our behalf; assurance of Presence | Sacramental worship; local and contextualized; participatory with full emotions and Temple pattern |
| Christ our King | Gracious government, shepherding; overcoming sin; life-on-life discipleship | Mercy; holistic empowerment; ecclesial evangelist |

*Note: this table is meant to show how the marks dynamically interact with one another, but none of them can truly be limited to one box. Hence the dotted lines.

Thinking through the Covenant-Temple Paradigm

| 1 | <u>Covenant (Gospel-centered)</u> | <u>Temple (Missional)</u> |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| 2 | Word | Flesh |
| 3 | Global | Local |
| 4 | Forensic/Legal | Participatory |
| 5 | Proclamation | Participation |
| 6 | Elements | Forms |
| 7 | Justification | Sanctification |
| 8 | Work of Christ | Person of Christ |
| 9 | Agape | Eros |
| 10 | Light | Heat |
| 11 | Paradigm | Power |
| 12 | Logos | Pathos or Ethos? |
| 13 | Message | Medium |
| 14 | Dialogue | Dance |
| 15 | Structure | Style |
| 16 | Pilgrim (Andrew Walls) | Indigenous (Andrew Walls) |
| 17 | Redemption? | Creation? |
| 18 | Truth | Love |
| 19 | Once-for-all | Continual |
| 20 | Memorial | Presence |
| 21 | Objective | Subjective |

*Note: some of these values are better categorized than others, so this chart is meant to give more of a “feel” for the tendencies of each, rather than strict dichotomies, just as you can never fully separate the Work from the Person of Christ.