

—Westminster Shorter Catechism—
Lesson 23—Christ as Priest, Q. 28

Introduction

- I. *In his rising again from the dead on the third day.*
 - a. The Plain Fact
 - i. Predicted in the *Old Testament* (Ps. 16:10; cf. Ac. 2:24-31)
 - ii. Predicted by *Christ* (Mt. 20:18, 19; Jn. 10:17, 18)
 - iii. Witnessed by the *apostles* (Ac. 1:3)
 - iv. Testified to by *Paul* independently (1 Co. 15:8; Ga. 1:12; Ac 9:3-8)
 - v. Seen by *500 brethren* at once (1 Co. 15:6)
 - vi. Apostolic *miracles* attest to it (Hb. 2:4)
 - vii. The *Holy Spirit* bears witness (Ac. 5:32)
 - viii. The day change in *Sabbath observance* also implies it (Ac. 20:7)
 - b. Its Great Importance
 - i. It proved Jesus to be the Son of God and authenticated his claims.
 - ii. It was a public acceptance by his Father of his mediatorial work on our behalf.
 - iii. We have an ever-living Savior at the right hand of power (Ro. 8:34).
 - iv. His resurrection secures ours (1 Co. 6:15; 15:49; Ph. 3:21).
- II. *In ascending up into heaven.*
 - a. Forty days after the resurrection in the presence of the apostles and others.
 - b. Ascending in his human nature as God-man, body and spirit, our Mediator.
 - c. He triumphed over his enemies and gave gifts to his Church (Ep. 4:8-12).
 - d. Ascended, he completes his mediatorial work as the forerunner of his people (Jn. 17:23 Hb. 6:20).
 - e. Ascended, he fills the universe with his glory (Ep. 4:10).
- III. *In his sitting at the right hand of the Father.*
 - a. This is the official exaltation in symbolic terms of the God-man as Mediator in supreme glory, felicity, and dominion over every name that is named.
 - b. This is a definite place, since his body and soul are finite and must be in a definite place, from thence to intercede and apply his grace to his people.
 - c. There he intercedes for his people as a priest upon the throne (Zc. 6:13).
 - d. Thence he effectually applies to his people, by his Spirit, that salvation which he had previously achieved for them in his humiliation (Ps. 16:11; 110:1; Da. 7:13, 14; Mt. 26:64; Mk. 16:19; Jn. 5:22; Ep. 1:20, 22; Ph. 2:9-11; Co. 3:1; Hb. 1:3, 4; 2:9; 10:12; 1 Pt. 3:22; Rv. 5:6)
- IV. *In his coming to judge the world at the last day.*
 - a. God in his pure godhood will not be our judge, but in his exaltation, the Day of Judgement is committed into the hands of the God-man (Mt. 28:18; Ro. 2:16; cf. Jn. 8:15). We will be judged by a man:
 - i. **Whyte:** “Man’s feelings, affections passions; His pity, compassion, tenderness, will all operate in the judgement, as well as His wrath, scorn, loathing, and contempt. Our judgement will be

as near, and as direct, and personal as if we were arraigned before a judge in an earthly court, and as searching and immediate as if God Omniscient and All-righteous sat on our case. The man Christ Jesus will judge every one of us.” (Ac. 17:31)

- b. He shall divide the good on his right, the wicked on his left.
 - i. It is his glory to condemn the wicked.
 - ii. It is his glory to give grace to all who look to him in faith.
- c. The Books shall be opened to him (Da. 7:110; Rv. 20:11, 12)
 - i. He will be exalted in complete knowledge over every naked soul.
 - ii. He will be exalted in his electing wisdom before all worlds.
- d. The God-man will declare final judgement on each soul (Mt. 25:31-46; 2 Th. 1:7-10; Rv. 22:20).
 - i. “Come, ye blessed of my Father.”
 - ii. “Depart from me, ye cursed.”

Reflections

1. Our faithful God always keeps his word and accomplishes his promises—even through death to life!
2. The doctrine of Christ’s exaltation secures for us all the blessings we have by faith, for by it we can look to the ascended Christ and know for certain that, united with him in heaven, we are on earth *saved* for this life and are *being saved* for the life to come.
3. If we reject the exaltation of Christ’s ascended humanity, we sever our only hope of salvation, because we have rejected the Mediator whom God has received in exalted glory.
4. Human nature, therefore, is at this moment most intimately united to the Godhead in Christ’s exaltation. What can all hell avail against him now? What does this exalted humanity lack? Nothing at all, and so shall we who put our faith in him.
5. It is a great comfort to know our judgement is vested in him who has destined us to share with him in the honor of judgment, so far is it from him to judge his saints in condemnation.