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## CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

#183

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## CHRIST THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT

Thomas Watson (1620-1686)

*“Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant”—Hebrews 12:24.*

JESUS Christ is the sum and quintessence<sup>1</sup> of the gospel; the wonder of angels; the joy and triumph of saints. The name of Christ is sweet, it is as music in the ear, honey in the mouth, and a cordial<sup>2</sup> at the heart. I shall waive the context, and only speak of that which concerns our present purpose. Having discoursed of the covenant of grace, I shall speak now of the Mediator of the covenant, and the restorer of lapsed sinners, “Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.”

There are several names and titles in Scripture given to Christ, as the great restorer of mankind:

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<sup>1</sup> **quintessence** – the pure essential part of a thing.

<sup>2</sup> **cordial** – any medicine which increases strength, raises the spirits, and gives life and cheerfulness to a person when weak and depressed; a tonic.

**I. Sometimes he is called a Saviour.** “His name shall be called Jesus” (Mat 1:21). The Hebrew word for Jesus signifies a Saviour, and whom he saves from hell he saves from sin; where Christ is a Saviour he is a sanctifier. “He shall save his people from their sins” (Mat 1:21). There is no other saviour. “Neither is there salvation in any other” (Act 4:12). As there was but one ark to save the world from drowning, so there is but one Jesus to save sinners from damning. As Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, “Are there yet any more sons in my womb?” (Ru 1:11), so has God any other sons in the womb of his eternal decree, to be saviours to us, besides Christ? “Where shall wisdom be found? The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me” (Job 28:12, 14). Where shall salvation be found? The angel says, It is not in me; mortality says, It is not in me; the ordinance says, It is not in me. Christ alone is the well-spring of life. “Neither is there salvation in any other.”

**II. Sometimes Christ is called a Redeemer.** “The Redeemer shall come to Sion” (Isa 59:20). Some understand it of Cyrus, others of an angel; but the most ancient Jewish doctors understood it of Christ, the Redeemer of the elect. “My Redeemer liveth” (Job 19:25). The Hebrew word for Redeemer signifies such a one as is near akin, and has right to redeem a mortgage; so Christ is near of kin to us, being our elder brother, therefore has the best right to redeem us.

**III. Christ is called a Mediator in the text.** “Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.” The Greek word for Mediator signifies a middle person, one that makes up the breach between two disagreeing parties. God and we were at variance by sin, now Christ mediates and becomes umpire between us; he reconciles us to God through his blood, there fore he is called the Mediator of the new covenant. *There is no way of communion and intercourse between God and man but in and through a Mediator.* Christ takes away the enmity in us, and the wrath of God, and so makes peace. Nor is Christ a Mediator of reconciliation only, but intercession. “Christ is entered, not into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb 9:24). When the priest had slain the sacrifice he was to go with the blood before the altar and mercy-seat, and show it to the Lord. Now, in Christ, our blessed Mediator, consider two things: A) His person, B) His graces.

**A. His person.** His person is amiable; he is made up of all love and beauty. He is the effigy<sup>3</sup> of his Father. “The express image of his person” (Heb 1:3). Consider,

#### **1. Christ’s person in two natures.**

a. *Look upon his human nature as incarnate.* The Valentinians<sup>4</sup> deny his human nature; but John 1:14 says, “The Word was made flesh.” It is spoken of Christ the promised Messiah. Christ took our flesh, that the same nature which sinned might suffer; and “The Word was made flesh,” that through the glass of his human nature we might look upon God.

*Why is Christ called the Word?*

Because, as a word is the interpreter of the mind, and reveals what is in a man’s breast; so Jesus Christ reveals his Father’s mind to us concerning the great matters of our salvation, (Joh 1:1). Were it not for Christ’s manhood, the sight of the Godhead would be formidable to us; but through Christ’s flesh we may look upon God without terror. And Christ took our flesh, that he might know how to pity us; he knows what it is to be faint, sorrowful, tempted. “He knows our frame” (Psa 103:14). And he took our flesh, that he might (as Augustine says) ennoble our human nature with honour. Christ having married our flesh has exalted it above the angelic nature.

b. *Look upon Christ’s divine nature.* Christ may be fitly compared to Jacob’s ladder, which reacheth from earth to heaven (Gen 28:12). Christ’s human nature was the foot of the ladder, which stood upon earth; his divine nature the top of the ladder, which reaches to heaven. This being a grand article of our faith I shall amplify it. I know the Arians,<sup>5</sup> Socinians,<sup>6</sup> and Ebionites<sup>7</sup> would rob Christ of the best jewel of his crown, his Godhead; but the Apostolical, Nicene, Athanasian creeds, affirm Christ’s Deity; and to this the churches of Helvetia, Bohemia, Wittenberg, Transylvania, &c., give their full consent. The Scripture is clear for it. He is called “the mighty God” (Isa 9:6). “And in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead” (Col 2:9). He is of the same nature and essence with the Father. So Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom. Is God the Father called Almighty? So is Christ. “The Almighty” (Rev 1:8). Is God the Father the heart-searcher? So is Christ. “He knew what was in man” (Joh 2:25). Is God the Father omnipresent? So is Christ. “The Son of Man which is in heaven” (Joh 3:13). Christ as God was then in heaven, when as man he was upon the earth.

*Is Christ eternal?*

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<sup>3</sup> **effigy** – painted or sculpted image of a person.

<sup>4</sup> **Valentinians** – followers of 2nd century Gnostic Valentinus of Alexandria, Egypt.

<sup>5</sup> **Arians** – heretical followers of Arius (c. 256-336), presbyter of Alexandria, who denied the eternity of Jesus Christ and taught that there was a time “when the Son was not.” Early form of the doctrine held by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

<sup>6</sup> **Socinians** – followers of Faustus Socinus (1539-1604), who denied the doctrine of the Trinity and taught that Jesus was a mere man with no existence prior to His birth at Bethlehem. Early form of what became Unitarianism and Liberalism.

<sup>7</sup> **Ebionites** – early Jewish sect of professing Christians that denied the deity of Jesus, but claimed He “became” the Christ at His baptism.

Christ is the everlasting Father (Isa 9:6), may be urged against the Cerinthian<sup>8</sup> heretics, who denied the pre-existence of Christ's Godhead, and held that Christ had no being till he derived it from the Virgin Mary. Does divine worship belong to the first person in the Trinity? So it does to Christ (Joh 5:23). "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb 1:6). Is creation proper to the Deity? this is a flower of Christ's crown. "By him were all things created" (Col 1:16). Is invocation proper to the Deity? this is given to Christ. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Act 7:59). Is recumbency [rest or repose] and trust peculiar to God the Father? this is given to Christ. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (Joh 14:1). Christ must needs be God, not only that the divine nature might support the human from sinking under God's wrath, but also to give value and weight to his sufferings. Christ being God, his death and passion are meritorious. Christ's blood is called *sanguis Dei*, the blood of God, in Acts 20:28, because the person who was offered in sacrifice was God as well as man. This is an invincible support to believers; it was God who was offended, and it was God who satisfied. Thus Christ's person is in two natures.

**2. Consider Christ's two natures in one person, God-man.** "God manifest in the flesh" (1Ti 3:16). Christ had a twofold substance, divine and human, yet not a twofold subsistence;<sup>9</sup> both natures make but one Christ. A scion<sup>10</sup> may be grafted into another tree—a pear-tree into an apple; which, though it bear different fruits, is but one tree; so Christ's manhood is united to the Godhead in an ineffable<sup>11</sup> manner; yet though there are two natures, yet but one person. This union of the two natures in Christ was not by transmutation,<sup>12</sup> the divine nature changed into the human, or the human into the divine; nor by mixture, the two natures mingled together, as wine and water are mixed; but both the natures of Christ remain distinct, and yet make not two distinct persons, but one person; the human nature not God, yet one with God.

**B. Consider Christ, our Mediator, in his graces.** These are the sweet savour of his ointments, that make the virgins love him. Christ, our blessed Mediator, is said to be "full of grace and truth" (Joh 1:14). He had the anointing of the Spirit without measure (Joh 3:34). Grace in Christ is after a more eminent and glorious manner than it is in any of the saints.

**1. Jesus Christ, our Mediator, has perfection in every grace** (Col 1:19). He is a panoply,<sup>13</sup> magazine and storehouse of all heavenly treasure, all fulness. This no saint on earth has; he may excel in one grace, but not in all; as Abraham was eminent for faith, Moses for meekness; but Christ excels in every grace.

**2. There is a never-failing fulness of grace in Christ.** Grace in the saints is ebbing and flowing, it is not always in the same degree and proportion; at one time David's faith was strong, at another time so faint and weak, that you could hardly feel any pulse. "I said, I am cut off from before thine eyes" (Psa 31:22). But grace in Christ is a never-failing fulness, it never abated in the least degree, he never lost a drop of his holiness. What was said of Joseph in Genesis 49:23, may more truly be applied to Christ. "The archers shot at him, but his bow abode in strength." Men and devils shot at him, but his grace remained in its full vigour and strength: "his bow abode in strength."

**3. Grace in Christ is communicative.** His grace is for us; the holy oil of the Spirit was poured on the head of this blessed Aaron, that it might run down upon us. The saints have not grace to bestow on others. When the foolish virgins would have bought oil of their neighbour virgins, saying, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out" (Mat 25:8), the wise virgins answered, "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you." The saints have no grace to spare for others; but Christ diffuses his grace to others. Grace in the saints is as water in the vessel, grace in Christ is as water in the spring. "Of his fullness have all we received and grace for grace" (Joh 1:16). Set a glass under a still and it receives water from it, drop by drop; so the saints have the drops and influences of Christ's grace distilling upon them. What a rich consolation is this to those who either have no grace, or their stock is low! They may go to Christ, the Mediator, as a treasury of grace: Lord, I am indigent;<sup>14</sup> but whither shall I carry my empty vessel, but to a full fountain? "All my springs are in thee" (Psa 87:7). I am guilty, thou hast blood to pardon me; I am polluted, thou hast grace to cleanse me; I am sick unto death, thou hast the balm of Gilead to heal me. Joseph opened all the storehouses of corn: Christ is our Joseph, that opens all the treasures and storehouses of grace, and communicates to us. He is not only sweet as the honey-comb, but drops as the honey-comb. In Christ our Mediator there is a cornucopia,<sup>15</sup> and fulness of all grace; and Christ is desirous that we should come to him for grace, like the full breast that aches till it be drawn.

**Use one:** Admire the glory of this Mediator; he is God-man, he is coessentially<sup>16</sup> glorious with the Father. All the Jews that saw Christ in the flesh, did not see his Godhead; all that saw the man did not see the Messiah. The temple of

<sup>8</sup> **Cerinthians** – Followers of the early gnostic heretic Cerinthus, educated in Alexandria, contemporary of the Apostle John.

<sup>9</sup> **subsistence** – being; reality of existence.

<sup>10</sup> **Scion** – Adetached shoot or twig containing buds from a woody plant, used in grafting.

<sup>11</sup> **ineffable** – that cannot be expressed in words; unutterable.

<sup>12</sup> **transmutation** – the change of any thing into another substance, or into something of a different nature.

<sup>13</sup> **panoply** – complete armor or defense.

<sup>14</sup> **indigent** – needy; impoverished

<sup>15</sup> **cornucopia** – a horn of plenty; the symbol of abundance.

<sup>16</sup> **coessentially** – partaking of the same essence or nature.

Solomon within was embellished with gold; travellers, as they passed along, might see the outside of the temple, but only the priests saw the glory which sparkled within the temple; so believers only, who are made priests unto God, see Christ's glorious inside, the Godhead shining through the manhood (Rev 1:16).

**Use two:** If Christ be God-man in one person, then look unto Jesus Christ alone for salvation. There must be something of the Godhead to fasten our hope upon; in Christ there is Godhead and manhood hypostatically<sup>17</sup> united. If we could weep rivers of tears, out-fast Moses on the mount, if we were exact moralists, touching the law blameless, if we could arrive at the highest degree of sanctification in this life, all this would not save us, without looking to the merits of him who is God. Our perfect holiness in heaven is not the cause of our salvation, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ. To this therefore did Paul flee, as to the horns of the altar. "That I may be found in him, not having my own righteousness" (Phi 3:9). It is true, we may look to our graces as evidences of salvation, but to Christ's blood only as the cause. In time of Noah's flood, all that trusted to the high hills and trees, and not to the ark, were drowned. "Looking unto Jesus;" and so look unto him, as to believe in him, that so Christ may not only be united to our nature, but to our persons (Heb 12:2). "That believing, you may have life through his name" (Joh 20:31).

**Use three:** Is Jesus Christ God and man in one person? This, as it shows the dignity of believers, that they are nearly related to one of the greatest persons that is;<sup>18</sup> "In him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily," so it is of unspeakable comfort (Col 2:9). Christ's two natures being married together, the divine and human, all that Christ in either of his natures can do for believers, he will do. In his human nature he prays for them, in his divine nature he merits for them.

**Use four:** Admire the love of Christ our Mediator; that he should humble himself, and take our flesh, that he might redeem us. Believers should put Christ in their bosom, as the spouse did. "Lie betwixt my breasts" (Song 1:13). What was said of Ignatius,<sup>19</sup> that the name of Jesus was found written in his heart, should be verified of every saint; he should have Jesus Christ written in his heart.

Taken from, *A Body of Divinity*, one of Watson's masterworks.

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**Thomas Watson (c. 1620-1686):** non-Conformist Puritan preacher and prolific author of *A Body of Divinity*, *The Lord's Prayer*, *The Ten Commandments*, *Heaven Taken by Storm*, and numerous others. Actual place and date of birth unknown.

## OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

### London Confession of 1689

1. It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the mediator between God and man; the prophet, priest, and king; head and saviour of the church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world; unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified (Isa 42:1; 1Pe 1:19-20; Act 3:22; Heb 5:5-6; Psa 2:6; Luk 1:33; Eph 1:22-23; Heb 1:2; Act 17:31; Isa 53:10; Joh 17:6; Rom 8:30).

2. The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with him who made the world, who upholdeth and governeth all things he hath made, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her: and the power of the Most High overshadowing her; and so was made of a woman of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David according to the Scriptures; so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion,

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<sup>17</sup> **hypostatically** – *hypostatic* is a theological term denoting the union of full deity and full humanity in one person, Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup> **one of the greatest persons that is** – we believe Watson might better have said, "the greatest person that is, was, or ever will be," *Editor*.

<sup>19</sup> **Ignatius** (ca A.D. 35-110) – Bishop of Antioch, who opposed the gnostic heresies of his day that denied the full humanity of Christ. Died a martyr in Rome.

composition, or confusion; which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man (Joh 1:14; Gal 4:4; Rom 8:3; Heb 2:14, 16-17; Heb 4:15; Mat 1:22-23; Luk 1:27, 31, 35; Rom 9:5; 1Ti 2:5).

3. The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure, having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of mediator and surety; which office he took not upon himself, but was thereunto called by his Father; who also put all power and judgment in his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same (Psa 45:7; Act 10:38; Joh 3:34; Col 2:3; Col 1:19; Heb 7:26; Joh 1:14; Heb 7:22; Heb 5:5; Joh 5:22, 27; Mat 28:18; Act 2:36).

4. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake, which that he might discharge he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfil it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have borne and suffered, being made sin and a curse for us; enduring most grievous sorrows in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified, and died, and remained in the state of the dead, yet saw no corruption: on the third day he arose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered, with which he also ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father making intercession, and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world (Psa 40:7, 8; Heb 10:5-10; Joh 10:18; Gal 4:4; Mat 3:15; Gal 3:13; Isa 53:6; 1Pe 3:18; 2Co 5:21; Mat 26:37-38; Luk 22:44; Mat 27:46; Acts 13:37; 1Co 15:3-4; Joh 20:25, 27; Mar 16:19; Act 1:9-11; Rom 8:34; Heb 9:24; Act 10:42; Rom 14:9-10; Act 1:11; 2 Pet 2:4).

5. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of God, procured reconciliation, and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him (Heb 9:14; Heb 10:14; Rom 3:25-26; Joh 17:2; Heb 9:15).

6. Although the price of redemption was not actually paid by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefit thereof were communicated to the elect in all ages, successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed which should bruise the serpent's head; and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, being the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever (1Co 4:10; Heb 4:2; 1Pe 1:10-11; Rev 13:8; Heb 13:8).

7. Christ, in the work of mediation, acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself; 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 (Joh 3:13; Act 20:28).

8. To all those for whom Christ hath obtained eternal redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them; uniting them to himself by his Spirit, revealing unto them, in and by his Word, the mystery of salvation, persuading them to believe and obey, governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit, and 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; and all of free and absolute grace, without any condition foreseen in them to procure it (Joh 6:37; Joh 10:15-16; Joh 17:9; Rom 5:10; Joh 17:6; Eph 1:9; 1Jo 5:20; Rom 8:9, 14; Psa 110:1; 1Co 15:25-26; Joh 3:8; Eph 1:8).

9. This office of mediator between God and man is proper only to Christ, who is the prophet, priest, and king of the church of God; and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof, transferred from him to any other. (1Ti 2:5).

10. This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic office; and in respect of our alienation from God, and imperfection of the best of our services, we need his priestly office to reconcile us and present us acceptable unto God; and in respect to our averseness and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom. (Joh 1:18; Col 1:21; Gal 5:17; Joh 16:8; Psa 110:3; Luk 1:74-75)

Taken from, *The London Baptist Confession of 1689*; available from Chapel Library.

*From the pen of Charles Spurgeon (year is year of publication):*

“All ministries, therefore, must be subjected to this test—if they do not glorify Christ, they are not of the Holy Spirit.”—1894, *Sermon 2382*

“Come and take Christ, and you have found God. No man believes in Christ and remains without the favor of God.”—1892, *Sermon 2272*

“In Him [*Jesus Christ*] you have redemption; out of Him you are in bondage.”—1891, *Sermon 2207*

## OF CHRIST'S OFFICES IN GENERAL

Thomas Boston (1676-1732)

*“Even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a Priest upon his throne”  
—Zechariah 6:13.*

I come now to speak of the offices which Christ executes as our Redeemer, from the text now read.

In the 11th verse of this chapter, there is a typical action crowning Joshua the high priest with two crowns, which is applied and explained in the following verses as representing Christ in his offices, who has on his head many crowns. In the 12th verse, there is a prophecy of the incarnation of Christ, under the metaphor of a branch, as sprung from the family of David, and making but a mean appearance in the world, “as a root out of a dry ground.” In the verse where our text lies, we have the offices which he was to execute as our Redeemer; which are three.

**1. The office of a Prophet;** *He shall build the temple of the Lord*; that is, his own church, whereof the temple was a type, by the word of the gospel, which it is his work to promulgate<sup>20</sup> as a Prophet. For the church is “built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone,” and the revealer of those truths which the prophets and apostles taught.

**2. The office of a Priest;** namely to expiate<sup>21</sup> the sins of his people, to purchase peace for them, and to manage their cause with God.

**3. That of a King;** for he has *a throne*, which denotes his kingly office. He is *a Priest upon his throne*, denoting the reward of his sufferings, and the high dignity he is advanced to in consequence of his humiliation and satisfactory sufferings. And he is represented *as sitting on his throne*, not a King in name only, or an inactive monarch, but exercising acts of jurisdiction and government. In him all the glory of these offices is to meet: and these offices he shall hold and exercise in spite of all opposition: *He shall sit and rule upon his throne.*

The text affords foundation for the following doctrine, viz.<sup>22</sup>

**Doctrine: “Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.”**

<sup>20</sup> **promulgate** – to make known by public declaration.

<sup>21</sup> **expiate** – remove guilt by means of an atonement.

<sup>22</sup> **viz.** – namely.

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall shew,

- I. The verity of these offices in Christ.
- II. The necessity of his exercising them as our Redeemer.
- III. When he did exercise these offices.
- IV. Lastly, Deduce some inferences.

**I. I am to shew the verity or reality of these offices in Christ.** I say then, that Christ as our Redeemer is actually invested with these offices; he is truly a Prophet, a Priest, and a King; and also that he executes them, that is, performs the functions of, or what belongs to these offices. This clearly appears,

**A. From plain scripture testimony,** (1.) To his having or being possessed of these offices—He is a Prophet, that Prophet foretold by Moses, who was to be heard in all things that he should say; and of whom it is said, “That every soul that would not hear him, should be destroyed from among the people,” (Act 3:22-23), which passage is applied to Jesus Christ by the apostle Peter, and can agree to none but him, who teacheth as never man taught, even with authority and power—He is a Priest. So he is expressly called, (Heb 5:6). “Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec”; and in several other places of that epistle, where the reality, nature, and end of his priesthood are largely described—He is a King. “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psa 2:6). “Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies” (Psa 110:2). He has all the ensigns of royal authority: the ceremony of inauguration or anointing to his office, “I have anointed my King upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psa 2:6); a crown, (Psa. 21:3); a sword, (Psa 45:3); a sceptre, (Psa 65:6); subjects, (Luk 1:33; Joh 1:49).

(2.) The scriptures bear witness to his executing these offices. Hence he says himself, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life,” (Joh 14:6). He is *the way* to life and happiness by his death; *the truth* in his word, the sum and substance of all revealed truth; and *the life* in his Spirit, quickening and preserving his people by his power. He “of God is made unto his people wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption:” *wisdom* as a Prophet, *righteousness* as a Priest, and *sanctification* and *redemption* as a King.

**B. We learn this also from his name *Christ*, or *Messiah*, which signifies *the anointed One*.** I told you in a former discourse, that three sorts of persons used to be anointed under the law, viz. prophets, (1Ki 19:16); priests, as Aaron, (Exo 29:7); and kings, as David and others. But all these offices meet in Christ, who was anointed for the execution of them. Hence he says himself (Isa 61:1), “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” He is anointed to *preach good tidings unto the meek*, as a Prophet; to *bind up the broken-hearted*, as a Priest; and to *proclaim liberty*, as a King. He was not anointed with material oil, as the prophets, priests, and kings, under the Old Testament dispensation were, but with the oil of the Spirit; “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me [says he], because the Lord hath anointed me.” And God is said to have “anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows,” (Psa 45:7). Now, this unction signified, (1.) His being set apart to the Mediatorial work, and to these offices: the Father “sanctified him, and sent him into the world,” (Joh 10:36). (2.) His being fully furnished with gifts and qualifications suitable to these offices, in respect of his human nature, to which the Spirit was given, not by measure (Isa 11:1-2, &c.), but in fulness, not of sufficiency only, but abundance, not the fulness of a vessel, but of a fountain, in order to communicate liberally unto his people, (Joh 1:16). He was solemnly inaugurated to these offices at his baptism (Mat 3:17); at his transfiguration (Mat 17:5); and at his exaltation, (Act 2:36). And he was as solemnly called to these offices (Heb 5:4-5): “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: so also, Christ glorified not himself, to be made an high Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.”

**II. Let us next consider the necessity of his exercising these offices.** Christ’s incarnation and taking on him the work of our redemption was entirely voluntary, without the least shadow of coercion<sup>23</sup> and compulsion; but seeing he was pleased out of his great kindness to us, to become our Redeemer, it was necessary for our salvation that he should execute all these three offices. This will be clear, if we,

**A. Consider our misery by sin, ignorance, guilt, and bondage.** We were ignorant of the way of returning to God again; and therefore Christ as our Prophet must teach us. We durst not look him in the face; being covered with guilt? and therefore Christ as a Priest must make atonement, and remove our guilt. We were in bondage to sin and

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<sup>23</sup> **coaction** – force, either in restraining or impelling.

Satan, and could not return to God, nor recover ourselves out of our thralldom;<sup>24</sup> therefore Christ as a King delivers us, brings us back again, leading captivity captive. As a Prophet he gives light to the blind, as a Priest he brings merit, and as a King power.

**B. Consider the salvation which the elect were to be made partakers of.** It behoved<sup>25</sup> to be revealed unto them, seeing of themselves they could never discover it, being quite blind and ignorant; and therefore our Redeemer became a Prophet to reveal the things that concern our salvation unto us, and instruct us therein. It behoved to be purchased for sinners, who, being weak and unfit for any spiritual work, could never purchase it for themselves: therefore he became a Priest to purchase life and eternal redemption for us. It behoved to be applied by the power of his Spirit; for as sinners could not purchase salvation, far less could they apply it to themselves: therefore Christ became a King. The slaves could never have raised their ransom, nor known it after it was paid, far less before; and they were unwilling to come out of their bondage. And therefore it behoved our Redeemer to be invested with these three offices.

**C. Consider Christ as Mediator of the covenant, who behoved to deal with both parties, in order to bring them together.** God was offended with our sin and guilt; and therefore for us he behoved [was necessary] to be a Priest, to satisfy law and justice, and intercede for our pardon. We knew not what was in agitation<sup>26</sup> between the Father and the Son; and therefore he behoved [was necessary] to be a revealer of that grace, and merciful contrivance. We were unwilling to deal with God; therefore he behoved, [was necessary] as a King, to bring us to submit and yield to his government. The benefits of the covenant he behoved [was necessary] to purchase, reveal, and administer.

**D. Consider the work of conversion.** The soul must be enlightened, by the conviction of the Prophet, to see its misery, and the suitableness of the remedy: upon the sight of its misery, the soul would despair, were not the blood of the Priest to sprinkle the conscience; and the will would never yield, if it felt not the power of his conquering sword.

**E. Consider our daily necessities.** Are we not every day in the dark about something? What should become of us, if we had not the great Prophet to go to for instruction and direction? We are every day contracting new guilt: what would be our ease, if there were not a lasting merit and an abiding Advocate? Are we not always needing protection against our enemies? how then should we break through the armies of hell, if our King were not on our head, to subdue them under us?

**F. Lastly, Consider the promises,** which are the stay and staff of the Christian's life, without which they could never bear up. Christ's offices are the source and spring of all these. How precious are the promises of illumination, guidance, direction, &c. to the blind and those who know not the way? These flow from Christ's prophetic office. "Behold, (says Jehovah), I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people" (Isa 55:4). How precious are promises of peace, pardon, and reconciliation, to those who are disquieted with fears, with guilt and sin? These flow from his Priestly office. And the promises of protection and deliverance to captives flow from his Kingly office: All the promises are the purchase of the blood of Christ; and they are all yea and amen in him, and flow from and through him.

**III. I come now to shew, when Christ did execute these offices.** As he was the Redeemer of the church in all ages, so did he execute these offices in all ages of the church. In the Old Testament he was the great Prophet of the church; for it is said (Joh 1:18), "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He brought the glad tidings of salvation unto sinners in all the discoveries thereof from the first gospel-promise until his manifestation in the flesh. And he not only reveals the things concerning salvation unto men, but teaches them, and gives men an understanding to apprehend and know them. He was a Prophet unto the church in the wilderness: Hence it is said (Exo 23:20), "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice." And we read, that "by the Spirit he went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (1Pe 3:19); that is, unto the sinners in the old world, by the ministry of Noah, who, not repenting, were then, at the time the apostle wrote, in the prison of hell. He was also their Priest, interceding, on the ground of his future sufferings, for his people. Of this we have a remarkable instance (Zec 1:12), "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem,

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<sup>24</sup> **thralldom** – servitude; bondage.

<sup>25</sup> **behoved** – was necessary.

<sup>26</sup> **agitation** – a state of being, deliberated upon, with a view to contrivance, or a plan to be adopted.



and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?” And he was their King, the Captain of the Lord’s host, who led and conducted them, delivered them, from the Egyptian bondage, guided them through the howling wilderness, placed them in Canaan, instituted their whole religious worship and service, &c.

But more especially Christ executed these offices after his incarnation, and that in his twofold estate of humiliation and exaltation. These are his two estates, of which the apostle speaks (Phi 2:8-9), “Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.”

He was a prophet while on earth, and still is revealing by his Word and Spirit the will of God for the salvation of his people. The whole doctrine of the Bible was taught by him; and it is by him that all saving knowledge is communicated to this day, and will be to the end of time.

He was a Priest in his state of humiliation, as well as he is in his state of exaltation. He offered his sacrifice on the earth, and therefore was a Priest there. Hence saith the apostle (Eph 5:2), “Christ...hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.” Nor did he ascend into heaven, till by his sacrifice he had “purg’d away our sins” (Heb 1:3). And he continues an interceding Priest for ever (Heb 7:25).

He was also a King in his state of humiliation. He was born a King (Mat 2:2); went into Jerusalem as a King, in accomplishment of an ancient prophecy concerning him (Mat 21:5); owned himself to be a King before Pilate (Mat 27:11). It was the Lord of glory that was crucified (1Co 2:8). And he is now exalted to his throne, and is styled, “King of kings, and Lord of lords,” and will reign till all his enemies be made his footstool, and all his subjects be brought home to glory.

Here it may be observed, that these three offices, which Christ executes, are not to be divided, especially when they are executed in a way that is effectual for the salvation of the subjects thereof. He may indeed objectively reveal the will of God, and give laws to his church, as a Prophet, without giving them the unction whereby those who are savingly taught of God know all things necessary to salvation: and he may execute his regal office, as a Judge, in inflicting heavy judgments and calamities on his enemies, without subduing them to that obedience and subjection to him which is the privilege of real believers. Yet it is a certain truth, that wherever he executes one of these offices in a saving way, he executes them all. In this respect, though the offices are distinct, yet they are not divided. For whosoever is taught by him as a Prophet, so as to be made wise unto salvation, is redeemed unto God by his blood as a Priest, and is subdued by his power as a King, and made a willing subject to him: and all whose sins are expiated by him as a Priest, shall, in his own time, be savingly taught by him as a Prophet, and made his willing subjects as a King, in the day of his power.

A few inferences shall shut up this subject.

**A. How great and how glorious is our Lord Jesus Christ,** who was meet to bear all these offices at once, and exercise them at once, so as one does not mar or clash with another! He is glorious indeed in whom all the glory scattered amongst the typical persons is perfectly centered.<sup>27</sup> If it was an honour to Melchizedec, to be both a priest and a king, and David to be both a king and a prophet; how much more glorious is it for our divine Mediator to be a Prophet, a Priest, and a King, really possessed of these offices, and exercising them in their full extent, in a more efficacious manner than any person that was ever invested with any of them on earth!

**B. Let this commend Christ unto you as a full and a suitable Saviour.** There is no case a poor sinner can be in, but he will find the remedy of it in these offices of Christ. Art thou, O sinner, under spiritual darkness and ignorance? There is knowledge and instruction to be had from him. He is the light of the world and can give thee an understanding to know him that is true, he can give thee the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. Art thou under guilt and condemnation, laden with sin that is like to sink thee to hell? There is righteousness in him as a Priest to remove thy guilt. He is the atonement and propitiation for sin. He saves from sin and wrath. Art thou a slave to sin and Satan? He is a King, who came to destroy the works of the devil: he can break the dominion of sin in thee, knock off thy fetters, and subdue all thy spiritual enemies.

**C. Ye cannot take Christ, as a Redeemer, if ye take him not in all his offices.** He offers himself to sinners no other way. And what God has joined together let no man put asunder. Many pretend to take Christ as a Saviour to

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<sup>27</sup> **centered** – to come together at a common center.

save them from hell and wrath, who do not hearken to him as a Prophet to teach them the saving knowledge of God, nor submit to his laws and commandments. How many call Christ their Lord, and yet do not the things that he saith? O the folly of the world, that reject Christ's teaching, saying, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways! O the stupidity of those who despise Christ as a Priest, and think to recommend themselves to the divine favour by their own works of righteousness, which they substitute in the room of his righteousness! O the madness of those who contemn Christ as a King, refusing to submit to his royal authority, and who spurn at his laws and government! And how foolish are the princes of the earth that will not suffer Christ to reign freely in their dominions, but encroach on his authority, and make laws opposite to and inconsistent with his!

**D. Do ye receive Christ in all his offices**, giving up yourselves to be taught by him as a Prophet, in all things relating to your salvation, renouncing your own knowledge and wisdom; to be justified by his righteousness, and washed in his blood, renouncing all your own righteousness, as filthy rags, saying, "in the Lord alone have I righteousness," and counting all things but loss and dung, that ye may win Christ, and be found, in him, not having your own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith; and to be guided and conducted, ruled and governed by him as your Sovereign Lord and King, yielding a hearty and cheerful obedience to all his laws and commandments, and saying, "Other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name."

**E. Employ this mighty Redeemer in all the offices wherewith he is invested**, and which as Mediator he exercises for the benefit of the ruined race of mankind. Ye have absolute need of him in all these offices. Ye are witless and foolish, and stand in need of his wisdom to guide and direct you; and ye are ignorant both of yourselves and of God, and so require saving knowledge and instruction. Ye are guilty and condemned sinners, nay, daily offenders, and so stand in need of pardon, nay, of continual pardons. Ye are weak, and have no strength to combat your spiritual adversaries, and so require the exertion of his mighty power as King of kings to cause you stand against your adversaries. If you knew yourselves, and were exercised to godliness, you would see the absolute necessity of all Christ's offices for your salvation, and would every day bless God for such a complete and all-sufficient Redeemer. O make use of him daily in all his glorious offices, and honour him by putting employment in his hand, as your Prophet, Priest, and King.

Taken from, *The Complete Works of Thomas Boston*, vol. 1.

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**Thomas Boston (1676-1732)**: Scottish Presbyterian minister and scholar. Author of *Human Nature in Its Fourfold State* (1720), *Notes to the Marrow of Modern Divinity* (1726), and many other treatises and sermons. Born in Duns, Berwickshire.

## THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT DESCRIBED IN HIS PERSON, NATURE, AND OFFICES

William Wtaker (1548-1595)

*"There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"—1 Timothy 2:5.*

IN the words [we have],

**I. The only way of friendly intercourse between God and man**—It is through a Mediator; that is implied. Whether man in the state of innocency needed a Mediator, is disputed among persons learned and sober; but in his lapsed state, this need is acknowledged by all. God cannot now look upon men out of a Mediator but as rebels, traitors, as fit objects for his vindictive wrath; nor can men now look up to God but as a provoked Majesty, an

angry Judge, a consuming fire. And therefore were it not for a Mediator, (that is, a middle person interposing between God and us, who are at variance, to procure reconciliation and friendship) we could not but so dread the presence of this God, that, like our first parents, (in that dark interval betwixt their sinning, and the succour<sup>28</sup> of that promise, Gen 3:15) we should have endeavoured to hide ourselves what we could “from the presence of the Lord” (Gen 3:8).

**II. The only Mediator between God and men**—“One Mediator,” that is, but one. Papists acknowledge one Mediator of reconciliation, but contend for many of intercession. But as God, in the former part of this verse, is said to be one God, by way of exclusion of all others; so is Christ said here to be “one Mediator,” that is, but one.

This Mediator is here described partly by *his nature*: “The man” and partly by *his names*: “Christ Jesus.”

**A. His nature**: “The man” that is, “That eminent man,” so some; “He that was made man,” so others.

OBJECTION: “But why is this Mediator mentioned in this nature only?”

ANSWER: 1. *Negatively*: not by way of diminution,<sup>29</sup> as if he were not God as well as man, as the Arians<sup>30</sup> argue from this scripture; nor as if the execution of his mediatorship were either only, or chiefly, in his human nature, as some of the Papists affirm.

2. *Positively*: to prove that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah whom the prophets foretold, the fathers expected, and who had in that nature been so frequently promised: as in the first gospel that ever was preached (Gen 3:15), he is promised as the Seed of the woman. Besides, the apostle mentions Christ in this nature, only as an encouragement to that duty of prayer [which] he had before persuaded; to the like purpose he is mentioned in this nature only. (Heb 4:14-16).

**B. His names**: “Christ Jesus.” *Jesus*, this was his proper name; *Christ*, this was his appellative<sup>31</sup> name.

*Jesus*: that denotes the work and business for which he came into the world; as appears from the reason which the angel, that came from heaven as a herald to proclaim his incarnation, gives of the imposition of this name: “Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Mat 1:21). This name, though it be given to others in Scripture, yet to him eminently; to them as types of that complete Savior who should come after them, and “save His people from their sins.”

*Christ*: that denotes the several offices, in the exercise whereof he executes this work of salvation; Christ in the Greek being the same with Messiah in the Hebrew; that is, “anointed.” Under the law, the solemn ordination, or setting apart, both of things and persons, to special services, was by anointing. Thus we read of three sorts of persons anointed: kings, priests, prophets; and in respect of all these offices, Jesus is called Christ.

From the words thus briefly explained arise these two observations

**DOCTRINE 1: *That there is now no other way of friendly communion between God and man, but through a Mediator***—And, indeed, considering what God is, and withal what man is; how vastly disproportionable, how unspeakably unsuitable our very natures are to his; how is it possible there should be any sweet communion betwixt them, who are not only so infinitely distant, but so extremely contrary? God is holy, but we are sinful. In him is nothing but light, in us nothing but darkness. In him nothing that is evil, in us nothing that is good. He is all beauty, we nothing but deformity. He is justice, and we guiltiness. He “a consuming fire,” and we but dried stubble (Isa 6:3, with Gen 3:5; 1Jo 1:5, with Eph 5:8; Rom 7:18). In a word: he an infinitely and incomprehensibly glorious majesty, and we poor sinful dust and ashes, who have sunk and debased ourselves by sin below the meanest rank of creatures, and made ourselves the burden of the whole creation. And can there be any communion, any friendship, between such? “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amo 3:3). And what agreement can there ever be but through a Mediator?

If ever God be reconciled to us, it must be through a Mediator; because of that indispensable necessity of satisfaction, and our inability to make it (Rom 8:7). If ever we be reconciled to God, it must be through a Mediator;

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<sup>28</sup> **succour** – aid; help; assistance.

<sup>29</sup> **diminution** – discredit; loss of dignity.

<sup>30</sup> **Arians** – heretical followers of Arius (c. 256-336), presbyter of Alexandria, who denied the eternality of Jesus Christ and taught that there was a time "when the Son was not."

<sup>31</sup> **appellative** – pertaining to a common name; noting the common name of a species.

because of that radicated<sup>32</sup> enmity that is in our natures to every thing of God, and our impotency to it. And thus in both respects—that God may be willing to be a friend to us, and that we may not be unwilling to be friends to him—there needs a Mediator (2Co 5:19 cf. Joh 14:6).

**DOCTRINE 2: *That there is no other Mediator between God and man, but Jesus Christ.*** “And one Mediator” that is, but one. The fondness of Papists in their multiplicity of mediators, not only unto God, but to our Mediator himself, having no other foundation than only their superstition, cannot be of moment with them who labour to be wise according to Scripture. That those members of the church who are contemporary here on earth do indeed pray for one another, cannot be denied; but that they are therefore mediators of intercession, hath been denied by the more ancient Papists themselves. This title of Mediator is throughout the New Testament appropriated unto Christ (Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). And indeed there is none else fit for so high a work as this but only he.

**REASON 1: *The singular suitability of his PERSON to this eminent employment.*** To interpose as a Mediator betwixt God and men, was an employment above the capacity of men, angels, or any other creature; but Jesus Christ, in respect of the dignity of his person, was every way suited for this work. Which you may take in these four particulars:

**A. That he was truly God, equal with the Father, of the same nature and substance.** Not only *homoiousios* (of the like nature), but *homoousios* (of the same nature) as is excellently cleared by that famous champion for the deity of Christ against the Arians, Athanasius.<sup>33</sup> “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col 2:9). “It is not the fulness of the Divinity, but of the Deity,” thereby intimating an identity of essence with God the Father and Holy Ghost. Though the divine essence be after a several manner in the several persons of the blessed Trinity—in the Father, “without receiving it from any other,” in the Son by an eternal generation, and in the Holy Ghost by proceeding—yet it is the same essence of God that is in all three persons; because such is the infinite simplicity of this essence, that it cannot be divided or parceled. Thus Christ (not to speak any thing concerning the other persons) is styled so the Son of God, as one equal with the Father; for upon this it is that the Jews ground their charge of blasphemy against him, that “he said God was his Father, making himself equal with God” (Joh 5:18). The force of their reason lies in this: the natural Son of God is truly God, and equal with God; as the natural son of man is man, equal, and of the same substance, with his father. Angels and men are the sons of God by adoption; but Christ is the natural Son of God, the only Son of God, and therefore truly God; “I and my Father are one” (Joh 10:30). He “thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Phi 2:6).

For the further confirmation of this, take these arguments:

**1. He whom scripture honours with all those names which are peculiar unto God, must needs be God.** That Christ hath these names ascribed to him appears from these instances: He is not only styled God: “The Word was God” (Joh 1:1); but God with such additional discriminations, as neither magistrates who, because they are God’s deputies and vicegerents<sup>34</sup> here on earth, are sometimes called “gods” (Psa 82:6), nor any creature is capable of: “The great God” (Ti 2: 13); “The true God” (1Jo 5:20); “The mighty God” (Isa 9:6); “Overall, God blessed for ever” (Rom 9:5); “The Lord of glory” (1Co 2:8); “The Lord from heaven” (1Co 15:47); yea, that great name Jehovah “The Lord” (or, “Jehovah”) “our righteousness” (Jer 23:6).

**2. He in whom are those high and eminent perfections, those glorious attributes, of which no creature is capable, must needs be more than a creature, and consequently God.**

a. *He that is omnipotent*, whose power is boundless and unlimited, *must needs be God*. The highest power of creatures hath its *non ultra*; thus far may it go, “but no further”; but Christ is said to be “Almighty” (Rev 1:8), “The Lord God omnipotent” (Rev 19:6).

b. *He that is omniscient*, that searcheth hearts, that hath a window into every man’s breast, that can look into all the rooms and corners of our souls, that can see through all those veils and coverings which no creature-eye can pierce, *must needs be God*. And these are the excellencies ascribed to Christ: “He needed not that any should testify of man, because he knew what was in man” (Joh 2:25); “I am he which searcheth the heart and reins” (Rev 2:23); “He knew their thoughts” (Luk 6:8. So Mar 2:8; Joh 13:19, 21-27, &c.).

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<sup>32</sup> **radicate** – to plant deeply and firmly; to take root deeply.

<sup>33</sup> **Athanasius** (c. 296-373) – devout Christian, clear-minded and skilled theologian, and champion of the deity of Christ against Arius and Arianism for most of the fourth century. Born in Alexandria, Egypt.

<sup>34</sup> **vicegerent** – person appointed by a ruler or head of state to act as an administrative deputy.

c. *He that fills heaven and earth and all places with his presence, must needs be God.* And thus was Christ in heaven, while he was on earth: “The Son of man which is in heaven” (Joh 3:13); “That where I am” (Joh 14:3). Christ as God was then in heaven, when as man he was on earth; so as God he is still on earth, though as man he sits at the right hand of God in heaven: “I” will be “with you to the end of the world” (Mat 28:20).

d. *He that is immutable and eternal must needs be God.* “The heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture<sup>35</sup> shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end” (Psa 102:25-27). So is Christ “the everlasting Father” (Isa 9:6); “The same yesterday, and today, and for ever” (Heb 13:8).

e. *He that hath life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others, must needs be God.* And thus is Christ “the Prince of life” to others, (Act 3:15) and hath “life in himself” (Joh 5:26).

**3. He to whom those works of infiniteness are ascribed, to which no less a power is sufficient than that of Omnipotency, he must needs be more than a creature.** He that laid the foundation of the earth, that by a word commanded all things out of nothing, that preserves them from mouldering, and sinking into their first nothing again; that could pardon sin, destroy him that had the power of death, subdue principalities and powers, redeem his church, carry his people triumphing into heaven (Mar 2:5, 7-10, &c.; Heb 2:13-15), he must needs be God. And all these works of infiniteness are ascribed to Christ: the work of creation: “Without him was not any thing made that was made” (Joh 1:3); of conservation: “Upholding all things by the word of his power” (Heb 1:3); of redemption: “Which he purchased with his blood” (Act 20:28).

**4. He whom angels adore, before whom the highest and best of creatures fall down, giving that worship which is peculiarly due to God, must needs be more than a creature.** And thus it is to Christ: “Let all the angels of God worship him” (Heb 1:6; so Mat 2:11).

I might add the equality of Christ in all those solemn benedictions and praises upon record in the New Testament; all which argue strongly, that he must needs be truly God.

**B. As he is truly God, so is he complete and perfect man;** having not only a human body, but a rational soul; and in all things was like to us, sin only excepted.

That he had a real, not an imaginary, body, appears from the whole story of the gospel. He that was conceived, born, circumcised, was hungry, athirst, sweat drops of blood, was crucified; he that went from place to place, and had all those sinless affections which are proper unto bodies; had a true and real body: and such was the body of Christ.

That he had a human soul is clear also from the story of the gospel. He that grew in wisdom and knowledge, as it is said of Christ; (Luk 1:80; 2:40) he whose knowledge was bounded and limited, as was also said of Christ: “Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son” of man, “but the Father” (Mar 13:32). As God, he knew all things; as man, his knowledge was but the knowledge of a creature, and therefore finite. All which argue [that] he had a human soul, as well as body, and was complete man. The whole nature of man was corrupted, destroyed; and therefore it was needful [that] Christ should take upon him whole man, that the whole might be repaired and saved.

**C. He is God and man in one person.** He had two natures, but was but one person: there was a twofold substance, divine and human, but not a twofold subsistence;<sup>36</sup> for, the personal being which the Son of God had before all worlds, suffered not the substance to be personal which he took, although, together with the nature which he had, the nature which he took continue for ever. Thus both natures make but one Christ. He was the Son of God, and the Son of man; yet not two Sons, but one person. He was born of God, and born of a virgin; but it is in respect of his different natures. Thus was Christ David’s Son, and David’s Lord; Mary’s Son, and Mary’s Saviour and Maker too.

By the right understanding of this, we may be very much helped in reconciling those seeming contradictions which frequently occur in scripture concerning Christ. He is said to be born of a woman, and yet to be without “beginning of days.” Himself says his Father is greater than he, and yet he is said to be equal with the Father. All which may be cleared by this: he was but one person; and therefore, as in man, who consists of soul and body, the

<sup>35</sup> **vesture** – a garment; a robe.

<sup>36</sup> **subsistence** – something that has real or substantial existence.

actions of each part are ascribed to the person (the man is said to understand: it is not his body, but soul, that understands; yet this is ascribed to the person, though it be but the formal act of one part); so in regard of this hypostatical<sup>37</sup> union of two natures in one person, the acts of each nature are ascribed to the person. Thus it is said, the Jews “crucified the Lord of glory” (1Co 2:8); that is, they crucified that person who was the Lord of glory. In Acts 20:28, God is said to purchase his church by his blood: as God, he could not shed his blood; but it was that person who was God. Thus is Christ said to be in heaven, when he was on earth; that is, as God, he was in heaven. And so what is proper to each nature, by reason of the hypostatical union, is ascribed to the whole person.

**D. This union of two natures in one person is without confusion or transmutation;<sup>38</sup> the natures remaining distinct, and the properties and operations of both natures distinct, notwithstanding this union.** Some things are proper to the Godhead, of which the manhood is incapable; and some things proper to the manhood, of which the Godhead is incapable. We cannot say, the Godhead was athirst, weary, died; neither can we say, the manhood was the fountain of all being, the Creator and Preserver of all things; or that it is ubiquitous<sup>39</sup> or omnipresent; though we may say all of the same person.

It is observed by learned writers, that the dividing of the person which is but one, and the confounding of the natures which are two, have occasioned those grand errors in this article of faith, by which the peace of the church hath been so much disturbed. And suitably to these four heads that have been spoken to, there have arisen four several heresies:

1. The *Arians*, denying the Deity of Christ; against whom the council of Nice determined that he was “truly God.”

2. The *Apollinarians*, who maimed and misinterpreted his human nature; against whom the council of Constantinople determined, that he was “complete and perfect man.”

3. The *Nestorians*, who divided Christ into two persons, because of his two natures; against whom the council of Ephesus determined, that he was Godman in one person, “without separation.”

4. The *Eutychians*, who confounded these two natures in one person; against whom the council of Chalcedon determined, that he was God-man in one person, “without confusion or mutation” of natures.

But in the four above-named heads enough hath been said by way of antidote against those dangerous mistakes. And, all being duly considered, we cannot but see great reason why he should be called “Wonderful” (Isa 9:6). Well might the apostle cry out by way of admiration: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh” (1Ti 3:16).

**E. The singular fitness of Christ for this work of mediation arises from his being God-man in two natures, united in one person without confusion or transmutation.**

1. Had he not been truly God, he had been too mean a person for so high an employment. It was God that had been offended, an infinite Majesty that had been despised; the person therefore interposing must have some equality with him to whom he interposes. Had the whole society of persevering angels interposed on man’s behalf, it had been to little purpose; one Christ was infinitely more than all, and that because he was truly God.

2. Had he not been completely man, he had been no way capable of performing that indispensably necessary condition, upon which God was willing to be reconciled; namely, the satisfying of that righteous sentence [which] God had pronounced: “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17). That therefore he might be capable of dying (which as God he could not), and that the justice of God might be satisfied in the same nature by which it had been offended, it was necessary he should be man.

3. Had he not been God and man in one person, the sufferings of his human nature could not have derived that infinite value from the divine nature. We could not have called his blood “the blood of God,” as it is called Acts 20:28; it would have been no more than the blood of a creature, and consequently as unavailable as the blood of bulls, &c. (Heb 9:12; 10:4).

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<sup>37</sup> **hypostatical** – *hypostatic* is a theological term denoting the union of full deity and full humanity in one person, Jesus Christ.

<sup>38</sup> **transmutation** – the change of any thing into another substance, or into something of a different nature.

<sup>39</sup> **ubiquitary** – existing everywhere or in all places.

4. Had he not been God-man without confusion of natures, his Deity might either have advanced his humanity above the capacity of suffering; or his humanity might have debased his Deity below the capability of meriting, which is no less than blasphemy to imagine.

And this is the first reason, the singular fitness of Christ for this work, because of the dignity of his person.

**REASON 2:** *The singular fitness of Christ for this employment in respect of the suitableness of his offices.* There is a threefold misery upon all men, or a threefold bar to communion with God.

1. *The guilt of their sins*, which themselves are never able to expiate, or satisfy for.
2. *The blindness of their minds*, the cure whereof is too difficult for any creature-physician.
3. *Their bondage and captivity to sin and Satan*, which are enemies too strong for man to deal with.

Suitably to these three great necessities, Jesus Christ is anointed of God to a threefold office, of a Priest, a Prophet, a King; the former of which offices he exercises on our behalf to God, and the last two from God to us.

**A. The priestly office of Christ is the great, the only relief we have against the guilt of sin.** The work of the priesthood consisted, under the law, chiefly of these two parts:

1. *Satisfaction for the sins of the people* (Lev 4:15-19, &c).
2. *Intercession unto God on their behalf* (Lev 16:15-17).

Both which were verified in Christ our “great High Priest” (Heb 4:14). And hence it is that the apostle encourages us to “come with boldness unto the throne of grace” (Verse 16). What was done by others *typically*, was done by Christ *really*.

**1. His satisfaction**, in discharging those debts which his people had run into with Divine Justice to the utmost farthing. And this he did by offering up that one single sacrifice which was infinitely more worth than all those multitudes of sacrifices offered up of old, and from which all former sacrifices had their virtue and efficacy. The priests of old offered up creatures, but this High Priest offers up himself (Eph 5:2). They offered the blood of bullocks, &c (Heb 9:12-13), but Christ, the blood of God (Act 20:28). They offered many sacrifices, and Christ but one; but such an one as infinitely exceeded all their many; such an one as “perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb 10:14). One sun is worth more than thousands of stars, and one jewel than millions of ordinary stones; and so one Christ is more effectual than all Lebanon, or “the cattle on a thousand hills.”

**2. His intercession:** this is the other part of his priestly office. His satisfaction—that was performed on earth; his intercession is performed chiefly in heaven. By the former he purchased pardon and reconciliation (2Co 5:19, cf. v. 21); by the latter he applies the benefits he hath purchased. His sufferings, though they were but while he was on earth, yet the benefit of them extends to all ages of the church, both before and since his passion; and his intercession is that which sues out these blessings for his people; and therefore that great apostle joins both together as the foundation of all his comfort :

“Christ hath died, who still maketh intercession” (Rom 8:34); and both these are so full, so sufficient a relief against the guilt of sin, that as we have no other, so we need no other. As the high priests bore the names of the people before the Lord, so does Jesus Christ the names of his elect. But the high priests of old were at certain times only to appear before the Lord, once a year to enter into the holy place; but Christ, our spiritual High Priest, is not only entered, but sat down at the right hand of God, to negotiate constantly on his church’s behalf: “He ever liveth to make intercession” (Heb 9:12, 24-25; 10:12; 7:25; 1Jo 2:1). And besides the constancy, consider the prevalence<sup>40</sup> of his intercession; that God that regards the cry of ravens, that will not altogether neglect the humiliation of Ahab, that God that is so ready to answer and honour the prayers of his own people, cannot but much more regard the prayers of his only Son, praying by his blood, and praying for nothing more than what himself hath deserved and purchased. He that is such a great High Priest, is excellently fitted in respect of this office for the work of mediation.

**B. The prophetic office of Christ is the great, the only relief we have against the blindness and ignorance of our minds.** He is that great Prophet of his church whom Moses foretold, the Jews expected, and all men needed (Deu 18:15; Joh 1:24-25, 45; 6:14); that Sun of Righteousness, who by his glorious beams dispels those mists of

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<sup>40</sup> prevalence – efficacy; success.

ignorance and error which darken the minds of men; and is therefore styled, by way of eminency, “that Light,” (Joh1:8) and “the true Light” (Joh 1:9).

The execution of this prophetic office is partly by revealing so much of the will of God as was necessary to our salvation; partly by making those revelations powerful and effectual.

**1. In revealing the will of God.** For “no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (Joh1:18). The manner of revealing the mind of God hath been different in several ages.

a. *Sometimes making use of instruments.* Who were either *ordinary*: as, under the law, the priests whose lips should preserve knowledge (Mal 2:7; 2Ch 15:3); and under the gospel, pastors and teachers. Or else *extraordinary*: as prophets, under the law and apostles and evangelists, in the first plantation of the gospel. (Eph 4:11-13).

b. *For some time instructing his church immediately in his own person.* God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son (Heb 1:1-2).

**2. In enlightening effectually the souls of his people.** In causing the blind to see, and making them who were once darkness to be “light in the Lord” (Eph 5:8). Thus he instructs by his word and by his Spirit, (1Pe 1:12) and, by that sovereignty he hath over the hearts of men, opens their hearts to receive his counsels. He that can thus speak, not only to the ear, but to the heart, is also in this office excellently fitted for the work of mediation.

**C. The kingly office of Christ is the great, the only relief we have against our bondage to sin and Satan.** He to whom “all power is given in heaven, and in earth” (Mat 28:18). He whom God hath “raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church” (Eph 1:20-22; Heb 2:8; Phi 2:9-11; 1Co 15:27-28); it is He that restores “liberty to the captives,” and “opens the prison doors to them that are bound” (Isa 61:1).

This great office of a King he executes chiefly in these royal acts:

1. In gathering to himself a people out of all kindreds, nations, and tongues; (Gen 49:10; Isa 2:2-3) and in making them a willing people in the day of his power. (Psa 110:3).

2. In governing that people by laws, officers, and censures of his own ordaining. (1Co 3:2-8; Isa 33:22; Eph 4:11-12; Mat 18:17-18).

3. In bringing all his elect into a state of saving grace, and preserving that grace alive in their souls, which himself hath wrought, though it be as a spark of fire in an ocean of water; in carrying it on to perfection, and crowning it with glory. (1Pe 1:3-5; Eph 4:12-13; 1Th 4:16-17).

4. In restraining, over-ruling, and at last destroying all his and his church's enemies. (Psa 110:1). Those who will not submit to the sceptre of his grace, he rules with his “iron rod,” and will at last “dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel” (Psa 2: 9).

And thus is Christ, not only in respect of the dignity of his person, but the suitableness of his offices, the only fit Mediator between God and man.

The doctrinal part of this scripture being thus cleared, take one word by way of application.

## USES

**USE 1: This may inform us of the unspeakable folly and misery of all such as despise this Mediator.** There *is* but one Mediator, but one way of reconciliation unto God, but one way of having sin pardoned, our natures cleansed, the favour of God restored, our lost condition recovered, and that is through the mediation of Christ; and shall it be said of any of us, as Christ himself speaks of those foolishly obstinate Jews, they would not come unto him that they might have life? (Joh 5:40) There is in Christ the life of justification, to free us from that eternal death [which] the law sentences us unto; the life of sanctification, to free us from that spiritual death we are under by nature (Col 3:4); there is in him a sufficient relief against whatever is discouraging; and shall we be so little our own friends, so false to our own concerns, as to reject his proffered help, notwithstanding we do so highly need it?



**A. In rejecting this Mediator, you sin against the highest and greatest mercy that ever was vouchsafed<sup>41</sup> to creatures.** It is mentioned as an astonishing act of love in God, that He should “so love the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (Joh 3:16); so, beyond all comparison, so, beyond all expression. And O, what an amazing condescension was it in Christ, who, though he “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” was yet pleased to “make himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phi 2: 6-8; Joh 15:13; compared with Rom 5:8) and all this as our Mediator! There is not any mercy we enjoy, but it is the fruit of this mercy.

**B. You hereby read your condition.** The same with Pagans; the emphasis of whose misery consists in this, that they are without Christ and therefore without hope (Eph 2:12). Nay, the same with devils; who have no mediator interposing on their behalf to God; but, as they sinned with a tempter, so they perish without a Saviour. This is their misery; and shall this be any of our choice?

**C. Your condition is hereby rendered in this respect worse than theirs, in that you despise that mercy which they were never proffered.** The danger of this sin, you may find awakeningly set down by the apostle. (Heb 2: 3; 10:28-30; 12:25).

**USE 2: Be persuaded then to make use of Christ in all his offices, in whom you have an universal antidote against all discouragements.**

Are your consciences alarmed with the thunder of scripture-threats and curses of the law? Fly to that “blood of sprinkling,” the voice whereof is much louder than the cry of your sins (Heb 12:24).

Are you stung with the sense of your corruptions? Look up to Christ as your Brazen Serpent, that he may cure these wounds, and deliver you from death. (Joh 3:14).

Are you discouraged from prayer, because your prayers have hitherto been so sinfully defective? Consider the intercession of Christ, and take encouragement from thence. (1Jo 2: 1; Heb 4:14, 16).

Are you afflicted with your own unteachableness? Look up to him as the great Prophet sent of God, and beg of him the inward and effectual teachings of his Spirit, that he would speak as powerfully in his word to your dead hearts, as he once spoke to dead Lazarus. (Joh 11:43).

Are you disquieted with doubts and fears, in respect of your own perseverance? Though temptations are boisterous,<sup>42</sup> and corruptions violent, look up to him who sits at the right hand, till all his enemies become his footstool, that he would strengthen you. (Psa 110:1; Col 1:11).

Are you full of fears because of Zion, the afflictions, dangers, enemies of the church? Remember, he is the Head over all things to the church. (Eph 1:22).

In a word: whatever your afflictions or troubles are, the mediation of Christ is a sufficient relief; and therefore sit not down dejectedly mourning, like Hagar weeping at the fountain-side (Gen 21:16, 19).

Taken from, *Puritan Sermons 1659-1689, The Morning Exercises at Cripplegate*, vol. 5, sermon 13

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**William Whitaker** (1548-1595): Gifted Cambridge Puritan theologian. Author of *Disputations on Holy Scripture* and a contributor to the *Lambeth Articles*. Born in Holme, Lancashire.

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<sup>41</sup> **vouchsafed** –condescendedly granted.

<sup>42</sup> **boisterous** – turbulent; rough and stormy.

# A MEDIATOR

C.H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)

*“Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one”—Galatians 3:20.*

**THE** text does not strike you as difficult, but it is exceedingly perplexing to the interpreter. I was looking at one very old commentator, who is a great favorite of mine, and I noticed that he said that there were two hundred and fifty different meanings given by expositors to this verse. John Prime, in 1587, called it “an endless labyrinth.” “Oh,” I thought, “here is a nice wood to lose oneself in! Two hundred and fifty meanings!” Turning to a more modern author—a great reader, however—he said he believed that more than four hundred different interpretations had been put upon the passage. This was getting from a wood into a forest—a black forest, where one might lose himself hopelessly. Should I preach from such a text? Yes; but I must not worry you with these many interpretations. Some of them cannot be correct; some of them are, no doubt, nearly accurate. What does the passage mean? I will not venture to say that I know; but I will venture to say that I know how to use it for a practical purpose. If the Spirit of God will help us, we shall find our way, by a very simple clue, to the practical meaning, and make use of the words for our soul’s profit.

A mediator! What is a mediator? A mediator is a middleman, a go-between; one who comes in between two parties who otherwise could not commune with each other. Take the case of Moses. God’s voice was very terrible, and the people could not bear it; so Moses came in and spake on the behalf of God. The presence of Jehovah upon the mountain was so glorious that men could not climb the hill, and endure that great sight, so Moses went up for men to God. He was a mediator, speaking for the Lord, and making intercession for the people. This is what Paul alludes to when he speaks of the law being “ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator”; and here the apostle lets slip a sort of general statement—a truth which does not seem to be in connection with anything that goes before, or anything that follows after. He lays this down as a general rule: “A mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.” Paul hath dust of gold: his every thought is precious. He is looking at one object, and talking about it, and meanwhile he strikes a stone with his foot, and lays bare a vein of gold. As if he did not notice the treasure, he passes on, and leaves that vein of gold for you and for me. He is very fond of a digression. It is the style of Paul, and the style of every man who is very full and running over. He keeps to one argument, but he sees many others. While he is running towards the goal, he lets fall golden apples in the form of general principles which occur to him at the time. I understand Paul here, not as going on with any argument, but as letting fall a general principle, which I—taking it out of its connection—hope to use for our profit tonight. A mediator, a go-between, an interposer, is not a mediator of one, that is clear; but God is one. What shall we learn from this?

**I. First, A MEDIATOR IS NOT FOR GOD ALONE. A mediator deals with two persons—with God and man.** A mediator does not come because God wants, himself, any kind of mediator. He is eternally one; and if you view him as the sacred Trinity, yet he is a Trinity in unity. God is one. Some persons call themselves Unitarians who have no exclusive right to the name. All Trinitarians are Unitarians: though we believe that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, yet we confess that there are not three gods, but one God. Now, between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, there is no difference, no ground for contention; and therefore no mediator is needed to reconcile the divine persons. God is one: therefore our God does not need the mediator for himself. Who is the mediator wanted for, then? Why, for somebody else. That somebody else is here tonight, and I want to find him out. A mediator! Blessed be God, there is a mediator; but God does not want him for his personal purposes; *there is another person for whom the mediator is required.* Where is that other person? In the very gift of Christ as a mediator, in the sending of him in his divine and human nature, in Christ’s life, in Christ’s death, God had an eye to another party. God, looking out beyond himself to somebody else, provided a mediator. That ought to be a great thought to you; for if God is looking out of himself, why should he not look at you? If God has so

looked out of himself as to provide a mediator, that must mean that he is thinking of a creature who needs one. O my soul, may he not be thinking of thee? Though thou hast wandered from him, and lived for many years without him, may it not be that as there is a mediator, and that mediator cannot be for God alone, for God is one, that mediator may be intended to meet my need, and bring me back to God?

Now, according to the run of the text, and according to the run of Scripture, *that other party, for whom a mediator is sent, is man*. Man has fallen out with God. Man is at enmity with God, and God is necessarily angry with man, for he cannot but hate sin, and he must punish evil. God, therefore, is looking out on man; and here am I tonight, sitting in the house of prayer: is he looking on me? God desireth fellowship with men. God would have men brought near to him; why should not I, then, be brought near? Why should I live at a distance? Here is a mediator: that mediator cannot be for God alone, for God is one; he must be meant for a second person: may not I be that person? Let me lift my eye to heaven, and say, "O gracious Lord, grant that I may be that other person for whom this mediator is concerned!" for a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one, and would have me to be the second, that there may be work for a mediator to do. That is clear enough.

**II. Now go a step further. In the second place, A MEDIATOR IS NOT FOR PERSONS WHO ARE AGREED WITH EACH OTHER.** A mediator is not needed for persons of one heart and of one soul. I want no mediator between myself and my brother, between myself and my son, between myself and my wife. We are perfectly at one already, and no mediator is wanted. So, then, it is clear that, if there be a mediator, it is for two persons between whom *there is some ground of difference*. Mark well this truth, and catch at it. I am not going to say pretty things, or use fine words; yet I say to those of you who long to be saved—Catch at what I am saying; for it will help you. A mediator! That must be for persons between whom and God there is ground of quarrel. Sinner, sinner, this is good news for you! A mediator is not for a man who is perfectly at one with God; but for you, who have by many sins provoked God, who by the sinfulness of your nature stand at a distance from him. There is need of a mediator between you and the thrice-holy God; and it is for such as you that a mediator has appeared. Do you see this truth? A mediator is not a mediator between those who are at one. He is a mediator between persons who differ; and that is the case with you as to your God.

**III. A mediator also comes when THERE IS A GROUND OF DIFFERENCE WHICH CANNOT READILY BE RESOLVED.** For if the ground of difference is trivial, and the two parties are willing to be agreed, they soon settle the matter; but a mediator, an arbitrator, is brought in when the case is hard. Such is your case and mine by nature. We have sinned. God is just. He is full of compassion, and willing to forgive as far as the slight is against his person; but he is also King and Judge of all the earth, and he must punish sin. If he does not punish sin, he will be unjust, and the injustice which does not punish sin is cruelty to all righteous men. If our judges were tomorrow to say to every thief, housebreaker, murderer, "Go your way; you are forgiven," it would be kindness to them, but it would be cruelty to us. It would not be true mercy on the part of God to pass by sin without a punishment. He could not occupy his throne as the guardian of right and the protector of virtue if he did not execute judgment upon sin. Here, then, we perceive a barrier between God and the guilty: God must punish offenders; and man has offended. How can these two be brought together? Here steps in the mediator, one of a thousand, who can lay his hand upon both, compose this deadly feud, and make eternal peace. A mediator is not for those who are at one, but for those who have a ground of difference which cannot be readily removed.

**IV.** In this case, if there be any wish on the part of the offending one to be reconciled, it may be done; for the offended God is willing to be at peace. **THERE WOULD BE NO USE IN A MEDIATOR UNLESS THE PARTIES WERE BOTH WILLING TO BE RECONCILED TO EACH OTHER.** A mediator who comes in between two who have a continued hatred simply loses his time; but in our case God is willing to be reconciled. "Fury is not in me," saith he. But man is not willing to be reconciled to God until grace changes his heart. If there be on your part a wish to end your quarrel, and to be friends with God, you will be happy to know that there is a mediator. Jesus stands waiting to remove the barrier that divides you from God, and to reconcile you to God by his own death.

There must, however, in order to a mediator, an umpire, be *a willingness on both sides to leave the matter in his hands*. There must be a difference which they cannot remove, a difference which they wish to have removed, and a difference which they are willing to leave in the umpire's hands. God is willing to leave our matter with Christ. He has done so. He has laid help on One that is mighty. He has qualified and commissioned him to come as an ambassador, and make peace between him and guilty men. On your part, are you willing to hand the matter over to Christ entirely, to do what he bids you, to own to what he would have you confess, to repent wherein he tells you

you are wrong, to seek to be right wherein he warns you that you have failed? Will you give your case over to the mediator, and make Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to be your representative in the business? God trusts his honor in the hands of his Son Jesus. He is not afraid to leave everything that concerns his moral government and his royal character in the hands of the well-beloved. Will you trust your soul's eternal interests in those same dear pierced hands? If so, rejoice that there is a mediator between two parties that have long been alienated—a mediator between God and you. Take him to your heart tonight.

**V. Now we will go a step further. A mediator is not a mediator of one; but HE STUDIES THE INTERESTS OF BOTH PARTIES.** Such is our Lord Jesus Christ. Coming here on earth, did he come to save men? Yes. Did he come to glorify his Father's name? Yes. For which of these two purposes did he chiefly come? I will not say. He came for both, and he blends the two. He looks after the interests of man, and pleads the causes of his soul: he looks after the interests of God, and vindicates the honor of God, even unto death. Is he obedient, that he might magnify the law of God, and make it honorable? Yes, but he is mediator that he may deliver us from the curse of the law. Beloved, our blessed mediator is not a mediator for one. An umpire must not take sides, and a mediator that did not understand more than one side, and was not concerned for anybody but one side, would be unworthy of the name. Our mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, has both natures. Is he God? Verily, he is very God of very God. Is he man? Assuredly, of the substance of his mother, as truly man as any man among us. Is he most God, or is he most man? This is a question not to be asked, and, therefore, not to be answered. He is my brother. He is God's Son. Yea, he is himself God. What better umpire can we want than this divine human being, who can lay his hands upon us both, who counts it not robbery to be equal with God, and yet calls man his brother? A mediator is not a mediator of one, since he wears both natures, and espouses both causes. Oh, how dear to the heart of Christ is the glory of God! He lives, he dies, he rises again, to glorify the Father. Oh, how dear to Christ is the salvation of men! He lives, he dies, he rises again, and pleads for the salvation of sinners. He has the enthusiasm of humanity, but he has the enthusiasm of divinity as well. God must be glorified; he will die to do it. Man must be saved; he will die to do it. What a splendid mediator, who is not a mediator of one, but a mediator who takes up the cause of both sides!

**VI. In this capacity, OUR BLESSED MEDIATOR PLEADS FOR BOTH WITH BOTH; for he is not a mediator of one.** A mediator, when he would make peace, goes to this one, and he states the case, and he urges him, and pleads with him. When he has done that, he returns to the other party, and states the other side. He pleads with the one on the behalf of the other. Even so our Lord Jesus Christ comes in between God and man. Oh, how wonderful! He pleads with God for sinners, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And then he turns round, and pleads with sinners for God, and bids them turn to him, and be reconciled to him, since he is their Father and their Friend! A mediator is not a mediator of one. He who should come in and pretend to be a mediator, and then throw all the blame on one party, and care only for the interests of the other party, would not be a mediator, but a partisan. But, in this case, here is One who has something to say, not in vindication, or excuse for sin, but in pleading for mercy to the sinner. He has something to say to magnify the justice of God, and yet he cries for mercy. He prays, "Have mercy, O God! Have mercy upon the guilty!" I think that I have got the run of this text, somehow, if I cannot give you the exact meaning of the words. This meaning lies hidden within the words: a mediator is not for one, but he studies the interests of both.

**VII. It is, then, most clear that A MEDIATOR MUST HAVE TWO PARTIES TO DEAL WITH, or else his office is a mere name.** An umpire is chosen to keep order between two sets of people; but if only one set shall put in an appearance, you may go home, Mr. Umpire. There is evidently nothing for you to do. "A mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."

Now, tonight my Lord is here to be a mediator. God is willing to be reconciled to men; but if there be nobody here to be reconciled, if the preaching of tonight has no relation to anybody here, then it is quite clear that the office of Christ cannot be exercised. He cannot be a mediator unless there is a sinner here to be reconciled. Where is he? My Lord the mediator holds his court tonight, and sits here as an ambassador; but what can he do unless I can find him out the other party; unless I can find out the offender, the guilty one; and unless, finding him out, the Spirit of God shall bring him to say, "I wish to be reconciled to God, and I put my case into the hand of the great interposer"? If there is no sinner in the world, then there is no Savior in the world. How can he save if men are not guilty, and do not need saving? I tell thee, sinner, thou art necessary to Christ's doing any business! A man is a surgeon, and puts a brass-plate outside his door. Go and tell him that there is nobody ill in the parish. Prove to him that within ten miles there is nobody who has so much as a cold or a toothache: the good man may take down his brass-plate, and go and spend a month in the country. It breaks a doctor up if everybody remains in health.

Now, if tonight everybody here has kept God's law, and is innocent, guiltless, and fully at one with God, my Master has no mission here, nor have I. I have no need to speak of him to you, for "they that be whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." Therefore come I forth in the name of the mediator, to ask whether there be not some sinner here who will confess his guilt; some enemy of God, who will ask for peace; some giddy<sup>43</sup> young man who has lived without God until now, who will pray to be reconciled to him. If so, you make work for my Master. You give him something to do in that divine office of mediator, in which he takes such a delight.

And mark you this: in the case of a mediator, or umpire, the more difficult the case, the greater is the honor that comes to him if he can compose<sup>44</sup> it. If there be a very stiff quarrel between you and God, I commend to you my Lord as mediator; for he never failed yet to settle any dispute, and at this time he says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Solomon was great in handling hard matters, but a greater than Solomon is here. If thy life be all in a tangle and a snarl, he can put it straight. If thy differences with God are too solemn and weighty to be stated in words; if they press thy life out of thee, if they rob thee of sleep, if they bring thee down to hell's door; yet still my Lord the mediator can settle every difference, and make peace between thy soul and God. Art thou willing that he should exercise his office for thee? If so, the worse thy case the greater will be the credit that will come to my Lord as mediator, when he has removed every difficulty for thee.

Do not be afraid because there are so many sinful ones here, and such great numbers of you are still the enemies of God. I do not only invite one of you to come, but I would say: Come all, and the more the merrier. My Lord will have the greater honor if he composes this quarrel in hundreds of cases, all varying, but all grievous. You may come, the whole of you, and he will not shut his door against you. If you go to see some eminent doctors of this city, you must get there early in the morning and wait almost till night before your turn comes round; but there will be no waiting with my Lord and Master. If you wish to be friends with God, the mediator is ready to compose the difference, and to send you away happy in the love of the Most High.

"But may I come?" says one. May you come? When Christ sets up to be a mediator, why should you not use him as a mediator? I do not ask the doctor's pardon when, feeling ill, I knock at his door. He has put up his name as one that is willing to deal with the sick, and therefore I seek him. I take no liberty in coming. If he has undertaken an office, let him do his office. Poor guilty wretch, afraid to come to God, behold Christ puts up the name of mediator with intent that he should be used as such! He is the way of access to the Father. Come and use him for what he professes to be. Believe that he is able to do what, by his name and his official title, he claims to do. Now come, and be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ his Son, the mediator.

I have been nearly forty years now trying to preach. I cannot get at it yet. Oh, that I knew how to put this, so as to move every soul to come to God, and sue for peace! How willing must God be to be at peace with men, when he provides a mediator between himself and them! How readily ought you to come when Christ's honor and glory depend upon men's trusting their cases in his hands! I ask again, what is a mediator if no case is trusted to him? A king without a crown, a shepherd without a flock, a farmer without land, a physician without sick people—these are all in a poor plight. And Christ without sinners, where is he? His name is an empty thing, and his glory gone. Come, then, ye chief of sinners, come to Christ, and leave your case with him!

**VIII.** But I close by noticing that, although it be necessary, when the mediator begins, that there should be two parties—for he is not a mediator of one, and God is one—yet when the case ends, **A MEDIATOR MUST MAKE THE TWO ONE, OR HE HAS NOT SUCCEEDED.** Our Lord Jesus has broken down the middle wall of partition. He has really reconciled those who stood apart. Christ has done this for so many that I should like you sitting in the gallery to say, "Why should not he do it for me?" Hung up in Christ's private chamber there is a record of ten thousand quarrels between men and God that he has ended. Why should he not have my name among them? Why should he not end the quarrel between me and God? Why should he not reconcile me to the Father, so that the Father should give me the kiss of peace? He has never failed in a case yet. Some of the very worst cases have been submitted to his umpireship; but he has always succeeded. They know not in heaven of a single defeat of our Lord; and the gloomy shades of hell cannot reveal a single failure on the part of Christ, in the case of one poor, condemned, guilty soul, that came to him and said, "Make my peace with God." He was never obliged to say, "I cannot do it." There is no such instance. Come, my friend, if thou hast lived to be eighty, an enemy to God, thou mayest yet become his friend through this mediator! Come, my hearer, if thou be young and full of vigor, and if

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<sup>43</sup> **giddy** – heedless, thoughtless, wild.

<sup>44</sup> **compose** – to calm; to settle.

thy passions have led thee far away from purity, so that God may well quarrel with thee, thou mayest come at once, just as thou art, and Christ will make up the quarrel between thee and God! His pardoning blood can take away the guilt that angers God; and the water which flowed with the blood from his dear pierced side can take away the propensity to rebellion within thine own bosom. Surely I ought, by such words as these, to comfort some souls, and lead them to Jesus.

Reconciliation, wrought out by Christ, is absolutely perfect. It means eternal life. O my hearer, if Jesus reconciles thee to God now, thou wilt never quarrel with God again, nor God with thee. If the mediator takes away the ground of feud—thy sin and sinfulness—he will take it away for ever. He will cast your iniquities into the depths of the sea, blotting out your sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud your transgressions. He will make such peace between you and God that he will love you for ever, and you will love him for ever; and nothing shall separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I have heard of some mend-all which so puts the pieces of broken plates together, that the articles are said to be stronger than they were before they were broken. I know not how that may be. This I know: the union between God and the sinner, reconciled by the blood of Jesus, is closer and stronger than the union between God and unfallen Adam. That was broken by a single stroke; but if Christ join thee to the Father by his own precious blood, he will keep thee there by the inflowing of his grace into thy soul; for who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?

One thing more I have to say. Remember, if you refuse the mediator whom God appoints, you do peremptorily<sup>45</sup> refuse to be at peace with God. You could not have found a mediator; you cannot discover another now. There can be no other so every way suitable to come between us and God, as the Godman, Christ Jesus; bleeding on the cross to put away our sin, and risen from the dead to proclaim that we are justified. Now, if God takes out of his own bosom his own Son, and gives him up to die, that he may make peace with us, and we refuse him, we mean endless war with God. That is what it comes to. If you will not have Christ, you are baring your arm for an eternal conflict with the Almighty. You are putting on your helmet, and girding your sword, to fight with your Maker. You are rejecting peace when you reject Christ. I am sure that it is so. You are choosing war with the Lord of hosts. Well, sirs, if you will have it, you must have it; but I would implore you to repent at once of your insane choice. HOW can you fight with God? Why should you fight with God? To battle with God is to battle against your own best interests, and to ruin your souls. Heaven, the only heaven that a creature can have, is to be at peace with his Creator. There is no peace unto the wicked. HOW can there be? The only hope that we can have is to be agreed with God. If he has made me, he has made me for a purpose. If I fulfill that purpose, I shall answer the end of my being, and I shall be happy. If I do not fulfill that purpose, I must be unhappy; and in choosing to be the foe of God, I have chosen my own eternal damnation. God help us to repent of such a choice; and may we now lay hold on Christ the mediator, and trust ourselves with him, that he may make peace between us and God; and to his name shall be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

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**Charles H. Spurgeon** (1834-1892): Influential Baptist minister in England. History's most widely read preacher (apart from those found in Scripture). Today, there is available more material written by Spurgeon than by any other Christian author, living or dead. Born at Kelvedon, Essex.

## THE FULNESS OF THE MEDIATOR

John Gill (1697-1771)

*“For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell”—Colossians 1:19.*

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<sup>45</sup> **peremptorily** – absolutely; positively.

**THE** apostle, after his usual salutation to the church at Colosse, with a great deal of pleasure, takes notice of their faith in Christ, and love to all the saints, puts up several petitions on their account, of an increase of spiritual knowledge, holiness, fruitfulness, patience and strength; gives thanks for some special blessings of grace he and they were partakers of; such as meetness for heaven, deliverance from the power of darkness, a translation into the kingdom of Christ, redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins; and then takes an occasion to set forth the glories and excellencies of the person of Christ; who, he says, verse 15, is the image of the invisible God, the natural essential, eternal, uncreated, perfect and express image of his Father's person, whom no man hath seen at any time; and the firstborn of every creature: Not that he was the first creature God made, which will not agree with the apostle's reasoning in the next verse, for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. Next the apostle proceeds to consider Christ in his office-relation, and mediatorial capacity; and he is the head of the body the church, even of the general assembly and the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; all the elect of God, over whom he is an head of dominion and power, and to whom he is an head of influence and supply; he adds, who is the beginning, both of the old and new creation, the first-born from the dead, who first rose from the dead by his own power to an immortal life, is set down at the right hand of God, has all judgment committed to him, that in all things he might have the preeminence; for which he is abundantly qualified, since it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

**I. I shall inquire what fulness of Christ is here intended;** since the Scriptures speak of more than one: And,

**A. There is the personal fulness of Christ,** or the fulness of the deity, which is said by our apostle (Col 2:9), in this same epistle, to *dwell* in him; *for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. There is no perfection essential to deity, but is in him; nor is there any the Father has, but he has likewise. Eternity is peculiar to the Godhead: Christ was not only before *Abraham*, but before *Adam*; yea, before any creature existed; he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; which is, and which was, and which is to come (Rev 1:8): he is *from everlasting to everlasting*. Omnipotence, or a power of doing all things, can only be predicated of God. The works of creation, providence, redemption, the resurrection of the dead, with other things, in which Christ has been concerned, loudly proclaim him to be *the Almighty*. Omniscience, another perfection of deity, may easily be observed in Jesus Christ; he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man (Joh 2:25); he is that living word of God, who is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, or to whom we must give an account (Heb 4:12-13); who in a short time will make *all the churches*, yea, all the world know, that he it is *which searcheth the reins<sup>46</sup> and hearts*. Omnipresence and immensity are proper to God, and are to be found in Christ Jesus, who is in heaven [while] at the same time he was here on earth; which he could not be, if he was not the omnipresent God; any more than he could make good the promises he has made, that he will be with his people when they meet in his name, and with his ministers unto the end of the world; nor could he be present with the churches in all places, as he certainly is; nor fill all things, as he certainly does. Immutability only belongs to God: Christ is *the same yesterday, today, and for ever* (Heb 13:8). In short, independence and necessary existence, which are essential to Deity, are to be ascribed to him; for he is God of himself: Though as man and mediator, he has a life communicated to him from the Father; yet as God, he owes his being to none; it is not derived from another, he *is over all, God blessed forever*; and must, therefore, be *the true God and eternal life*. If any perfection of Deity was wanting in him, *the fulness*, all the fulness of it could not be said to dwell in him, nor he be said, as he is, to be *equal with God*. Now some think that this is the fulness designed in our text, and read it, *the fulness of the Godhead*, which seems to be transcribed from another passage in this epistle already mentioned; and suppose that this suits well the apostle's design in proving the primacy and preeminence of Christ over all things: But it should be observed, that the fulness of the Deity possessed by the Son of God, does not depend on the Father's will and pleasure; but is what, as such, he naturally and necessarily enjoys by a participation of the same undivided nature and essence of the Father and Spirit, and therefore cannot be the fulness here intended...

**B. There is a relative fulness which belongs to Christ,** and is no other than his body the church, of which he is head, who is called *the fulness of him that filleth all in all* (Eph 1:32); and for this reason, because she is *filled* by him. When all the elect are gathered, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and all *Israel* saved; when these are filled with all the gifts and grace of God designed for them, and are grown up to their just proportion in the body, and have attained to *the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*; then will they strictly be, and may be truly called so.

<sup>46</sup> **reins** – literally, the kidneys. In Scripture the inward parts, the seat of affections and passions.

Some interpreters are of opinion, that this is the fulness here meant: But, though the Church dwells in Christ, and he in her, and that through the good will and pleasure of the Father; and though she is complete in Christ, and is said to be his fulness; yet, properly speaking, she is not so yet, at least in such sense as she will be: Nor is she ever said to be *all fulness*, as in the text, and therefore cannot be here intended.

**C. There is a fulness of the fitness and abilities in Christ** to discharge his work and office as mediator, which greatly lies in his being both God and man, or in the union of the two natures, divine and human, in one person. Hereby he becomes abundantly qualified to be *the day's-man betwixt us*, able to lay his hand upon us both; or in other words, to be the mediator between God and man; to be both a merciful and faithful high-priest, in things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Job 9:33; 1Ti 2:5; Heb 2:17): For being man, he had somewhat to offer in sacrifice to God, and was thereby capable of making satisfaction in that nature which sinned, which the law and justice of God seem to have required, and also of conveying the blessings of grace procured by him to elect men; for which reason, he *took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham*. The holiness of Christ's human nature greatly fitted him to be an high-priest, advocate and intercessor, and very often an emphasis is put upon this in the sacred writings; as when he is said (1Jo 3:5; Heb 9:14; 1Pe 1:19); *to take away sin, and in him is no sin, to offer up himself without spot to God*, and we are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, *as of a lamb without spot or blemish*: And, indeed, such a redeemer is proper for us, such an advocate suits us, who is Jesus Christ *the righteous*: such an high-priest *became us*, [and] is every way fit for us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*. Being God as well as man, there is a sufficient virtue in all his actions and sufferings to answer what they were designed for; in his blood to cleanse for all sin, in his righteousness to justify from it, and in his sacrifice to expiate and atone for it. Being the mighty God, he could travel in the greatness of his strength, draw nigh to God for us, offer up himself to God, bear our sins, and all the punishment due unto them, without failing or being discouraged; his own arm alone was capable of bringing salvation to himself and us; there is nothing wanting in him, to make him a complete Savior of the body, and head of the church. Now, this may be taken into the sense of our text, yet is not the whole of it: For,

**D. There is dispensatory,<sup>47</sup> communicative fulness**, which is of the Father's good will and pleasure, put into the hands of Christ, to be distributed unto others: And this is principally designed here, and is,

**1. A fulness of nature.** Christ is the head of *every man*, and *the head over all things to the church*; God has appointed him *heir of all things*, even in nature: The light of nature is in him and from him; and he is *the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world* (Joh 1:9). The things of nature are all with him, and at his disposal; the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof (Psa 24:1); and he gives it to his chosen and special people in a peculiar manner: The blessings of nature are wisdom's left hand blessings, as those of grace are her right hand ones: *The world, and they that dwell therein*, are his, even the men of the world; the wicked part of the world are, in some sense, given unto him to be subservient to the ends of his mediatorial kingdom and glory. *Ask of me*, says the Father to him (Psa 2:8-9); and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession; which cannot be understood of the chosen vessels of salvation...

**2. A fulness of grace.** Christ is said to be *full of grace and truth* (Joh 1:14, 16); and it is of this fulness that the believer receives, *and grace for grace*; a sort of a fulness out of it, all kind of grace, every measure, and every supply of it.

a. *There is a fulness of the Spirit of grace, and of the gifts of the Spirit in Christ*; For he is the Lamb in the midst of the throne, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God (Rev 5:6); not seven distinct personal subsistencies; but the phrase designs the one blessed Spirit of God, and the perfection of his gifts and grace, signified by the number *seven*, which, in the most enlarged sense, dwell in Christ; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of fear of the Lord (Isa 11:2); rest upon him; he is *anointed with the oil of gladness*, the holy Ghost, *above his fellows*, any of the sons of men, who are made partakers of his grace and glory; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him (Psa 45:7). All those extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost, with which the apostles were filled on the day of Pentecost, were given from Christ, as the head of the church; who, when he ascended to heaven to fill all things, *received gifts for men*, and gave them to them, to qualify them for extraordinary work and service: And he has been in all ages since, more or less, bestowing gifts on men, to fit them for *the work of the ministry*, and for *the edifying of his body the church*, and *the residue of the spirit is with him*.

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<sup>47</sup> **dispensatory** – having the power to distribute God's wise providence to men.



b. *There is a fulness of the blessings of grace in Christ.* The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, as well as sure, it is full of all spiritual blessings. Now this covenant is made with Christ, it is in his hands, yea, he is the covenant itself; all the blessings of it are *upon his head*, and in the hands of our antitypical<sup>48</sup> *Joseph*, even *on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brethren*; and therefore, if any are blessed with these blessings, they are blessed with them *in heavenly places in Christ*;...particularly, there is in Christ a fulness of justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace.

(1.) *There is a fulness of justifying grace in him.* One part of his work and office, as mediator, was *to bring in everlasting righteousness*; a righteousness answerable to all the demands of law and justice, which should answer for his people in a time to come, and to last for ever: such a righteousness he has wrought out and brought in, by which justice is satisfied, the law is magnified and made honourable, and with which God is well pleased: whence he is truly called, the Lord our righteousness and the Sun of righteousness and strength (Jer 23:6, Mal 4:2), from whom alone we have our righteousness. Now this righteousness wrought out by the Son of God, is in him, and with him, as the author and subject of it; and to him are sensible souls directed, to him they look, and to him they apply for it; and every one for themselves say, as their faith grows up, *surely, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*: From him they receive this *gift of righteousness*, and with it an *abundance of grace*, a flow, an overflow of it. As it was freely wrought out for them, it is freely imputed to them, and bestowed upon them, without any consideration of their works; and is so full and large, that it is sufficient for the justification of all the elect, and that from *all things*, from which they could not be justified in any other way.

(2.) *There is also a fulness of pardoning grace in Christ.* The covenant of grace has largely and fully provided for the forgiveness of the sins of all the Lord's people. One considerable branch of it is (Heb 8:12), *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* In consequence of this covenant, and the engagements of Christ in it, his blood has been *shed for many, for the remission of sins*. The issue of which is, that in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Mat 26:28, Eph 1:7), which, as it is entirely free, the riches, the glory of grace and mercy are eminently displayed in it, so it is large and abundant, full and complete; for God, pursuant to the covenant of his grace, and looking upon the precious blood of his Son, forgives all the trespasses of his people, past, present, and to come: Through the man Christ Jesus is preached unto us, and bestowed upon us, the free and full forgiveness of our transgressions. This is the declaration of the gospel; and what makes it good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners, that *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*.

(3.) *There is likewise a fulness of adopting grace in Christ.* The blessing of the adoption of children springs originally from the love of the Father: *Behold*, says the apostle John (1Jo 3:1), what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be call the sons of God. Predestination to it is by, or through Jesus Christ: The enjoyment of it is greatly owing to the redemption which is in him, for he came to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Gal 4:5). The right, the privilege, the liberty of becoming the sons of God, is actually given forth from Christ, to them that receive him and believe in him; so that those who are the children of God, are openly and declaratively so *by faith in Christ Jesus*.

(4.) *Add to this, that there is a fulness of sanctifying grace in Christ.* The whole stock and fund of the saints holiness is in Christ's hands; he is their *sanctification*, as well as their *righteousness*; it is of his fulness they receive one sort of grace, as well as another: All the holiness is derived to them from Christ, which they are made partakers of in life, and which is made perfect in the hour of death; for without holiness, even perfect holiness, no man shall see the Lord (Heb 12:14). In the first work of conversion, a large measure of sanctifying grace is given forth from Christ; when the grace of our Lord is exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus (1Ti 1:14). As he is *the author and finisher of faith*, he is the author and finisher of every other grace; every measure of it is owing to him, every supply of it is from him: There is a fulness of all grace in Christ, to supply all our wants, support our persons, and to carry us safely and comfortably through this wilderness: There is a fulness of light and life, of wisdom and knowledge, strength and ability, joy, peace, and comfort in him: all spiritual light is in him, and from him. As all that light which was scattered throughout the whole creation, was on the fourth day collected together, and out into that great luminary the sun, so all fulness of spiritual light dwells in Christ, *the Sun of righteousness*, from whom we receive all we have: which by degrees grows, increases, and *shines more and more unto the perfect day*: All spiritual life is in him, *with him is the fountain* of it; from him we have the living principle of grace, and by him

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<sup>48</sup> **antitypical** – the fulfillment of an earlier type or symbol.

it is maintained in us unto eternal life. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, and from him they are communicated to us. As in him is righteousness to justify us, so in him is strength to enable us to oppose every corruption, withstand every enemy, exercise every grace, and discharge every duty. Though we cannot do any thing of ourselves, and without him can do nothing; yet through him strengthening us we can do all things. In a word, there is a full fountain, and a solid foundation of all spiritual peace, joy and comfort in Christ: *If there is any consolation* to be had any where, it is *in Christ*; it arises from and is founded upon his person, blood, righteousness and sacrifice; in a view of which a believer is sometimes *filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*: For as *the sufferings of Christ*, those which we suffer for Christ, *abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ* (2Co 1:5). There is a grace in Christ sufficient for us to bear us up under, and bear us through all the trials, exercises and afflictions of life; to make us fruitful in every good work: and to cause us to hold on and out unto the end. There is a fulness of fructifying<sup>49</sup> and persevering grace in Christ.

c. *There is a fulness of the promise of grace in Jesus*. There are many *exceeding great and precious promises*, suited to the various cases and circumstances of the children of God. There never has been a case a believer has been in since the creation of the world, and I may venture to say, there never will be one to the end of it, but there is a promise given forth suitable to it. The covenant of grace is full of these promises; from thence they are transcribed into the gospel, and are spread all over the Bible; and what is best of all, “all the promises of God are in Christ yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us” (2Co 1:20); they are all put into his hands for our use, and are all safe and secure in him, who will see to it, that they are actually and fully accomplished, not only the grand *promise of life*, even of eternal life, which God (that cannot lie) promised before the world began, and which is in Christ Jesus, but all other promises are in him likewise: So that whosoever are partakers of them, are partakers of them *in him, by the gospel*.

Besides the fulness of nature, and of grace, which is in Christ,

**3. There is also the fulness of glory, and of eternal life and happiness.** God has not only put the grace of his people, but their glory also, into the hands of Christ. Their portion, their inheritance, is reserved for them with him: where it is safe and secure. They are *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*; so that their estate is sure unto them. As their *life of grace*, so their *life of glory is hid with Christ in God*; and *when Christ who is their life shall appear, then shall they appear with him in glory*; which will greatly consist in being like Christ, and seeing him as he is. The saints will be like to Christ, both in body and soul. Their bodies which are redeemed by his blood, and are members of him, will be *fashioned like unto his glorious body*, in spirituality, immortality, incorruption, power and glory; and *will shine forth like the sun*, with brightness and lustre, *in the kingdom of their Father*. Their souls will be made like to Christ in knowledge and holiness, so far as creatures are capable of. They will then *see him as he is*; behold his mediatorial glory, view him *for themselves, and not another*; will be inexpressibly delighted with the excellencies of him, and always continue with him, and be in his presence; *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*. Now all this is secured in Christ for the saints; all which they may expect; on this they may depend; for *this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son* (1Jo 5:11). Thus all fulness of nature, grace and glory, is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I proceed,

**II. To give some account of the nature and properties of this fulness; particularly the fulness of grace, And,**

**A. It is a very ancient.** We are not to suppose that this fulness was first put into Christ’s hands upon his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God; for though he is then said to have received gifts for men, and to have given them to them, because there was then an extraordinary distribution of the gifts and grace of the Spirit to the apostles, yet God had given the Spirit to Christ without measure long before. The disciples in the days of his flesh, in his state of humiliation, when *the word being made flesh dwelt among them, beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth* (Joh 1:14). And long before them Isaiah saw this branch of his glory, *his train filling the temple*. All the Old-Testament saints looked to him, believed in him, and depended on him, as their living Redeemer; one and all said, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength* (Isa 45:24). They were supplied with both out of this fulness: they *drew water with joy, out of the wells of salvation* in Christ; and were saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, even as we are. Yea, this matter is to be carried still higher, not only to Old Testament times, or to the foundation of the world, but even into eternity itself. For as early as the elect were given to Christ, so early was grace given to them in him; which was before the world began; as early as the choice of them in him, which was before the foundation of the world, so early were they blessed with all spiritual blessings in him;

<sup>49</sup> fructify – to make fruitful or productive.

as early as Christ was the mediator of the covenant, and that was as early as the covenant itself, which was from everlasting; so early was this fulness of grace deposited with him. *The Lord possessed me*, says Wisdom or Christ, that is, with this all fulness of grace, *in the beginning of his ways* of grace; he began with this, before *his works of old*, of creation and providence; *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was* (Pro 8:22-23), as the mediator of the covenant, entrusted with all the blessings and promises of it. Now this serves greatly to set forth the eternity of Christ's person, the antiquity of his office, and the early regard Jehovah had to his chosen people; which strongly expresses his wondrous love, and distinguishing grace towards them.

**B. This fulness is a very rich**, and an enriching one. It is a fulness of truth, as well as of grace; for Christ is *full of grace and truth*, which the gospel largely opens to us; every truth of which is a pearl of great price, and all together make up an inestimable treasure, more valuable than all the riches of the *Indies*. Now in Christ *are laid up and hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* (Col 2:3). What a rich and enriching stock, fund, and fullness of truth, is there in Jesus Christ! The promises of grace are *precious* ones to all those who have seen grace that is in them, to whom they have been opened by the Holy Spirit of promise, and have been by him suitably and seasonably applied; to such they are exceeding precious indeed, they are like *apples of gold in pictures of silver*, rejoiced at more than at a great spoil, and preferred to all the riches of the world; and these, as has been observed, are all *in Christ*. There are not only riches of grace, but riches of glory in Christ, even *unsearchable riches*, which can never be traced out or told over; which are solid and substantial, satisfying, lasting and durable. Through the poverty of Christ we are enriched with those riches here and hereafter; and this serves much to enhance the glory, excellency, freeness and fulness of his grace: For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich (2Co 8:9).

**C. This fulness is entirely free**, with respect to the spring and source of it, the distribution of it, the persons concerned in it, and the manner in which they receive from it. The source and spring of it is the sovereign goodwill and pleasure, grace, and love of God. *It pleased the Father* to lay it up in Christ: He was not induced to it by any thing in his people, or done by them; for it was laid up in Christ antecedent to their having done good or evil. He could not be influenced by their faith and holiness to do it; since these are received out of it: For of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace (Joh 1:14); one grace as well as another, every sort of grace, and faith, and holiness among the rest: nor could he be moved to it by their good works; seeing these are fruits of that grace which is derived from it. It is indeed said to be for them that *fear him*, and *trust in him*; but these phrases are only descriptive of the persons who have received from it, and are made so by it; not that their fear and faith were the causes or conditions of it: for then the goodness of God would not be so largely displayed in it, as the *Psalmist* (Psa 31:19) suggests when he says, *O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought*, or appointed, or made *for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!* And as it was freely laid up, it is as freely distributed; our Lord gives it out *liberally, and upbraideth not*; he gives this *living water* to all that ask it of him, yea, to them that ask it not; he gives more grace, large measures, fresh supplies of it, to his humble saints, readily and cheerfully, as they stand in need of them; he withholds no good things from them that walk uprightly. The persons to whom it is given are very unworthy, and yet heartily welcome. Whoever is *thirsty*, and has a will to come, may *come and take the water of life freely*; such *who have no money*, nor anything that is of a valuable consideration, who have neither worth, nor worthiness of their own, may *come and buy wine and milk, without money, and without price*. And whereas this fullness of Christ, this *well of grace is deep*, and we have *nothing to draw with*, faith, the bucket of faith is freely given: that grace, by which we receive of it, is *not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*; and with this we *draw water with joy out of the full wells of salvation*, which are in Christ Jesus.

**D. This fulness is inexhaustible**. As the whole family in heaven and in earth is named of Christ, so it is maintained by him. If by the family in heaven we understand the angels, as it was usual with the Jews to call them a family, and *the family above*; what large measures of confirming grace have the elect angels received from Christ! For he is the head of grace to them, as well as to us: we are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power (Col 2:10). Or, if by *the family in heaven*, is meant the saints who are gone to glory; what a vast deal of grace has been expended out of this fullness to bring them thither! The grace of our Lord has been abundant, superabundant; it has flowed, and overflowed; there has been a pleonasm,<sup>50</sup> a redundancy of it in the case of a single believer. O what must the aboundings of it have been to all the saints in all ages, times and places, since the foundation of the world! And still there is enough for the *family on earth* yet behind. Christ is still *the fountain* of all his *gardens*, the churches, a

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<sup>50</sup> **pleonasm** – the use of more words than are required to express an idea; redundancy.

*well of living water*, which supplies them all, and *streams from Lebanon*, which sweetly refresh and delight them. His *grace* is still *sufficient for them*; it is *the same today, yesterday, and forever*. I go on.

**III. To shew in what sense this fulness may be said to dwell in Christ, and what that phrase imports.** And,

**A. It expresses the being of it in him.** It is not barely in intention, in design and purpose, but it is really and actually in him; it is given to him, out into his hands, and laid up in him: And hence it comes to be communicated to the saints; because it is in him, *they receive of it, and grace for grace*. He is the head in whom it dwells, they are members of him, and so derive it from him. He is theirs, and they are his, and so all that he has belongs unto them. His person is theirs, in whom they are accepted with God; his blood is theirs, to cleanse them from all sin; his righteousness theirs, to justify them from it; his sacrifice is theirs to atone for it; and his fullness theirs, to supply all their wants; and out of this they are so filled, as to be said to be full of the holy Ghost, full of faith, and full of goodness (Act 6:3, 8; Rom 15:14): not that they are so in such sense as Christ is; for this fulness is in him *without* measure, in them *in* measure; it is in him as an overflowing fountain, but in them as streams from it. This fulness is in Christ, and in no other. The wells of salvation are only in him, there is salvation in no other; it is in vain to expect it from any other quarter; no degree of spiritual light and life, grace and holiness, peace, joy and comfort, is to be had elsewhere. Such therefore who neglect, overlook, or forsake this fountain of living waters, hew out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water (Jer 2:13). Wherefore it becomes all who have any knowledge of themselves, any sense of their wants, and views of the fullness of Christ, to apply to him; for *whither should any go*, but to him who *has the words of eternal life*?

**B. It imports the continuance of it with him.** It is an abiding fulness, and yields a continual, daily supply; believers may go every day to it, and receive out of it; the grace that is in it will be always sufficient for them, even to the end of their days. And to this abiding nature of it, the perpetual dwelling of it in Christ, is owing the saints final perseverance; for, because he lives as full of grace and truth, they do and shall live also. Great reason have believers to be *strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus* (2Ti 2:1). This fullness will abide in Christ unto the end of time, until all the elect are gathered in, and they are filled with grace, and made meet for glory. There will be as much grace, and as large a sufficiency of it for the last believer that is born into the world, as for the first. Besides, there is a fulness of glory in Christ, which will abide in him to all eternity; out of which the saints will be continually receiving glory for glory, as here grace for grace; they will have all their glory from and through Christ then, as they now have all their grace from him and through him.

**C. It denotes the safety and security of it.** Everything that is in Christ is safe and secure. The persons of God's elect being in him are in the utmost safety, none can pluck them out of his hands. Their grace being there, it can never be lost; their glory being there, they can never be deprived of it. Their *life*, both of grace and glory, is *hid with Christ in God*, and so out of the reach of men and devils. Christ is the storehouse and magazine of all grace and glory, and a well fortified one; he is a rock, a strong tower, a place of defense, such an one as the gates of hell cannot prevail against. I hasten,

**IV. To make it appear, that the being and dwelling of this fulness in Christ is owing to the good-will and pleasure of the Father.** The phrase, *The Father*, is not indeed in the original text, but is rightly supplied by our translators; since he is expressly mentioned in the context, and is spoken of as he who makes the saints meet to be partakers of the heavenly glory, who delivers from the power and dominion of sin and Satan, and translates into the kingdom of his dear Son, (vv 12-13), and as he who by Christ, reconciles all things to himself, whether in heaven or in earth, even such who were alienated and enemies in their minds unto him, (vv 20-21). Now,

**A. It is owing to the good-will of the Father to his Son,** that this fullness dwells in him. Christ was ever as mediator, *as one brought up with him, daily his delight, rejoicing always before him* (Pro 8:30); and so he always continued to be; and as an evidence and demonstration of it, he treasured up all fullness in him. This seems to be the import of our Lord's words, when he says, *the Father loveth the Son, and hath put all things into his hands* (Joh 3:35); that is, he hath shewed his love to him, and given a full proof of it, by committing all things to him, to be at his will and disposal. This sense of the words well agrees with the context, which represents Christ in his mediatorial capacity, as exalted by the Father, with this view, *that in all things he might have the preeminence*.

**B. It is owing to the good-will of the Father to the elect,** that this fullness dwells in Christ; for it is for their sakes, and upon their account, that it is put into the hands of Christ. God has loved them with an everlasting love; and therefore takes everlasting care of them, and makes everlasting provision for them. They were the objects of

his love and delight from everlasting; and therefore he set up Christ as mediator from everlasting, and possessed him with this fulness for them...

**C. It pleased the Father that this fulness should dwell in Christ;** because he considered him as the most proper person to trust with it. It is well for us, that it is not put into our own hands at once, but by degrees, as we stand in need of it; it would not have been safe in our own keeping. It is well for us, it was not put into the hands of *Adam*, our first parent, our natural and federal head, where it might have been lost. It is well for us, it was not put into the hands of angels, who, as they are creatures, and so unfit for such a trust, were also in their creation-state mutable creatures, as the apostasy of many of them abundantly declares. The Father saw that none was fit for this trust but his Son, and therefore it pleased him to commit it to him.

**D. It is the will and pleasure of God** that all grace should come to us through Christ. If God will commune with us, it must be from off the mercy-seat, Christ Jesus. If we have any fellowship with the Father, it must be with him through the Mediator. If we have any grace from him, who is the God of all grace, it must come to us in this way; for Christ alone is *the way, the truth, and the life* (Joh 14:6); not only the way of access to God, and acceptance with him, but of the conveyance of all grace, of all the blessings of grace unto us. Now inasmuch as it is the pleasure of the Father that all fulness of nature, grace, and glory, should dwell in Christ the Mediator, this,

1. Sets forth the glory of Christ. One considerable branch as Christ's glory, as Mediator, lies in his being *full of grace and truth*; which souls sensible of their own wants, behold with pleasure. It is this which makes him *fairer than the children of men*, because *grace*, the fulness of it, is *poured into his lips*. It is this which makes him appear to be *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand*; and look so lovely, even *altogether lovely*, in the view of all that know him. It is this which makes him so exceeding *precious* to, and so highly valued and esteemed by, all them that *believe*.

2. This instructs us where to go for a supply. The Egyptians, in the seven years of famine, when they cried to Pharaoh for bread, he having set Joseph over his storehouses, bids them go to him, saying, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do (Gen 41:55). Christ is by his Father made head over all things to the church. He is our antitypical Joseph, who has our whole stock of grace in his hand: All the treasures of it are hid in him; he has the entire disposal of it, and therefore to him should we go for whatsoever we stand in need of. And this we maybe sure of, that there is nothing we want but what is in him: and nothing in him suitable for us, but he will readily and freely communicate to us.

3. This directs us to give all the glory of what we have to God, through Christ: For since he is the way of the conveyance of all grace unto us, *by him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips; giving thanks unto his name* (Heb 13:15). It is by the grace of God in Christ, through him and from him, we are what we are; it is that which has made us to *differ from another*. We have nothing but what we have in a way of receiving, nothing but what we have received out of the fulness of Christ; and therefore we should not *glory*, as though we had not received it: But if any of us glory, let us glory in this; that Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (1Co 1:30).

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