

THE 1689 BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

Christ the Mediator (1)

A. Introduction

1. Two things we are commanded to do as elders are to watch and to hold.

We are to watch what we believe, to make sure we are believing what God's Word says.

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:16)

We are to hold firmly to the truths taught in God's Word.

"He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it." (Titus 1:9)

It is vital we do these two things, not just for our own sake, but also for the members of this church and in fact those who live in the community God has placed us in.

To help us to watch and to hold, we are spending our elders' meeting working through the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith a paragraph or so at a time.

2. In Chapter 7 of the Confession we saw that the only way sinners can relate to God is by way of the covenant of grace.

This covenant of grace was made in eternity, revealed progressively in history, and established in Christ.

For Christ to be able to establish this covenant of grace, He needed to be our mediator, which is the focus of Chapter 8.

"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."

3. What is a mediator?

A mediator is one who intervenes between two parties who are opposed to one another in order to bring about reconciliation.

We need a mediator because there is hostility in our hearts toward God, but there is also hostility in the heart of God toward us.

"Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour." (Colossians 1:21)

"Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath." (Ephesians 2:3)

The mediator we need must be able to represent us before God and represent God before us.

The mediator we need must be able to remove the enmity we have toward God and satisfy God's wrath towards us.

Only Jesus Christ can be and is this mediator.

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men." (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

Why is Christ the mediator?

B. Christ was appointed to be the mediator because of God's purpose

1. It was God's decision to appoint Jesus to be the mediator we need.

"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."

"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations." (Isaiah 42:1)

2. This decision was made in eternity past in 'the covenant of redemption' (the Pactum Salutis).

The covenant of redemption was the agreement of the Father and the Son to save the elect from their sin and the wrath against them and to give to them eternal life.

"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake." (1 Peter 1:18-20)

3. This decision means that Christ was chosen to be the mediator before sin entered the world or there was a world for sin to enter into.

He was chosen to be the Saviour of God's elect before they were created and before they sinned.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves." (Ephesians 1:3-6)

C. Christ was appointed to be the mediator because of God's pleasure

1. It was God's decision to appoint Jesus to be the mediator we need, but it was also His delight to do so.

"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."

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved." (Ephesians 2:4-5)

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

2. There was no unwillingness on the part of God the Father to send His Son or on the part of God the Son to be sent by His Father to be the mediator we need.

Christ was pleased to take on flesh in order to act on our behalf.

Christ was pleased to keep the law in thought, word, and action on our behalf so that His righteousness can become our righteousness before God.

Christ was pleased to pay the penalty of the law (satisfying the wrath of God) that we deserve, because by nature and by choice we are sinners who have broken the law.

Christ was pleased to share with us all the blessings that are His (e.g. forgiveness, righteousness, a new nature, eternal life and so on) so that we can be reconciled to God.

D. How then shall we lead?

1. We should give thanks and glorify the Father who loved us and gave His Son for us and for our salvation.

John 3:16 is a verse we should never get bored of hearing and must be at heart of what we preach and teach!

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

2. We should give thanks and glorify the Son who loved us and gave Himself for us and for our salvation.

1 Peter 3:18 is a verse we should never get bored of hearing and must be at heart of what we preach and teach!

“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” (1 Peter 3:18)