

## THE 1689 BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

### Christ the Mediator (19)

#### 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. The Lord Jesus was chosen and appointed to be the mediator between God and man by fulfilling the threefold office of prophet, priest, and king, for those people He was given as a gift in eternity.

He executed this office of mediator by being willing and obedient; by suffering, dying, rising, and ascending, and by sitting, interceding, and one day returning.

In executing this office of mediator, Jesus offered up His obedience and sacrifice to God for the sake of all those people He had been given by His Father (including the elect who lived before His coming), achieving for them satisfaction of God's justice and securing reconciliation.

This redemption that Christ has accomplished, He applies to the lives of those He came to save by praying prayers of intercession for them, revealing the truth of how they can be saved to them, persuading them to believe His Word, and by powerfully protecting them.

3. Paragraph 9 of chapter 8 of the Confession is one which is missing from both the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) and the Savoy Declaration (1658).

It is lifted almost word for word from the London Baptist Confession of 1644.

*"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."*

Why did our Baptist forefathers choose to retain this paragraph, when the Presbyterians and Congregationalists dropped it?

It was to provide a warning against what was taught by the Roman Catholic Church.

This paragraph is all about the uniqueness and exclusivity of Christ as the mediator between God and man.

#### B. No-one else can stand between sinners and God

1. Only Christ can be our mediator.

*"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."*

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5)

Why?

Because no-one else can truly represent both God and man.

To attribute any of Christ's accomplishments or applications of Christ's work to anyone else is to rob Him of His glory because no-one else can stand between sinners and God.

2. Who else can accomplish salvation for us?

Only Jesus has lived a sinless life and only He kept the law on behalf of sinners, so that they can be righteous in God's sight and acceptable to Him.

Only Jesus has borne the infinite punishment that sinners deserve so they can be forgiven.

3. Who else can apply the benefits of salvation to us?

Only Jesus can intercede for sinners before the Father.

Only Jesus can unite sinners to Himself by sending His Spirit.

Only Jesus can reveal the mystery of salvation to sinners.

Only Jesus can keep sinners safe until the very end.

**C. No-one else can bring sinners to God**

1. Only Christ must be our mediator.

"Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

*"...and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof, transferred from Him to any other."*

We dare not pray to, or trust in, anyone or anything else to be our mediator.

Not his mother, Mary, or one of the saints, or an earthly priest.

2. This is a warning against the false practices of the Roman Catholic church.

Why should Mary not be prayed to?

Scripture never records the apostles praying to Mary.

Mary is not recorded as being given a special honour, or having a special influence over Jesus.

Significantly, Peter, Paul, John, and James never mention her once in their epistles.

*"Surely this silence is a rebuke to those who would build a system of salvation around her. God has given to us all the record we need concerning Mary, and that record does not indicate that worship or veneration in any form is to be given to her." (Lorraine Boettner)*

The phrase "*born of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the manhood*" in the Creed of Chalcedon to emphasise the humanity of Christ, has been abused by the Roman Catholic church to magnify Mary so that Catholics go to her and not to Him.

*"Romanism magnifies the person that the Holy Spirit wants minimised, and minimises the person that the Holy Spirit wants magnified." (Lorraine Boettner)*

**D. How then shall we lead?**

1. Recognise that Roman Catholics need to be evangelised.

They need to repent of praying to Mary.

They need to trust in Christ alone for their salvation.

2. Recognise that children of Christians need to be evangelised.

They won't be saved by the faith of their parents.

They need to trust in Christ themselves for their salvation.