

The Humiliation of Jesus Christ

Let's Look at the Intersection of two important dimensions in Christology, the doctrine of the Person and Works of Jesus Christ...

1. His ***states*** of Humiliation and Exaltation
2. His ***offices*** as Prophet, Priest and King

The WSC (1647) describes ***the Humiliation of Christ*** as...consisting in (1) his being born, and that in a low condition, (2) made under the law, (3) undergoing the miseries of this life, (4) the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; (5) in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

You can think of Christ's Humiliation...***Cradle to Cross...His Incarnation***

The WSC describes ***the Exaltation of Christ*** as...consisting in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

In a very real way, the Exaltation of Christ represents the culmination and application of all He accomplished in His Humiliation.

Belgic Confession (1561) Article 20... That God has manifested his justice and mercy in Christ

“We believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and just, ***sent his Son to assume that nature in which the disobedience was committed, to make satisfaction in the same, and to bear the punishment of sin by his most bitter passion and death.*** God therefore manifested his justice against his Son, when he laid our iniquities upon him; and poured forth his mercy and goodness on us, who were guilty and worthy of damnation, out of mere and perfect love, giving his Son unto death for us, and raising him for our justification, that through him we might obtain immortality and life eternal.”

Humiliation of Christ...5 aspects

1. Being born...in a low estate

Spurgeon's sermon..."Our Lord in the Valley of Humiliation"

*Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery...
Look to Christ, who condescended
Took on flesh to ransom us*

2 Made under the Law

Galatians 4:4...But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law

Why? Fulfill all righteousness... Active Obedience of Christ

*Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery...
Christ the great and sure fulfillment
Of the law; in Him we stand*

Matthew 3:15...Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan *coming* to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”

Matthew 5:17-18...“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

2 Corinthians 5:21...He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Consider two critical realities...

a. Christ knew no sin

Heb 7:26...For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens

Heb 4:15...has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin

b. In Christ (and it is crucial to see this...every spiritual blessing that inures to the believer is because he/she is In Christ), **we who have no inherent righteousness** (and in fact are utterly, radically depraved)... **are credited with His righteousness**

*His robes for mine: what cause have I for dread?
God's daunting Law Christ mastered in my stead.
Faultless I stand with righteous works not mine,
Saved by my Lord's vicarious death and life.*

Our standing before God was fatally corrupted in the First Adam (Romans 5:12) only to be regained in Christ (our True and Better Adam)

*Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery...
See the true and better Adam
Come to save the hell-bound man*

3. Underwent the miseries of this life...Identified with our sufferings and trials

Rejected...

Mark 8:31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed.

Acts 4:11 He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, *but* which became the chief corner *stone*.

Acquainted with grief...

Isaiah 53:3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Temptations of this life...tested to the extreme but without sin

Hebrews 4:15,16...We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet* without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

4. Suffered the wrath of God and the cursed death of the cross

Why? to save us from God and His wrath...the propitiation for the Father's wrath

1 John 2:2...He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world.

The cursed death of the cross... We who were cursed in Adam and because of our own sin, are saved by One who became cursed in our stead

Galatians 3:13,14... Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”— in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

In the Apostles Creed we see the phrase “He descended into Hell”. That’s a problematic thought for many, but the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) puts a helpful light on this...

Q 44...Why is there added: He descended into hell?

A 44...In my greatest sorrows and temptations
I may be assured and comforted
that my Lord Jesus Christ,
by his unspeakable anguish, pain, terror, and agony,
which he endured throughout all his sufferings
but especially on the cross, has delivered me
from the anguish and torment of hell.

*Because a sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me*

5. Was buried and continued under the power of death for a time.

Fulfills prophecy

Isa 53:10,11...But the Lord was pleased
To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief;
If He would render Himself *as* a guilt offering,
He will see *His* offspring,
He will prolong *His* days,
And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.
As a result of the anguish of His soul,
He will see *it and* be satisfied;
By His knowledge the Righteous One,
My Servant, will justify the many,
As He will bear their iniquities.

This is indeed a great mystery...1 Timothy 3:16 begins by saying “By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh...”

*Come behold the wondrous mystery
In the dawning of the King
He the theme of heaven's praises
Robed in frail humanity
See the price of our redemption
See the Father's plan unfold
Bringing many sons to glory
Grace unmeasured, love untold*

The Humiliation of Christ is described for us by the Apostle Paul in Phil 2:5-8...

“Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

In context, the Apostle Paul actually cites meditation upon the the Humiliation of Christ as a powerful, penetrating antidote to selfishness, empty conceit and the self-exaltation which is so utterly destructive to harmony in the Body of Christ and so antithetical to the model of the Saviour.

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood*

But much more...the Humiliation of Christ is integrally part of Christ's work as our Redeemer.

The essence of redemption is to purchase those who are helpless and hopeless out of bondage and to release them never to return again to their desperate strait. **Matthew 10:28**...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many

The WSC succinctly tells us that **Christ, as our Redeemer, executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.**

I want to focus on one particular aspect of the intersection of His Humiliation and the way in which He fulfilled His offices as Prophet, Priest...and especially as King

1. Prophet...

WSC 24. Q. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A. Christ executes the office of a prophet, in ***revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation***

Showed us the Father

John 1:18...No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

John 14:7-9...If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”

Philip *said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

Jesus *said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

Revealed the way to the Father

John 14:3-6...If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas *said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” Jesus *said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

2. Priest...

WSC Q 25. How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executes the office of a priest, in ***his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.***

Prepared the qualified sacrifice...perfected through His sufferings

Hebrews 5:7,8...Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation

Offered the sacrifice...Himself, once for all

Hebrews 10:11,12...Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God

Christ as King...in His Humiliation? Yes!

The essence of the King(1) He Conquers all His and Our Enemies and (2) He Rules and Subdues His Own People

(1) Our King in His humiliation conquered all His and our enemies

At Calvary, The Seed of the Woman crushed the Serpent's head... He conquered the enemy of our souls...

Genesis 3:15...And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He shall bruise you on the head

*And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.*

John 12:31...Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

And He conquered death...

1 Corinthians 15:22,55,56..For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive...O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 10:17,18...For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.

He is the Shepherd King who lays down His life for His wayward sheep

He is the Bridegroom King who died for His Bride

Not only has Jesus our King conquered all his and our enemies...He does indeed Rule His own...

If any one will follow Him, they must deny themselves, take up His cross daily and follow Him

*Thou art the King of mercy and of grace,
reigning omnipotent in ev'ry place:
so come, O King, and our whole being sway;
shine on us with the light of thy pure day.*

And He subdues His Own in a Most Wonderful Way

Spurgeon...

He has done that for me which none but a God could do. He has subdued my stubborn will..He hath turned for me my mourning into laughter, and my desolation into joy; he hath led my captivity captive, and made my heart rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And he is full of grace. Ah! had he not been, I should never have been saved. He drew me when I struggled to escape from his grace; and when at last I came all trembling like a condemned culprit to his mercy-seat, he said, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee: be of good cheer." And he is full of truth. True have his promises been, not one has failed. I bear witness that never servant had such a master as I have; never brother such a kinsman as he has been to me; never spouse such a husband as Christ has been to my soul; never sinner a better Saviour; never mourner a better comforter than Christ hath been to my spirit. I want none beside him. In life he is my life, and in death he shall be the death of death; in poverty Christ is my riches; in sickness he makes my bed; in darkness he is my star, and in brightness he is my sun...Jesus is to me all grace and no wrath, all truth and no falsehood: and of truth and grace he is full, infinitely full. My soul, this night, bless with all thy might the only Begotten.