

THE UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST AS THE GOD-MAN MEDIATOR

Commonly known as His 'Mediatorial Kingship' or 'Mediatorial Dominion' over the Nations

LC 36: "The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, in the fulness of time became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever."

LC 42: "Our Mediator was called Christ, because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure, and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the offices of prophet, priest, and king of his church, in the estate both of his humiliation and exaltation."

LC 45: "Christ executeth the office of a king, in calling out of the world a people to himself, and giving them officers, laws, and censures, by which he visibly governs them; in bestowing saving grace upon his elect, rewarding their obedience, and correcting them for their sins, preserving and supporting them under all their temptations and sufferings, restraining and overcoming all their enemies, and powerfully ordering all things for his own glory, and their good; and also in taking vengeance on the rest, who know not God, and obey not the gospel.

LC 54: "Christ is exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God, in that as God-man he is advanced to the highest favour with God the Father, with all fulness of joy, glory, and power over all things in heaven and earth; and does gather and defend his church, and subdue their enemies; furnisheth his ministers and people with gifts and graces, and maketh intercession for them.

SC 102: "In the second petition, which is, Thy kingdom come, we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

LC 191: "In the second petition, (which is, *Thy kingdom come*,) acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, we pray, that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fullness of the Gentiles brought in; the church furnished with all gospel-officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate: that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that are yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up of those that are already converted: that Christ would rule in our hearts here, and hasten the time of his second coming, and our reigning with him forever: and that he would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of his power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends."

RPT 23.2: "God has given the exercise of all authority to the Lord Jesus Christ."

Matthew 28:18-20

18 Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

John 17:2

As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

Ephesians 2:22

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church.

Philippians 2:9-11

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, **11** and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus Christ, as the God-man, presently exercises a kingdom of supreme power and authority over all things in heaven and earth, having been made "head over all things for the church", that He might destroy the kingdom of Satan, establish His kingdom of grace among all nations, and hasten the arrival of His kingdom of glory.

CHAPTER ONE

THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST'S MEDIATORIAL DOMINION

"The sovereign authority of Christ may be viewed either as necessary, or as official. Viewing him as God, it is necessary, inherent, and underived: viewing him as Mediator, it is official and delegated. It is the latter of these we are now to contemplate. The subject of our present inquiry is, the Mediatorial Dominion of the Son; not that which essentially belongs to him as God, but that with which, by the authoritative act of the Father, he has been officially invested as the Messiah. It is that government, in short, which was laid upon his shoulders — that power which was given unto him in heaven and in earth." P. 1

I. "The kingly office of Christ is necessary to the fulfillment of God's gracious purposes respecting the elect." [Paraphrase: To oversee and govern God's redemptive purposes in the world to their completion.] P. 4

- "The right of dominion over all things necessarily belongs to him as God."
- "Man, having broken the original moral constitution under which he was placed, and become liable in consequence to judicial displeasure and punishment, and God having determined to rescue a number of the human family from the fearful consequences of such a state, that this might be done honorably and successfully, it became necessary that the government of these, and of others on their account, should be committed to him who was chosen to be their Savior."
- "God, from the very perfection of his nature, could not in his absolute character deal with rebel sinners in any way with a view to their salvation. In this character he must seek their punishment for he is just: and not only could he not *procure* or offer pardon and deliverance from the curse of the broken covenant, but he could not even *bestow* it, nor could he actually deliver them, or conduct them to any of the blessings of salvation. Hence the necessity of another being appointed, not only to purchase and to offer redemption through his blood, but to apply it, to give it effect, to bestow the benefits of grace on the destined objects of salvation." 4

II. "To complete the mediatory character itself, such an office was requisite." [Paraphrase: To perform all that was necessary in order to reconcile His people to God, as their Mediator.] PP. 4-6

- "Jesus, the chosen of God, is of course a perfect Savior. But this he could not be without being invested with regal dignity and power. . . The ransom must be *applied* as well as *paid*; the offer must be not only *made*, but *accepted*; and to secure this the Mediator must be invested with regal power."
- "Generally speaking, it may be said that his province as a priest is to purchase; as a prophet, to publish; as a king, to apply. In the first, he procures; in the second, he makes known; in the third, he gives effect. They are all alike essential: not one of them can be dispensed with. . . Without regal authority, the sacrifice, however meritorious, has no power; the intercession, however powerful, has no efficacy; the doctrine, however clear, has no saving influence; and the Son of God must be content to see the whole human race perish forever in their sins, as if his blood had never been either shed on Calvary, or carried within the veil."
- "Follow him in his ascension to heaven; see him pressing forward into the presence of God. . . This is the address with which the Father salutes him as he enters the heavenly places not made with hands: 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool' (Ps. 110:1). As if he had said to him - 'Thou hast established thy right to that rebel world: I surrender the government of it into thy hands: go through it and find out thy redeemed: gather them from the four winds of heaven: for this purpose institute ordinances, promulgate laws, issue commands, appoint servants, subordinate whatever exists to the gracious and magnificent ends of thine appointment."

III. **“The kingly dignity of the Mediator is necessary, as a reward of his obedience unto death.”** pp. 6-8

- “In estimating the sacrifice made in performing this service, we must remember that the Son of God left the bosom of his Heavenly Father, the region of uncreated light, and all the attractions of celestial society; that he put the essential splendor of His perfections in eclipse, and assumed the likeness of sinful flesh; that he tabernacled with men on the earth, and there submitted to poverty, reproach, and pain; that he endured the persecution of men and devils, and suffered the most awful and mysterious agony, springing from the hiding of his Father’s countenance. Then, the end contemplated was nothing less than this: that men might be saved from everlasting destruction, made fit for heaven, reinstated in the society of angels and of one another, and restored to the favor of God. When or where was there ever service to compare with that of Christ? . . . Should not such service be rewarded? Every principle of moral rectitude says that it should. ‘Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?’ (Luke 24:26).”
- “Having as a part of his humiliation, suffered himself to be made subject to rulers, to be placed at their bar, to be judged by their laws, to be counted worthy of death by their unrighteousness decree, it is fitting that, in reward of what he has effected, he should be invested with sovereign rule over the princes of this world, and, in his turn, demand them obedience to his authority, punish them for their proud and obstinate rebellion, and subordinate all their measures and movements to the gracious purposes of his reign.”

IV. **“Nor is this dominion less requisite to counteract the opposition made to the work of man’s salvation by its enemies – ‘For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.’”** pp. 8-10

- “Against those internal operations in the heart which salvation supposes, there rise up a host of adversaries.”
 1. “The law as a covenant of works, by demanding the punishment of the guilty violator, slays the peace of the soul.” [Isa. 9:6; Php. 4:7]
 2. “Indwelling corruptions wage incessant warfare against the quickening, sanctifying, and comforting work of the Spirit.” (Rom. 7:21)
 3. “Satan and his emissaries, numerous, subtle, and powerful, assail by their temptations, accusations, and persecutions.” (Eph. 6:12)
 4. “The world, with its allurements and terrors, its smiles and frowns, tries to undermine the principles of stability.” (John 15:19)
 5. “Death, by threatening to execute the curse of the broken covenant, awakens slavish fears; deprives of tranquility; maintains in ignoble and distracting bondage.” (Heb. 2:15)
- “In opposition to the outward administration of the work of Christ in the world, also, a whole host of enemies stand forth. Wilful ignorance, unblushing infidelity, hardened profanity, open idolatry, Mohammedan delusion, Jewish obstinacy, anti-Christian [Roman Catholic] domination, and civil misrule, form a combined phalanx [army] of portentous breadth and depth; an unholy alliance of discordant materials, yet breathing only one spirit of determined enmity to the reign of Christ in the world, and resolved to prevent the progress, and, if possible, to effect the extermination of his kingdom by every means in their power. Are these enemies to meet with no resistance? Is the Kingdom of the Messiah to fall a prey to their rapacious hatred, and that of his great arch-enemy to be erected on its ruins? Certainly not. It is the prayer of every saint that they may meet with a signal defeat. The honor of the Savior demands their final overthrow; and the Word of God assures us that such shall be the ultimate issue of the contest.”
- “To the accomplishment of this work, investment with regal power and authority is indispensable. . . Nor is there anything in this at variance with his general character as Mediator. The Savior of his people, and the conqueror of their foes, are not incompatible features. The prosperity of the people of God is intimately connected with the destruction of their enemies. These things go necessarily hand in hand.

V. “The kingly office is not less necessary to meet the needy circumstances of Christ’s own people.” p. 10

- A. They need to be regenerated!** “They are all of them, by nature, rebels, enemies to Christ, both in their minds and by wicked works. . . They must *be* reconciled — they must be *made* willing — their imaginations must be *brought* down. And how but by the Savior’s rod of omnipotent strength sent forth out of Zion; by the irresistible scepter of his grace, swayed with authority for this very end.”
- B. They need to be pardoned!** “They are all by nature guilty, and stand in need of pardon; but to dispense forgiveness is a royal prerogative, and Christ could never have exercised it had he not been a king.”
- C. They need to be governed!** “They are naturally unruly, and need to be governed; nor can they frame or execute laws for themselves — the Lord is their lawgiver; and to promulgate laws, to enact statutes, belongs to one invested with regal dignity.”
- D. They need to be protected!** “They are, moreover, weak and defenseless... that he may not only restrain and conquer all their enemies, but rule and defend themselves, Christ must hold the office of a king.”

CLOSING SUMMARY: “Such is the varied necessity that exists for the regal office of the Mediator. A review of the several points by which it is established may serve to strengthen our conviction of the importance attaching to this feature of the character of our redeemer. Without Christ’s kingly work, the gracious purposes of God could not be executed; the mediatorial character itself would not be complete; the work of salvation must continue unrewarded; the enemies of truth and holiness should finally triumph, and the necessities of the children of God remain for ever unsupplied. Such things cannot — shall not be. “The Lord is our king, and he will save us” (Isa. 33:22). The exalted Redeemer is at once a “Prince and a Savior” (Acts 5:31). **pp. 10-11**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could reduce all five of Symington’s arguments into a single word or phrase, what would it be?
2. Complete the following sentence: “According to Symington, God the Father has given Jesus Christ supreme authority over all things for the primary purpose of _____.”
3. How does Symington’s Scriptural emphasis on the salvation of God’s people serve to guard the church from the temptation to preach a “social gospel” or to function as a political movement?
4. How would you respond to the charge that Symington’s emphasis on personal salvation is socially irresponsible?