

C. CHRISTOLOGY

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR OF SALVATION.

Our redemption was achieved completely by Christ the God-Man in His two states of exinanition and exaltation, which suggests the division of this part of dogmatics into three main heads.

- 1. The person of the Redeemer: He is the God-man.**
- 2. The two states of his existence: Humiliation and Exaltation**
- 3. The mediatorial work of Christ and his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.**

1. The Person of the Redeemer.

The material will be presented under three heads.

- A. The two natures of Christ.**
- B. The union of the two natures.**
- C. The communication of idioms (idioms = attributes and activities specific to each nature).**

A. The Two Natures.

I. Christ is true God.

Note. For a presentation of the wealth of Scripture testimony on this point see the section on the Holy Trinity, I, 6 (pages 175-181). See also the Monarchian and Arian controversies (page 198-199).

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

II. Christ is true man.

1. This truth is stated in general terms.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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

Hebrews 2:14,17 Since the children have flesh and blood (*αἵματος καὶ σαρκός*), he too shared in their humanity (*μετέσχευεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων*) so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Notice the comparisons between Adam and Jesus, the second Adam:

Romans 5:15-19 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶ Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

2. This humanity includes a human soul, with human volition.

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

John 12:27 Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour?" No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Matthew 26:38,39 Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

3. This humanity is rejected by various heresies.

a) Docetic Gnostics, who taught that the divine would not unite with flesh, so Christ only seemed to be man (his body a phantom, his suffering a shadow play).

Ignatius of Antioch (d. 107): Do not pay attention if anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the family of David, the child of Mary, who was truly born, who ate and drank, who was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and truly died, in full view of heaven, earth, and hell, and who was truly raised from the dead.... But, if as some godless people, that is, unbelievers say, he suffered in mere appearance (*to dokein pepothenai*)—being themselves mere appearances—why am I in bonds [as a martyr] (Letter to the Trallians, 9-10).

Ireneus (d. ca. 200): Saturninus...declared that the Savior was unborn, uncorporeal, and without form, asserting that he was seen as a human being in appearance only (*Adversus haereses* l.xxiv.12-2).

Tertullian (d. 220): He suffered nothing who did not truly suffer; and a phantom could not truly suffer.... Now if his death is denied because of the denial of this flesh, there will be no certainty of this resurrection. Similarly is Christ's resurrection is nullified ours is also destroyed (*Against Marcion*, ANF III, 328).

- b) Apollinarius who taught that the Λόγος takes the place of the human spirit so that there is no complete human nature. The Word became flesh, but he did not become fully human. Christ had human *psuche* but not *pneuma*. Opposed by Cyril of Alexandria.**

Apollinarius (a.k.a. Apollinaris) (d. 390): The Word himself has become flesh, without having assumed a human mind—that is, a changeable mind, which is enslaved to filthy thoughts—but which exists as an immutable and heavenly divine mind (Letter 2).

Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394) in opposition: Mind, which is man's proper nature, distinguishes him from irrational beasts.... Man is necessarily rational and is not a man should he lack this capacity (*Against Apollinaris*, p 14).

- c) The Monothelites who taught that Jesus lacked a truly human will, since the only will was that of the Λόγος. Sergius of Constantinople, Cyrus of Alexandria and Pope Honorius vs Sophronius of Palestine, Popes Martin and Agatho and the Council of 680.**

Sergius (d. 638): For the saving doctrine of the holy Fathers clearly teaches that the intellectually animated flesh of the Lord never performs its natural movement apart from, and by its own impetus contrariwise to, the direction of the Word of God hypostatically united to it, but only at the time and in the manner and to the extent that the Word of God wishes, just as our body is moved by our rational soul (Letter to Honorius).

Council of Constantinople (680): We likewise preach two natural wills in Christ, and two natural operations undivided, inconvertible, inseparable, unmixed, according to the doctrine of the holy fathers, and the two natural wills are not contrary (as the impious heretics assert) far from it! But his human will follows the divine will and is not resisting or reluctant but rather subject to his divine and omnipotent will.

- d) The orthodox fathers opposed the denial of the full humanity.**

Gregory Nazianzen: τὸ ἀπρόσληπτον ἀθεράπευτον.

Cyril of Jerusalem: Εἰ φαντασία ἦν ἢ ἐνανθρώπησις, φαντασία καὶ ἡ σωτηρία.

4. Christ is one person.

- a) The human nature was non-personal.**

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Augustine: The Word did not take on a human person, but a human nature (*De Fide ad Petrum*, ch. 17, MPL 40, 772).

**b) The human nature was received into the personality of the Logos.
ἄμα σρξ, ἄμα Λόγου σάρξ. We acknowledge the divine mystery.**

Gerhard: In Christ there is ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο, since his divine essence, or nature, is something else than his human essence, or nature; however, he is not ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος, since there are not two persons, a divine person and a human person, but the θεάνθρωπος is one God and Man and therefore one Person (*Exeg.* 1.4 par. 34).

Athanasian Creed: 28-34: For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; Perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood; Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ: One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God; One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 6: We believe, teach, and confess that the Son of God, although from eternity He has been a particular, distinct, entire divine person, and thus, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, true, essential, perfect God, nevertheless, in the fullness of time assumed also human nature into the unity of his person, not in such a way that there now are two persons or two Christs, but that Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary, as it is written Rom. 9, 5: Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.

Ibid., 11: We believe, teach, and confess also that now, since the incarnation, each nature in Christ does not so subsist of itself that each is or constitutes a separate person, but that they are so united that they constitute one single person, in which the divine and the assumed human nature are and subsist at the same time, so that now, since the incarnation, there belongs to the entire person of Christ personally, not only his divine, but also his assumed human nature; and that, as without his divinity, so also without his humanity, the person of Christ or *Filii Dei incarnati* (of the incarnate Son of God), that is, of the Son of God who has assumed flesh and become man, is not entire. Hence Christ is not two distinct persons, but one single person, notwithstanding that two distinct natures are found in him, unconfused in their natural essence and properties.

III. Christ's dual nature points to a twofold generation.

1. He was begotten of the Father from eternity.

John 1:14,18 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only (μονογενοῦς) who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only (μονογενῆς θεός) who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

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

2. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin (הַמְלֵאכָה) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Matthew 1:20,23 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." ²³ The virgin (ἡ παρθένος) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel—which means, "God with us."

John Schaller: While it is idle to speculate upon the nature of the generative act of the Holy Ghost, it may safely be described from its effects as a segregation of one living germ cell in the Virgin; its purification from all taint of inherited sin; the propagation and transplantation of a soul from the substance of the mother's soul; and the successive development of the child's body. Yet Mary was the true mother of Jesus, even as he is true man (*Christology*, p 54).

3. He was born of the Virgin Mary.

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 1:3 Regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David.

Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

4. When we say Christ is *de Maria* that is the *de* of material (*materiale*). When we say Christ is *de Spiritu Sancto* that is the *de* of power (*potentiale*).

5. The incarnation and virgin birth are rejected by liberal theologians.

Tillich: The assertion that God has become man is not a paradoxical but nonsensical statement (*ST*, II, p 94).

Braaten: The primary interest of dogmatics is to interpret the virgin birth as a symbol and not as a freakish intervention in the course of nature. Scientific inquiries into the frequency of parthenogenesis in the world of nature are beside the point. They contribute nothing to deeper insight into the revelatory reality to which the story of Jesus' birth points. It is possible to hold to the virgin birth as a biological fact and miss its point. It is also possible to make the same point without reference to the virgin birth, as the writings of Paul and John prove by not mentioning it. It is important, then, not to let the story get bogged down in biology, but to read it as a symbol witnessing to the truth of the kerygma (*Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 546).

IV. Christ was without sin in his human nature (*ἀναμαρτησία*).

1. Scripture teaches this truth.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

John 8:46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

1 Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

2. His temptations caused him a painful struggle, but he remained untainted by sin. In fact, as true God, he cannot sin, yet his temptations were very real.

Matthew 4:1-11 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Hebrews 2:18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

James 1:13: When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

Francis Pieper: Was it possible for Christ according to His human nature to commit a sin? We emphatically deny this possibility. Not because of the sinlessness of the human nature of Christ in itself, for Adam, too, was created sinless and nevertheless succumbed to temptation, but because Christ’s human nature never existed as a separate person, but from the beginning constitutes one Person with the Son of God. To assume that the man Christ could sin is assuming that the Son of God could sin, with whom the man Christ constitutes one Person. They that assume the peccability of the man Christ thereby relinquish, whether they know it or not, the incarnation of the Son of God, the *unio personalis* of God and man, and substitute for it an *unio mystica*. Some object that impeccability would exclude temptability, would make of Christ’s temptation a sham battle. However, Matt. 4:1 ff. does describe a real battle (*CD*, II, p 76).

Alfred Edersheim (d. 1889) (more speculatively): The position of the first Adam was that of being capable of sinning, not that of being incapable of sinning. The Second Adam also has a nature capable of not sinning, but not incapable of sinning. This explains the possibility of “temptation” or assault upon him. ... The Second Adam, morally unfallen, though voluntarily subject to all the conditions of our nature, was, with a peccable human nature, absolutely impeccable, as being also the Son of God—a peccable nature, yet an impeccable person (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Bk. III, Ch. I, p 137).

3. Although Christ’s human nature was not in itself subject to death since Christ had no sin, yet because he willingly assumed our sin, he also took our death.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man (lit. in the likeness of sinful flesh) to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Philippians 2:8: And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!

Pieper: The immediate result of the sinlessness of Christ’s human nature was its immortality. According to Scripture, death is the direct result of sin (Gen. 2:17; 3:17–19; Rom. 5:12; 6:23). Christ died because He willed to die. John 10:18: “No man takes it [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself,” namely, as the Redeemer of men, in payment of their sins. 1 Cor. 15:3: “Christ died for our sins.” The death of Him who in Himself is immortal is the ransom (λύτρον Matt. 20:28; ἀντίλυτρον, 1 Tim. 2:6) which purchased life for all who are doomed to die (II, p 77).

Adolf Hoenecke: Jesus does not die but gives his life into death. And it is part of his divine power that he subjected his deified, human nature to death (*ELD III*, p 72).
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B. The Union of the Two Natures.

I. The union of the two natures in Christ is most intimate and indissoluble.

- 1. The subject of the act of union is the Logos ἄσαρκος. The act is not reciprocal. The divine nature is the assuming nature, the human nature is the assumed nature. *Divina natura est assumens, humana assumpta.* (Other names for union—assumption of the flesh—incarnation—conception.)**

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared (μετέσχευεν) in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

- 2. The subject of the resulting union is the Logos ἔνσαρκος.**

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body (ἐν σαρκί), was vindicated by the Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι), was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

- 3. The act of uniting is not reciprocal, the divine nature alone was active. The resulting union is reciprocal.**
- 4. The union is real, not merely verbal like an honorary title (*nominalis*), nor logical (as substance and accident)—nor relative like two closely knit but separate people—nor *συνάφεια* (simply placed side by side).**
- 5. The union is personal, resulting in a person, not like the union of persons such as the mystic union or the union of persons in marriage.**
- 6. The union is not a natural union (as body and soul) but one of two natures; not essential (as resulting in a new essence); not accidental (as whiteness and sweetness in milk); nor one of mere jointure (*συνάφεια*).**

Augsburg Confession, III, 1-2: Also they teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, did assume *the human nature* in ²¹ the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably enjoined in one Person, one

Christ, true God and true man.

Formula of Concord, E, VIII, 15: Hence we believe, teach, and confess that the Son of Man is *realiter*, that is, in deed and truth, exalted according to his human nature to the right hand of the almighty majesty and power of God, because he was assumed into God when He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb, and his human nature was personally united with the Son of the Highest.

Hollaz: It is a union of natures, but not a natural union. It is a personal union, but not a union of persons. We call it "personal" not by reason of the starting point (*terminus a quo*), as if the union had been made from two persons, but by reason of the result (*terminus ad quem*), a union resulting in one person (*Examen*, Part III, p 106).

7. The union is denied by various heresies.

a) Nestorius divided the person and opposed the word θεοτόκος.

Nestorius: I cannot worship a God who was born, put to death, and buried (Mansi, IV, 1028, 1197).

Nestorius: If anyone says that he who is Emmanuel is God the Word and not rather that he is God with us, that is, that he inhabited the nature which is of our kind by his being united with our substance (*massa*), which he received from the Virgin Mary; if the Holy Virgin is declared to be the mother also of God the Word, and not rather of him who is Emmanuel, and that this Word of God himself was converted into flesh [this is Nestorius' own deduction] which he received to show forth his deity, to live in it as in his house as a man, let him be anathema" (*Anathematism I*).

Zwingli: In the statement Luke 24:26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" the term 'Christ' designates solely the human nature; the human nature alone could suffer and die, not, however, the divine nature. In the passages Matthew 26: "The Son of Man is betrayed," or delivered "to be crucified," and Matthew 20: "The Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and scribes," the Son of Man stands for the human nature, for that could be delivered and killed, but by no means the divine nature" (*Zwingli's Answer to Luther*, reprinted in St. L. XX:1195).

Francis Pieper: True, Nestorius had no intention of denying the one Person in Christ. He bitterly resented the charge of Cyril that he conceived of Christ as a mere man. But he did, in fact, dissolve the *unio personalis*. When he claimed that Mary did not give birth to the Son of God and that the Jews did not crucify the Son of God, but rather that the Son of Man was only the instrument of God in His birth and crucifixion, he revealed clearly that in his mind the Man Christ was neither in his birth nor in his crucifixion received into the Person of the Son of God, but remained distinct and separate from this divine person. He taught a connection (*συνάφεια*) between God and man in Christ, which left the Ego of the Man Christ separate and distinct from the Ego of the Son of God. By this *συνάφεια* the Son of God works through the Man Christ merely as through His instrument and dwells in the Man Christ merely as in His temple (*CD*, II, p 93).

Luther: Christ is God and a human being in one person. Whatever is said about

him as a human being must also be said about him as God, namely, “Christ has died,” and, as Christ is God, it follows that “God has died” not God in isolation (*der abgesonderte Gott*) but God united with humanity (*On the Councils and the Church*, Weimar Vol. 50, 590. 3-4). This work also appears in *LW*, Vol. 41. On pages 95-100 Luther admits that the popes and other enemies of Nestorius and Eutyches had distorted their views, but that they justly were condemned for denying the communication of idioms. Luther is nearly as critical of the councils as he is of Nestorius and Eutyches.

b) Eutyches merged the two natures (Monophysites; Monotheletes).

Eutyches: I confess that our Lord was born of two natures before the union; but after the union I confess one nature (Mansi, V, 744).

Petition of the Monophysites to Justinian (532): Just as an ordinary human being, who is made up of various natures (such as soul, body, and so on) is not divided into two natures on account of a soul being joined by composition to a body to make up one nature and person of a human being, so also God the Word, who was personally united to and joined by composition with a flesh which possesses a soul cannot be “in two natures” on account of his union with a body (In McGrath, *Christian Theology Reader*, p 149).

c) The Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) settled on the orthodox formulation that rejected both errors:

ἀσυγχύτως (inconfuse)—ἀτρέπτως (immutabiliter)—ἀδιαίρετως (indivise)—ἀχωρίστως (inseparabiliter). John of Damascus later added: *ἀδιαστάτως (indistanter)*.

II. In the union of the two natures in Christ a communication takes place of each to the other.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Colossians 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

1. The human nature is the nature of the Son of God: God is man.

Psalm 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”

Matthew 22:42-45 “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied. ⁴³ He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, ⁴⁴ ‘The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.”⁴⁵ If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”

2. **The divine nature is the nature of the Son of Man: This man is God.**

Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.

Matthew 1:20-23 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us.”

Matthew 16:13,16 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

3. **This communication is expressed in words like: περιχώρησις, *immetatio*, *permeatio*, *penetratio*. It leaves room for neither an *extra separationis* nor an *extra excessus* (*extra Calvinisticum*).**

Mentzer: Those who say that after the incarnation took place the Logos was or exists outside the flesh, with whatever color they paint it, dissolve as far as they are concerned the hypostatic union, since they destroy its definition (*Disp. Theol. De praicipuis controv.* In Adadem. Giess. T. I. p 36).

Gerhard: [The natural acts] belong to him naturally according to his essence; [the personal acts] belong to him personally according to his state of being; e.g., iron does not burn or glow naturally by reason of its essence, but it is rightly said to burn or

glow when it is heated because of the peculiar manner of its existence (*Exeg. I IV*, par. 121).

4. **Note that in the personal propositions (*propositiones personales*) both subject and predicate are expressed by concrete nouns not by abstracts (God is man; this man is God, not divinity is humanity or humanity is divinity).**
 - a) **Note a change in the use of the terms concrete and abstract. Modern use: abstract is the name of some idea, e.g., quality, action, relation, etc., concrete is the name of some material, visible, tangible thing. Old use: abstract is the thing as such (the Godhead *per se*, human nature *per se*; the concrete are the divine and human natures as they appear united in the person of Christ).**

Baier: Abstracts, which signify the natures as such, cannot be predicated equally of one another since the natures, although they are joined together within one person, are nevertheless different from one another (*Compendium*, IIIa, p 39).

- b) **To illustrate this point consider this passage.**

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. [Notice that this passage does not say that the divine nature became corporeal.]

Note: “Christ is true God (or, true man)” is not a *propositio personalis* (χριστοτόκος).

5. **Note that the personal propositions (*propositiones personales*) express a reality (*propriae*). They are not empty words (*nude verbales*) or mere figures of speech (*tropicae*). They are neither saying the same thing in the subject and predicate (*identicae* or *univocae*), nor is it that there is no real connection between subject and predicate (*accidentales*).**

Nestorius: Do not boast, O Jew, not God but man you have crucified (*Historia Tripartita*, XII, 4).

6. **Thus Christ in his human nature is a natural, not an adopted, Son of God—though he is not such in a natural way (*naturaliter*) by a physical birth.**

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

Galatians 4:5 To redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 8:15,23 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

The adoptionist controversy at the time of Charlemagne shifted the Sonship from the person to the nature (modified Nestorianism) . Elipandus of Toledo and Felix of Urgellis were opposed by Alcuin.

Felix (Urgellis) to Alcuin: We confess and believe that God of God, the Son, was begotten of the Father before all times without any beginning ... not by adoption but by birth, and not by grace but by nature.... But for the salvation of the human race ... assuming a visible body from a virgin ... according to the tradition of the fathers we confess and believe that he, made of a woman, made under the law, was the Son of God, not by birth, but by adoption, and not by nature but by grace (referred to by Quenstedt, *TDP*, III, s. 2 q. 8. p 216).

C. The Communication of Idioms.

Preliminary remarks.

- 1. An idiom (including not only qualities but also actions) is the name for an attribute common to the species alone and found in every normal individual of that species.**
- 2. God being absolutely one, his nature and attributes are really identical—while in a human being they are distinct.**
- 3. In reality there is no difference between the communication of natures and the communication of idioms.**
- 4. As the communion of natures does not involve an essential change of either or both natures, neither does the communication of idioms.**

Quenstedt: A characteristic of fire never becomes a characteristic of iron; meanwhile, nevertheless, when iron and fire are joined together, the fire penetrates the iron in such a way that it communicates to it the power to burn and shine (*TDP*, Part III, Chapter III, Section I, Subsection I, Thesis LII, Note II, p 92).

- 5. There are Scripture passages which ascribe the idioms of either nature to the person of Christ (cf *χριστοτόκος*). Those speaking about a real interchange are commonly grouped under three heads.**
 - a) *Genus idiomaticum*: All idioms of either nature are ascribed to the person of Christ, designated either by a personal name, or by a concrete of either nature.**
 - b) *Genus maiestaticum*: The truly divine perfections are communicated to the human nature as considered by itself.**
 - c) *Genus apotelesmaticum* Christ performs all official acts (*ἀποτελέσματα*)**

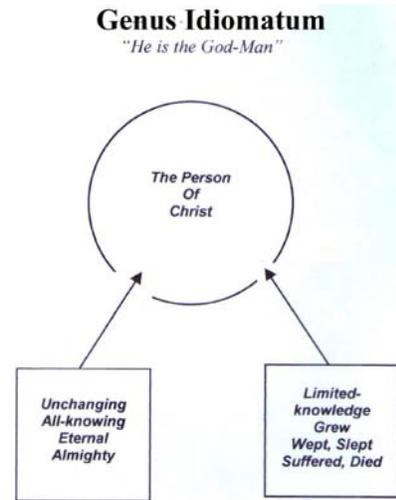
according to both natures, each nature in intimate communion with the other contributing that which is peculiar to it, in one undivided action.

1) Genus Idiomaticum.

All idioms of either nature are ascribed to the person of Christ, designated either by a personal name or by a concrete of either nature.

1. The subject may be a name of the person as such.

- a) This is called *alternatio* (ἀντίδοσις) since the subject and predicate can be transposed without altering the truth of the statement.



Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:4 For to be sure, [Christ] was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

1 Corinthians 10:4 [The Israelites] drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

- b) Sometimes distinguishing terms (*particulae diacriticae*) may be used to indicate the nature in Christ to which this attribute belongs essentially.

Romans 9:5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry (ὧν οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα) of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body (ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ) on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body (Χριστοῦ οὖν παθόντος σαρκί), arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body (θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκί) but made alive by the Spirit (ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι). [??]

2. The subject may be a concrete of the divine nature with an idiom of the human nature in the predicate.

a) This is known as *appropriatio* (ἰδιοποίησις) since the divine nature appropriates to itself a human attribute.

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

1 Corinthians 2:8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

b) Note also the following passages.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 8:36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

3. The subject may be a concrete of the human nature with an idiom of the divine nature in the predicate.

a) This is known as *communicatio divinorum* (κοινωνία των θείων) since an attribute of the divine nature is communicated to the human nature itself.

1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

John 8:57-58 “You are not yet fifty years old,” the Jews said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!”⁵⁸ “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”

John 6:62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

b) Likewise, human attributes are attributed to the person of Christ.

Matthew 17:12 But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.

Mark 8:31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

4. These propositions are reciprocal (*reciprocae*). Subject and predicate may be interchanged without altering the truth of the statement.

5. Zwingli's *alloeosis* destroys the communication of attributes.

a) Zwingli would substitute for the subject the nature to which the predicate applies, "Christ's human nature died for us."

Zwingli (commenting on John 6:55): The flesh is properly speaking that of the human nature in him, but through a change (*alloeosis*) the divine nature is put in its place. For the same reason for which he is the Son of God, for that reason he is food for the soul (*Amica Exegesis, Opp.* III, 525, quoted in Pieper II, p 137).

John 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

b) The idea expressed in the distinguishing terms (*particulae diacriticae*) would be turned into one of separation.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 21: This Dr. Luther has fully explained in his Large Confession concerning the Holy Supper in opposition to the blasphemous *alloeosis* of Zwingli, who taught that one nature should be taken and understood for the other, which Dr. Luther committed, as a devil's mask, to the abyss of hell. [cf. F. C., T.D., VIII 38-43].

Richard Muller: The Lutheran teaching is a real *communicatio* while the Reformed, remaining at the level of a *communicatio in concreto* only, is quite accurately called *antidosis onomaton*, a mutual interchange or reciprocation of names rather than a transfer or communication of properties (*Dictionary*, p 74).

6. Illustration: How did the Son of God suffer? How was God crucified?

Not in abstract (*abstracto*), the Godhead per se, but by means of its union with the human nature in Christ. Hence:

- *hypostatic*—Christ died as a person
- *appropriative*—the person suffered according to his human nature. cf Cyril (Alex) ἀπαθῶς ἔπαθεν.
- *voluntarie*—cf Irenaeus: ἡσαρχάζοντος τοῦ Λόγου. The Word rested allowing the human nature to be put to death.

- *permissive (potuisset repellere).*
- *effective dupliciter--sustaining the human nature; giving infinite value to this death.*
- *Si sola humanitas est passa, ergo non persona, ergo non Filius Dei.* If only the human nature suffered, then the person has not suffered, then the Son of God has not suffered.

2) Genus Maiestaticum.

I. The truly divine perfections are communicated to the human nature as considered by itself.

1. This genus, also called *αὐχηματικόν* is described by the Greek fathers as *βελτίωσις, προσθήκη μεγάλη, περύψωσις, μετάδοσις, δόξασις, μετάληψις θείας ἀξίας, μετοχή θείας δυνάμεως, θέωσις, ἀποθέωσις, θεωποίησις.*

2. This genus is not reciprocal (*reciprocum*), nor is there a corresponding *genus tapeinotikon*. **Humanity is raised, deity is not lowered.**

Malachi 3:6 “I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.”

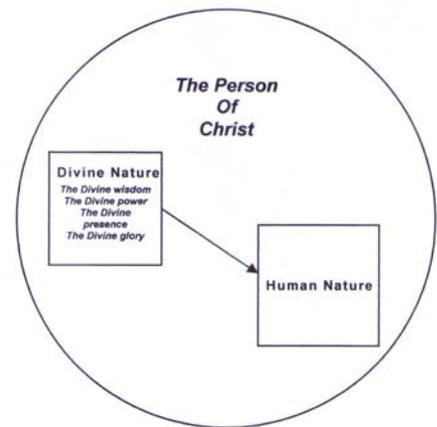
3. **If the union of the divine nature with the human is admitted, the communication of divine idioms to the human nature of Christ may not consistently be doubted.**

- a) Both are far beyond human conception.
- b) It is a conclusion from the greater to the lesser (*Conclusio a maiore ad minus*).
- c) Denying the *genus maiestaticum* practically annuls the union of the natures.

4. **The divine nature has the divine idioms essentially; Christ’s humanity has them as a gift.**

Hunnius: One and the same majesty does not belong to both natures in the same way, but it is attributed in a far higher way to the divinity than to the humanity. The Logos is omnipotent by its very being, the human nature by having received it; the Logos by nature, the human nature by grace; the Logos in itself, the

Genus Maiestaticum “In this Man, We Find God”



human nature not in itself, just as it does not exist in itself but in the person of the Logos, into whose fellowship it is taken up (*Libelli*, IV. p 54).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 9: Accordingly, we believe, teach, and confess that to be almighty, eternal, infinite, to be of itself everywhere present at once naturally, that is, according to the property of its nature and its natural essence, and to know all things, are essential attributes of the divine nature, which never to eternity become essential properties of the human nature.

II. The *genus maiestaticum* is taught by Scripture.

1. Scripture teaches this truth.

Philippians 2:6 [Christ] who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.

Matthew 28:20 And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

Psalms 45:2,7 You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you forever. ⁷ You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

2. It is applied to Christ's human nature as such (*in abstracto*).

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

John 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 51-52: For the Holy Scriptures, and the ancient Fathers from the Scriptures in which they were fully trained, testify forcefully that, for the reason and because of the fact that it has been personally united with the divine nature in Christ, the human nature in Christ, when it was glorified and exalted to the right hand of the majesty and power of God, after the form of a servant and humiliation had been laid aside, did receive, apart from, and over and above its natural, essential, permanent properties, also special, high, great, supernatural, inscrutable, ineffable, heavenly *prerogativas* (prerogatives) and excellences in majesty, glory, power, and might above everything that can be named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come [Eph. 1, 21]; and that, accordingly, in the operations of the office of Christ: the human nature in Christ, in its measure and mode, is equally employed at the same time, and has also its *efficaciam*, that is, power and efficacy, not only from, and according to, its natural, essential attributes, or only so far as their ability extends, but chiefly from, and according to, the majesty, glory, power, and might which it has received through the personal union, glorification, and exaltation.⁵²¹ And nowadays even the adversaries can or dare scarcely deny this, except that they dispute and contend that those are only created gifts or *finitae qualitates* (finite

qualities), as in the saints, with which the human nature in Christ is endowed and adorned; and that, according to their crafty thoughts or from their own silly *argumentationes* (argumentations) or fictitious proofs, they wish to measure and calculate of what the human nature in Christ could or should be capable or incapable without becoming annihilated.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 13: Now as regards this majesty, to which Christ has been exalted according to his humanity, he did not first receive it when he arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, but when he was conceived in his mother's womb and became man, and the divine and human natures were personally united with one another.

III. Scripture names specifically four idioms that are communicated: omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, honor. Though these are transitive attributes, the immanent (intransitive, quiescent, absolute) are not excluded. God's intransitive attributes are infinite, eternal, immutable, etc'.

John 6:62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

Quenstedt: It is rightly said: all the divine attributes are communicated to the human nature, likewise, certain ones are communicated, and none are communicated. 1) *All* are communicated as far as indwelling and possession are concerned; 2) *certain ones* at least as far as immediate predication and enunciation are concerned as the operative ones or those who have an *actus primus* [presence] and *secundus* [exercise], as omnipotence, omniscience, etc., but not the inoperative ones, as eternity, infinity, etc. 3) *None* are communicated as far as transfer from one subject to another is concerned (*TDP*, III. s. 2. q. 10. F. 228).

Adolph Hoenecke: Thus one can scripturally say: The humanity of Jesus has omnipotence, omnipresence, eternity, immeasurability, infinity and further: The human nature of Jesus is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient; but not: the human nature of Jesus is infinite, eternal, immeasurable (*ELD* III, p 89).

Omnipotence

1. Limited human power.

John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

Luke 22:43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

John 18:12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him.

Luke 23:33 When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.

2. Communicated divine omnipotence.

John 5:19,21,26,27,29 Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

John 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Hebrews 2:8,9 “And put everything under his feet.” In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Psalms 8:6,7 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:⁷ all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field.

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Daniel 7:13,14 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Matthew 11:27 All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

John 13:3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.

John 3:35 The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Matthew 9:6 “But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...” Then he said to the paralytic, “Get up, take your mat and go home.”

Notice the testimony of his miracles.

John 2:11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Notice divine attributes predicated even to abstracts of the human nature.

John 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Omniscience

1. Limited human knowledge.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Mark 13:32 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

2. Communicated divine omniscience.

Matthew 9:2,4 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.” ⁴Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?”

Luke 5:22 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?”

John 2:24,25 But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. ²⁵ He did not need man’s testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

Acts 1:24 Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen.”

Note in the following three passages that the ability to know thoughts is clearly a divine attribute.

Jeremiah 11:20 But, O LORD Almighty, you who judge righteously and test the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

Psalms 7:9 O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure.

Psalms 139:2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

John 1:48 “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

John 11:4,11 When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.”¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.”

Matthew 16:21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

John 3:31,32 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.

John 3:13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.

3. The unity of consciousness: How can limited and unlimited knowledge exist in the same person at the same time? Compare: human knowledge in a state of sleep; when one tries to recall some name but can’t; cured amnesia.

Omnipresence

Christ has at least four modes of presence.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 97-103 quotes Luther: God has and knows of many modes of being in any place, and not only the single one concerning which the fanatics talk flippantly, and which philosophers call *localem*, or local.^{98]} Also: The one body of Christ has a threefold mode or all three modes of being anywhere.^{99]} First, the comprehensible, bodily mode, as he went about bodily upon earth, when, according to his size, he vacated and occupied space [was circumscribed by a fixed place]. This mode he can still use whenever he will, as he did after the resurrection,

and will use at the last day, as Paul says, 1 Tim. 6, 15: “Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed God and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” And to the Colossians, 3, 4: “When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear.” In this manner he is not in God or with the Father, neither in heaven, as the mad spirits dream; for God is not a bodily space or place. And this is what the passages how Christ leaves the world and goes to the Father refer to which the false spirits cite.¹⁰⁰¹ Secondly, the incomprehensible, spiritual mode, according to which he neither occupies nor vacates space, but penetrates all creatures wherever he pleases according to his most free will; as, to make an imperfect comparison, my sight penetrates and is in air, light, or water, and does not occupy or vacate space; as a sound or tone penetrates and is in air or water or board and wall, and also does not occupy or vacate space; likewise, as light and heat penetrate and are in air, water, glass, crystal, and the like, and also do not vacate or occupy space; and much more of the like. This mode he used when he rose from the closed sepulcher, and passed through the closed door to his disciples, and in the bread and wine in the Holy Supper, and, as it is believed, when he was born of his mother, the most holy Virgin Mary.¹⁰¹¹ Thirdly, the divine, heavenly mode, since he is one person with God, according to which, of course, all creatures must be far more penetrable and present to him than they are according to the second mode. For if, according to that second mode, he can be in and with creatures in such a manner that they do not feel, touch, circumscribe, or comprehend him, how much more wonderfully will he be in all creatures according to this sublime third mode, so that they do not circumscribe nor comprehend him, but rather that he has them present before him self, circumscribes and comprehends them! For you must place this being of Christ, who is one person with God, very far, far outside of the creatures, as far as God is outside of them; and again as deep and near within all creatures as God is within them. For he is one inseparable person with God; where God is, there must he also be,¹⁰²¹ or our faith is false. But who will say or think how this occurs? We know indeed that it is so, that he is in God outside of all creatures, and one person with God, but how it occurs we do not know; this mystery is above nature and reason, even above the reason of all the angels in heaven; it is understood and known only by God. Now, since it is unknown to us, and yet true, we should not deny his words before we know how to prove to a certainty that the body of Christ can by no means be where God is, and that this mode of being is false. This the fanatics must prove; but they will forego it.¹⁰³¹ Now, whether God has and knows still more modes in which Christ’s body is anywhere, I did not intend to deny herewith, but to indicate what awkward dolts our fanatics are, that they concede to the body of Christ no more than the first, comprehensible mode; although they cannot even prove that to be conflicting with our meaning. For in no way will I deny that the power of God may accomplish this much that a body might be in many places at the same time, even in a bodily, comprehensible way. For who will prove that this is impossible with God? Who has seen an end to his power? The fanatics indeed think thus: God cannot do it. But who will believe their thinking? With what do they make such thinking sure?

1. Circumscribed presence – one place and one space like a human body (*praesentia circumscriptiva*).

Luke 2:7,46 And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

Matthew 9:20 Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak.

Matthew 8:23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.

2. Illocal presence - in one place but taking up no space like angels (*praesentia definitiva*).

Luke 4:30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

John 8:59 At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

3. Divine presence, filling presence, a presence not bound by finite measurements of place and space (*praesentia repletiva*).

John 3:13 No one has ever gone up into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man [*add variant* who is in heaven].

Ephesians 1:23 Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Matthew 28:20 And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Jeremiah 23:24 "Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD.

4. Sacramental presence (*Praesentia sacramentalis*).

Matthew 26:26,28 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." ²⁸ "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

5. The divine presence (*praesentia repletiva*) is not invalidated by Christ's ascension into heaven and his return to judgment nor by his sitting at the right hand (*sessio ad dextram*).

a) Notice how Scripture speaks of Jesus' return.

John 16:16 In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming (τῆ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ).

1 Timothy 6:14 To keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing (τῆς ἐπιφανείας) of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Titus 2:13 While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing (ἐπιφάνειαν) of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

b) Notice how Scripture speaks of the right hand of God.

Psalms 20:6 Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

Psalms 77:10 Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High."

Hebrews 1:3,4 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

Hebrews 8:1 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 3:21 He must remain in heaven (ὅν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δέξασθαι) until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Ephesians 1:19-23 That power is like the working of his mighty strength,²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Grudem, on the other hand: When we are talking about Jesus' human nature, we can say that he ascended to heaven and is no longer in the world. But with respect to his divine nature, we can say that Jesus is everywhere present. So we can say that both things are true about the person of Christ—he has returned to heaven, and he is also present with us (*Systematic Theology*, p 558, 559).

c) The right hand of God is everywhere (*Dextra Dei est ubique*).

Formula of Concord, Ep., VII, 12: The second: That God's right hand is everywhere; at which Christ is placed in deed and in truth according to his human nature, and therefore being present, rules, and has in his hands and beneath his feet everything that is in heaven and on earth as Scripture says, Eph. 1, 22, where no man else, nor angel, but only the Son of Mary is placed; hence He can do those things which we have said.

- 6. The sacramental presence (*praesentia sacramentalis*) is taught by us, not because of the divine presence (*praesentia repletiva*), but because of Christ's promise. When the Sacramentarians in Nestorian fashion denied the communicated divine presence to Christ's human nature, and thus tried to force their own interpretation on the words of institution, then the fallacy of their argument was pointed out.**

Formula of Concord, Ep., VII, 10: The grounds, however, on which we stand against the Sacramentarians in this matter are those which Dr. Luther has laid down in his Large Confession concerning the Lord's Supper.

Divine Honor

- 1. Divine honor is ascribed to Christ in his human nature.**

John 5:22,23 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

Philippians 2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

2. To exclude Christ's human nature from divine adoration is Nestorianism.

a) In a controversy precipitated originally by a loathing of Roman Catholic adoration of the host and Corpus Christi celebrations, the Reformed went beyond Scripture in their condemnations and also charged the Lutherans with idolatry for any divine adoration given to Christ's human nature (*horrendae idolatriae crimen*).

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.

Jeremiah 17:5 This is what the LORD says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD."

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Worship of the Eucharist (*Eucharistiae cultus*). In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. "The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration (*latriae cultum*), not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession" (Paul VI, *MF* 56, Par. 1378).

Muller: Because of their view of the *communicatio idiomatum*, or communication of proper qualities, the Lutheran scholastics argued a *cultus vere divinus* of Christ according to his human nature. The Reformed, by way of contrast, held a *cultus mediatorius*, or mediatorial worship, due to Christ's humanity in its union with the divine nature (*Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, p 86).

Quenstedt: The flesh of Christ must not be adored separately or as a certain separate person, but as a hypostatic nature, existing in the person of the Son of God (*TDP*, III, f. 296).

Luther: Likewise, here in the sacrament and in all believing hearts it should be left a matter of freedom, in order that we may be assured

that he gave no command about worshipping him in the sacrament or in believing hearts. Moreover, that is not the reason for his presence there. Nevertheless, one should not withhold from him such worship and adoration either; but freely give it, if the proper time and occasion presents itself, or omit it. For that reason we say now that one should not condemn people or accuse them of heresy if they do not adore the sacrament, for there is no command to that effect and it is not for that purpose that Christ is present just as we read that the apostles did not adore the sacrament since they were sitting and eating at table [Matt. 26:20, 26]. On the other hand, one should not condemn and accuse of heresy people who do adore the sacrament. For although Christ has not commanded it, neither has he forbidden it, but often accepted it. Free, free it must be, according as one is disposed in his heart and has opportunity. Therefore both parties are to be blamed when they take a stand on either of these two sides and quarrel over this matter and condemn one another, and both of them miss the middle way (*LW 36:294*).

Nevertheless, you can see that adoration of this sacrament is a dangerous procedure if the Word and faith are not inculcated; so much so that I really think it would be better to follow the example of the apostles and not worship, than to follow our custom and worship. Not that adoration is wrong, but simply because there is less danger in not adoring than in adoring; because human nature tends so easily to emphasize its own works and to neglect God's work, and the sacrament will not admit of that (*LW 36:296*).

b) The Roman Catholic and Orthodox distinguish levels of worship.

Worship (*Latria*) — God alone.

Veneration (*Dulia*)—Saints and angels.

Super-veneration (*Hyperdulia*)—the Man Jesus (and Mary)

Catechism of the Catholic Church: “All generations will call me blessed”: “The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship (*christiani cultus*).” The Church rightly honors “the Blessed Virgin with special devotion (*speciali cultu*). From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of ‘Mother of God,’ to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs...This very special devotion...differs essentially from the adoration (*a cultu adorationis*) which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration.” The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an “epitome of the whole gospel,” expresses this devotion to the Virgin Mary (Paragraph 971).

Timothy Ware: Among the saints a special position belongs to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom Orthodox reverence as the most exalted of God’s creatures, “more honored than the cherubim and more exalted than the seraphim.” Note that we have termed her “most

exalted *among God's creatures.*” Orthodox, like Roman Catholics, *venerate* or *honour* the Mother of God, but in no sense do the members of either Church regard her as a fourth person of the Trinity, nor do they assign to her the *worship* due to God alone. In Greek theology the distinction is very clearly marked: there is a special word, *latreia*, reserved for the worship of God, while for the veneration of the Virgin entirely different terms are employed (*duleia, hyperduleia, proskynesis*) (*The Orthodox Church*, p 157).

3) Genus Apotelesmaticum.

I. Christ performs all official acts (*ἀποτελέσματα*) according to both natures, each nature in intimate communion with the other contributing that which is peculiar to it, in one undivided act (including the gifts of the *genus maiestaticum*).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 51: In the operations of the office of Christ: the human nature in Christ, in its measure and mode, is equally employed at the same time, and has also its *efficaciam*, that is, power and, efficacy, not only from, and according to, its natural, essential attributes, or only so far as their ability extends, but chiefly from, and according to, the majesty, glory, power, and might which it has received through the personal union, glorification, and exaltation.

1. The official acts of Christ are often summed up in his titles and descriptions, such as Savior, Mediator, King, Priest, Prophet, Lord, Shepherd, and by his actions as shown below.

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

1 Timothy 2:5,6 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Ephesians 5:2 Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God

1 Corinthians 15:3,4 For what I received I passed on to you as of first

Genus Apotelesmaticum
“He is the God-Man, Our Kinsman and Redeemer”



importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

Galatians 1:4 [Christ] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

1 John 3:8 The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

2. Whether stated in verbs or in these titles the official act (*apotelesm*) is always presented as an undivided act, in which both natures participate.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Hebrews 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.

1 John 4:2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

3. To say that the human nature “cannot be made the organ” (Hodge) for divine omnipotence, omnipresence, etc., is a Nestorian separation of Christ's natures.

Note. “Organ” is in this case not an *instrumentum separatum*, but one *personaliter coniunctum*, i.e. Christ is not an instrument in the way an inspired or possessed person is.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Genesis 22:18 And through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

1 John 4:2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

4. The work of our redemption in all its phases is thus truly theanthropic; and the *genus apotelesmaticum* rests on the two previous genera.

Hollaz: The remote basis of this communication is the unity of the person of Christ and an intimate communion of the divine and human nature in Christ. The near basis is the communication of idioms of the first and second class (*Examen, De pers. Christo, qu 67*).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 46-47: Secondly, as to the execution of the office of Christ, the person does not act and work in, with, through, or according to only one nature, but in, according to, with, and through both natures, or, as the Council of Chalcedon expresses it, one nature operates in communion with the other what is a property of each.⁴⁷¹ Therefore Christ is our Mediator, Redeemer, King, High Priest, Head, Shepherd, etc., not according to one nature only, whether it be the divine or the human, but according to both natures, as this doctrine has been treated more fully in other places.

II. To hold fast to the *genus apotelesmaticum* is of utmost practical importance for our faith.

1. On this point we hear Luther.

Luther: Make sure that you comprehend this doctrine in such a way that you leave the Person of Christ intact and assign the functions of each nature to Him despite the difference in these natures. For according to the divine nature, He was not born of a human being, nor did He inherit anything from the Virgin. It is true that God is the Creator and that man is a creature. But here the two have come together in one Person, and now God and man are one Christ. Mary bore a Son, and the Jews crucified a Person who is God and man. Otherwise—if He were only man, as other saints are—He would be unable to deliver us from even one sin or to extinguish one little drop of hell's fire with all His holiness, His blood, and His death (*LW 24:108–109*).

Luther: Beware, beware, I say, of this alloeosis, for it is the devil's mask since it will finally construct a kind of Christ after whom I would not want to be a Christian, that is, a Christ who is and does no more in his passion and his life than any other ordinary saint. For if I believe that only the human nature suffered for me, then Christ would be a poor Savior for me, in fact, he himself would need a Savior. In short, it is indescribable what the devil attempts with this alloeosis (*LW 37:209–210*).

Formula of Concord, TD, VIII, 44: We Christians must know that if God is not also in the balance, and gives the weight, we sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: If it were not to be said, God has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if "God's death" and "God died" lie in the scale of the

balance, then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light, empty scale.

2. Only by a happy inconsistency does Reformed theology retain the gospel.

Charles Hodge: Such expressions as *Dei Mors*, *Dei sanguis*, *Dei passio* have the sanction of Scriptural as well as of church usage. It follows from this that the satisfaction of Christ has all the value which belongs to the obedience and sufferings of the eternal Son of God, and His righteousness, as well active as passive, is infinitely meritorious (*S.T.*, II, p 168).

This in spite of his claim that the human nature “cannot be made the organ” for divine omnipotence, “a soul which is omniscient . . . is not a human soul”; “the human nature of Christ is no more omniscient or almighty than the worker of a miracle is omnipotent” (*S.T.*, II, p 468).

Reformed Axiom: *Finitum non est capax infiniti* (The finite cannot contain the infinite).

2. The Two States of Our Redeemer.

I. The Scriptures, both in history and in doctrine, present Christ to us in two states of living.

1. General statements are found in Philippians 2, Psalm 22, and Isaiah 53.

Philippians 2:5-9 Your attitude should be the same at that of Christ Jesus; ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. 5 Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. 6 ὃς ἐν μορφῷ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ. 7 ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εἰρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος 8 ἑταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Hebrews 3:3 Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

2. In the one state he refrained from living on an equal level with God, but appeared in the form of a servant; in the other he received the name above every name.

Cf. passages above.

3. **The one state is called the state of exinanition (humiliation); the other, exaltation.**
4. **These states affect directly Christ's human nature only.**
 - a) **The divine nature is not subject to change, but in Christ it partook of the exinanition by means of the hypostatic union.**

Psalm 102:27 But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Malachi 3:6 I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

- b) **Only according to the human nature could Christ receive gifts (Php 2:9 –ἐχαρίσατο). Christ as God gives all things, as man receives all things. There is no advancement of the assuming nature, but only of the assumed nature.**
- c) **Yet exinanition is predicated of the person of Christ, even designated by a *concretum* of the divine nature.**

1 Corinthians 15:3,4 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Galatians 1:4 [The Lord Jesus Christ] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

5. **The incarnation as such is not identical with the exinanition.**

Schertzer: The exinanition is badly defined as the incarnation. If that were the case, the exaltation would have to be described as excarnation (*Syst. L.* VIII. p 221).

II. In the exinanition Christ voluntarily gave up the full use of his divine prerogatives for a time.

1. He emptied himself of the ἴσα εἶναι θεῷ.

a) He was under law.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

b) He was poor and lowly.

Matthew 8:20 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Isaiah 7:15 He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right.

c) He gave up the display of glory.

John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

d) He gave up full use of his authority.

Luke 22:42,54 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁵⁴ Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.

Psalm 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Ephesians 1:20 Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

e) His knowledge was limited.

Mark 11:13 Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs.

Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

John 11:34 “Where have you laid him?” he asked. “Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

2. **Christ did not give up any of the divine attributes (Col. 2:9). Opposed to this is Kenoticism, which taught that Jesus did not possess the transitive divine attributes during his exinanition. Distinguish *κτῆσις* (“possession”) and *χρῆσις* (“use”).**

3. **Temporarily giving up the full use of the divine attributes is sometimes called concealment. (The term “concealment” has at times been misused in such a way as to almost deny the meaning of the exinanition. See Pieper Volume II, p 296-301, Schaller, p 87, Hoenecke, *ELD*, p 110-113.)**

- a) **There was a secret use.**

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.”

John 3:13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. [some manuscripts add: who is in heaven]

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.

Formula of Concord, Ep., VIII, 16: This majesty Christ always had according to the personal union, and yet he abstained from it in the state of his humiliation, and on this account truly increased in all wisdom and favor with God and men; therefore he exercised this majesty, not always, but when it pleased him, until after his resurrection he entirely laid aside the form of a servant, but not the human nature, and was established in the full use, manifestation, and declaration of the divine majesty, and thus entered into His glory. Also Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 26.

- b) **This secret use was not identical with the *sessio ad dextram*, since this is a technical term for the exaltation.**

- c) **Even now there is a certain concealment.**

Hebrews 2:8 In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.

1 Corinthians 1:7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ἀπεκδεχομένους τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

4. **He assumed the *μορφή δούλου*, in obedience and suffering.**

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

5. **Careful moderation is in place: the divine mystery is to be adored; it cannot be explained.**

III. The exinanition covered the period of Christ's life from his conception to his burial (inclusive).

1. **The various phases of Christ's life do not denote degrees, but rather different epochs.**
 - a) **Since the Scriptures do not determine the number of phases, any enumeration that covers the entire period is acceptable.**
 - b) **Following the Second Article, six steps are very commonly treated. It is advisable to list more.**
2. **Conception by a virgin. The incarnation was not in itself humiliation, but the manner of Christ's conception and birth has led to suspicions and innuendos against him.**

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

John 8:39-41: "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did." ⁴⁰ As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

Origin: But let us now return to where the Jew is introduced, speaking of the mother of Jesus, and saying that "when she was pregnant she was turned out of doors by the carpenter to whom she had been betrothed, as having been guilty of adultery, and that she bore a child to a certain soldier named Panthera" and let us see whether those who have blindly concocted these fables about the adultery of the Virgin with Panthera and her rejection by the carpenter, did not invent these stories to overturn his miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit: for they could have falsified the history in a different manner, on account of its extremely miraculous character, and not have admitted, as it were against their will, that Jesus was born of no ordinary human marriage. It was to be expected, indeed, that those who would not believe the miraculous birth of Jesus would invent some falsehood. And their not doing this in a credible manner, but their preserving the fact that it was not by Joseph that the Virgin conceived Jesus, rendered

the falsehood very palpable to those who can understand and detect such inventions (*Contra Celsum* I xxxii. See also Talmud, *b. Shabbat* 104, *t. Hullin* 2,22).

3. **Birth. Jesus experienced a real human birth.**

Luke 2:7 And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:23 As it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord.”

Exodus 13:2 Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal.

a) **Jesus was born of a virgin.**

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Jeremiah 31:22 How long will you wander, O unfaithful daughter? The LORD will create a new thing on earth—a woman will surround a man. (יְקַבֵּלָהּ תְּסֻבֵּב גְּבֵר) [This verse has traditionally been associated with the virgin birth, but in context it seems to refer more to unfaithful Israel becoming faithful.]

Luke 1:34 “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

Matthew 1:18,20,25 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The following oppose either the reality of the birth or the conception by a virgin.

Valentine (Gnostic, d. 150): Christ was only a kind of guest in Mary’s womb with his flesh, which was assumed from somewhere else, as if he was born of Mary in the way water passes through a pipe, assuming nothing from the substance of the pipe, whether of lead or wood (Damascenus, *De Haeresibus*, 31m MPG 94, 697; Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, p 57).

Braaten: The primary interest of dogmatics is to interpret the virgin birth as a symbol and not as a freakish intervention in the course of nature. Scientific inquiries into the frequency of parthenogenesis in the world of nature are beside the point. They contribute nothing to deeper insight into the revelatory reality to which the story of Jesus’ birth points. It is possible to hold to the virgin birth as a biological fact and miss its point. It is also possible to make the same point

without reference to the virgin birth, as the writings of Paul and John prove by not mentioning it. It is important, then, not to let the story get bogged down in biology, but to read it as a symbol witnessing to the truth of the kerygma (*Christian Dogmatics*, I, p 546).

Tillich: The actual story is a myth, the symbolic value of which must be seriously questioned.... By excluding the participation of a human father in the procreation of the Messiah, it deprives him of full participation in the human predicament (*S.T.*, II, p 160).

b) There is no scriptural evidence that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Christ.

1) Scripture says nothing of a miraculous process of giving birth (*clauso utero*).

Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew: There has been no spilling of blood in his birth, no pain in bringing him forth. A virgin has conceived, a virgin had brought forth, and a virgin she remains (13).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 499: The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. In fact, Christ's birth did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it. And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as *Aeiparthenos*, the "Ever-virgin."

Formula of Concord quotes Luther, T.D., VII, 100: Secondly, the incomprehensible, spiritual mode, according to which he neither occupies nor vacates space, but penetrates all creatures wherever he pleases; as, to make an imperfect comparison, my sight penetrates and is in air, light, or water, and does not occupy or vacate space; as a sound or tone penetrates and is in air or water or board and wall, and also does not occupy or vacate space; likewise, as light and heat penetrate and are in air, water, glass, crystal, and the like, and also do not vacate or occupy space; and much more of the like. This mode he used when he rose from the closed sepulcher, and passed through the closed door, and in the bread and wine in the Holy Supper, and, as it is believed [emphasis added], when he was born of his mother.

Luther in the Smalcald Articles, First Part, IV: That the Son became man in this manner, that he was conceived, without the cooperation of man, by the Holy Spirit, and was born of the pure, holy [ever-]Virgin Mary [Latin: *sempervirgine*; the German does not have "ever"].

2) Whether Mary had children after the birth of Jesus cannot be determined from Scripture with absolute certainty. The three theories about the identity of those known as Jesus' brothers and sisters, named after church fathers who advocated them, are:

- a) Joseph's children from a previous marriage (Epiphanian). Favored by Ambrose and the East.**

-b) Cousins of Jesus, children of Mary wife of Alpheus (Hieronymian). Favored by most Western Fathers after the time of Jerome.

-c) Children of Mary and Joseph (Helvidian). Only Tertullian among the leading fathers.

Explanation c seems to accord best with the evidence. On the theories see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p 252-291.

Ezekiel 44:2 The LORD said to me, “This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered through it.”

Matthew 12:46 While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him.

Matthew 13:55 “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?”

Mark 6:3 “Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

Galatians 1:19 I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord’s brother.

Luke 2:7 She gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:23 As it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord.”

Matthew 1:25 But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The following passages are included to illustrate the use of “until” in Scripture.

Psalms 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”

2 Samuel 6:23 And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Deuteronomy 34:6 He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.

Isaiah 46:4 Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

4. Circumcision may be considered as the first public testimony of Christ's being under the Law.

Luke 2:21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Quenstedt: In the same way that we were under the law, in that way also Christ was made under the law; and we were under the law not only by reason of the curse and of eternal and temporal punishments, but also by reason of perfect obedience (which was owed to the law) (*TDP*, pars III, cap. III, memb. III, sect. I, thes. XXVI, nota, p 345).

5. Education, growing, learning.

Luke 2:41,51-52 Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. ⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

6. Lack of social and economic status.

Mark 6:3 "Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

John 7:15 The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?"

Matthew 8:20 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Matthew 17:24-27 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" ²⁵ "Yes, he does," he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?" ²⁶ "From others," Peter answered. "Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him. ²⁷ "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

John 19:10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

7. Suffering. Jesus' suffering is often divided into two parts:

a) The beginning of his suffering (*Passio inchoata*).

Matthew 17:17 “O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.”

Mark 4:11,12 He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables ¹² so that, ‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”

Luke 19:41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it.

John 11:33,35,38 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

b) His great suffering (*Passio culminata, magna*).

John 13:21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.”

Matthew 26:38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

Luke 22:44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

8. Death. Jesus death was real, it was voluntary; he suffered no decomposition.

John 19:30-35 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. ³¹ Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. ³² The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. ³⁵ The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Mark 15:44,45 Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

John 10:11,15,17,18 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Psalm 16:10 Because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

Acts 2:31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

Acts 13:37 But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

Schaller: At the same time, the death of Christ did in no way alter the fact of the personal union of the two natures. His soul and his body, though separated for a brief time from one another, were even then united with the personality of the Son of God (*Christology*, p 94).

We know the union of the natures continued and the death was real, but we should not speculate as to how this could be.

9. Burial (there was a transitional element in the honor he received in his burial).

Isaiah 53:9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 27:57-66 As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb. ⁶² The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Mark 15:42-47 It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached,⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body.⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died.⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid.

1 Corinthians 15:1,3,4 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

IV. In the exaltation the human nature of Christ entered upon the full and uninterrupted use of the divine majesty communicated to it by virtue of the hypostatic union.

1. The exaltation followed the exinanition.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Luke 24:26 Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

1 Peter 1:11 Trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

1 Timothy 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

2. The exaltation pertains to the use (*χρησις*), not to the possession (*κατῆσις*), of the divine glory.

a) Negatively (from the perspective of what he put off) it was the deposition of the lowly way of life.

Philippians 2:6-9 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a

cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Romans 6:9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

b) Positively (from the perspective of what he put on) it was the assumption of the unrestricted, continuous, perpetual use of the ἴσα εἶναι θεῷ.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 13: Now as regards this majesty, to which Christ has been exalted according to His humanity, he did not first receive it when he arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, but when he was conceived in his mother's womb and became man, and the divine and human natures were personally united with one another.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 26: Hence also the human nature, after the resurrection from the dead, has its exaltation above all creatures in heaven and on earth; which is nothing else than that he entirely laid aside the form of a servant, and yet did not lay aside his human nature, but retains it to eternity, and is put in the full possession and use of the divine majesty according to his assumed human nature. However, this majesty he had immediately at his conception, even in His mother's womb, but, as the apostle testifies [Phil. 2, 7], laid it aside; and, as Dr. Luther explains, he kept it concealed in the state of his humiliation, and did not employ it always, but only when he wished.

3. The right to make use of his divine power and glory is presented in Scripture as a gift.

Psalm 2:8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

Psalm 8:5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Quenstedt: New power, strength, or majesty were not given to Christ which he did not have before; but there was conferred on him only the full ability to administer his kingdom which he had received through the union itself (*TDP* III, .s. 1. Th. 70 f. 527).

4. The exaltation produced a change in the mode of living, not in the human nature itself.

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

Romans 5:17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:39-42 Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a Spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

5. This state began with the resurrection and continues forever.

John 10:17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.
Θανατωθείς μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιήθεις δὲ πνεύματι

Romans 6:9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

Revelation 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Luke 1:33 And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

6. The exaltation serves the carrying out of the work of redemption.

a) **The exaltation may be considered as a reward for the exinanition, but not as a reception of gifts he did not previously have nor as the motivation for his willing exinanition. He came to win for us, not for himself.**

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Isaiah 53:10-12 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto

death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

b) Christ is now exalted as Lord of all.

Philippians 2:10,11 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 7:39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Ephesians 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:8-10 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."⁹ (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

c) The various phases may be viewed either as manifestations of glory or as apotelesms.

V. The divine glory which our exalted Savior manifests may conveniently be considered according to the five phases mentioned in the Second Article.

1. The descent into hell.

a) The time was between the resurrection and his resurrection appearances (hence, it does not refer to suffering on the cross, nor to suffering in hell; nor is it a synonym for burial).

Note: Some have taken note of the period of time between his "coming alive" in the grave and his showing himself alive to the apostles and the women. The former they call resuscitation (*vivificatio*) and the later resurrection. The problem arises because of the order of events in the Apostles Creed.

1 Peter 3:18,19 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached (ἐκήρυξεν) to the spirits in prison.

Braaten: The downward curve of the incarnational line reached its lowest point in Jesus' descent into hell. In the 17th century, Lutheran and Reformed dogmaticians debated whether Jesus' descent into hell was the extreme limit of his humiliation or the initial step toward triumph and exaltation. We are including it under the state of humiliation, because the descent into hell is a symbol which conveys the truth that Jesus' victory over the enemies of man (sin, death, and the devil) was attained by first suffering the negation they introduced into the world (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 1, p 548).

Grudem: Concerning the doctrinal question of whether Christ did descend into hell after he died, the answer from several passages of Scripture seems clearly to be no (*Systematic Theology*, p 594).

Hodge: Christ's humiliation after his death consisted in his being buried, and continuing in the state of the dead, and under the power of death till the third day, which has been otherwise expressed in these words, "He descended into hell." This is the correct view of Christ's descent into hell (*Systematic Theology*, p 616).

b) The purpose for descending was not to suffer.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

c) The purpose was not to rescue the souls of Old Testament believers from the abode of the dead (limbo).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Scripture calls the abode of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down, "hell" – *Sheol* in Hebrew or *Hades* in Greek – because those who are there are deprived of the vision of God. Such is the case for all the dead, whether evil or righteous, while they await the redeemer: which does not mean that their loss is identical, as Jesus shows through the parable of the poor man Lazarus who was received into "Abraham's bosom." It is precisely these holy souls, who awaited their Savior in Abraham's bosom, whom Christ the Lord delivered when he descended into hell (Paragraph 633).

Michael Pomazansky: Christ, after his death on the cross, descended in his soul and in his divinity into hell, at the same time that his body remained in the grave. He preached salvation to the captives of hell and brought up from there all the Old Testament righteous ones into the bright mansions of the kingdom of heaven (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 217).

d) The purpose was not to preach salvation (εὐαγγελίζω), but to herald (κηρύσσω) his victory and proclaim judgment. Κηρύσσω does not necessarily denote preaching of the gospel.

Matthew 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, *preaching* in the Desert of

Judea.

Acts 15:21 For Moses has been *preached* in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.

Romans 2:21 You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who *preach* against stealing, do you steal?

Luke 16:26,31 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us. ³¹ He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

1 Peter 3:18-19; 4:5-6 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison ⁴⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are [*now*] dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle (*ἐδειγμάτισεν*) of them, triumphing (*θριαμβεύσας*) over them by the cross.

Formula of Concord, T.D., IX, 1-3: And since even in the ancient Christian teachers of the Church, as well as in some among our teachers, dissimilar explanations of the article concerning the descent of Christ to hell are found, we abide in like manner by the simplicity of our Christian faith, to which Dr. Luther in his sermon, which was delivered in the castle at Torgau in the year 1533, concerning the descent of Christ to hell, has pointed us, where we confess: “I believe in the Lord Christ, God’s Son, our Lord, dead, buried, and descended into hell.” For in this the burial and descent of Christ to hell are distinguished as different articles; and we simply believe that the entire person, God and man, after the burial descended into hell, conquered the devil, destroyed the power of hell, and took from the devil all his might. We should not, however, trouble ourselves with high and acute thoughts as to how this occurred; for with our reason and our five senses this article can be comprehended as little as the preceding one, how Christ is placed at the right hand of the almighty power and majesty of God; but we are simply to believe it and adhere to the Word. Thus we retain the substance and consolation that neither hell nor the devil can take captive or injure us and all who believe in Christ.

e) The relevance of Ephesians 4:9 for the topic is disputed.

Ephesians 4:9 What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? *Κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς*

2. The resurrection.

a) As the efficient cause both the Father and the Son are mentioned.

The following passages attribute Jesus' resurrection to the Father.

Acts 2:24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Acts 4:10 Then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

Acts 5:30-31 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.³¹ God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Acts 10:40 But God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.

Acts 13:30 But God raised him from the dead.

Ephesians 1:20 [God exerted power] in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

The following passages attribute Jesus' resurrection to him.

John 2:19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

Romans 1:4 And who through the Spirit of holiness (*κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης*) was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bucanus (d. 1603): Did the human nature of Christ cooperate in his resurrection?—According to his divine nature Christ himself effected his resurrection; he suffered from the weakness of the flesh—and he lives by the power of God. But properly speaking he rose according to his human nature, which was obedient to his resuscitating divine nature and acted according to its will and power (*Insti. theol.*, XXVI, 4; in Heppes., p 362). [???

b) Christ had the same body as before, but in a glorified form.

John 20:20,25-27 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into

his side, I will not believe it.”²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

Luke 24:39-43 “Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a Spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?”⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

Philippians 3:21 [Christ] by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Romans 6:9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

Quenstedt: Christ rose ... when the sepulcher was closed or the stone had not yet been rolled away from the door of the sepulcher by the angel.... The stone was rolled away by the angel, but he did this in order to demonstrate that the resurrection had already occurred (*TDP*, III, III, III, sect I, thes. XCVII, p 378, note).

Contra: Peter Martyr (d. 1562): Perhaps the doors gave way; perhaps Christ entered through a window or the roof (quoted by Quenstedt, *TDP*, III, s. 2.q.11.f. 634).

c) The time was the third day after his death.

Matthew 28:1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

Mark 16:1,2 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body.
²Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb.

Luke 24:1-3 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb,³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

John 20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

Matthew 16:21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be

raised to life.

Matthew 17:23 “They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

Matthew 20:19 And will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!

Mark 8:31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

Here is an example of the Hebrew way numbering days.

Esther 4:16; 5:1 “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”¹ On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king’s hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance.

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

d) The New Testament testifies to the certainty of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15).

1 Corinthians 15:5-6 He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

Mark 16:6 “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.”

John 20:1-10 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb.⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.⁶ Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there,⁷ as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus’ head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen.⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed.⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes.

Matthew 28:11-15 While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.

¹² When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³ telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ¹⁴ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

e) **The resurrection is God’s public declaration of the justification of all mankind.**

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Hebrews 13:20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep.

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Matthew 12:38-40 Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.” ³⁹ He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Luke 24:25,26,46 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.”

Romans 4:24 But also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

1 Peter 1:21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Romans 8:11,34 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Romans 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

1 Corinthians 15:12-20 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If

there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵ More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

2 Corinthians 1:9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.

Gerhard: Just as God punished our sins in Christ, which had been laid on and imputed to him as our substitute, so also by raising him from the dead he absolved him of our sins which were imputed to him, and therefore he also absolved us in him in order that the resurrection of Christ might thus be the cause and pledge and counterpart of our resurrection. In the resurrection of Christ we were absolved of our sins so that they no longer can condemn us before the judgment seat of God (quoted by Calov in *Bibl. illustr.* ad 1.c. Rom 4:25).

f) The forty days after the resurrection.

1) Jesus was no longer with his disciples.

Luke 24:44 He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

2) Yet he was with them.

Luke 24:39,40 “Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a Spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

John 21:14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Acts 10:41 He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:5-8 And that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers

at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

3) He was instructing his disciples concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts 1:3 He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Luke 24:25-27 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24:44-48 He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.”

g) The abundant testimony to the resurrection has not eliminated the teaching of errors concerning the resurrection.

1) Some deny the possibility, necessity, or reality of the resurrection (mythical invention, swoon theory, substitute theory, hallucination theory, mistaken identity theory).

The first denial: Matthew 28: 12-15 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ¹⁴If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” ¹⁵So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

Paul Tillich: The most primitive theory, and at the same time most beautifully expressed, is the physical one.... The sources of this story (the women finding the tomb empty) are rather late and questionable.... Theologically speaking, it is a rationalization of the event, interpreting it with physical categories that identify resurrection with the presence or absence of a physical body (*S.T.*, II, p 155).

Rudolf Bultmann: An historical fact which involves a resurrection from the dead is utterly inconceivable ... the incredibility of a mythical event like the resuscitation of a dead person (*The New Testament and Mythology*, p 39).

Emil Brunner: ... to speak of the Resurrection itself as “one of the most sure historical facts in the history of the world” is ... senseless. (*The*

Mediator, p 578) The Resurrection is not a “fact of world history,” it is a fact of the history of the Kingdom of God (*Dog. I, CDG*, p 33).

John Dominic Crossan, the Jesus Seminar: The tales of entombment and resurrection were later wishful thinking. Instead, Jesus’ went the way of all abandoned criminals’ bodies. It was probably barely covered with dirt, vulnerable to the wild dogs (*Time*, Jan 10, 1994 on www.time.com)

Hugh Schonfeld: Jesus contrived to be arrested the night before the Passover, fully aware that he would be nailed to the cross the following day, but taken down before the onset of the Sabbath in accordance with Jewish law. He would survive the agony of but three hours on the cross.... Given a drug that would render him unconscious and make him appear dead, he would then be cut down from the cross in a deathlike trance, removed by his accomplices to the tomb where he would be nursed back to health and then “resurrected” (*The Passover Plot*, cover blurb).

Robert Cavin: Jesus had an unknown identical twin who impersonated Jesus after the crucifixion, thereby convincing people that he had risen from the dead (1995 debate).

Muslim theories: Jesus was not crucified on the cross, but God made someone [Judas?, Simon of Cyrene?] look like Jesus and this person was mistakenly crucified as Jesus. The words “God raised him up” means that Jesus was taken alive up to heaven (summarized by Geisler, *Answering Islam*, p 65.) This theory is implied by Quran 4:156-158 and stated in the Gospel of Barnabas, which is a Muslim forgery.

Michael Martin: Certainly it is not beyond the realm of psychological possibility...that in first century Palestine, among the unsophisticated people who believed in the divinity of Jesus, one disciple’s hallucinations of Jesus could have triggered corresponding hallucinations in others (*The Case Against Christianity*, p 94-95).

Carl Braaten: We can call the resurrection an historical event because it happened at a particular place, in Palestine, and at a definite time, a few days after his death and prior to Pentecost (*Christian Dogmatics I*, p 551).

Kirsopp Lake contended that the women made a mistake and visited the wrong tomb, where they met a young man who said to them “He is not here,” but the women were frightened and left (*The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, p 250-252).

Siegbert Becker: It is amazing what people will believe as long as it’s not in the Bible.

2) **Some deny single features of the resurrection:**

-a) Calvinists

-1) Deny that Christ’s human nature participated effectively in his resurrection

-2) Claim that Christ's glorified body is dependent on space and time

Hodge: It still occupies a definite portion of space and retains all the essential properties of a body (*ST*, II, p 629).

-b) Photinians (4th century) denied that Christ still has real flesh and blood after his exaltation into heaven.

Compare Jehovah's Witnesses: Jesus did not take his human body to heaven to be forever a man in heaven. Had he done so that would have left him even lower than the angels...God did not purpose for Jesus to be humiliated thus forever by being a fleshly man forever. No, but after he had sacrificed his perfect manhood, God raised him to deathless life as a glorious spirit creature (*Let God Be True*, p 41).

Compare a recent sharp controversy among Evangelicals that pitted Murray Harris vs. Norman Geisler.

Murray Harris: This suggests that after his resurrection *his essential state was one of invisibility and immateriality...* The Resurrection marked his entrance upon a spiritual state of existence, or, to borrow Pauline terminology, a "spiritual body," which was both immaterial and invisible yet capable of interaction with the world of space and time.... However, the Resurrection did not convert Christ into "pure spirit" (*Raised Immortal*, 1983, p 56-57).

Murray Harris: The resurrection of Christ was not his transformation into an immaterial body (as Prof. Geisler imagines I believe) but into a "spiritual body" which could be expressed in an immaterial or material mode, a nonphysical or a physical form (*From Grave to Glory*, 1990, p 405). Nor have I ever expressed the view that the resurrection body of Christ was simply immaterial. It was "customarily immaterial" in the sense that in *his customary mode of existence* during the forty days he did not have a material body of "flesh and bones" (*From Grave to Glory*, 1990, p 404).

3. The ascension.

a) Christ rose to the clouds in a real, gradual motion. Then he disappeared.

Mark 16:9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

John 20:17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

—
Luke 24:51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Acts 1:9-11 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Carl Braaten: The mythical features of this trajectory of exaltation are obvious the moment we ask where Jesus went when he ascended to heaven. ... The need to demythologize should not, however, weaken our sense for the message it contains (*CD*, I, p 552).

b) He ascended both to the presence of the saints and angels (*coelum beatorum*) and to the position of rule and authority over the whole universe (*coelum maiestaticum*).

Hebrews 12:22-23 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Revelation 5:6-8 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.

Hebrews 4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

Hollaz: Its common goal was the home and dwelling place of the blessed, where Christ shows himself to the blessed in order that they may behold his face. Christ thus ascended into Paradise, where the converted thief was with him (Lk 23:43); where mansions are ready for the faithful (Jn 14:2); where the most glorious Redeemer himself by his most glorious appearance fills with joy the souls of the saints. The *terminus proprius*, or the ultimate goal, is the *coelum Dei maiestaticum*, that is, the heaven of divine majesty or the throne of divine majesty. The *coelum Dei maiestaticum* is above the other heavens, as Eph 4:10 teaches.... It is the very right hand of God itself, where Christ has been made far

higher than all heavens (He 7:28) (*Examen*, III, I, III, p 785).

c) Ascending into heaven does not lead to a local confinement, a retirement to a state of rest and glory.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Psalms 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Acts 2:34-36 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand³⁵ until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’”³⁶ Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Acts 3:21 He must remain in heaven (ὅν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δεξασθαι) until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VII, 119: Likewise, [we reject] when it is taught that because of his ascension into heaven Christ is so enclosed and circumscribed with his body in a definite place in heaven that with the same [his body] he cannot or will not be truly present with us in the Supper, which is celebrated according to the institution of Christ upon earth, but that he is as far and remote from it as heaven and earth are from one another, as some Sacramentarians have wilfully and wickedly falsified the text, Acts 3, 21; *oportet Christum coelum accipere*, that is, *Christ must occupy heaven*, for the confirmation of their error, and instead thereof have rendered it: *oportet Christum coelo capi*, that is, Christ must be received or be circumscribed and enclosed by heaven or in heaven, in such a manner that in his human nature he can or will in no way be with us upon earth.

Pieper: δεχεσθαι here can only mean *capere* (to receive) and not *capi* (to be received), no matter whether οὐρανόν or ὄν is regarded as the subject of the clause. To express the passive *capi*, the statement would have to read somewhat like this: ὄν δεῖ ὑπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ or οὐρανῶ δεξασθαι [*sic*—δεχθῆναι?] (Vol II, p 327).

Quenstedt: Therefore the Calvinists do violence to the words of the apostle, ὄν δεῖ οὐρανὸν δεξεσθαι, which τὸ δεξασθαι they interpret (to be contained in, to be inclosed as one held). But persuasive for the active meaning is (1) the nature of the verb δεξασθαι. For it is purely a deponent verb, which is always active, never passive, especially in this form, the middle, as it is called (*TDP*, II, 279).

d) While the resurrection needed no eye witnesses, the disciples witnessed Christ’s ascension as that which marked the end of his post-resurrection appearances.

Luke 24:31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.

Acts 1:3,9-10 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

4. The sitting at the right hand.

a) The right hand is a position of power.

Exodus 15:6,12 Your right hand, O LORD, was majestic in power. Your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy.¹² You stretched out your right hand and the earth swallowed them.

Psalm 20:6 Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

Psalm 63:8 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

Psalm 77:10 Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High."

Acts 2:33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Gerhard: Of God himself, who is enclosed in no place and excluded from no place, it is said that he dwells on high, that he is in heaven, that he looks down from heaven on the sons of men; nevertheless, no one concludes from this or is able to conclude that he rules only in the place of heaven. The Holy Spirit defines that loftiness of God and of God's right hand, not by spatial elevation, but by the inexpressible exaltedness of his glory and heavenly majesty (*Disputatt. Th.*, par. 221 in Baier, IIIa, p. 99).

b) The sitting at the right hand of God is correctly described by our dogmaticians as ruling with power.

Psalm 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Matthew 26:64 "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Mark 16:19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Ephesians 1:20 Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

Colossians 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 8:1,2 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,² and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

Hebrews 10:12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1 Peter 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Revelation 3:21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Quenstedt: Christ's sitting at the right hand of God is the highest degree of exaltation, or an act by which he himself after his ascension into heaven, when he was placed according to his human nature on the throne of divine majesty, dwells in the fullness of honor, glory and majesty and fully exercises his infinite power and through it rules in a most present and powerful way over all things in heaven and on earth for the glory of his own name and for the comfort and salvation of his afflicted church (*TDP*, pars III, cap. III, memb. III, sect. I, thes. CXVII, p 386).

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 28: Yet this occurred not in an earthly way, but, as Dr. Luther explains, according to the manner of the right hand of God, which is no fixed place in heaven, as the Sacramentarians assert without any ground in the Holy Scriptures, but nothing else than the almighty power of God, which fills heaven and earth, in [possession of] which Christ is installed according to His humanity, *realiter*, that is, in deed and truth, *sine confusione et exaequatione naturarum*, that is, without confusion and equalizing of the two natures in their essence and essential properties.

c) This sitting at the right hand in the strictest sense applies to the human nature of Christ (*subiectum quo*).

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Acts 2:32,33 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 5:30,31 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.³¹ God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Matthew 26:64 “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Luke 22:69 But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.

Calov: Although Christ rules according to both natures, nevertheless his exaltation, following his exinanition, has reference to his human nature alone, according to which he was made Lord over all things (*Theol. Pos.*, III, I, XIIX, par. 842, p 383).

Quenstedt: To sit at the right hand of God the Father is not entirely the same as to reign with the Father. For until now Christ has reigned with the Father and the Holy Spirit from eternity. Nevertheless, he did not sit at the right hand of God from then (i.e., eternity), for this sitting began first from the time of this exaltation (*TDP*, III, III, III, thes. CXIV, p 384).

d) Christ’s sitting at the right hand is a source of comfort for the church (an apotelesm).

Ephesians 1:20-23 [That power] which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 4:10-13 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.¹¹ It was he who gave some to

be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Matthew 28:18-19 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Romans 8:32,34 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Formula of Concord, T.D., VIII, 78: But we hold that by these words the majesty of the man Christ is declared, which Christ has received, according to his humanity, at the right hand of the majesty and power of God, namely, that also according to his assumed human nature and with the same, he can be, and also is, present where he will, and especially that in his Church and congregation on earth he is present as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest, not in part, or one-half of him only, but the entire person of Christ is present, to which both natures belong, the divine and the human; not only according to his divinity, but also according to, and with his assumed human nature, according to which he is our Brother, and we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.

5. Return to judgment.

a) This sitting at the right hand is the final stage of exaltation.

Hebrews 10:12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Luke 1:33 And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

b) The return to judgment is the revelation of Christ's glory.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

1 Timothy 6:14-16 To keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has

seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

2 Timothy 4:1,8 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Titus 2:13 While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

c) The judgment is the final act of Christ as Savior.

1 Corinthians 15:23-28,51-57 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. ⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:31-33 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Matthew 13:39-43 The enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰ As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

3. The Office of Christ.

I. By office we understand Jesus' work (ἔργον) of undoing the damage inflicted by Satan through the introduction of sin and of reuniting the human race with God.

1. The Son was appointed to the office.

John 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Psalms 2:6,7 "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father.

Hebrews 5:5 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

Zechariah 6:12,13 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.¹³ It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two."

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

2. The Son willingly assumed the office.

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

Psalms 40:7,8 Then I said, "Here I am, I have come—it is written about me in the scroll."⁸ I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

John 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

3. The nature of the work is expressed in the title Mediator.

a) The work of a mediator is to reconcile.

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

Hebrews 8:6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator (μεσίτης) is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator (μεσίτης) of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 12:24 To Jesus the mediator (μεσίτη) of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Hebrews 7:22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee (ἔγγυος) of a better covenant.

Galatians 3:19,20 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.²⁰ A mediator (μεσίτης), however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

b) Christ was mediator in both natures.

Formula of Concord, Ep., III, 2-3: For the one side [Osiander] has held that Christ according to his divinity alone is our Righteousness, if he dwell in us by faith; contrasted with this divinity, dwelling in us by faith, the sins of all men must be regarded as a drop of water compared to the great ocean. Others, on the contrary, [Stancarus] have held that Christ is our Righteousness before God according to the human nature alone.³¹ Against both the errors just recounted, we unanimously believe, teach, and confess that Christ is our Righteousness neither according to the divine nature alone nor according to the human nature alone, but that it is the entire Christ according to both natures, in his obedience alone, which as God and man he rendered to the Father even unto death, and thereby merited for us the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, as it is written: “As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous,” Rom. 5: 19.

Andreas Osiander (d. 1552): The one and only righteousness availing before God is God Himself. But Christ is the Word which we apprehend by faith, and thus Christ in us, God himself, is our righteousness which avails before God (“Action of the Honorable Wise Council in Nürnberg with Their Preachers”).

Francesco Stancarus (d. 1572): Christ is mediator according to the human nature only; this exclusive “only” does not exclude the divine nature from the person of Christ, but from his office as mediator (quoted by Bente in the *Historical Introduction to the Symbolical Books*, p 160).

Bellarmino: The common belief of Catholics is ... that the basis on which those works of the Mediator were performed by the Mediator was the human nature, not the divine.... A mediator ought to be altogether in the middle, i.e., standing apart from both dissenting parties (*Disput.*, tom. I, lib. V, de Christo, cap. I, p 261).

Quenstedt: If Christ served as our Mediator in his divine nature alone, in this way the necessity of the incarnation of the Son of God for the work of reconciliation and mediation is removed, and his obedience accomplished for us and its imputation are denied (*TDP*, pars III, cap. III, sect. II, qu. I, antithes. I, p 273).

Augustine: If man had not perished, the Son of man would not have come (Sermon 174; Pieper II, p 332).

Gottfried Hoffmann (d. 1712): If you say that Christ in so far as he is God was not separate from God the Father and the Holy Spirit, much less from himself, also in so far as he is a man he will not be separate from men. It is sufficient therefore that he is separate from God not indeed as to his nature, but nevertheless as to his work and office (*Synopsis*, par. I, p 515).

4. The work is also called salvation.

Σωτηρία

Romans 13:11 Do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our *salvation* is nearer now than when we first believed.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive *salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:5 [We] who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the *salvation* that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring *salvation* to those who are waiting for him.

Acts 13:26 Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of *salvation* has been sent.

2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the *salvation* that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Σωτήρ

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a *Savior* has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Acts 13:23 From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the *Savior* Jesus, as he promised.

Titus 2:10 And not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so

that in every way they will make the teaching about God our *Savior* attractive.

1 Timothy 4:10 We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

Ἰησοῦς

Matthew 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name *Jesus*, because he will save his people from their sins.

Luke 1:31 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name *Jesus*.

Luke 2:21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named *Jesus*, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

5. The office is indicated especially by the name Christ, i.e. the Anointed (Messiah).

a) Scripture teaches this truth.

Daniel 9:24-26 Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. ²⁵ Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶ After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

Psalms 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One.

Psalms 45:7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. (Quoted in Hebrews 1:9)

John 4:25,29,42 The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” ⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Acts 4:27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and

power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

Luke 4:1-2, 14, 17-18 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. ¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

b) Christ was anointed in his human nature.

Greek fathers: ἡ θεϊότης χρίσιν τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος.

Gottfried Hoffmann: For since he was anointed with the oil of gladness, that is the Holy Spirit, by God the Father, therefore also he was called Christ. And, indeed, he was anointed not as God, but as man; although he administers the office for which he was anointed not only according to his human nature, but also according to his divine nature. For he is said to have been anointed above his companions (Ps 45:8); but according to his divine nature he does not have companions (*Synopsis, de offic. Christi*, paragraph I, ecthes., p 513).

Chemnitz: Christ, was anointed according to his human nature “above all his fellows” (Ps 45:7), not only with infused gifts of the Spirit, nor only with the indwelling of the Spirit through grace in order that the Spirit might accomplish certain or numerous or great works in Christ, but also because the divine nature of the Logos with its total substantial fullness dwells personally in his assumed nature (*The Two Natures in Christ*, p 328).

Gerhard: It is one and the same anointing with which the Father anointed Christ according to his human nature and with which Christ anointed his own flesh with the oil of the Deity and the fullness of his own Spirit (*Loci*, Tom. 1, loc. IV, cap I paragraph 14, p 452).

6. The mediatorial work of Jesus began with his conception.

a) He was born as our Savior.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will

be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

b) His circumcision, as also his presentation, were acts of obedience to the Law.

Luke 2:21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

Romans 2:25 Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised.

Luke 2:22,23 When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”).

c) In his baptism God presented him publicly as the promised Messiah.

Matthew 3:15,17 Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

John 1:33 I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, “The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.”

1 John 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

Bernhard Weiss (d. 1918): The Spirit descends on Christ to equip him for his Messianic calling.... For the Messiah baptism with the Spirit is directly combined with water baptism (*Das Matthäus Evangelium*, p 73).

**II. It is customary to speak of a threefold office of Christ:
He is our Prophet, Priest, and King.**

1. This ancient tradition is based on Scripture passages which name these offices.

Deuteronomy 18:18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

Luke 13:33 In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!

Psalm 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Hebrews 4:5,6,14 And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.”⁶ It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience.¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

Psalm 2:6 I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.

Matthew 21:5 Say to the Daughter of Zion, “See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

Eusebius (d. 341): All these [OT prophets] refer to the true Christ, the divine and heavenly Logos, who alone is the High Priest of the whole world, who alone is King of the entire creation, and who alone among the prophets is the highest Prophet of his Father ... that to the present he is honored as King, admired as more than a prophet, and praised as the true and only High priest of God (*Church History*, Chap 1, p 3).

2. Some theologians speak of only a twofold office.

Gerhard: The office of Christ is commonly designated as threefold: prophetic, priestly, and kingly—but this can be reduced to two members, in such a way that the office of Christ is considered as twofold, priestly and kingly. For it is the work of a priest not only to sacrifice, pray, intercede, and bless, but also to teach, which is ascribed to the prophetic office (*Disputatt. isag.* p 406).

3. Gerhard himself shows the adequacy of the threefold division.

Gerhard: As many as the groups are into which the names which are ascribed to Christ with respect to his office and the statements of Scripture which speak about the office of Christ can be referred, so many parts of the office of Christ are also established.... Because of the ignorance of our mind brought on by sin we needed a teacher or prophet. Because of our sins and the punishments of our sins we needed a priest who would reconcile us to God, make satisfaction for us, and intercede before the tribunal of God. Because of the weakness of our will we needed a king to lead and defend us. (Ibid.)

A. The Prophetic Office.

I. We study the prophetic office of Christ, pointing out various aspects, and comparing him with human prophets.

1. He was declared to be a prophet in name and by activity.

By Old Testament prophecy:

Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

Isaiah 42:1-3 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. ² He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. ³ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice.

Isaiah 50:4,10 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. ¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

Isaiah 55:4,5 See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. ⁵ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.

Isaiah 61:1,2 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.

By the testimony of eye witnesses of his ministry and by his own testimony:

Acts 3:18,22-24 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. ²² For Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people." ²⁴ Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.

John 6:14 After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

John 7:40 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet."

Luke 7:16 They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people."

Luke 24:19 "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people."

Matthew 21:11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

John 4:19 “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet.”

Matthew 8:10 Nor are you to be called ‘teacher,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ.

John 12:49,50 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. ⁵⁰ I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.

John 17:8,14,26 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ¹⁴I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

John 18:37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

Note: the overlap of the office of prophet and the kingdom of grace.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Hebrews 2:3,12 How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ¹² He says, “I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.”

By the witness of his prophetic activity:

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

Luke 4:15 He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.

By the witness of his miraculous signs which testified to his prophetic office:

John 3:2 He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

John 7:31 Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, “When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?”

John 9:17 Finally they turned again to the blind man, “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” The man replied, “He is a prophet.”

John 10:25,28 Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”

John 12:37 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.

2. He was a prophet from his birth.

Colossians 1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.

Colossians 2:3,9 In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁹For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.

John 1:4,5,9,14 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. ⁹ The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

Luke 2:32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

As the eternal Λόγος his prophetic activity can be traced before his incarnation:

1 Peter 1:11 [The prophets were] trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Genesis 16:7,13,14 The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. ¹³ She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.” ¹⁴ That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

Genesis 31:11,13 The angel of God said to me in the dream, “Jacob.” I answered, “Here I am.” ¹³ “I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.”

Exodus 3:2,4,6 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.” ⁶ Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

3. He spoke with divine authority (truly, I say to you).

Scripture makes specific statements of this truth.

John 3:31,32 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 3:34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

John 6:46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.

John 7:17 If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

John 8:38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father.

His authority was recognized by those who heard him.

Matthew 7:29 Because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Mark 1:22 The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.

Luke 4:22,32 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. ³² They were amazed at his teaching, because his message had authority.

John 7:26,46 Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ? ⁴⁶ "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

4. Christ is the prophet for the whole world.

a) In the days of his flesh his teaching activity was limited to Israel.

Matthew 15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

Matthew 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans."

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles."

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Romans 9:4 Theirs [Israel] is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.

Romans 15:8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs.

John 12:20-23 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast.²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

b) Christ now brings God's message to the whole world.

Isaiah 49:6 He says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Isaiah 55:4,5 See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples.⁵ Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.

Isaiah 60:3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Haggai 2:7 "I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the LORD Almighty.

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 10:16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

Luke 2:30-32 For my eyes have seen your salvation,³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people,³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

John 1:9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

Romans 10:12,17 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

c) **The Christian religion is the only saving religion.**

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

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

Ephesians 2:12,13 Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

- 1) **Other religions may contain some elements of truth since they are based on the natural knowledge of God and the law.**
- 2) **They are fundamentally false, since they are built on the error of work-righteousness.**
- 3) **This teaching that salvation is by faith in Christ alone is called exclusivism, is opposed by the unbiblical teachings of pluralism (there are many ways to heaven) and inclusivism (Christianity is the best way to God among many ways).**

G.W. Gilmore (d. 1933): The progress of study has already compelled a modification of earlier estimates of other religions and an increasing gentleness in discussing them. The statement can no longer be made without challenge even from Christians that the world outside of Christianity is a "welter of errors" (Calvin)... There results (1) an increasing appreciation of the discovery that religion is one, in different stages of growth, and (2) a growing willingness to grant to all religious faiths impartial examination and candid recognition of whatever excellencies they may possess (*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, "Comparative Religion," Vol 3, 1977 edition, p 192).

Vatican II, Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions: The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions. She looks with sincere respect upon those ways of conduct and life, those rules and teachings which, though differing in many particulars from what she holds and sets forth, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men... Upon the Moslems, too, the Church looks with esteem. They adore one God, living and enduring, merciful and all-powerful, Maker of heaven and earth and Speaker to man... Consequently, they prize the moral life, and give worship to God especially through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting (*Doc.*, p 662f).

A New Catechism: Catholic Faith for Adults (1969): The great civilizations are characterized in general by polytheism... Though mixed with sin, such as despotism and licentiousness, and with error, such as fatalism, these religions were the way in which millions of men

experienced the mystery of God in their lives.... And we may be sure that our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, was at work in the wisdom of these religions, through his Holy Spirit: not manifestly, as God revealed him among the Jews, but no doubt really and profoundly (p 27). It is not for us to pass precise judgments on the elements of sin or Satanic evil which may also be found in these forms of thought. Hinduism and Buddhism set men's minds on Nirvana. Islam imprisons men in a doctrine which does not call God father. Humanism teaches children not to turn to God. Marxism holds out a future that will never come. There is some wickedness and corruption in all this. But we must trust the Spirit of God, who leaves no man untouched, and concentrate on the truth and goodness which they offer to men. And then they can also be helpful to us. The gleam of truth in another way of life can help Christians to gain a deeper and more vital conviction of Jesus' truth (p 33).

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation (Paragraph 847).

"Interfaith Relations and the Churches," a statement by the National Council of Churches from a link on the ELCA Web Site: As Christians we recognize that Jesus is not central to other religious traditions. For men and women in other communities, the mystery of God takes many forms. Observing this, we are not led to deny the centrality of Christ for our faith, but to contemplate more deeply the meaning of St. Paul's affirmation: 'Ever since the creation of the world, (God's) eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things [God] has made' (Romans 1:20). Christians disagree on the nature and extent of such 'natural revelation' and its relation to salvation. No matter what our view on this may be, we can be open to the insights of others.

d) Today Christ employs the church and its ministry to carry out his prophetic work.

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and

you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Luke 10:16 He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.

Isaiah 52:6 Therefore my people will know my name; therefore in that day they will know that it is I who foretold it. Yes, it is I.

Ephesians 4:11,12 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Jeremiah 3:14,15 "Return, faithless people," declares the LORD, "for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion.¹⁵ Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding."

Jeremiah 23:1-6 "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD.² Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: "Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done," declares the LORD.³ "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number.⁴ I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the LORD.⁵ "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

Isaiah 40:6-11 A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass.⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."⁹ You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!"¹⁰ See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young."

II. Christ's message is the gospel.

1. Christ did also preach the law.

a) This was in order to make people conscious of their sins. This work is often called his “foreign work” (*alienum opus*).

Isaiah 28:21 The LORD will rise up as he did at Mount Perazim, he will rouse himself as in the Valley of Gibeon—to do his work, his strange work, and perform his task, his alien task.

Luke 10:25-28 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”²⁷ He answered: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

John 5:45 But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.

Apology, Article XII (V): Of Repentance: “The Lord shall be angry that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act.” He calls it the strange work of the Lord when He terrifies, because to quicken and console is God’s own work.

b) Christ used the law as a guide for Christian behavior. Christ explains the true meaning of the law in the Sermon on the Mount.

Formula of Concord, Ep., V., 8,10: As to the revelation of sin, because the veil of Moses hangs before the eyes of all men as long as they hear the bare preaching of the Law, and nothing concerning Christ, and therefore do not learn from the Law to perceive their sins aright, but either become presumptuous hypocrites who swell with the opinion of their own righteousness as the Pharisees, or despair like Judas, Christ takes the Law into his hands, and explains it spiritually, Matt. 5, 21ff; Rom. 7, 14. And thus the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all sinners [Rom. 1, 18], how great it is; by this means they are directed to the Law, and then first learn from it to know aright their sins—a knowledge which Moses never could have forced out of them.

¹⁰Yet as long as all this (namely, Christ’s suffering and death) proclaims God’s wrath and terrifies man, it is still not properly the preaching of the gospel, but the preaching of Moses and the Law, and therefore a foreign work of Christ, by which he arrives at His proper office, that is, to preach grace, console, and quicken, which is properly the preaching of the Gospel. Also Formula of Concord, T.D., V., 10.

2. Christ’s chief message was the gospel.

a) Scripture states this fact.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.)

Mark 1:14,15 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”

Luke 7:22 So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.”

Luke 4:43 But he said, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.”

John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

John 8:31,51 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ⁵¹ I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

b) When he speaks of “obeying” his word, “doing” his will, etc., these are often a reference to accepting his gospel in faith.

Romans 10:16 But not all the Israelites accepted [literally: obeyed] the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?”

2 Thessalonians 1:8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

1 John 3:23 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

3. The purpose of his message is to enlighten and convert sinners.

a) In other word, the goal of preaching is faith and salvation.

Luke 2:32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

John 1:9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

John 5:25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

John 8:12,51 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. ⁵¹ I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”

John 10:27,28 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.
²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

John 17:6-8 I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

Acts 26:15-18 Then I asked, “Who are you, Lord?” “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” the Lord replied. ¹⁶ “Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”

Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

b) The rejection of the gospel hardens the hearts of the hearers.

Matthew 13:11-15 He replied, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: ““You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.””

Luke 8:10 He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ““though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.”

John 12:37-40 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. ³⁸ This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: “Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” ³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them.”

B. The Priestly Office.

Preliminary remarks: The gospel which Christ proclaims as prophet he himself established as priest. His prophetic message is dependent on his priestly work. If he as priest produced a partial salvation, he can as prophet proclaim only a partial salvation. If he produced a conditioned justification, he can as prophet do no more than announce the conditions.

As priest he did not provide a justification which we receive only after meeting certain conditions, he provided a justification complete in every respect, which he proclaims as a ready blessing and which we receive as such through faith.

I. Christ is attested as our high priest by being directly called so, by descriptive names which characterize his position as such, and by sacerdotal functions which he performs.

1. He is called priest and declared to be the fulfillment of Old Testament types.

Psalm 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind:
“You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Zechariah 6:13 It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.

Hebrews 2:17 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

Hebrews 4:14,15 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Hebrews 5:5,6,10 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.” ⁶ And he says in another place, “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” ¹⁰ [He] was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6:20 Where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:26-28 Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 8:1-4 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,² and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.³ Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer.⁴ If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law.

Hebrews 9:11 When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation.

Hebrews 10:21 Since we have a great priest over the house of God.

2. Since the purpose of the priesthood is to restore communion between a sinner and his offended God, also the names Mediator (Guarantee), Redeemer, and Lamb of God indicate the priesthood.

a) Mediator (Guarantee).

1 Timothy 2:5,6 For there is one God and one mediator (*μεσίτης*) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Hebrews 8:6 But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is *mediator* is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the *mediator* of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 12:24 To Jesus the *mediator* of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Hebrews 7:22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee (*ἔγγυος*) of a better covenant.

Galatians 3:19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a *mediator*.

b) Redeemer, רִדְּמָה.

Job 19:25 I know that my Redeemer [רִדְּמָה] lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

Isaiah 44:6,24 This is what the LORD says—Israel's King and *Redeemer*, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.²⁴ This is what the LORD says— your *Redeemer*, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens,

who spread out the earth by myself.

Isaiah 49:7 This is what the LORD says—the *Redeemer* and Holy One of Israel—to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: “Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

Isaiah 59:20 “The *Redeemer* will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,” declares the LORD.

Hosea 13:14 I will ransom [רָפִּי] them from the power of the grave; I will redeem [מִלְּמָוֶת] them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?

Psalms 103:4 Who redeems [לְחַיֵּה] your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.

c) **Lamb of God (ἀμνός, ἀρνίον, πάσχα).**

ἀμνός

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

1 Peter 1:18,19 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,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

ἀρνίον

Revelation 5:12 In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

Πάσχα

1 Corinthians 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

3. Priestly functions are ascribed to Christ.

a) **He atones for sins by a sacrifice which fulfills the meaning of the Old Testament sacrifices.**

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Hebrews 9:14,26 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 10:12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 8:3 Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer.

Hebrews 10:1,5,9,10 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. ⁵ Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.” ⁹ Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

- 1) **Old Testament sacrifices were of two basic kinds: sin and guilt offerings—and thank offerings. See Leviticus 1-7. Christ’s sacrifice was a sin offering (περὶ ἁμαρτίας).**
- 2) **Old Testament sin offerings had both a law and a gospel aspect.**

Hebrews 10:3 But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.

Leviticus 1:3,4 If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to offer a male without defect. He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that it will be acceptable to the LORD. ⁴ He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

Leviticus 16:20-22 When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. ²¹ He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat’s head. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. ²² The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.

The prayer for the Day of Atonement (*Talmud*): O Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have transgressed, they have rebelled, they have sinned before thee. I beseech thee now, absolve their transgression, their rebellion, and their sin that they have sinned against thee, as it is written in the law of Moses, thy servant, that on this day he shall make “an atonement for you to cleanse you from your sins, and you shall be clean.”

Quenstedt: The purpose and use of the sacrifices is twofold, legal and evangelical. The legal use was a reminder of sins, so that, namely, sinners might be admonished about the seriousness, hideousness, and guilt of their sins, and thus they were a means of arousing contrition.... The evangelical use was that they might point to that unique propitiatory sacrifice which was to be offered for us at some time on the altar of the cross and might reconcile penitent sinners to God.... Moreover they had expiatory power as types, namely, in so far as the bodies were so to speak substitutes and representative of the victim that was to be offered for the sins of the world in the fullness of time (*TDP*, P.IV. c.1.s.1.th.46-48).

3) **These sacrifices benefited only those who used them in faith.**

Isaiah 1:11-13 “The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?” says the LORD. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.¹² When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts?¹³ Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies.”

Amos 5:22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them.

Psalms 51:16-19 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.¹⁸ In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem.¹⁹ Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

4) **Sin offerings were bloody.**

-a) **This is stated as a *sine qua non*.**

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.

Hebrews 9:22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

-b) Hence “blood” often means, metonymically, the sacrificial death.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Hymn of Thomas Aquinas:
O pious Pelican, Lord Jesus,
cleanse impure me with your blood,
one drop of which is able to save
the whole world from all wickedness.
(quoted in Hoenecke III, p 228)



b) Christ makes intercession.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence.

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense [παράκλητον]—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

c) Christ pronounces benediction.

Numbers 6:23-27 Tell Aaron and his sons, “This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ²⁴ ‘The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.’” ²⁷ So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Luke 24:50,51 When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

John 20:19,21 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

d) Christ’s is an everlasting priesthood.

Hebrews 7:23-25 Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office;²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood (ἀσράβατον ἔχει τὴν ἱερωσύνην).²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

II. The priestly work of Christ is called obedience.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

1. It was the Father’s will to save sinners through the sacrifice of his Son, and the Son agreed to carry out that will (vocational obedience).

John 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

John 3:16 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 6:57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.

John 4:34 “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

John 5:30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

Hebrews 10:7,10 Then I said, “Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God.”¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Psalms 40:8 I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Isaiah 50:5 The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back.

2. In a special sense the obedience of Christ was submission to the law.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

Formula of Concord, T.D., III, 15,16: For since Christ is not man alone, but God and man in one undivided person, he was as little subject to the law, because he is the Lord of the Law, as he had to suffer and die as far as his person is concerned. For this reason, then, his obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that he in our stead was voluntarily made under the law, and fulfilled it by this obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that, on account of this complete obedience, which he rendered his heavenly Father for us, by doing and suffering, in living and dying, God forgives our sins, regards us as godly and righteous, and eternally saves us. ¹⁶ This righteousness is offered us by the Holy Spirit through the gospel and in the sacraments and is applied, appropriated, and received through faith, whence believers have reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, the grace of God, sonship, and heirship of eternal life.

3. He was obedient to the commands of the law.

a) This is known as active obedience.

Galatians 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.

Matthew 3:15 Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

Matthew 5:17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Luke 2:51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

John 8:46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

1 Peter 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

1 Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

b) The active obedience was vicarious (substitutionary).

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Quenstedt.: Hence the obedience of Christ, afforded in our place, is commonly said to be twofold, the active, which consists in the most perfect fulfillment of the Law, and the passive, which consists in the perfectly sufficient payment of penalties that awaited us (*TDP*, III, 244).

Hollaz: By his active obedience, Christ most exactly fulfilled the divine Law in our stead, in order that penitent sinners, applying to themselves, by true faith, this vicarious fulfillment of the Law, might be accounted righteous before God, the judge, Gal. 4:4, 5; Rom. 10:4; Matt. 5:17 (*Examen*, 737).

Anselm (d. 1109): If we say because he will give himself for obedience to God so that by steadfastly preserving righteousness he may subject himself to his will, this was not to give what God did not demand from him as his due. For every rational creature owes God this obedience (*Cur Deus Homo*, II 11, quoted in Pieper II, p 373, but see note 75 there).

c) As Son of Man Jesus was Lord of the Law.

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Philippians 2:6,8 [Christ] being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

4. He was obedient by suffering the curse of the law.

a) This is known as passive obedience.

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Hebrews 10:10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

b) This obedience was vicarious.

5. **We must use caution in regard to the axiom: “The law obligates either to obedience or to punishment” (*Lex obligat vel ad obedientiam vel ad poenam*). It cannot be used to deny the need for Christ’s active obedience. (See Pieper, Volume II, p 377)**

- a) **As a general rule the axiom applies only to unfallen man. It does not apply to fallen man, who needs both perfect obedience and punishment for failures. The axiom does not apply to Christ who needs neither obedience or punishment for himself.**

Parsimonius (Karg) (1563) who recanted his view: The law binds to either obedience or punishment, not both at once. Therefore, because Christ endured the punishment for us, he thereby rendered obedience for himself. Also: What he rendered, that we dare not render, and are under no obligation to do it. But we must render obedience to the law. Christ, therefore, did not render obedience to the law for us, but for himself, that he might be an offering unspotted and acceptable to God (Schmid, p 355).

Quenstedt: The cause on account of which the Son of God was subject to the law was not his own obligation; for Christ not only as God, but also according to his human nature, was in no way subject to the law.... For Christ, with respect to himself, was the Lord of the entire law, and not its servant, Mark 2:28. And, although he was and is the seed of Abraham, yet, because in the unity of his person he was and is the Son of God, he was not subject to the Law with respect to himself. That consequently as Christ has nevertheless fulfilled the Law, he has done it in our stead (*TDP*, III, 246).

Gerhard: The suffering of penalties alone is not the righteousness of the law, for then it would follow that the damned most perfectly fulfill the law; since they endure the most exquisite punishments for their sins.... The passion of Christ would not have profited had it not been combined with most full and perfect obedience to the law.... The active obedience alone would not have been sufficient, because punishment was to be inflicted for the sins of the human race; the passive obedience alone would not have been sufficient, because if the sins were to be expiated, perfect obedience to each and every precept of the Law was required, i.e., the passive obedience had to be that of one who had most fully met every demand of active obedience.... Rational creatures not yet fallen into sin, the law places under either punishment or obedience. The holy angels it obliges only to obedience, but in no way to punishment. Adam, in the state of innocence, it obliges only to obedience, but not at the same time, except conditionally, to punishment. For, where there is no transgression, there is no punishment. But rational creatures that have fallen into sin, it obliges to both punishment and obedience: to obedience, so far as they are rational creatures, to punishment, because they have fallen into sin. Thus, since the Fall, Adam and all his posterity are under obligation at the same time both to punishment and to obedience, because the obligation to obedience is in no way abated by a fall, but on the other hand, a new obligation has entered, viz., that of the endurance of punishment for sin (*Loci*, vii, 70, sqq.).

- b) **The two forms of Christ’s obedience are not to be separated mechanically.**

Quenstedt: Nevertheless it must be noted that the active and passive obedience in the satisfaction of Christ are most closely connected, since his suffering was active and his active obedience involved suffering (*TDP*, II, p 407).

Quenstedt.: The distinction into active and passive obedience is not very accurate, as Dr. Mentzer well remarks, because the passive obedience does not exclude the active, but includes it, inasmuch as the latter was wonderfully active, even in the very midst of Christ's death. Hence Bernard correctly called Christ's action passive, and his passion active (*TDP*, III, 244).

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

John 18:11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

6. It was the God-Man who became obedient.

Quenstedt: The obedience of Christ is an action not only of his human nature but of Christ the God-man, who, just as he was born and given for us, so also was made under the law for us, and is the end, i.e., the fulfilling, of the law not for himself, but for righteousness to every believer (*TDP*, III.c. 3. membr. 2. s. 2. q. 3. f. 407).

III. The vicarious nature of Christ's obedience is set forth in various ways.

1. It is expressed by prepositions which convey the ideas of substitution and benefit.

a) ἀντί (instead of, in place of, for).

Non-justification usage of ἀντί:

Matthew 2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea *in place of* his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee,

Matthew 5:38 You have heard that it was said, "Eye *for* eye, and tooth *for* tooth."

Matthew 17:27 "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them *for* my tax and yours."

Usage in the context of justification:

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom *for* many.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom *for* many.

b) ὑπέρ + gen. (for one's benefit, instead of – at times also, “concerning”).

Non-justification usage of ὑπέρ:

Philemon 13 I would have liked to keep him with me so that he *could take your place* in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

Usage in the context of justification:

John 11:50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die *for* the people than that the whole nation perish.

2 Corinthians 5:14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died *for* all, and therefore all died.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up *for* us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Luke 22:19,20 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given *for* you; do this in remembrance of me.”
²⁰In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out *for* you.”

John 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give *for* the life of the world.

John 10:15 Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life *for* the sheep.

Romans 5:6,8 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died *for* the ungodly. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up *for* us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

2 Corinthians 5:15,21 And he died *for* all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died *for* them and was raised again. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin *for* us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself *for* me.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse *for* us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered *for* you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels,

now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death *for* everyone.

Hebrews 10:12,14,18 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice *for* sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

c) *περὶ* is usually used with sin as its object and rarely with sinners as the object. (The usage of *ὑπέρ* is the opposite.)

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for [*περὶ*] sins once for all, the righteous for [*ὑπέρ*] the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out *for* [*περὶ*] many for the forgiveness of sins.

2. His death is called a sacrifice.

a) In a sacrifice the victim takes the place of the sinner (denoted by the laying on of hands).

Isaiah 53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

b) Scripture describes Christ’s self-sacrifice.

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Hebrews 9:14,25,26,28 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ²⁵ Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Hebrews 10:12,14,18 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹⁴ By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

1 Corinthians 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

John 17:19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

John 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

3. His death is called a ransom.

a) A ransom is the price by which a prisoner or a slave is set free, the redemption by gold or silver.

1 Peter 1:18 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.

b) On Christ's redemption

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed (ἐξηγόρασεν) us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom (λύτρον) for many.

1 Timothy 2:6 [Christ] gave himself as a ransom (τὸν ἀντίλυτρον) for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Titus 2:14 [Christ] gave himself for us to redeem (λυτρώσεται) us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Luke 2:38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption (λύτρωσιν) of Jerusalem.

Hebrews 9:12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption (λύτρωσιν).

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought (περιποιήσατο) with his own blood.

Ephesians 1:14 Who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession (ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως)—to the praise of his glory.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a

people belonging (περιποίησιν) to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price (ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς). Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price (τιμῆς ἡγοράσθητε); do not become slaves of men.

c) Notice Christ's (and the Father's) willingness

Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Galatians 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

4. In view of the above Scripture testimony all objections to the vicariousness of Christ's obedience become invalid.

Note: Shame on sinners, who need redemption and are blessed with Christ's redemption, for criticizing God's method. We list some of these errors.

**a) "God could forgive sins by his mighty power."
Perhaps—but he didn't.**

Hebrews 2:17: For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Romans 3: 25-26 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

**b) "It is an insult to God to attribute anger, wrath, and enmity, to him."
But God's wrath is a fact. Scripture the reality of death, and our conscience all testify to it.**

Romans 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

Romans 5:9,10 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's

enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Romans 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

c) **“Christ’s death manifests God’s love.”
True—but also his wrath.**

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Galatians 3:10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”

d) **“It is unjust to punish the innocent for the guilty.”
Although Christ was willing, yet the saying “there is no injustice done to the willing” (*volenti non fit iniuria*) does not satisfy human reason.**

John 10:17,18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.

John 18:4-11 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who is it you want?” ⁵ “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “I am he,” Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) ⁶ When Jesus said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. ⁷ Again he asked them, “Who is it you want?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” ⁸ “I told you that I am he,” Jesus answered. “If you are looking for me, then let these men go.” ⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: “I have not lost one of those you gave me.” ¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) ¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”

Ephesians 5:2 And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

e) **“Christ could not suffer eternal damnation in a few hours.”
Yet Christ is the infinite God.**

f) **“The idea of vicariousness is too juridical.”
But the entire doctrine of law, sin, wrath, judgment is juridical.
So is the doctrine of justification. Hence this “pious” objection strikes at the very heart of Christianity.**

Mark Lewis Taylor: Christian scapegoating interpretations of Jesus' death bear a significant responsibility for today's theatrics of terror, as we suffer it in the form of prisons, endemic police brutality, and state-sanctioned executions. Christians who wish to counter this theatrics of terror with something really new

must lay aside the scapegoating myth of Jesus' death. Jesus' execution was not a salvific event, and I have not presented it as such in this book (*The Executed God*, p 108).

Carl Braaten: The historical account is a code, a surface manifestation of a real meaning to be found on a different and transcendent level. The historical event must be translated into eternal truth about the satisfaction of God's honor, or elevated to a sublime example of dedication to whatever religious people are supposed to be dedicated to, or transcribed into a story about the deception of cosmic tyrants. None of that is evident from the event itself. It comes from the moral, mythological and metaphysical baggage we carry with us (*Christian Dogmatics*, Volume II, p 79).

From *The Lutheran*: Question: Is it true Jesus was born so he could die on the cross? Jesus was born not to die, but to live for us. If Jesus was born simply to die, Herod's soldiers could have killed him as a baby. The cross is central to our preaching because it shows the depth of God's love for us. ...Some preaching describes Jesus' death as a payment to God's wrath. This approach stresses guilt as a barrier to our entry into heaven. There is truth here, but this is only one of many ways the Scriptures proclaim the meaning of Jesus for us (March 30, 1988, p 46).

Robert Brinsmead: The penal-satisfaction theory of atonement too closely portrays God as a celestial Shylock who must have his pound of flesh before he can forgive (*Verdict*, Essay 8, 1983, p 9).

g) "God's demand for suffering and allowing his Son to suffer foster a spirit of vindictiveness, legitimize child abuse, or endorse inappropriate parental dominance."

Mary Daly: The model of Jesus as the supreme scapegoat, projected upon women and others for them to imitate, has contributed to their victimization. Taking on the idealized qualities of a victim, such as sacrificial love, passive acceptance of suffering, humility, and meekness, has reinforced women's subservient role (*Beyond God the Father*, summary p 75-77).

h) "Christ's submission to the Father's will endorses submission to the point of sin and invites or enables low self-esteem, passivity, and irresponsibility."

Mary Daly: As a uniquely masculine image and language for divinity loses credibility, so also the idea of a single divine incarnation in a human being of the male sex may give way in the religious consciousness to an increased awareness of the power of Being in all persons (*Beyond God the Father*, p 71).

Daphne Hampson: Consequently some women have wanted to say that "woman's 'sin'...is 'the failure to take responsibility for self-actualization.'" ... For women to hear that it is their right and duty to take themselves seriously, that it matters who they are and what they think, is to turn Christian theology as they have imbibed it upside-down (*Theology and Feminism*, p 124.)

Rita Brock: We redeem Christ when we recognize the images of Jesus Christ

that reflect our hunger for healing wholesomeness and claim those images as resources for hope because we belong to a community of transformation and empowerment (“The Feminist Redemption of Christ,” in *Christian Feminism: Visions of a New Humanity*, p 74)

**IV. The grand result of Christ’s priestly work may be expressed as:
Satisfaction—Propitiation/Expiation—Reconciliation—Atonement.**

1. Satisfaction (*satisfactio vicaria*): a non-biblical, ecclesiastical term that expresses the truth that all demands of God’s righteousness have been fully satisfied.

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price (ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς).
Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price (τιμῆς ἡγοράσθητε); do not become slaves of men.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought (τὸν ἀγοράσαντα) them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased (ἡγόρασας) men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

Revelation 14:3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed (οἱ ἡγορασμένοι) from the earth.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed (ἐξηγόρασεν) us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

Galatians 4:5 To redeem (ἐξαγοράσῃ) those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom (ἀπολύτρωσιν) to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις).

Ephesians 1:7,14 In him we have redemption (ἀπολύτρωσιν) through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession (ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως)—to the praise of his glory.

Colossians 1:14 In whom we have redemption (*ἀπολύτρωσιν*), the forgiveness of sins.

Job 19:25 I know that my Redeemer (*יִלְיֵא*) lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

Isaiah 41:14 Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I myself will help you,” declares the LORD, your Redeemer (*יִלְיֵא*), the Holy One of Israel.

Hosea 13:14 “I will ransom (*מִדְּפָאָה*) them from the power of the grave; I will redeem (*מִלְּנֶפֶס*) them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?”

Psalms 49:7,8 No man can redeem (*הַפְּדֵה אֶת-חַיִּי*) the life of another or give to God a ransom (*כֹּפֶר*) for him—⁸ the ransom (*כֹּפֶר*) for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought (*περιποιήσατο*) with his own blood.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share (*περιποίησιν*) in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging (*λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν*) to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

2. **Propitiation/Expiation. These are competing English renderings of Greek words based on the root *ἵλασ-*. “Propitiation” properly means an appeasement or changing of feelings of the gods. The heathen Greeks often used the *ἵλασ-* words with this meaning. In the Greek Old Testament, however, *ἵλασ-* words were used to render the Hebrew root *כפר*, which means covering, full payment, expiation. *כפר* does not mean “appeasement” in the pagan sense, as if God was angry with man until he received a sacrifice to placate him. God’s love prompted him to provide the offering, Ro 5:8, “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” In the King James Version “propitiation” was used to render the *ἵλασ-* words. This was not a good choice, but eventually readers of the Bible came to understand “propitiation” as a payment word, not an appeasement word. The NIV uses renderings like “atoning sacrifice.”**

Leviticus 16:14,15 He is to take some of the bull’s blood and with his finger sprinkle it on the front of the atonement cover (*תַּבְּרִיחַ*, in the LXX this is translated with *ἵλαστήριον*); then he shall sprinkle some of it with his finger seven times before the atonement cover. ¹⁵ He shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering for the people

and take its blood behind the curtain and do with it as he did with the bull's blood: He shall sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of it.

Hebrews 2:17 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement (τὸ ἰλάσκεσθαι) for the sins of the people.

Luke 18:13 But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy (ἰλάσθητι) on me, a sinner."

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice (ἱλασμός) for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

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

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement (ἱλαστήριον), through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

Hoenecke: As He 2:17 shows, the basic meaning of ἰλάσκεσθαι is this: to cover sin before God with a sacrifice. But it does not mean, as Quenstedt incorrectly takes it, to make God propitious. It is not used with the accusative of the person to be reconciled, neither is ἐξιλάσκεσθαι so used.... Christian revelation teaches about a God who in mercy is favorably inclined toward us from eternity and who does not arrange for an expiation of guilt in order that he might then first become gracious, but in order that sin might be covered and his justice might not be compelled to let his wrath hold sway, but that rather he might let his everlasting mercy have free rein (III, p 193).

Anselm (d. 1109): If God shall say "You are a sinner," you say, "Lord, I interpose the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between my sins and you" (*Liber meditationum, Consolatio*, PL 158:687).

Ambrosiaster (unknown 4th century author wrongly identified with Ambrose): This expiation was by his blood [which means that] we have been set free by his death so that God might reveal him and condemn death by his passion... He nullified the sentence through which it seemed just that everyone should be condemned (*Commentary on Paul's Epistles*, CSEL 81).

Epistle to Diognetus (2nd century): O sweet exchange! O unsearchable operation! O benefits surpassing all expectation! That the wickedness of many should be hid in a single Righteous One, and that the righteousness of One should justify many transgressors (*ANF*, 1:28).

3. Reconciliation.

a) **These texts are speaking of a change in the world's legal status before God. Neither a change in the world's attitude (conversion) nor a change in God's attitude fits the phraseology.**

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 All this is from God, who reconciled (καταλλάξαντος) us

to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (καταλλαγῆς): ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 5:9-11 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled (κατηλλάγημεν) to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation (καταλλαγήν).

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile (ἀποκαταλλάξαι) to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

b) Hoenecke has the best definition.

Hoenecke: To change the relationship between God and the world in such a way that the world no longer has to appear as one that according to justice is separated from him because of sin and damnable (III, p 191).

4. Atonement: the establishment of peace. In older usage atonement was used as a synonym for reconciliation. In more modern usage atonement is used more frequently as a synonym for satisfaction or expiation.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement (לְכַפֵּר) for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

Ephesians 2:14,17 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 20:19,21 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Isaiah 40:1,2 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

5. In view of the above Scripture statements we must reject, or at least correct, the following theories.

a) Triumphatorial—Christ's work terminates on Satan, forcing him to release his captives (cf. Col 2:15). Greek Fathers, Ludensians.

Gustaf Aulén (d. 1978) describes what he calls the “classic” idea of the atonement, in contrast to the Latin and traditional Lutheran: Its central theme is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ—Christus Victor—fights against and triumphs over the powers of the world, the “tyrants” under which mankind is held in bondage and suffering, and in him God reconciles the world to him self (*Christus Victor*, p 20f). It is precisely the work of salvation wherein Christ breaks the power of evil that constitutes the atonement between God and the world (p 87).

Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Note: Was the ransom paid to the devil? No, a satisfaction is more than a ransom.

The Eastern Fathers were divided. For example, Gregory of Nyssa supported this theory; Gregory of Nazianzus opposed.

Ireneus: Therefore the almighty Word of God, who did not lack justice, acted justly even in the encounter with the apostate one [Satan] ransoming from him the things which were his own... through persuasion, not by the use of force (*Adverses haereses*, V.i.1).

Gregory of Nyssa: What, then, under these circumstances is justice? It is not the exercising any arbitrary sway over him who has us in his power, nor, by tearing us away by a violent exercise of force from his hold, thus leaving some color for a just complaint to him who enslaved man through sensual pleasure. For as they who have bartered away their freedom for money are the slaves of those who have purchased them, for they have constituted themselves their own sellers, and it is not allowable either for themselves or any one else in their behalf to call freedom to their aid... Whereas, if he wishes to pay a price to get such a one away, there is no law to prevent that. On the same principle, now that we had voluntarily bartered away our freedom, it was requisite that no arbitrary method of recovery, but the one consonant with justice should be devised by him who in his goodness had undertaken our rescue. Now this method is in a measure this; to make over to the master of the slave whatever ransom he may agree to accept for the person in his possession (*Great Catechism*, XXII). The Enemy, therefore, beholding in [Christ] such power, saw also in him an opportunity for

an advance, in the exchange, upon the value of what he held. For this reason he [Satan] chooses him [Christ] as a ransom for those who were shut up in the prison of death. ...[God's] making the redemption of the captive a matter of exchange exhibits his justice, while the invention whereby he enabled the Enemy to apprehend that of which he was before incapable, is a manifestation of supreme wisdom (*Great Catechism*, XXIII).

John of Damascus (d. 749): Away with the thought that the blood of the Lord should have been offered to the tyrant (*Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 3:27)

Augsburg Confession, IV, 2: Their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by his death, has made satisfaction for our sins.

Apology, VI, 43: Besides the death of Christ is a satisfaction not only for guilt, but also for eternal death, according to Hosea 13:14, "O death, I will be your death."

Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

b) Mystic—Christ's work terminates physically on man, producing an inner participation: not Christ for us, but Christ in us. Osiander, Schleiermacher, Eastern Orthodoxy, Lutheran-Orthodox dialogues, Lutheran-Catholic dialogues.

Andreas Osiander: The gospel has two parts; the first, that Christ has satisfied the justice of God; the other, that he has cleansed us from sin and justifies us by dwelling in us (quoted by Bente in *Historical Introduction to the Symbolical Books*, p 156).

Osiander: The entire fullness of the deity dwells in Christ bodily, hence in those also in whom Christ dwells....Therefore we are just by His essential righteousness....Whoever does not hold this manner of our justification is certainly a Zwinglian at heart, no matter what he may confess with his mouth....They also teach things colder than ice [who hold] that we are regarded as righteous only on account of the forgiveness of sins, and not on account of the [essential] righteousness of Christ who dwells in us through faith (ibid.).

Vladimir Lossky: The descent (*katabasis*) of the divine person of Christ makes human persons capable of an ascent (*anabasis*) in the Holy Spirit. It was necessary that the voluntary humiliation, the redemptive self-emptying of the Son of God should take place, so that fallen man might accomplish their vocation of *theosis*, the deification of created beings by created grace (*In the Image and Likeness of God*, p 97).

c) Moral influence—Christ's work terminates on man, inducing him to work out his own salvation. Abelard, Socinians, some Arminians.

Peter Abelard (d. 1142): God in Christ has united our human nature to himself and by suffering in that same nature has demonstrated to us that supreme love of which Christ himself speaks.... It now seems that we have been justified by the blood of Christ and reconciled to God in this way: through this singular act of

grace made known in us...he has more fully bound us to himself by love. As a result our hearts should be set on fire by such a gift of divine grace, and true love should not hold us back from suffering anything for his sake. Therefore, our redemption through the suffering of Christ is that deeper love within us which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but also secures for us the true liberty of the children of God in order that we might do all things out of love rather than out of fear (*Expositio in Epistolam ad Romanos*, 2).

Hastings Rashdall (d. 1924): At last we have found a theory of the atonement which thoroughly appeals to reason and to conscience.... When we see in the death of Christ the most striking expression and symbol of the spirit which dominated his whole life, our recognition of the divine love which shines forth in that death ceases to be dependent upon our accepting of any of those always difficult and sometimes repulsive theories of substitutive or expiatory or objective efficacy which were once connected to it (*Idea of the Atonement*, p 360-362).

- d) **Rectoral—Christ’s work terminates on man, inducing in him a horror of sin and God’s wrath which deters him from sin and enables God to safely forgive sin. Hugo Grotius, Jonathan Edwards, John Miley.**

Hugo Grotius (d. 1645): When it was determined to spare [sinners], either by instituting or not [instituting] some example against so many and so great sins, he most wisely chose the way by which the greatest number of his attributes might be manifested at the same time, namely, both his clemency and his severity or hatred of sin, and his concern for maintaining the law (*Defensio Fidei*, Ch. 5).

- e) **Reconciliation—Christ’s work terminates on God.**
- 1) **Christ, sympathetically entering our condition, adequately repented and confessed.**
 - 2) **Christ by His obedience earned the right to do as he pleases with those whom God gave him as a reward.**
 - 3) **This contradicts the Bible, which says the world needed to be reconciled to God, not God to the world.**
- f) **These are travesties of the biblical doctrine.**

V. **The salvation procured by our high priest is complete in every respect.**

1. **It is complete *intensive*.**

- a) **All sins are completely covered and perfect righteousness has been gained for us.**

1 John 1:7 The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but

also for the sins of the whole world.

Romans 5:10,11 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:19-20 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."

Hebrews 10:14 Because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

b) It is proclaimed unconditionally. Not even faith is a condition or term to be met but is the receiving organ.

Ephesians 2:8 For it is *by* grace you have been saved, *through* faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

2. It is complete *extensive*. It covers all people without exception.

a) It applies to all people in the world.

John 3:16 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.

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:14,15 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

1 Timothy 2:6 Who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

b) In some passages “many” is opposed to few or to one (not to all).

Romans 5:18,19 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for *all* men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for *all* men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man the *many* were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the *many* will be made righteous.

Isaiah 53:6,12 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us *all* (כָּלֵנוּ).

¹²Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of *many* (רַבִּים), and made intercession for the transgressors.

Matthew 20:28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 26:28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 9:26,28 . Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Daniel 12:2 Multitudes (רַבִּים) who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28,29 Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Quenstedt: Scripture does not correct itself, but explains, when it now calls those *many* whom elsewhere it calls *all*; it does not set many in opposition to all, but to one or few (*TDP*, III, c. 3, m. 2, s. 2.q. 7.f. 459).

c) The fallen angels are not included.

Hebrews 2:16,17 For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

_____ Ephesians 1:10 To be put into effect when the times will have reached their

fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Colossians 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

d) Christ’s payment is retroactive.

Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.

Luke 16:22 “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side.

Romans 4:3-7: What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”⁴ Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation.⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.⁶ David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:⁷ “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Acts 15:10,11 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? ¹¹No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.

Luke 10:24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

e) Christ’s payment applies to the world not in *abstracto*, but to each one individually.

1 Timothy 4:10: We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone (*ὕπὲρ παντὸς*).

f) Christ's payment covers also those who are lost.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.

Hebrews 6:4-6 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

g) Christ is the only Savior.

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

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Romans 3:23,24 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

3. It is futile to distinguish between sufficiency of the payment (enough to pay for the sins of all people) and its efficacy (applied only to the elect). "Infinite value"—"Limited in purpose".

Loraine Boettner (d. 1990): While the value of the atonement was sufficient to save all mankind, it was efficient to save only the elect. ...When the atonement is made universal its inherent value is destroyed. If it is applied to all men, and if some are lost, the conclusion is that it makes salvation objectively possible for all but that it does not actually save anybody. According to the Arminian theory the atonement has simply made it possible for men to co-operate with divine grace and thus save themselves — if they will. But tell us of one cured of disease and yet dying of cancer, and the story will be equally luminous with that of one eased of sin and yet perishing through unbelief. The nature of the atonement settles its extent. If it merely made salvation possible, it applied to all men. If it effectively secured salvation, it had reference only the elect. As Dr. Warfield says, "The things we have to choose between are an atonement of high value, or an atonement of wide extension. The two cannot go together." The work of Christ can be universalized only by evaporating its

substance. Let there be no misunderstanding at this point. The Arminian limits the atonement as certainly as does the Calvinist. The Calvinist limits the extent of it in that he says it does not apply to all persons (although as has already been shown, he believes that it is efficacious for the salvation of the large proportion of the human race); while the Arminian limits the power of it, for he says that in itself it does not actually save anybody. The Calvinist limits it quantitatively, but not qualitatively; the Arminian limits it qualitatively, but not quantitatively. For the Calvinist it is like a narrow bridge which goes all the way across the stream; for the Arminian it is like a great wide bridge which goes only half-way across. As a matter of fact, the Arminian places more severe limitations on the work of Christ than does the Calvinist (*The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, Ch, XII, Limited Atonement, par. 3).

a) **“Christ died for his people.”
True—but only for them?**

Calvin: It is clear that salvation is freely offered to some while others are barred from access to it, on account of God’s pleasure (*Inst.* III, XXII, 1 as quoted by McGrath in *Christian Theology Reader*, p 233).

b) **“Christ gave his life for many (namely, the elect)”.
See the section on “many” in 2,b above.**

Matthew 22:14 For many are invited, but few are chosen.

c) **“Christ would not pray for the reprobate, then much less would he die for them.”**

1) **Christ did and does make special intercession for his own.**

John 17:9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

2) **He did also pray for those who were never converted.**

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

VI. By his priestly work Christ established Christian liberty.

1. By raising Christ from the dead God declared every sinner to be righteous.

a) **This is objective justification.**

Romans 3:23,24 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins (διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα) and was raised to life for our justification (διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν).

Romans 5:18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

2 Corinthians 5:19,21 That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

b) This is the message with which Christ sent his apostles into the world.

John 17:18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

John 20:21-23 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

2 Corinthians 5:18,19 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

c) Through this announcement objective justification becomes subjective.

Explanation to the Third Article of the Creed in Luther's Small Catechism: "in which Christian Church he daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers."

2. Through faith in this message sinners know that they are freed from God's wrath and enjoy peace of conscience.

Romans 5:9,10 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Romans 8:1,31-39 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than

conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The state of being under the law is replaced by the state of grace.

a) We stand in grace.

Romans 5:1,2 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Romans 10:4 Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Galatians 4:5 To redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Galatians 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

1 Timothy 1:9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous (ὅτι δικαίω νόμος οὐ κεῖται) but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers.

b) Christians will carefully guard this precious liberty.

Galatians 5:1-4 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.² Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.⁴ You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Colossians 2:16,17,20 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules.

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

c) In regard to adiaphora they will neither despise a weak brother nor give offense to him.

Romans 14:1,10,13 Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

1 Corinthians 8:9,13 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹³ Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

1 Corinthians 10:31-33 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. ³² Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— ³³ even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

Philippians 2:3,4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

4. The image of God, restored through justification, will impel a renewing in the manner of living. Note even the natural effect of "good news":

Genesis 45:27 But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

a) Freedom is not license (licentiousness).

John 8:34,36 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

Romans 6:1,2 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom

Galatians 5:1,13 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ¹³ You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

1 Peter 2:16 Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.

b) This freedom means a strenuous effort in sanctification.

1 Peter 1:17-19 Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ 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,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

1 Corinthians 6:20 You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Romans 6:4-7 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Romans 8:4 In order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Romans 14:8,9 If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.⁹ For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

5. The presence of defects and adversity shows that the complete revelation of our freedom is a matter of faith and hope.

a) Our real life is hidden.

Colossians 3:3,4 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

1 Corinthians 15:43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

b) It is a striving not a having attained.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you

will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:13 Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

c) Perfection is held out for the future life.

John 6:40,54 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.
⁵⁴Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 10:28,29 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

2 Timothy 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

VII. Christ is carrying on his sacerdotal work in the state of exaltation by making intercession for us.

1. The vicarious atonement was completed during the exinanition.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Hebrews 9:12,24-26 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all [ἐφάπαξ] by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. ²⁴ For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. ²⁵ Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

2. During the exinanition Christ's prayers were both expiatory and intercessory.

a) Expiatory, as vicarious fulfillment of the Second Commandment.

b) Intercessory, as pleas for sinners.

1) For those who never came to faith.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

2) For his first disciples.

Luke 22:32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

John 17:9,11,15,17,24 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. ²⁴ “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

3) For his disciples of all time.

John 17:20 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.

3. In the state of exaltation Jesus’ prayers are only intercessory not expiatory. He now applies to us the once and for all sacrifice for sin.

a) He claims forgiveness for us.

Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding (*ἐντυγχάνει*) for us.

Hebrews 7:24,25 But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede (*τὸ ἐντυγχάνειν*) for them.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear (*ἐμφανισθῆναι*) for us in God’s presence.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense (*παράκλητον*)—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

b) This intercession is real. About the manner nothing is revealed.

1) The intercession is real.

Quenstedt: Christ is not a metaphorical priest; therefore he does not make intercession only metaphorically (*TD*, c.3, membr.2.s.2.q.10. f. 472).

2) Many of the most common verbs for prayer, like εὔχασθαι, δεῖσθαι, αἰτεῖν, ἐρωτᾶν, are not used. Christ is not so much asking for something as making a legal claim.

3) When used of men the expressions for Christ’s intercession denote a verbal petition, presenting a case.

Acts 25:24 Festus said: “King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned (ἐμέτευχον) me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.”

Romans 11:2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed (ἐντυγχάνει) to God against Israel.

Acts 25:2 Where the chief priests and Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.

4. The intercession continues till Judgment Day.

a) Then Christ's mediatorship will have achieved its purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:24,28 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

b) The fruits will endure throughout eternity.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

5. Christ is our only intercessor.

a) He is Paraclete in a different manner from the Spirit.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

John 14:16,26 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 15:26 When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Romans 8:26,27 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes (ὕπερεντυγχάνει) for us with groans that words cannot express.²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes (ἐντυγχάνει) for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Galatians 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

b) It is blasphemy against Christ’s role as sole mediator to address prayer to departed saints.

1) There is no evidence that the saints in heaven know specific details of life on earth.

Isaiah 63:16 But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

2) Even though the saints may, in a general way, intercede for the church, nowhere does Scripture command us to pray to them.

Revelation 6:9,10 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. ¹⁰They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”

Augsburg Confession, XXI, 1-2: Of the Worship of Saints they teach that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works, according to our calling, as the Emperor may follow the example of David in making war to drive away the Turk from his country, for both are kings. But the Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints or to ask help of saints, since it sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor.

Apology, XXI, 8-10 Besides, we also grant that the angels pray for us. For there is a testimony in Zech. 1:12, where an angel prays: “O Lord of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem?” Although concerning the saints we concede that, just as, when alive, they pray for the church universal in general, so in heaven they pray for the church in general, albeit no testimony concerning the praying of the dead is extant in the Scriptures, except the dream taken from the Second Book of Maccabees, 15:14. Moreover, even supposing that the saints pray for the Church ever so much, yet it does not follow that they are to be invoked; although our Confession affirms only this, that Scripture does not teach the invocation of the saints, nor that we are to ask the saints for aid. But since neither a command, nor a promise, nor an example can be produced from the Scriptures concerning the invocation of saints, it follows that conscience can have nothing concerning this invocation that is certain.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship. The Church rightly honors the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of Mother of God, to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs. This very special devotion differs essentially from the adoration which is given to the

incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration. The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an epitome of the whole Gospel, express this devotion to the Virgin Mary (Paragraph 971).

Pomazansky: When the common conviction of the sanctity of the reposed person is confirmed by special testimonies, such as martyrdom, fearless confession, self-sacrificing service to the Church, the gift of healing, and especially when the Lord confirms the sanctity of the reposed person by miracles after his death when he is remembered in prayer - then the Church glorifies him in a special way...When this happens, prayers for the forgiveness of the sins of the departed one and for his repose cease; they give way to other forms of Church communion with him, namely: a) the praising of his struggles in Christ...b) petitions to him that he might pray for us, for the remission of our sins, for our moral advancement, and that he might help us in our spiritual needs and in our sorrows (*Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, p 314-315).

c) Christians carry on their intercession for one another as those who have received a royal priesthood under Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Revelation 1:6 And has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

Revelation 5:10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.

VIII. In conclusion we remind ourselves once more that in his vicarious obedience, in his propitiatory sacrifice, in his priestly intercession, Christ acts according to both his divine and his human nature. The God-Man in both natures is the Savior of mankind.

C. The Kingly Office.

I. Christ our mediator according to both natures governs and controls all things in heaven, on earth, and in hell.

1. Christ is called king or described as king in many passages.

Psalm 2:6 I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.

Psalm 45:1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

Psalm 72:1 Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

Jeremiah 23:5,6 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.”

Ezekiel 37:24 My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees.

Isaiah 9:6,7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Psalms 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

John 12:13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the King of Israel!”

Luke 1:33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

John 1:49 Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.”

John 18:33-37 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”³⁴ “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”³⁵ “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”³⁶ Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”³⁷ “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

Ephesians 1:21-23 Far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Colossians 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us

into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

2. In the Bible “kingdom” (βασιλεία) most often means the exercise of kingly authority (kingship).

a) Christ’s kingdom is an exercise of power.

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:18,20 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub.²⁰ But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

Acts 1:6 So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

Luke 17:21 Nor will people say, “Here it is,” or “There it is,” because the kingdom of God is within you.

b) To call the church the kingdom (of God, of Christ, of heaven) is an ecclesiastical metonymy.

1) It is legitimate.

2) It must not be read into Bible passages as their primary meaning.

Apology, VII, 13: For it is necessary to understand what it is that principally makes us members, that is, living members, of the church. If we will define the church only as an outward polity of the good and wicked, men will not understand that the kingdom of Christ is righteousness of heart and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Small Catechism, Lord’s Prayer, Second Petition: Thy kingdom come. *What does this mean?* Answer. The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also. *How is this done?* Answer. When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life here in time and yonder in eternity.

3. The kingdom was given to Christ.

a) It was given to him according to his human nature.

Psalm 2:6 I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an

everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Ephesians 1:20 [the power] which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

b) It was given to him at his incarnation.

Luke 1:31-33 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

Matthew 2:2 Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

4. Christ's kingdom is universal, unlimited, everlasting (Psalm 72).

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Hebrews 2:8 "And put everything under his feet." In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.

Luke 1:33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

Daniel 7:14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

II. The manner of Christ's kingship varies with the attitude or state of the person to whom it extends. The commonly used threefold division of Christ's

kingdom (power, grace, and glory) must not obscure the fact that God's kingdom is really one ruling activity which is here viewed from three different angles. The three kingdoms are not exclusive of each other.

1. Kingdom of Power (*regnum potentiae*).

a) Christ rules over all things by his laws.

Psalm 8:6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.

Daniel 7:14,27 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.

Colossians 1:16,17 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

1 Peter 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Matthew 11:25-28 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. ²⁷ All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

b) His rule extends even over his enemies (*regnum iustitiae*).

Psalm 110:1,2 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

1 Corinthians 15:25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Hebrews 10:12,13 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.¹³ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool.

c) Christ exercises this kingdom in the interest of the church.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

2. Kingdom of Grace (*regnum gratiae*).

a) In this kingdom Christ conveys spiritual blessings on his subjects through his gospel.

Romans 14:17,18 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

Jeremiah 23:5 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.”

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

John 18:37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

b) The only means by which he exercises this kingship is the gospel.

Matthew 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Also Matthew 9:35, Luke 8:1.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

Luke 4:43 But he said, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.”

Luke 16:16 The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

c) Christ brings men to faith and unites them in faith.

Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”

Romans 1:16,17 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

2 Corinthians 10:4,5 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Acts 20:32 Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Matthew 16:18,19 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

d) He endows the believers with spiritual gifts, both sanctifying gifts (*dona sanctificantia*) and gifts for ministry (*dona ministrantia*).

1 Corinthians 1:5-7 For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge—⁶ because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.⁷ Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift (*χαρίσματι*) as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

1 Corinthians 12:4-12 There are different kinds of gifts (*χαρισμάτων*), but the same Spirit.⁵ There are different kinds of service (*διακονιών*), but the same Lord.⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,¹⁰

to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

Romans 12:4-8 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.⁶ We have different gifts [χαρίσματα], according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Ephesians 4:7,11 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

e) Under his gracious rule his believers are empowered in their struggle against their enemies (church militant).

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Ephesians 6:12-18 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Ephesians 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to

be head over everything for the church.

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

f) This kingdom is not now visible (neither the king, nor his ruling, nor the beneficiaries). Perceiving it is a matter of faith.

Luke 17:20,21 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation,²¹ nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you” (*ἐντὸς ὑμῶν*).

John 3:8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

John 18:36 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

John 17:6,14,17 I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 10:14,27 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Ephesians 4:4-7 There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called—⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

g) His kingdom will continue to all eternity.

Matthew 28:20 And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

h) We are not to look for an earthly millennial kingdom. Revelation 20 makes three main points.

1) It emphasizes the world-wide spread of the gospel made possible by the binding of Satan.

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

2) It emphasizes the rule of the saints in heaven.

Revelation 20:4-6 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.⁶ Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

3) It emphasizes the loosing of Satan for the “short season” at the end.

Revelation 20:7-15 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.¹⁵ If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Acts 14:22 Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.

i) The papacy is the brazen rival of Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article IV, 10-14: This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted himself above, and opposed himself against Christ because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power, which, nevertheless, is nothing, and is neither ordained nor commanded by God. 11] This is, properly speaking to exalt himself above all that is called God as Paul says, 2 Thess. 2, 4. Even the Turks or the Tartars, great enemies of Christians as they are, do not do this, but they allow whoever wishes to believe in Christ, and take bodily tribute and obedience from Christians. The Pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that to be saved a person must obey him. This we are unwilling to do, even though on this account we must die in God's name. This all proceeds from the fact that the Pope has wished to be called the supreme head of the Christian Church by divine right. Accordingly he had to make himself equal and superior to Christ, and had to cause himself to be proclaimed the head and then the lord of the Church, and finally of the whole world, and simply God on earth, until he has dared to issue commands even to the angels in heaven. And when we distinguish the Pope's teaching from, or measure and hold it against, Holy Scripture, it is found that the Pope's teaching, where it is best, has been taken from the imperial and heathen law and treats of political matters and decisions or rights, as the Decretals show; furthermore, it teaches of ceremonies concerning churches, garments, food, persons and similar puerile, theatrical and comical things without measure, but in all these things nothing at all of Christ, faith, and the commandments of God. Lastly, it is nothing else than the devil himself, because above and against God he urges and disseminates his papal falsehoods concerning masses, purgatory, the monastic life, one's own works and fictitious divine worship (for this is the very Papacy), and condemns, murders and tortures all Christians who do not exalt and honor these abominations of the Pope above all things. Therefore, just as little as we can worship the devil himself as Lord and God, we can endure his apostle, the Pope, or Antichrist, in his rule as head or lord. For to lie and to kill, and to destroy body and soul eternally, that is wherein his papal government really consists, as I have very clearly shown in many books.

3. Christ's Kingdom of Glory (*regnum gloriae*).

a) The exalted Christ at the right hand of the Father is the glorious king.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

Revelation 5:12,13 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" ¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Galatians 1:5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:16 Who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

b) The kingly function of Christ includes the resurrection and the final judgment.

John 5:21-23,28,29 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. ²⁸ Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

Revelation 6:16,17 They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

c) Then his glory will be revealed and his subjects will enjoy indescribable bliss in his presence.

John 17:24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Matthew 25:34 Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.”

1 Thessalonians 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Revelation 21:1-5 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” ⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!”

Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

- d) **Only the elect will inherit this kingdom; only the church militant will become the church triumphant.**

Romans 8:30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

1 Peter 1:5 Who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

**The loci on Soteriology and Eschatology are found in
Volume II of these notes.**