

## *From Your Pastor* *A Study of Shorter Catechism*

**Question:** WSC 25 How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

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

**Scripture Memory:** *ESV Hebrews 9:14* ...How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

**An Explanation:** On the cross, the Lord Jesus offered Himself up willingly by the Eternal Spirit as a sacrificial offering to propitiate God's just wrath against sin, and reconcile sinners to God (Heb. 9:14, 26b; Rom. 3:24-26; Col. 1:20). Although Jesus was God's perfect and holy priest, He also willingly became the final sacrifice. There are two parts to Christ's priestly work that should be noted: 1) **Oblation/Sacrifice** and 2) **Intercession for sinners**. In John 17, we behold the glory of both of these aspects of Christ's priestly office. Jesus intercedes or prays for His own that the Father has given Him as he willingly and joyfully goes to the cross to satisfy divine justice and redeem His people through His blood ("*...Father, the hour has come...*", John 17:1). Jesus prays that He would glorify the Father through His priestly ministry, as the Father glorifies Him in the salvation work that will be accomplished through the cross and resurrection-ascension (John 17:1-5; cf. Heb. 10:10).

Christ completed His work of salvation for sinners through His death on the cross. He cried out: "*It is finished*" giving sinners great confidence in entering the blessed Holy of Holies through His blood, and giving His people boldness and confidence in their access to the Father (Heb. 4:14-16; cf. Eph. 2:18). Although Christ's priestly work in His estate of humiliation was fully accomplished and finished, His Heavenly Priestly work had just begun! The Bible teaches us that the priestly work of Christ in His estate of exaltation is to ever intercede for His own people, ensuring their endurance to the end, and ministering to them by His grace through Word and Sacrament by His Spirit from His Heavenly Throne in heaven. This great Gospel hope is summarized wonderfully in Hebrews 7:24-28:

*...But he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. <sup>25</sup> Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. <sup>26</sup> For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.*

**A Prayer:** Dear Jesus, let me come daily and boldly to the Throne of Grace to have you minister to me in my needs. Let me enter into your prayer time and intercession as I seek communion and fellowship with you. Let me know your peace as I live for you (Heb. 9:14).

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Biggs

*"Faith is an experiential, convicting, soul-emptying grace. To lay hold of Christ, to treasure His righteousness, necessitates losing my own righteousness. Faith teaches utter humility... Faith means utter despair of everything except Christ."*

-Joel Beeke