

Thoroughly Qualified

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[0 : 00] Well, we're continuing in our study of our confession of faith. As I've said in previous weeks, if you don't have a copy of our confession, please talk to me.

I would love to get it into your hands. And we're continuing in our study of chapter 8 in particular, Christ the Mediator. So we've been now going week by week, paragraph by paragraph, through this chapter.

Now, last week, we looked at paragraph 2. Now, I asked this last week, doing review together, and it took us a little while to warm up.

So let's think, what is it that we learned from paragraph 2? And as something comes to mind that you learned that you especially found helpful or edifying or needed to hear, go ahead and say what that is that you recall from last week.

God's plan is accomplished. Good, yes. Using those words, the key words, even both of them.

Wow. Sam, you really brought it all together there. So we saw in paragraph 1, the plan of God, the eternal plan of God.

[1 : 11] And then we saw in paragraph 2, how it is now that God has gone about accomplishing that plan. Good. Molly. Christ is just as important as what he has done.

Yes. So the who is just as important as the what. Who Christ is. We must understand that. And then we can also then understand what he has done.

So we started by looking at the who last week. Good. So who is Christ? He is God.

Good. Good. And man. The God-man. Divine. Human. And the confession unpacked both of those realities for us in detail and showed us from the Word.

Even if it didn't always cite the Word, it showed us that it was from the Word. Well, good. Well, let's go ahead in this morning. Let's actually read, or I'll read for us, paragraph 2 again, just to especially give us a refresher from last week and then even to kind of prime the pump as we go into paragraph 3.

[2 : 20] Paragraph 2. The Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity, is truly and eternally God. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, the same in substance and equal with Him.

He made the world and sustains and governs everything He has made. When the fullness of time came, He took upon Himself human nature with all the essential properties and common weaknesses of it, but without sin.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The Holy Spirit came down upon her and the power of the Most High overshadowed her. Thus, He was born of a woman from the tribe of Judah, a descendant of Abraham and David in fulfillment of the Scriptures.

Two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person without converting one into the other or mixing them together to produce a different or blended nature.

This person is truly God and truly man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and humanity. So these are weighty truths from God's Word that we are studying together.

[3 : 32] I feel the weight of it each week, even in preparing to teach on these paragraphs. It's why, in part, I try to quote often from other godly, more learned individuals than myself.

We want to hear what they say to help us along in these studies. This chapter of the Confession isn't light reading at bedtime. So I hope that this study serves to remind us that we love God with our minds.

That's part of what it means to love God with our minds. We should work hard to know and to understand more and more of who He is and what He's like.

This is honoring to Him as we do this hard work of thinking about what His Word says. We live in a world that is saturated with entertainment. It seems everything that we encounter is actually

intended to dumb us down, to make us think less and less.

So let's fight against that temptation, even this morning, in this study, and let's seek to honor God with our minds. We should want to grow in our knowledge of God. And so may our study of confession help us to that end.

[4 : 44] So let's read paragraph 3 together, and guess what? It's shorter. It all fits on just one slide. Paragraph 3. The Lord Jesus, in His human nature, united in this way to the divine in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit beyond measure.

He had in Himself all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The Father was pleased to make all fullness dwell in Him, so that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, He was thoroughly qualified to carry out the office of mediator and guarantor.

He did not take this office upon Himself, but was called to it by His Father, who put all power and judgment in His hand and commanded Him to carry them out.

So paragraph 3 is really just a continuation of paragraph 2. If we remember back a couple weeks ago, paragraph 1 explains God's plan to send Jesus Christ to be our mediator.

And then last week, we saw paragraph 2. It begins to explain how God accomplished that plan by telling us who Jesus is. So we're considering who Jesus is before what He did.

[6 : 09] So do we remember that Dr. Seuss-sounding statement? Who before what when talking about how? We're still talking about the who this morning in paragraph 3.

It's simply continuing where we left off in paragraph 2. More of who Jesus is and who He is shows us just how qualified, thoroughly qualified He is to carry out the office of mediator, the go-between for us and God.

So this morning, we are going to look again at something of what we learned about last week, the hypostatic union. Jesus is both truly God and truly man in one person.

And you remember the precision of language that we saw in paragraph 2 last week. We saw that in this one person, we have two whole, perfect, and distinct natures inseparably joined together, yet without mixing or blending to become this kind of third nature, human nature and divine nature and the person of Jesus Christ.

So paragraph 3 here begins right where we left off. So let's break down this paragraph. And as we've done each week, we'll break the paragraph itself down into three sections and work our way through each of these sections looking closely at them.

[7 : 39] So here is this first section. The smooth transition in that opening statement. As truly God and truly man, the Lord Jesus was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit beyond measure.

So we spent some time last week seeing and understanding that God the Father and God the Son, the Lord Jesus, are indeed both God. We really took our time to see the same substance and equal.

The same is true when talking about the Holy Spirit. The same substance and equal.

So we cannot separate the Godhead because there is only one God. To separate out God the Father and God the Son and God the Spirit would be to say that there are three gods.

And that's not what the Bible teaches. Deuteronomy 6.4 Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Or how about the Great Commission that Jesus gives in Matthew 28?

[8 : 46] Believers are to be baptized into the name, singular, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Not three names of three separate gods, but as Sinclair Ferguson helpfully says, The name of God the Trinity, the single name of the three-person God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

So one God in three persons. The three persons cannot be separated, but they can and they are distinguished from one another in Scripture.

They are distinct persons. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God. But the Father is not the Son.

The Spirit is not the Father. And any other combination of those, that's not true. They are each distinct. Now some in church history, and sadly even today, heretically teach that there is one God who simply appears to us in three different modes or forms.

So sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son, sometimes as the Holy Spirit. But all you need to do is look at Jesus' baptism, and really quickly that teaching falls apart.

[10 : 09] Because there you have the Father speaking from heaven. There you have the Son coming up out of the water. And there you have the dove descending upon the Son. One God, and

yet clearly three distinct persons.

So Kevin de Young says, There has always been an order in the Trinity. An order not of rank, but of well-arranged relationships.

Not of rank, not the Father somehow superior to the Son, but of relationships within the Trinity. We see those relationships or those distinctions between the persons of the Godhead in history.

We see those distinctions in creation, in redemption. For example, God the Son did not send God the Father. Or God the Spirit.

He dwells in us as a guarantee of our inheritance. It's not the Father dwelling in us as a guarantee of our inheritance. The Scriptures teach us consistently. God the Spirit.

[11:12] So the confession is making these clear distinctions. In paragraph 1, who was it that chose and sent the Son? The Father. That's reflecting the teaching of Scripture.

In paragraph 2, it was through God the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus was conceived. And so God the Son became a man. Not God the Father. Not God the Spirit.

Now in paragraph 3, we see these different modes of operation within the Godhead. The Lord Jesus was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit. Now we often think of being sanctified as growing in righteousness.

We think of putting off sin, putting on righteousness. Sinning less and less and holiness growing in that more and more.

But that's obviously not the kind of sanctification that the confession is talking about here in regards to Jesus. We just saw last week the confession clearly states what the Bible states.

[12:14] Jesus is without sin. Jesus was then sanctified in the sense that he was set apart for a particular purpose.

Now listen to this guy's name. Gerhardus Voss. How about that for a name? Gerhardus Voss. He says this. This is not to be understood as a change in the Savior.

As if this sanctification presupposes a previous lack of holiness. But as the consecration of his life in mediatorial obedience to God.

He even brings out Christ as our mediator. Set apart for this purpose. Obeyed God in every way.

And we see that consecration. We see that anointing at Jesus' baptism.

When the Holy Spirit descended upon him. This was something of a special setting apart ceremony for the Son. Jesus was beginning his earthly ministry.

[13:16] And he was being anointed with the Holy Spirit for this purpose. Now we see here there's some references. And we want to see each of these. We see first Psalm 45 7.

This is showing us here in the confession that Jesus' anointing with the Holy Spirit was in fulfillment of Psalm 45 7. There we read, Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.

So do you see how that psalm anticipates Christ? This is a special anointing. The psalmist says, Beyond your companions. Set apart from his companions.

Unlike them. This could also be translated beyond your fellows. And so Spurgeon said, Fellow with us. Or companion with us.

And yet equal with God. Man anointed the Christ. Yet still the reigning God. So Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit.

[14:20] John the Baptist speaks of this reality in John 3.34. He's talking about Jesus there in John 3.34. Beginning in verse 33, this is what John proclaims.

Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this. That God is true. For he whom God has sent utters the words of God.

For he gives the Spirit without measure. So the Old Testament anticipated this fulfillment. John the Baptist, he proclaimed this fulfillment. And so too did the apostles.

That's where we see Acts chapter 10 coming into play. There Peter, he's speaking to a Gentile man named Cornelius. And others are there with Cornelius. And this is what Peter says in Acts chapter 10.

Verse 37. You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea. Beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit.

[15:20] And with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. For God was with him. So there again, we read of this anointing with the Holy Spirit.

And we also read there of another anointing. With power. Jesus was anointed with power. This seems to go hand in hand with the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Meaning that in his being anointed with the Holy Spirit, he was also anointed with power. So we see this when Jesus says in Matthew 12, 28.

But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. If it's with the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Jesus didn't just say that he casted out demons by his own power. He said, by the Spirit of God. But I would expect that episode from Matthew 12 was on Peter's mind in Acts chapter 10 as he was speaking to Cornelius.

[16:24] Now that being said, we must be careful to not deny that Jesus had power within himself as God. Some actually seek to deny the deity of Jesus by saying, well, he was anointed in a special way with the Holy Spirit.

So any kind of miracle, any kind of supernatural act that we see him perform, well, that was done by the Spirit of God within him. So they are then denying his deity.

The scriptures, though, show us that in himself, Jesus had power in his earthly ministry because he is God. In his divine nature, he has all power.

And he often showed that power as a very evidence that he is God. So yes, we see the Holy Spirit working through Jesus with power. And yet other times, we read of Jesus doing miracles that are clearly meant to showcase his own power as God.

Miracles that weren't meant to point to the Spirit. Miracles that were meant to point to him. They're evidences. This is not just an ordinary man empowered by God.

[17:35] This is God in the flesh. I appreciate Wayne Grudem's words on this. He says, Some may object that these miracles just showed the power of the Holy Spirit working through him, just as the Holy Spirit could work through any other human being.

And therefore, these do not demonstrate Jesus' deity. But the contextual explanations of these events often point not to what they demonstrate about the power of the Holy Spirit, but to what they demonstrate about Jesus.

For instance, after Jesus turned water into wine, John tells us, This is the first of his miraculous signs Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory.

And his disciples believed in him. John 2.11. So it was not the glory of the Holy Spirit that was manifested, Grudem says, But the glory of Jesus himself, as his divine power, worked to change water into wine.

Or how about when Jesus calmed the wind and the waves? His disciples said, Who then is this that the wind and the sea obey him? The disciples understood, as Jewish men, God controls his creation.

[18:49] And so they understood that as Jesus calmed the wind and the waves, this was evidence. Jesus is no ordinary man. Jesus is not even just a man empowered by God, but that he is God.

Did you hear that? They did not marvel at the power he possessed. They marveled at him. Who is this? And the implied answer is, this is God in the flesh.

We are beholding God in the flesh. So we should affirm what the scriptures teach. Jesus was anointed by God with power.

Jesus was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit. Jesus in himself had power as God. One last example.

It's the ultimate example. Jesus' resurrection. So we read in Romans 8.11. If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you.

[19:55] So there we see. God the Father raised Jesus from the dead through God the Spirit. And yet, we also read in John 10.18.

Jesus says this, speaking of his own life. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.

This charge I have received from my Father. And then the last verse, John 2.19. Jesus is talking about his own body. And this is what he says.

Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. So all three persons of the Godhead are said to have powerfully raised Jesus from the dead.

So we can say that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit without losing sight of the fact that Jesus himself possessed divine power as God.

[20 : 57] All right, our confession then goes on with one more sentence here in this section. And this is where I made the mistake of sending this PowerPoint ahead on Tuesday before I'd really dove into this section.

And really, I shouldn't have split what we have here with the next sentence. We're going to see they go hand in hand. But first, we will look at this. He had in himself all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

This is basically a word-for-word quote from Colossians 2.3. Yet, in Colossians 2.3, we read additionally that this treasure is hidden in Christ.

And that isn't to mean hidden so that we might not find it. Like hidden to keep it away from us. It means hidden in the sense of it's secure. It's safe in Christ.

This also speaks of his sufficiency. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. What we need for salvation. Where's that found? In Jesus. Hidden in him.

[22 : 03] So there's no other wisdom. There's no other knowledge outside of Christ that we need in order to be made right with God. No, Christ is sufficient.

That's what Paul is arguing in Colossians 2. The very next verse, verse 4, he says, I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.

Meaning false teachers will try to persuade you to think otherwise. And they will be compelling.

They won't give you these bad arguments. They're going to give you plausible arguments.

We have some kind of hidden, secret knowledge. We have knowledge that you need that you won't find in Christ. You need to listen to us to get that knowledge.

Now Paul is saying in Christ we have all that we need for salvation. No other knowledge necessary. No other wisdom necessary. And in his earthly ministry, Jesus shared this wisdom and this knowledge.

[23 : 08] He communicated it to us in his earthly ministry. It's why God the Father at the transfiguration in Luke 9 says, this is my son, my chosen one.

Or you could say, my anointed one. And then what's the command that he gives? Listen to him. Listen to him. So Jesus then would pray to the Father at the end of his earthly ministry in John 17, beginning in verse 6.

I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.

For I have given them the words that you gave me. And they have received them, and have come to know in truth that I came from you. And they have believed that you sent me.

Jesus is saying, I have imparted all the words that you had for me to share to them. I've given that to them. That knowledge that will make us wise for salvation.

[24 : 11] Jesus shared it. So in himself, he possesses all wisdom and knowledge. I've heard it said, Jesus is the treasure chest of wisdom.

And so the disciples rightly said in John 16, 30, Now we know that you know all things, and do not need anyone to question you. This is why we believe that you came from God.

Okay, now we're going to see the connection. And we have two separate slides. It's terrible that we have it this way. But we need to see this. The next sentence. The Father was pleased to make all fullness dwell in him.

So here's the connection. The one in whom we find fullness of wisdom and knowledge is also the one in whom the fullness of God dwells.

Guess where we learn this? In Colossians, again. Chapter 1, verse 19. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. Or chapter 2 again, verse 9.

[25 : 16] For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. It's hard to find a couple of verses that would more clearly spell out the incarnation for us.

God took on flesh. In the man Jesus Christ, the whole fullness of deity dwells. So the confession here is drawing from Colossians chapter 2.

And it's simply connecting Jesus' possession of all wisdom and knowledge with his possession of the divine nature. The one in whom all the fullness of God dwells is the one in whom all wisdom and knowledge is hidden.

And so as God in the flesh, we see that Jesus is holy. Harmless or blameless is another way that we might conceive of that. undefiled and full of grace and truth.

The confession here doesn't footnote it, but clearly the confession writers have the book of Hebrews in mind. Particularly Hebrews 7.26. There we will see, and later in our study of the confession, we will talk through how Jesus is our great high priest.

[26 : 30] And there in Hebrews chapter 7, the author of Hebrews is talking about this. That Jesus is our great high priest. And this is what Hebrews 7.26 says.

For it was indeed fitting that we should have a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

So using many adjectives there, one of the main points that the writer of Hebrews is making is that Jesus is without sin. He is sinless. And Jesus proved that sinlessness.

He endured trials and temptations all through his life. And in all of it, Jesus only ever obeyed. He committed no sin, 1 Peter 2.22 says.

Neither was deceit found in his mouth. So Jesus was holy. Jesus was innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and all of this over the course of his entire life.

[27 : 33] It's not like he just came from heaven and went to the cross, being one who was without sin. And he came from heaven, born as a baby, lived his whole life, never once having sinned.

Now the confession writers include another phrase at the very end of all of those adjectives. Full of grace and truth. You're probably familiar with that last phrase.

John 1.14, it's cited there in the footnotes of the confession. It's part of John's introduction to his gospel account. And what is his main purpose in John's introduction to his gospel account?

I wish we had the older children from Wednesday nights here because Diane just taught through John with those kids and we could see, could those kids know, what is it that John is telling us? The very first words that John writes, they tell us that Jesus is God in the flesh.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Then you drop down to verse 14. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

[28 : 42] That word for dwelt, it's often pointed out that that word means tabernacled. And it reminds us of the tabernacle in the Old Testament where God's presence dwelt on earth.

So John is saying, God's presence came to dwell on earth, not in a building, but in a body, a human body, in the Lord Jesus.

The invisible God appeared in human flesh. As John 1.18 says, no one has ever seen God, the only God who is at the Father's side.

He has made Him known. So did you catch what John said there? No one has ever seen God. That is one statement. No one has ever seen God. Here's the next.

The only God who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known. So John is saying, God has made God known.

[29 : 42] D.A. Carson, in his commentary on John, says this, what it means is that the beloved Son, the incarnate Word himself, God, while being at the Father's side, has broken the barrier that made it impossible for human beings to see God and has made Him known.

God the Son made God the Father known. So Jesus says in John 6.46, anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.

We haven't seen the Father. But we have seen the Son. And He reveals the Father to us. And so we sing in Wesley's hymn, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see.

Hail the incarnate deity. So then, in light of all of this, all that we've just now studied out, we come to the end of this sentence.

He was thoroughly qualified for this office of mediator and guarantor. So because the fullness of God dwells in Him, because He is holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, because He is full of all wisdom and knowledge, Jesus is qualified for this office.

[31 : 03] Mediator. Guarantor. A guarantor is simply someone who guarantees something. So we can say that we have confidence in Jesus as our mediator.

We have an unshakable confidence. We have a certain confidence. We have a full confidence. A guarantee that by grace through faith, we have been made right with God.

Because this right relationship with God is through the perfect mediator, Jesus Christ. Now we need to talk for a moment about this term, office.

This is the first time that the word office has popped up in this chapter. An office is a position of authority. Barry Cooper is helpful on this point.

He says, sometimes we talk about a president taking office or leaving office. Office meaning a particular role of authority. In the same way, theologians sometimes speak of the offices of Christ, particularly roles of authority that Christ fulfills.

[32 : 12] So this office, this particular role of authority that Christ possesses, it's given to him by the Father. We see the confession says, he did not take this office upon himself, but was called to it by his Father.

So the Son, in coming to earth to fulfill this office, he submitted himself to the will of his Father. Kevin DeYoung is helpful here.

He says, the Father and the Son share the same essence and rank, and yet in their relationship, the Son submits to the Father, while the Father never submits to the Son.

Over and over again, especially in the Gospel according to John, Jesus speaks of this submission in his earthly ministry. Like in John 5, beginning in verse 19, we read, so Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing.

For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing, and greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.

[33 : 31] Or John 6, beginning in verse 37, all that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I will never cast out, for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Jesus is always speaking, not of his own will, but of his Father's will, so that even on the last night of his betrayal, before going to the cross, as he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus could say, Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me.

Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done. So the Son, sent by the Father to carry out the Father's will. And then the last phrase here to round out paragraph three.

It tells us that the Father put all power and judgment in his hand and commanded him to carry them out. Sometimes I have given the confession writers a hard time for not footnoting biblical references, but here we have three just for this brief statement.

[35 : 07] So we need to see each of these references. John 5, 22 says, The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son.

And then in verse 27, again Jesus says, And the Father has given the Son authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of Man. Then Matthew 28, 18.

This is an interesting one. Jesus says, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. And then finally, Peter in Acts 2, 36. Let all the house of Israel, therefore, know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

So authority given to Christ. Now we might often think of this power and this judgment in perhaps purely negative terms.

We think of power and judgment and we think of it rightly so as condemnation would follow. The power and the judgment, the authority to hand down sentences of punishment.

[36 : 14] Which is true. One day Christ will return in glory to do just that. But we need to think of this authority also in a positive sense.

And I appreciate that the confession writers included Matthew 28 in these three references.

Because Matthew 28 is speaking in positive terms of Jesus' authority.

He has power and authority to save. He's there commissioning his disciples and us as well to not condemn the world but to go and to make disciples.

Power and authority to save. So that one day we will not be judged. Back to John 5. We looked at verses 22 and 27.

Smack dab in the middle of those verses we have verse 24. And listen to what Jesus says there. Truly, truly I say to you whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.

[37 : 15] He does not come into judgment but has passed from death to life. So Jesus has all power. All judgment. He has all authority given by the Father.

Both in salvation and in condemnation. So for those who are not in Christ there should be fearful expectation because Jesus is and always will be a mediator.

But one day he will be mediating God's just judgment for those outside of him. But for us who are in Christ we should rejoice.

We have a mediator who stood in our place who took God's just wrath upon the cross. And we have a mediator who continues to stand in our place and to intercede for us before the throne.

And we'll see more of that next week Lord willing in paragraph four as we get into the what of accomplishing God's plans. We are dismissed. For this place We are dismissed from the Lord episode of the Lord and Jesus and Jesus is still autour of us for the Lord of puericos and I stand for the rest.

[38 : 26] We are dismissed but for the Lord and I stand for the Lord and I stand for sais ■■■ if you are Over■■■ed and I stand because he is