

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH SHORTER CATECHISM

LESSON # 18 (Q2LES5) - CHRIST'S EXALTATION QUESTIONS # 28

1. Prayer

2. **Bible reading:** Philippians 2: 1 – 11, Acts 1:9 - 11

3. **Review:** We are still on the subject of redemption. In question 23 we learned that Christ, as our redeemer, executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, and we discussed the execution of these offices in questions 24 through 26. Question 23 also told us that He executes these offices in both His estate of humiliation and exaltation. In our last lesson, we learned about Christ's humiliation. Christ, our God, who's every characteristic, righteousness, goodness, love, is at a level so far above us, agreed to this humiliation because of His love for us. He was humiliated by the nature of His birth, in His life, by every aspect of his death, and His treatment after His death.

4. **Introduction:** This lesson will cover SC question 28. This question deals with Christ's estate of exaltation. After Christ's death, a number of things happened which were to Christ's glory, and we will deal with them.

5. Question:

Question 28 **Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?**

Answer: **Christ exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.**

6. The WCF, SC, and LC

The SC deals with Christ's exaltation in one question, q28. The LC deals with this subject in considerably more detail, using six questions, q51 through 56. The WCF covers this subject in chapter 8, Of Christ the mediator, at the end of paragraph 4.

7. CHRIST'S EXALTATION

a. According to SC q28, what does Christ's exaltation consists of?

- Christ's rising from the dead after three days.
- Christ's ascending into heaven.
- Christ's sitting on the right hand of God the Father.
- Christ's coming to judge the world.

C8p4 of the WCF says, in part, *"On the third day He arose from the dead, with the same body in which He suffered, with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of His Father, making intercession, and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world."*

8. **(1 Cor 15:4 "And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:")**

a. How was Christ exalted in his resurrection ?

- He rose from the dead after three days, in fulfillment of His prophesy.

1. Had Christ's body seen corruption?

No **(Acts 13:37 "But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.")**

2. Was Christ's body the same body in which He suffered?

Yes **(John 20:27 "Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless; but believing.")**

3. Was Christ's body still a mortal body?

No **(Rom 6:9 "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no mere dominion over him.")**

- By whose power was Christ risen?

By His own power. **(John 10:17-18 "⁽¹⁷⁾Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.⁽¹⁸⁾No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.")**

- Jesus says in **John 10:18**, that He has the power to raise Himself from the dead. Yet in **Acts 13:37**, it says that God raised Him up. Is this a contradiction?

No. The end of **John 10:18** says, ***"This commandment have I received of my Father."*** Jesus had the power to raise Himself from the dead because it was given Him by God.

- Did Christ's death on the cross satisfy divine justice?

Yes (**Heb 9:14** ***How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"***)

- His death also vanquished death for His elect. (**Heb 2:14** ***"Foreasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil"***)

b. How do we know that Christ rose again from the dead?

- By the many witnesses who saw him, and conversed with him after his death. (**1 Cor 15: 5 – 6** ***"⁽⁵⁾And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: ⁽⁶⁾After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, buy some are fallen asleep."***)
- By the empty tomb.
- Because otherwise our faith would be in vain, the guilt of sin would still be upon us. (**1 Cor 15: 15 – 17** ***"⁽¹⁵⁾Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that the raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. ⁽¹⁶⁾For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: ⁽¹⁷⁾And if Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins."***)

There is a detailed discussion of this in Lee Strobel's [The Case For Christ](#).

9. (Luke 24:50-51 ⁽⁵⁰⁾*And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.* ⁽⁵¹⁾*And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven)*

How was Christ exalted by his ascension?

- a. triumphing over His enemies. (Eph 4:8 *“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”*)

How was His ascension a triumph over His enemies?

- His rising from the dead foiled those who tried to kill Him.
 - His rising from the dead foiled those who attempted to destroy His church and teachings, instead it guaranteed the spreading of His church.
- b. by visibly ascending into the highest heavens. (Acts 1:9 – 11 *“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”*)

Remember, after Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection:

1. He had been appearing to and conversing with his apostles and others (this in itself, after having been very publicly crucified and murdered, is an extreme form of exaltation.)
 2. for a period of 40 days after his rising from the grave.
 3. His ascension in front of His apostles was therefore a high form of exaltation.
- c. By again receiving the glory he had with the father before the world was. (John 17:5 *“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”*)
- d. By taking possession of heaven for his church, to prepare a place for us. (John 14:3 *“And if I go and prepare a place for you will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”*)

10. (Eph 1: 19 - 20 ⁽¹⁹⁾*And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,* ⁽²⁰⁾*Which he*

wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,")

How is Christ exalted by sitting at the right hand of God?

- a. by Christ's sitting on the right hand of God, as the God man, he is advanced to the highest favor with God the Father, with all fullness of joy, glory, and power over all things in heaven and earth. **(Phil 2:9 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:")**
- b. by being able to make continual intercession for us. **(Rom 8:34 "Who is he that condemneth: It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.")**

The LC, q55 says, "Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth, declaring his will to have it applied to all believers; answering all accusations against them, and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings, access with boldness to the throne of grace, and acceptance of their persons and services." Remember, until we cease to sin, we need Christ's continual intercession. God is so far above us in glory, power, and all His attributes, that, without Christ, we are not fit to be in his presence.

11. (Acts 17:31 "Because he that appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.")

How is Christ exalted in his coming to judge the world at the last day?

- a. Because, when he comes,
 - He will come with great power, in all His and His Fathers glory **(Matt 24:30 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.")**
 - He will come in the presence of those who judged Him **(Acts 3:14 - 15 "(14)But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; (15)And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.")**
 - He will come as the judge of mankind **(Acts 17:31 "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.")**.

- b. LC q56 says, *“Christ is to be exalted in his coming again to judge the world, in that he, who was unjustly judged and condemned by wicked men, shall come again at the last day in great power, and in the full manifestation of his own glory, and of his Father’s, with all his holy angels, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, to judge the world in righteousness.”*

12. Conclusion

What is mans chief end?

Mans chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

Christ’s exultation is a return. From the beginning, Jesus was with God, He spoke, and the world leapt into existence. He had all the glory and honor, yet he willingly became man, willingly suffered humiliation, all because of God’s love for us. After His suffering and humiliation, he returned to the glory He deserves, He returned to the right hand of God, where he will reign forever.