

The Apostle and High Priest of Our Profession

1. **Heb 3:1**—Paul here admonishes believers to take time to consider Jesus as Apostle and high priest of our profession
2. “our profession” of what?
 - a. **Heb 10:23**—profession of our faith
 - b. In short, when we “consider” Christ Jesus in His high priestly role, we profess faith in Him; considering Jesus as High Priest is an expression of our profession of faith in Him
 - c. The work of Jesus as high priest in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation and central pillar of the Adventist faith (GC 409); we show we are Adventists when we consider Christ as high priest of our profession
 - d. And the more we spend time considering Him in that role, the stronger our faith in Him becomes!
3. What happens when we do not take the time to consider Christ Jesus in His role as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary?
 - a. It shows that we profess very little faith in Him, if there’s that at all
 - b. It goes without saying moreover, that professing very little faith in Him is really no different from openly rejecting Him
4. Have we ever stopped to consider the enormous losses we incur by not spending enough time daily to consider the work going on in the heavenly sanctuary, in answer to Paul’s appeal in **Heb 3:1**?
 - a. Missed opportunity to get to know Jesus better and have a deeper closer relationship with Him
 - b. Missed opportunities to understand better the more advanced truths for these lat days
 - c. Missed opportunity to grow our faith in His ability to save from sin to the uttermost
 - d. Missed opportunity to grow in the experience God requires for those living in the time of the end

The Meaning of “Consider”

5. The word “**consider**” in the original Greek is “*katanoeo*” which literally means to “consider attentively,” to “discern clearly”, to “fix one’s eyes or mind” upon the object of consideration
6. It has nothing to do with considering the subject of Christ’s ministration in the heavenly sanctuary superficially, or haphazardly
7. In the words of Ellen White—

The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be **clearly understood** by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. **GC 488**

The great plan of redemption, as revealed in the closing work of these last days, should receive **close examination**. The scenes connected with the sanctuary above should make such an impression upon the minds and hearts of all that they may be able to impress others. All need to become **more intelligent** in regard to the work of the atonement, which is going on in the sanctuary above. **5T 575**

Benefits of Christ's Work as High Priest

8. From our previous studies, we already gathered that the ministry of Jesus as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary brings to the believers a load of benefits
 - a. Benefits of Christ's work in the first apartment for 18 centuries
 - i. Forgiveness and cleansing (**1 John 1:9; 1 Cor 6:11**)
 - ii. Acceptance and reconciliation with God the Father (**Eph 1:6**)
 - iii. The impartation of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 5:31**)
 - iv. Righteousness by faith (**Rom 5:1; Rom 8:1**)
 - b. Benefits of the final ministrations of Jesus in the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary
 - i. the blotting out of sin and the perfecting of the conscience (**Heb 10:1-2; Lev 16:30; Dan 8:14**)
9. In fact, the entire Christian experience, from start to finish, is the benefit derived from that continuous work of Jesus as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary
10. Our Christian experience would come to a standstill if the high priestly ministrations of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary is suddenly stopped for some reason

The Two Great Prerequisites of Christ's Priesthood

11. So, we have in the past spent much time considering deeply and understanding clearly the benefits we have been deriving as a result of Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary
12. Have we ever stopped to consider what He had to go through to provide for us those benefits?
13. What did Jesus have to **give up** and what did He have to **endure** in order to shower upon us those priestly benefits and blessings?
14. In **Heb 5:1-3**, certain prerequisites were laid out in order to qualify for the priesthood:
 - a. They had to be taken from among men (who were weak and sinful) so they can have compassion on those who they're representing as well as understand their struggles
 - b. They also needed to have something to offer for the sins of the people (namely, the blood of bulls and goats)
15. Likewise, when Jesus was called by the Father to the priesthood, it became incumbent upon Him to satisfy the requirements of that priesthood

16. He could not assume the role of Priest working in behalf of His sinful, erring people until He had satisfied these same two requisites
 - a. He had to assume the same human nature of those He came to minister to as High Priest
 - i. And so, we read in **Heb 2:14-17**, that He had to be made in all points like unto His brethren so He can minister to them in things pertaining to God
 - ii. In short, His incarnation was needed in order for Him to qualify as Priest
 - iii. As our great High priest in human flesh, Jesus understands our weaknesses and struggles and shows great compassion towards the erring (**Heb 4:14-16; Ps 20:1-2**)
 - b. He also needed to have something to offer (**Heb 8:3-4; Heb 10:5; Heb 9:12**)
17. Remember: Until Jesus had satisfied these two prerequisites of the priesthood, He could not even begin to officiate as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, offering gifts and sacrifices for the sins of His people
18. The question is, did Jesus have to give up somethings in order to satisfy these requirements for the priesthood? Did He have to endure hardship and take risks in fulfilling these prerequisites?

The Incarnation of Christ

19. **Heb 2:8-17**

- a. Made lower than the angels
- b. Partake of flesh and blood
- c. Took the nature of the seed of Abraham, not the nature of angels
- d. Made in all things like unto His brethren

20. **Rom 8:3-4**—sent in the likeness of sinful flesh

21. **Phil 2:5-7**—In taking sinful, fallen flesh upon His divinity, Jesus had to humble Himself

- a. He had to leave the comforts and glories of heaven and be born as a helpless babe, subject to all the hardships and trials, the dangers and temptations common to all humanity
- b. Once encumbered **with a weak, dilapidated and defective human nature**, He found Himself in the same position we are in and had to struggle against sin the same way we struggle against sin, in order to maintain the purity of His character; this resulted in great suffering to Him (**Heb 2:10, 18**)
- c. **Heb 4:15**—He was tempted in all points like are
 - i. He knows what it is like to struggle with appetite and the lusts of the flesh
 - ii. He knows what it is like to struggle with pride and selfishness
- d. Jesus not only understands the strength of the temptations weak fallen human beings go through; He also demonstrated the way to overcome them—by trusting completely in His Father, and not in His own abilities
- e. **Heb 12:2-3**—a reference to His struggle against temptation in the garden of Gethsemane

22. Hence, in the process of taking sinful, fallen humanity upon His divinity Jesus assumed tremendous **risks**; He placed not only Himself, but all of heaven at risk!!

It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life. . . **into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss.**
DA 48

23. What if Jesus had sinned?
 - a. It would have proved Satan's claim to be correct—that the law cannot be kept!
 - b. Satan wins the great controversy
 - c. To even consider what the results would be if Jesus had sinned, is mind-boggling!
24. Bear in mind that Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection, still bearing human nature! He will never be the same! His divinity will always be encumbered with humanity throughout eternity

The Atoning Death Christ

25. Remember: It was not enough for Jesus to come in human flesh and resist a lifetime of temptations to qualify as High Priest
26. At the end of His sojourn on earth, He also needed to surrender His life as atoning sacrifice, so He can have something to offer for sin as High Priest
 - a. **Matt 20:28**—Jesus came to give His life ransom for many
 - b. **John 10:11, 15, 17-18**—Jesus made it known that His mission on earth was to lay down His life for His sheep
27. Again the question comes, were there **difficulties** and **risks** involved in this process of Jesus offering Himself for the human race as atoning sacrifice?
28. What was Jesus willing to **give up** forever in order to die for the human race?
29. Satisfying the second requirement of Christ's priesthood (which was to offer His life as Sacrifice for the sins of the world) turned out to be much more challenging and more risky, because He consented to undergo a procedure which was not really necessary to satisfy that requirement!
30. Question: was it necessary for Jesus to be crucified in order to save man?
31. No! Jesus did not need to be crucified on a Roman cross in order to be Savior of the world; All Jesus needed to do was to lay down His life through His own voluntary act of the will; He had the power to do it
32. Jesus **walked the extra mile** by allowing Himself to be dragged to Calvary and nailed to a cross as a common criminal
33. He **went above and beyond** the call of duty, by allowing Himself to be strung naked and crucified on a Roman cross

34. Consider the following important but nevertheless surprising points about the crucifixion of Christ:

- a. **Point #1: The crucifixion was not necessary for our salvations**
 - i. If the cross were necessary for our salvation, then there would be no condemnation for Judas or Annas or Caiaphas and even Pilate for their part in crucifying Jesus; they were only helping God fulfill His plan (**Matt 26:24**)
 - ii. Satan becomes partly our savior for placing the Roman cross in front of Jesus and orchestrating the entire process of having Jesus nailed on that cross
 - iii. The mob who cried out crucify Him, crucify Him are not guilty of instigating the murder of the Son of God, but were merely assisting God in the accomplishment of the plan of salvation
 - iv. Since the crucifixion was unnecessary for salvation, allowing Himself to be crucified merely increased the risk of failure
- b. **Point #2: The cross was not God's idea, but Satan's---**
 - i. it was Satan's purpose to use the cross as his ultimate roadblock to derail the plan of salvation
 - ii. it was Satan's desperate, last-ditch effort to derail the plan of salvation
 - iii. Satan had hoped that through the crucifixion, which was the worst punishment for offenders, Jesus might be dissuaded from making His ultimate sacrifice and save Himself
- c. **Point #3: The fact is, Jesus did not die because of the cross (John 19:31-33)**
 - i. He died because He voluntarily gave up His life (**John 19:30**); He had the power and the ability to do it (**John 10:17-18**);
 - ii. The cross was the place of His death, but not the means of His dying
 - iii. Jesus died on the cross, but not because of the cross!
- d. **Point #4: Jesus could have prevented His crucifixion if He wanted to and still fulfill His mission to lay down His life for the human race**
 - i. **Matt 26:63-66; John 19:6-7**—Jesus sentenced to die by the Sanhedrin for blasphemy
 - ii. **Lev 24:16; John 8:57-59; John 10:30-33**—stoning however, was the punishment for blasphemy, not crucifixion
 - iii. Jesus could have spoken and immediately exposed the treachery of the Pharisees and the Scribes and the whole proceeding would have been declared a mistrial by the Romans, but He chose to remain silent; He said nothing in His defense to prevent His crucifixion
- e. **Point #5: Jesus was at the point of dying at Gethsemane**

Having made the decision, He fell **dying** to the ground from which He had partially risen. **DA 693**

The divine Son of God was fainting, dying. The Father sent a messenger from His presence to strengthen the divine Sufferer and brace Him to tread His bloodstained path. **2T 206**

- i. Jesus had the power to withstand the advance of death on the cross if He wanted to: He timed His death to coincide exactly with the offering of the Passover sacrifice in the temple;
- ii. Jesus voluntarily laid down His life while hanging on the cross

"I lay down My life, that I might take it again. 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." While as a member of the human family He was mortal, as God He was the fountain of life for the world. He could have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but voluntarily He laid down His life, that He might bring life and immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, endured its curse, yielded up His life as a sacrifice, that men might not eternally die. **DA 484.**

The Power of Christ's Priesthood

35. **Heb 1:3**—Thus, having successfully satisfied the two great requirements of the priesthood, Jesus ascended to heaven in 31 AD and was inaugurated high priest at the right hand of the Father
36. **Heb 5:5-10**—the power of Christ's work as High Priest and Intercessor is depicted in this passage

All who have a sense of their deep soul poverty, who feel that they have nothing good in themselves, may find righteousness and strength by looking unto Jesus. He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden." Matthew 11:28. He bids you exchange your poverty for the riches of His grace. We are not worthy of God's love, but Christ, our surety, is worthy, and is abundantly able to save all who shall come unto Him. Whatever may have been your past experience, however discouraging your present circumstances, if you will come to Jesus just as you are, weak, helpless, and despairing, our compassionate Saviour will meet you a great way off, and will throw about you His arms of love and His robe of righteousness. He presents us to the Father clothed in the white raiment of His own character. He pleads before God in our behalf, saying: I have taken the sinner's place. Look not upon this wayward child, but look on Me. **Does Satan plead loudly against our souls, accusing of sin, and claiming us as his prey, the blood of Christ pleads with greater power. MB 8**

37. All heaven was amazed by what Jesus was able to accomplish on earth; and so, whatever Jesus asks the Father, He grants it to Him
- a. **Matt 28:18**—All power has been given to the Son
 - b. **John 5:22**—All judgment has been committed to the Son
38. **John 16:23, 26**—Jesus tells us that whatever we ask the Father in the powerful name of Christ will be granted

39. The priesthood of Jesus Christ is everything to us

40. We need to learn to appreciate it especially because it is nearing its close. . .