

TEACHING GOAL

To study the threefold office of Christ.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

- Q. What offices does Christ execute as our redeemer?
- A. Christ as our Redeemer, executes the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest and of a King, both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation.
- S.C. 23; L.C. 41-42; W.C. of F. VIII; Savoy 8; Young 47-48

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Psalm 110

Support Passages: Acts 3:11-26 - Christ the Prophet; Hebrews 5:1-10 - Christ the Priest; Isaiah 9:6-7 - Christ the King; Psalm 2, 45:1-9; Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:18-19; Acts 2:29-36

BIBLE STORY

Genesis 14; Abraham pays tithes to Melchizedek

.MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

Acts 3:19-20

19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

APPLICATION

The Messiah, anointed as Prophet, Priest and King has come. Let us repent of our sins and be forgiven and refreshed by the Lord.

SUMMARY

Having studied the person of Christ, namely His deity and sinless humanity, we now turn to His work as the Christ of God. The word Christ means anointed one. The Greek word for this is Christos and the Hebrew word is Meshiach. So it is clear that the words Christ and Messiah are equivalent. Calvin writes of this as follows:

"Now it is to be noted that the title 'Christ' pertains to these three offices: for we know that under the law prophets as well as priests and kings were anointed with holy oil. Hence the illustrious name of 'Messiah' was also bestowed upon the promised Mediator. As I have elsewhere shown, I recognize that Christ was called Messiah especially with respect to, and by virtue of, his kingship. Yet His anointings as prophet and as priest have their place and must not be overlooked by us. Isaiah specifically mentions the former in these words: 'The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me, because Jehovah has anointed me to preach to the humble, ... to proclaim the year of the Lord's good pleasure,' etc. (Isaiah 6:1-2; cf. Luke 4:18). We see that he was anointed by the Spirit to be herald and witness of the Father's grace."¹

Christ was anointed beyond measure in all three; Prophet, Priest and King. He occupies and executes these offices now in heaven in His supremely exalted estate as He did when He was here with us even though He was emptied of His divine prerogatives (Philippians 2:7-8). But because we shall study the nature of the three offices of Christ and of His estates of humiliation and exaltation in future lessons, let us here merely raise the question of when the offices are to be carried out.

Luke deals with Christ as Prophet in Acts 3:11-26 saying that Christ is that Prophet foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15, the Messiah appointed for us (verse 20), who is now in heaven until the period of restoration of all things (verse 21). We must give heed to everything He says to us. Now, from His sublime exaltation, He speaks to us in His written word, made effective by His Spirit. But when He was here with us, He spoke directly with all the authority of God, whom He was and is.

Paul quotes Psalm 110:4 in connection with Jesus, "Thou art a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek (cf. Hebrews 5:16) and there we notice the eternal character of the Messiah's priesthood. In the former example, that of the Prophet, Christ is compared with Moses who was a King (or chief magistrate) in a position of authority over Israel, and a prophet. While Moses interceded for Israel on many occasions nevertheless He did not perform the office of priest. We may assume that when Moses sacrificed he did so through the offices of the Levites and Aaron the High Priest. Moses is clearly a King-Prophet, but Melchizedek was a King-Priest. Genesis 14 informs us that

Melchizedek (or King of Righteousness) was a priest of the most high God and Melchishalom (or King of Peace). That Christ is a Priest according to the order of Melchizedek means among other things that He is a King-Priest. Aaron was a priest-prophet for he spoke the word of the Lord. So we observe the fact that no one but Christ occupied all three offices, Prophet, Priest and King, at once.

That Jesus is a King now is apparent in Isaiah 9:6-7, and Psalms 2, 45, and 110 among many other scriptures. In all these, His kingly office is associated with His first coming as the Messiah. His is an eternal office and kingdom and throne. It is clear from Acts 2:29-36 that Jesus now occupies David's throne for Luke writes that the Prophet David (verse 30) looked ahead to the resurrection of Christ, clearly understood by David (Psalm 16:8-11), whereby the foretold Messiah was seated upon David's throne forever. This throne will also be the great throne of judgement (Matthew 19:28, 25:31) upon which the Son of Man, Jesus, will judge all the nations and it will foremost in the new Heaven and new Earth (Revelation 22:1-3). That Jesus now sits on an eternal throne is stated explicitly in Revelation 3:21. Is not the throne of God eternal (Acts 7:49, Matthew 5:33ff, Hebrews 1:8)?

Each one of us must repent from sin, turning from them unto this glorious one who is our Prophet, Priest, and King. Only then will the times of refreshing come to us from the presence of the Lord

¹ John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Chapter XV.2.