

Systematic Theology, Lesson 20: Christology: The Doctrine of Christ, Part 3

1. Introduction: The Offices of Christ

- a. Among the people of Israel in the Old Testament, there were three major offices:
 - i. Prophet (**2 Sam 7:2**).
 - ii. Priest (**1 Sam 30:7**).
 - iii. King (**2 Sam 5:3**).
- b. Each and every prophet, priest, and king fell short. Thus, the whole Bible (particularly the Old Testament), shows the need for a perfect prophet, priest, and king.
 - i. Pentateuch: the issue is holiness and shows the need for a perfect _____.
 - ii. Historical books: the issue is leadership and shows the need for a perfect _____.
 - iii. Poetical books: the issue is the will, mind, and emotions of humanity and shows the need for a perfect man.
 - iv. Prophetic books: the issue is loyalty and shows the need for a perfect _____.
- c. Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of these three offices in the Old Testament, and so his work may be divided into three areas.
 - i. Christ is a prophet in that he represents God to man. In this work he reveals God to us and speaks God's words to us.
 - ii. Christ is a priest in that he represents man to God. In this work he offers the sacrifice of himself and intercedes for us before the Father.
 - iii. Christ is a king. In this work he rules over us and rules over the universe.

2. Christ as Prophet

- a. The role of prophet: reveals God to man and speaks God's words to the people.

- i. **Ex 7:1-2:** Then the LORD said to Moses, “See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.”
 - ii. **Deut 18:18:** “I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.”
- b. Christ reveals God to man and speaks God’s words to us.
- i. **John 1:14:** And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - ii. **Heb 1:1-2a:** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son.
 - iii. **John 8:28:** So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.”
- c. Christ is not only *a* prophet in that he represents God to man and speaks God’s words to the people, he is _____ prophet foretold from the Old Testament.
- i. **Deut 18:15-18:** “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.’ The LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.’”
 - ii. **Acts 3:20-23:** . . . “and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you. And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’”

d. “Why do we need Christ as prophet? Because we are ignorant.”

3. Christ as Priest

a. The role of priest: to offer sacrifices and intercession so that people are acceptable to God.

- i. **Lev 9:22:** Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them, and he stepped down after making the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings (cf. Lev 21).
- ii. **Heb 5:1-4:** For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; and because of it he is obligated to offer *sacrifices* for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. And no one takes the honor to himself, but *receives it* when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.

b. Christ is the perfect sacrifice for sin and continually intercedes for us.

- i. **Heb 2:17:** Therefore, He [Jesus] had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
- ii. **Heb 9:26:** Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
- iii. **Rom 8:33-34:** Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- iv. **Heb 7:23-25:** The *former* priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

c. Christ is not only *a* priest in that he himself is the sacrifice for our sin and intercedes for us to make us acceptable to God, he is _____ priest foretold from the Old Testament.

- i. **1 Sam 2:35-36:** “But I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who will do according to what is in My heart and in My soul; and I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before My anointed always. Everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread and say, ‘Please assign me to one of the priest’s offices so that I may eat a piece of bread.’”
 - ii. **Heb 5:5-7:** So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU”; just as He says also in another *passage*, “YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.” In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.
- d. “Why do you need Christ as priest? Because I am guilty.”

This mediatory prayer of Christ is the ground of all the acceptance of our prayers. Our prayers if not found in him are provocations rather than appeasements. If a godly man’s prayer availeth much, it is because Christ’s prayer availeth much. He is the altar upon which all the oblations are sanctified, and from hence it is that the incense of their prayers are perfumed, so that God finds a sweet savour in them.¹

It doesn’t matter how complicated, how desperate, perhaps even hopeless your life has become. No matter how overwhelmed you may feel by your problems, if your trust is in Jesus Christ, you can be sure that he is praying for you now and through that prayer he will provide for you the resources to bring you relief or enable you to carry on.

The most important thing that you and I need to learn about prayer is this: first of all and ultimately, prayer is not something we do but what Jesus does for us.²

4. Christ as King

- a. The role of king: enforce God’s laws and rule as a servant for the good of the people.

¹ Anthony Burgess, *CXLV Expository Sermons upon the Whole 17th Chapter of the Gospel according to St. John*. . . (London: Abraham Miller, 1656), 227 (42); quoted in Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 371.

² Richard B. Gaffin, “Christ, Our High Priest in Heaven,” *Journal of Northwest Theological Seminary* 1/3 (Dec 1986): 17-27, <http://www.kerux.com/doc/0103A2.asp> (accessed online June 16, 2016).

- i. **Duet 17:14-20:** “When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,’ you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, *one* from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. . . . Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.”

- b. Christ rules over his people and rules over the universe.
 - i. **Matt 28:18:** And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
 - ii. **Luke 1:33:** “and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”
 - iii. **Eph 1:20-22:** which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,
 - iv. **Col 1:13:** For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,
 - v. **Heb 2:8a:** YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him.

- c. Christ is not only *a* king in that he rules over his people and rules over the universe, he is _____ king foretold from the Old Testament.
 - i. **2 Sam 7:12-13:** When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

ii. **Acts 2:29-32:** “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT *one* OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.”

d. “Why do we need Christ as king? Because we are weak and helpless.”

Thus it is [that Christ is King] that we may patiently pass through this life with its misery, hunger, cold, contempt, reproaches, and other troubles— content with this one thing: that our King will never leave us destitute, but will provide for our needs until, our warfare ended, we are called to triumph. Such is the nature of his rule, that he shares with us all that he has received from the Father. Now he arms and equips us with his power, adorns us with his beauty and magnificence, enriches us with his wealth. These benefits, then, give us the most fruitful occasion to glory, and also provide us with confidence to struggle fearlessly against the devil, sin, and death. Finally, clothed with his righteousness, we can valiantly rise above all the world’s reproaches; and just as he himself freely lavishes his gifts upon us, so may we, in return, bring forth fruit to his glory.³

5. Summary: The Offices of Christ

- a. Christ is a prophet in that he represents God to man. In this work he reveals God to use and speaks God’s words to us.
- b. Christ is a priest in that he represents man to God. In this work he offers a sacrifice of himself and intercedes for us before the Father.
- c. Christ is a king. In this work he rules over us and rules over the universe.

This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of His prophetic office; and in respect of our alienation from God, and imperfection of the best of our services, we need His priestly office to reconcile us and present us acceptable unto God; and in respect to our averseness and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need His kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to His heavenly kingdom.⁴

³ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. by John T. McNeill (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960, 2006), 2.15.4.

⁴ The 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, 8.10.