Section: Doctrine of Christ (Christology)

Wednesday, September 16, 2020

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q73. What three offices does Christ fulfill as our promised redeemer?**

Christ fulfills the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

Intro: Q&A pray with me.

The first question we will cover tonight is going to be brief. I’m going to spend most of our time teaching on How Christ is our Prophet. Over the next few weeks other members of the teaching team will teach on the other two offices that Christ fulfills. Therefore we’ll be short on our first catechism Q&A and then dive into the second one.

Christ fulfills the office of prophet, priest, and king. Let us define these three offices so that we can better understand why it is important for Jesus to fulfill them. We will start with prophet.

Prophet: an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the will of God. Someone uniquely empowered by God to proclaim the words of God.

Priest: Priest always denotes one who offers sacrifices. In the Old Covenant, the priest was the one who interceded for man in the OC system and preformed the sacrifices to atone for sin.

King: The male ruler of a particular kingdom. The highest human authority, who rules and reigns.

See Christ as Prophet:

John 12:49 “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.” Jesus proclaimed the words of God Himself. He spoke what the Father told Him to speak, repeatedly Jesus confirms this truth when He says, “I and the Father are one”, “I have come to do the work the Father has given me”, “I came to do the will of my Father”, etc… There was never one more rightly suited for this position, in fact the gospel of John opens with giving Jesus the title of the “Word”. We will dive into this more later though, so this is enough to make my point here.

See Christ as Priest:

Hebrew 6:20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. The priest is the God-appointed office of intercessor for the people. The priest goes to God on behalf of the people and his most common job was to make the sacrifice for the people to God. Jesus is not only the better priest who goes to God on behalf of His beloved but Jesus was the sacrifice as well—the one that all priests and sacrifices pointed to.

See Christ as King:

Matthew 2:22 “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.” The scripture told of a king to come from the line of King David. Jesus is that king. Jesus rightfully inherits His Fathers kingdom that is everything. Man sinfully wanted a king to be like the other nations, but God sovereignly prepared a king to save His beloved from their sin and set them apart from the other nations. Jesus came to reign forever as the greatest and last king. A king rules His people and provides for them/cares for them etc… Jesus is the last, final, greatest, and only true eternal king.

There is a great quote by Herman Bavinck that gives a brief description of this threefold office:

"Christ, both as the Son and as the image of God, for Himself and also as our Mediator and Savior, had to bear all three offices. He had to be a prophet to know and to disclose the truth of God; a priest, to devote Himself to God and, in our place, to offer Himself up to God; a king, to govern and protect us according to Gods will.

To teach, to reconcile, and to lead; to instruct, to acquire and to apply salvation; wisdom, righteousness, and redemption; truth, love, and power “all three are essential to the completeness of our salvation. In Christ God-to-humanity relation, He is a prophet; in His humanity-to-God relation He is a priest; in His headship over all humanity He is a king. Rationalism acknowledges only His prophetic office; mysticism only His priestly office; millennialism only His royal office.

But Scripture, consistently and simultaneously attributing all three offices to Him, describes Him as our chief prophet, our only [High] priest, and our eternal king. Though a king, He rules not by the sword but by His Word and Spirit. He is a prophet, but His word is power and really happens. He is a priest but lives by dying, conquers by suffering, and is all-powerful by His love. He is always all these things in conjunction, never the one without the other: mighty in speech and action as a king and full of grace and truth in His royal rule."

These 3 offices are an integral part of Christ Jesus’s mediation between us and God. The London Baptist confession of faith reads.

LBCF: Chapter 8: Of Christ the Mediator

1. It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the mediator between God and man; the prophet, priest, and king; head and savior of the church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world; unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

As I said at the beginning, we are diving deeper into each of these categories tonight and for the next two weeks.

Let us move to our next Q&A

**Q74. How is Christ our Prophet?**

Christ is our Prophet by revealing God’s will to us through His word, affirmed by the Holy Spirit.

A prophet’s role was to reveal God’s word to man. Prophets spoke on God’s behalf and shared revelations from God. Often, this was done to inform man of God’s plan and commands and to warn nations or people to repent of their sins or there would be punishment from God. Some prophets would have visions and dreams; some prophets like Moses were simply told by God what to say and do. Now as you can imagine God had given very strict rules for those who claimed to be prophets. Imagine the weight and authority that a prophet would speak with. A prophet carried authority as if it were God Himself speaking. Therefore, it makes sense that false prophets were dealt with harshly. We can find rules given for prophets in the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy:

**Deuteronomy 13:1-5** 1 Suppose a prophet or one who foretells by dreams should appear among you and show you a sign or wonder, 2 and the sign or wonder should come to pass concerning what he said to you, namely, “Let us follow other gods” – gods whom you have not previously known – “and let us serve them.”

3 You must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer, for the Lord your God will be testing you to see if you love him with all your mind and being. 4 You must follow the Lord your God and revere only him; and you must observe his commandments, obey him, serve him, and remain loyal to him. 5 As for that prophet or dreamer, he ***must be executed*** because he encouraged rebellion against the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, redeeming you from that place of slavery, and because he has tried to entice you from the way the Lord your God has commanded you to go. In this way, you must purge out evil from within.

AND

**Deuteronomy 18:18-22** 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. 20 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet ***shall die***.’ 21 And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?’— 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Notice a few key things here, False prophets were proven to be false for two reasons, 1 they spoke of other gods and worshiping them, 2 the prophecy given did not come true. Please see that God sometimes caused false prophets to have some success in order to test His people so not every prophet that was correct was a true prophet, within these circumstances the question comes down to were they pointing people to the true God. The basic principle was this; in the Old Covenant, if the prophet taught to follow believe in etc… *any other god* than the LORD, you were to put that prophet to death. And, if a prophet claimed to be speaking in the name of the Lord and what the prophet spoke did not come to pass, that prophet spoke presumptuously and that prophet shall die.

Now what we know is that under the Old Covenant there were different consequences for sins than we now have under the New Covenant, but the general equity of this rule is to remove these false prophets (during the Apostolic age) and false teachers throughout the whole New Covenant from among the fellowship of the people of God.

I say all of that to say that today there are many who claim to be prophets, these people are to be avoided and “put away” from the fellowship of the people of God. These are false prophets/false teachers. We are to have nothing to do with them; we are to purge the evil from among us in this way.

In this time, in the New Covenant, nearly 2000 years from the office of Apostle being completed and finished and since the cannon of scripture is closed, we know that there are no longer new prophets. (If you’re new, know that we’ll teach on that topic further, again later in the catechism series.) We must remember that prophets were given to reveal to us a word from God or to speak on God’s behalf. With the cannon of Scripture closed, we know God is not speaking in the ways of the Apostles and Old Covenant. He has blessed us with the written Scripture removing the need for new prophets.

We will not nor do we need to add to the scriptures because they are sufficient. We see the sufficiency of Scripture in 2 Timothy:

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** 16All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

There is no purpose for new prophecy today. If so-called private revelations or prophecy agree with Scripture, they are unnecessary (since we have Scripture) and if they disagree with Scripture they are false. We have already been given all we need. The word of God that we have in the Scriptures is all that we need. As the Timothy passage states, the scripture we have makes us complete, equipped for every good work, therefore we no longer need to add anything to it.

This is key; if there truly were a prophet today speaking on behalf of God, it would be given that what they spoke would be added to the scriptures. This will not happen, therefore what would be the purpose of a prophet now.

Listen, too many people fall into distracting, unbiblical, and unnecessary things when it comes to modern-day so-called prophecy and the nonsense that comes along with it.

In the Old Covenant, excommunication by death was God’s command on anyone who claimed to hear directly from God and was wrong: Period. That should give everyone a sense of just how important this is to God (and should be to man as well). Clearly the weight of this is missed by so many, given how many claim to hear directly from God. God’s words are the most weighty, authoritative, important words…He has had a specific plan for how man hears from Him.

The New Covenant we live in abolished the death element of excommunication, but excommunication is still the requirement for those teaching falsely about God. So even in our own lives….each of us needs to know how serious it is to claim to hear from God or speak for God. If you are ever false in a pattern of proclaiming what you claim is from God, then you’d need to be excommunicated. Let’s not do that.

Let’s accept that God stopped speaking new or personal revelations when the Apostles finished their ministry and the cannon of Scripture was closed. Let’s go then to that Scripture, that’s where God speaks. His words are on the pages of Scripture nowhere else. What a blessing! Let’s thank Him that He’s given SO MUCH to read of His words. No one else in history had the fullness of the scriptures-God very words-the way we do. We do not need extra words; we need to know the ones He’s given and know them well. If you want to hear from God, read His words in the Bible and trust that it’s enough. With all the unbiblical things parading around as Christianity in our day, this isn’t popular, but it is biblical. Let us seek God in the proper way, that’s what He has ordained.

We will discuss these things more in the future but for now if you need to ask more questions please reach out to me after tonight and I would gladly meet with you to discuss this more. Let us move on.

**LBCF 8:9. This office of mediator between God and man is proper only to Christ, who is the prophet, priest, and king of the church of God; and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof, transferred from him to any other. (**[**1 Timothy 2:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Timothy%202.5)**)**First, there is no doubt that the scriptures declare Jesus to be a prophet. We have in Deuteronomy a prophecy about the prophet to come.

**Deuteronomy 18:18 “**I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.”

**John 6:14** reads “When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”

So even the people who saw what Jesus had done believed he was the Prophet from Deuteronomy.

We see Jesus himself claim to be a prophet in Mark 6:4 And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.”

The scriptures clearly call Jesus a prophet. So what was Jesus’s role as prophet? To reveal God to us (that is, the attributes of God and the will of God). Jesus truly revealed God to the world as Jesus was the light of the world, when you are looking for something in a dark room what do you need to help you see it? You need light;

John 8:12 “Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John1:4-5 “In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”

It’s amazing how scripture uses simple things for us to understand complex ideas? Why do you turn on a light in a dark room? You do this to reveal what is hidden by the darkness. Well in that same sense prophets revealed God by showing us what we could not see, what was hidden by the darkness that our sin has brought and the separation it has caused.

Track with me for a minute, in the garden Adam and the woman did not need a prophet because God was with them—speaking His will directly to them. There was no need for God to reveal Himself through a prophet because He was present. There was no darkness or separation yet. When Adam sinned, God separated Adam from his intimate presence and all who would come from Adam because Adam was mankind’s federal head thus revealing the darkness that sin creates.

Now Jesus (for the elect) steps into the world as the light that ultimately defeats the darkness of sin and separation from God caused by our sin. Our true eternal prophet Jesus removes sin, darkness, and separation from God eternally for the elect. He is the ultimate prophet! Jesus, being the light in the darkness, was sent to reveal to us what we would not otherwise be able to see in the darkness.

Jesus, the light of man, the light that shines in the darkness, and is not defeated by it, is clearly sent as a prophet to reveal, to whomever He chooses, who God the Father and God the Son truly are. We see this in:

Matthew 11:27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Now the revelation that Jesus speaks of here is the ability and authority He has to effectually cause the saving knowledge of God in whom He wills. This is one way that Jesus is the far superior prophet. All other prophets could tell the people of God’s will and what God said, but no other prophets had the power to reveal God in such a way that it caused saving knowledge of the Father and Son. The other prophets had definitely been used by God, and through God’s will and power, faith had been given using those prophets as a means to God’s end. However, because Jesus is God he was not only the means but the end as well. That’s one reason why He is the truest or ultimate prophet.

The revealing in this Matthew verse is a revealing that causes the salvation of the elect. That’s so incredible! No other prophet had this ability. This is what Jesus is clearly stating here in these verses. There is no other prophet that could come close. No one knows the Father or the Son except those to whom the Son chooses to reveal them to.

Let’s now break down the answer of our catechism question; the first parts says, “Christ is our Prophet by revealing God’s will”

Jesus revealed God’s will to us in what He did.

John 6:38 “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me,”

John 5:30 “I can do nothing by Myself; I judge only as I hear and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

Jesus only did the will of the Father, and all of the things that Jesus did all of the judgments Jesus made, reveal to us what the Fathers will is. Like the lesser true prophets before Him, Jesus also revealed God’s will to us by His words.

John 12:49 “For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. 50And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

You can see here that Jesus revealed to us God’s will by His words, He spoke what God told Him to speak. What Jesus said, He said as the Father had told Him to say it. As our answer says; Christ is our Prophet by revealing God’s will to us *through His word*.

Now here is an interesting part of this question and answer. The question asked, “How is Christ our prophet?” The question does not say, “How *was* Christ our prophet?” I want to draw your eyes to this for the very reason our answer gives. Jesus’ word is what reveals to us who God is and what God expects of us. The very word of God is what we have in the Holy Scriptures. We must be reading the scriptures, we ought to be learning new things daily from the word of God! If we are obedient to this, then Jesus’s very words still reveal to us who God is. Christ is not our past prophet, as if His prophetic work was done when He gave us His word long ago. Rather His word is still alive. He is our prophet now. He, through the Holy Spirit’s illumination of the scriptures, continues to unpack for us who God is. This is incredible, we do not need some mere human prophet to give us a word from God, we have the ultimate prophet Jesus and His word is still here!

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Oh, church, praise God that He has provided us with His word, and with His Son who reveals to us, through the Holy Spirit, who God is. See the beauty of the Triune God at work. See our prophet Jesus and His living word. It is active and living, it pierces us to the division of soul and spirit, it reads us, and it discerns the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. How often have I sat with the word to see it reading me, knowing me, showing me through the Spirit’s convicting my sin and my heart problems! This is the beautiful word of God for us. Do not be deceived by false prophets and silly words, you have the word of God: The Scriptures.

Now as we see the triune God here at work it leads us well into the last part of our answer: Christ is our Prophet by revealing God’s will to us through His word, *affirmed by the Holy Spirit*.

**John 14:26 “**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

See when I said, “The Holy Spirit illuminates the scriptures for us”, this is what I was referring to. You can again see clearly in John 14:26 the Triune God at work. God the Father sends the helper, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches and reminds us the words that Jesus shared. What a cool way that God works to reveal Himself to us.

We are desperate for the Holy Spirit to effectively reveal to us what Jesus means through His word. We constantly pray for understanding and that God would teach us truth and keep us from error. One of the ways He does this is by the whole testimony of Scripture. The Holy Spirit enables us to see and rightly understand what all of Scripture says.

Jesus is our prophet, not was but is. His words are the very words of God. The Holy Spirit helps us rightly know Jesus’s words and remember them. God has ordained these things so that Jesus can be and is our prophet.

Why does it matter that Jesus fulfills the office of prophet?

First, we must know that we are not looking for another prophet. We are not in need of a better, truer, fuller prophet. Jesus is THE prophet. He is the fulfillment of all that pointed to the GOOD prophet. He is THE truth, not merely a mouthpiece for truth. Amazing.

Even those who were true prophets after Christ ascended (those in the Apostolic time period—there were none after that), they were not a better version….no, they pointed to Jesus and were a mouthpiece for Jesus. Christ was and forever is THE prophet. Again, Jesus is THE word. He is THE truth, not merely a mouthpiece for truth.

Second (Why does it matter that Jesus fulfills the office of prophet?), we need to know God to have faith in Him and we cannot know God unless Jesus reveals Him to us. There is this amazing verse in scripture

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known. You see, without Jesus fulfilling the office of Prophet we would not have seen or have had God the Father made known to us for knowing God in a saving way is only possible for any person based on the work of Christ to earn our reconciliation to God. Jesus had to fulfill this office to reveal to His beloved who God is.

John 14:6-11 6Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”8Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” 9Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

Jesus said if you had known me, you would have known the Father also, and now you have seen Him in me. Look at Jesus’ words “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

Jesus revealed the Father to us in a effective way that no other prophet before Him could have. He is the image of the invisible God. He is the supreme prophet. Look at the rest of what He said,

“The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.”

Jesus clearly says again believe my words for they are Gods words, and if you don’t believe my words then look at the works I do that prove I am trustworthy. Jesus reveals to His disciples and us here that He is God. He and the Father are so uniquely one that when the disciples saw Him they saw the Father. Notice the stark contrast of this verse were Jesus said believe in my word but if you need more believe in the works that prove my words, and the verse in John 10 where Jesus says the Jews who were talking to Him could not believe in His words or His works because they were not His sheep. You see in real way Jesus is a prophet to the world as is clear that His very word has spread throughout the world, but in a unique and loving/saving way, He is a special prophet to those of us whom He saves. He reveals God to His elect in a way that causes faith.

So if Jesus did miracles and spoke truth in front of the Jews of John 10, and yet they could not believe because they were not His sheep then He is still a prophet but He is a prophet in a special way to those whom are His sheep. For they will hear His voice and will follow Him.

Implications:

So what are some of the practical implications here?

1. We can trust Jesus’ word. It is and was the very word of God. That means when Jesus says He will save us, His beloved, we can be sure in the fact that this is truth and will happen.
2. When Jesus tells us He is the Christ, we can trust Him. We can rest well knowing that we are not waiting for another savior to come but trusting in the Savior who came. The one and only true Savior who defeated death and sin on our behalf and gives His elect faith to believe, true eyes to see who He is and who the Father is.
3. Jesus claims that He chose to whom He would reveal God, so if you have faith in Jesus you do not have to wonder if you are saved. Jesus did it. Therefore, you are saved.
4. We have no need for more prophets, the cannon of scripture is closed and the written word of God is sufficient for all we need in the New Covenant. This will help you avoid giving time, resources, thoughts, or anything, to those claiming to be modern-day prophets. Please hear this truth and do not waste an ounce of your life on people’s claims to be hearing from or speaking for God. He has given us Scripture. It is amazing and it is enough.
5. You and I who were once blind and separated from God living in darkness have now been given eyes to see because our Prophet revealed to us God in such a way that we are saved. This changes everything for us. The practical implications here are huge.
6. Spiritual deadness and blindness is such a helpful topic to understand when we are addressing the lost world around us through the lens of the gospel. Here’s what I mean. In light of the gospel, the fact is that your prophet Jesus revealed God to you, causing you to be born again, and giving you eyes to see Him truly Literally saving you from the wrath you deserve. And if it were not for His work as prophet to reveal God you would not have received this sight. Because of this reality we ought to address the rest of the world through this gospel lens.

We must remember that the unbelieving world is blind. Jesus has not revealed God to them in a saving way. If Jesus leaves them in this state, they will get what you and I deserved for our sins, namely eternal wrath for their offense against a holy perfect God. Therefore remembering this truth we ought to treat an unbelieving world differently.

Let me illustrate this point, if you were walking down the street and someone ran into the back of you, and I don’t mean the uncomfortable bump of people in a crowded space (something I almost miss thanks to the response to Covid), I mean the person ran into you in such a way that you spin around ready to defend yourself. How fast does your posture change when the person you see standing behind you is a man with a red and white striped cane and big black glasses. The moment you realize that person is blind all the anger and all the fury you were preparing to unleash in self defense upon that person vanishes, right? Why? Because they are blind right.

You see you do not get mad at a blind man for walking into something he cannot see. Yet when an unbelieving world makes choices and fights for things that seem literally crazy to us, we respond as if blind people should be able to see these things.

Listen unless Jesus becomes their prophet to unveil their eyes to who God is they will not be able to see. Lost people need the gospel and God’s sovereign work. Blind people need to see, they do not need our wrath for their blindness.

Now what I am not saying is that we simply accept sin and do not push back darkness, no we do not let blind people continue to walk into the same wall repeatedly. That would be cruelty; rather we engage and do our best to help them see their problem. The way we help them is to show them the gospel and pray that through Gods grace they will be given sight. Their problem is not that they are walking into a wall, or you, their problem is that they are lost in sin, blind, and desperate for the gospel eyes that only Christ gives. Do you see how Jesus being our prophet changes how we interact with a lost world?

So beloved, take heart, Jesus who revealed the Father to you and caused you to know Him in a saving way will come back, He is the greatest prophet who ever lived. He is the living prophet who can never die again. He will keep His word, He will not fail us. If you love Jesus, if He is greater to you than everything, if He is your treasure, then He is also your prophet and He is indeed your savior.

I want to close with one more quote from the **LBCF 8:10. [Christ’s] number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetical 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.**

Because of our ignorance Christ must be our Prophet. Praise God for this church and look forward to these other offices and how Christ fulfills them!

Let’s pray.