

Heidelberg Catechism 31–Christ: Prophet, Priest, King

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: “Christ” is not an exclamation to use when you are hurt, frustrated, or angry. When you use the word “Christ” you must do so with the full sense of what “Christ” means. You must do so with reverence 敬重 for who Christ is and what he has done for you! You will hear more about this today.

Our headings are:

The Definition of “Christ”

The Details of “Christ”

Our goals are: That you gain a richer, fuller appreciation of who “Christ” is and what that means for your salvation, and that you will then work for him and worship him better.

31 Q. WHY IS HE CALLED “CHRIST” MEANING “ANOINTED”?

A. Because he has been ordained by God the Father and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit to be our chief prophet and teacher who perfectly reveals to us the secret counsel and will of God for our deliverance; our only high priest who has set us free by the one sacrifice of his body, and who continually pleads our cause with the Father; and our eternal king who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who guards us and keeps us in the freedom he has won for us.

问 31：为何称他为“基督”，意即受膏者呢？

答：因为他被父神任命，又被圣灵膏立，作我们的大先知和教师，他完全地向我们启示有关神对我们救赎的奥秘计划和意旨；他又是我们唯一的大祭司，一次献上他的身体而救赎了我们；他永远活着，为我们向神代求；他也是我们永远的君王，他用他的话语和圣灵管理我们，又保护并保守我们在他为我们预备的救赎中。

The Definition of “Christ”

1. The name “Christ” is a title, not a name. (“Jesus” was the Lord’s name.) Christ is the translation of the Hebrew word Messiah, which means **“Anointed One 受膏者.”**

2. An “anointed one” was one who was separated for special service to the Lord. (No one is anointed to sell pizza or cut the grass!) For example, Saul and David were anointed to be kings. This meant that they were separated to the special office of king. The anointing, which was oil (signifying the Holy Spirit) put on the head by someone important, showed that that person had the approbation 赞同 of God.

3. So Jesus was anointed – separated for special service – in order to redeem man. Human life was desecrated 玷污 – defiled by the filth of sin from Eden so man needed someone who was **not desecrated**. So Jesus was **specifically set** aside to live and die for man, remove his filth, and restore him to God. It is true that Israel was set apart as a nation of priests and kings. God spoke to Israel in the wilderness saying, “You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” But they could never live up to God’s holy standard. So Israel had to wait for the Anointed One who would do the promised work of consecrating 成圣中 mankind back to God.

4. Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit (pictured by oil in the OT) and that anointing was confirmed by his Father. This special anointing confirmed Christ’s greatness. The anointing of other High Priests was insufficient, as they had sin in themselves.

Luke 3:22 And **the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him**, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

Luke 4:14 Then Jesus **returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee**, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

5. Christ's anointing did not suddenly appear in the New Testament. He was already described as the Anointed One long before he was born in time.

Isaiah 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, **Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor;** He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

Daniel 9:26 "And after the sixty-two weeks **Messiah shall be cut off**, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations 荒涼的事 are determined.

Jesus confirmed that he was the Anointed One – the Christ- when he applied Isaiah prophecy to himself.

Luke 4:17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, **Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor;** He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed 受壓制; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." 20 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "**Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.**"

There is another quote in Hebrews, but it is really from Psalm 45:7, a Christ-specific Psalm.

Hebrews 1:8 But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom 你的國權是正直的. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; **Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness** more than Your companions."

The Details of Christ

1. The Christ was anointed and ordained by the Holy Spirit **to be your Chief Prophet.**

Acts 3:22 "For Moses truly said to the fathers, '**The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet** like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.

Prophet Moses prophesied that though he was unable to win the hearts of the people of Israel to God there would come a prophet who would cause the people to listen to him. Apostle John confirmed Jesus was a prophet (who is one who reveals God's truth about the past, present, or future.)

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has declared Him.**

Lord Jesus himself testified that being a prophet was the purpose for which he had come into the world.

John 15:15 ...**for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**

In Luke 4, Jesus confirmed that he was anointed to teach. Christ came and announced the Year of Jubilee 禧年 to the world. It was time for freedom for those who were trapped in sin and had no means of rescue. He confirmed his teaching by **great miracles.**

2. The Christ was anointed and ordained by the Holy Spirit **to be your only High Priest.** Aaron was appointed to be the High Priest by God with oil- a symbol of the presence of the Holy Spirit. But the Christ's anointing as High Priest was an eternal anointing. This was what the **writer of Hebrews asserted.**

Hebrews 7:17 For He testifies: "**You are a priest forever** According to the order of Melchizedek."

This was Psalm 110:4, where **David predicted** that the Messiah would conquer the world **by being an eternal High Priest.** There were no perfect priest who could give his life for the sins of the world...and even if he were perfect, he would not be great enough to die for the sins of the world. **Christ's work as your High Priest was most essential for your salvation.** No death of the Christ, no victory for You!

Christ was great enough to die for the sins of the world. And he willingly offered himself as a sacrifice for you. Your sin was placed upon him as the scapegoat 代罪羔羊 on the Day of Atonement when He was crucified for all of our sin! What permanent and complete victory your High Priest earned for you!

Hebrews 9:11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, **but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all**, having obtained eternal redemption.

Christ had to die to restore to man the office of priest that he lost. He had to right the wrong of Adam. Now you can have fellowship with the Lord. You pray to God through Jesus Christ. Yes, being a prophet was important, but if you knew the truth and no one to take the punishment for you, you would still be in your sins. And even now, Jesus makes intercessions 代禱 for you!

3. The Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be your eternal and all powerful King.

Matthew 21:4 All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, '**Behold, your King is coming to you,**

Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey 又騎著驢、就是騎著驢駒子。"

This was a quote from Zechariah 9:9. Jesus claimed kingship. He claimed for himself all spiritual authority to save and protect. And his authority was one that was far greater than military force. It was an authority to make men's hearts submit. He had the authority to save and protect.

Matthew 28:18 ... "**All authority has been given to Me** in heaven and on earth. 19 "**Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations**...

John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 "And I give them eternal life, and **they shall never perish**; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

Christ even protects his people's reputation... not just their bodies and their souls.

Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the **accuser of our brethren is cast down** 控告我們弟兄的、已經被摔下去了, which accused them before our God day and night.

What a failure Adam was. He did not protect his wife, his children, or the world from sin. He caused them to be condemned. **But the Anointed Christ did what Adam could not do**. Of course you notice that Jesus could not just be prophet and priest for you. If you had your sins paid and no one to protect you, you would fall back into sin. But your prophet and priest is also your king.

4. Jesus, as Prophet, Priest, and King was called to the office of Messiah legally (the Covenant of Redemption was made with the Father in eternity). At Jesus' baptism his call was publicly made known to the world by the Father. He was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world, and the Holy Spirit confirmed that by descending on him— anointing him. So Jesus was eminently qualified to be Christ. **As God, Christ was not a man-corrupted** as the prophets, priests, and kings before. **As a man, Christ obeyed perfectly the will of God**. As God he was able to take the severe punishment and save the world. As the Anointed One He took His offices seriously and whatever the work entailed He performed. Only he could fulfill all 3 offices.

Conclusion:

Jesus came to set the prisoners free by fulfilling all 3 necessary offices – prophet, priest, and king. One office or 2 offices would not have been enough. And he fulfilled them perfectly for his children.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. When Jesus completed his 3 offices he was exalted to God's right hand. Now your work must begin.

2. Exalt him. You can exalt him today by your worship of him and your work for him.

3. As you work, remember that the Lord has restored you to your rightful office. You are now a prophet who must speak God's Word in truth to your children and the lost. You must be a priest and pray for your children and the lost. You must be a king and protect your children – physical and spiritual.

Finally, if you are not a child of God, the Lord freely offers the work of Christ to you...to be your prophet, priest, and king. Take it. It is for free to those who ask in sincerity. And it will free you of your sins and give you a heavenly hope. It will take away God's anger against you.