

Jesus is our Prophet, Priest & King

Q. How is Christ our redeemer?

A. As our redeemer, Christ is a prophet, priest and king in both His humiliation and His exaltation.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A #23)

“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.”

(Luke 4:18,21)

Every four years, on January 20th, the United States holds a very important and historic event that has taken place ever since the year 1789, that is, Inauguration Day. Inauguration Day is a ceremonial event which marks the beginning of a new four-year term for the President of the United States. According to the U.S. Constitution, on Inauguration Day, the President elect, must, before entering into the execution of his office, take the official “*oath of affirmation*” wherein the President elect must pledge, “*I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.*”. The first part of the oath of affirmation states that the President will “*faithfully execute the Office of President*”. In other words, the president has been elected to carry out a set of certain tasks or duties, which the president vows to execute “*to the best of his/her ability*”. What does it mean for a person to faithfully execute the Office of President? It means that he or she must “*preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States*” by faithfully fulfilling all of the responsibilities of the Executive Branch of our government.

In today’s catechism question, the Westminster Divines ask, “*How is Christ our Redeemer?*”. Other translations of the Shorter Catechism ask the question in this way, “*What offices does Christ execute as our redeemer?*”. And the answer given is that, “*Christ, as our redeemer, executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest and of a king*”. In other words, our catechism, in summarizing the teaching of the Bible, is telling us that Jesus Christ has been anointed by God to hold a certain office. In fact, instead of holding only one office like the President, Jesus Christ, as our savior has been ordained by God to hold three offices: the office of Prophet, Priest and King. And in holding each of these three offices, Jesus has certain tasks or duties that He faithfully carries out or “*executes*” on behalf of His people. What are those tasks and duties? First of all, as our Prophet, Jesus delivers us from our state of spiritual ignorance. In the Old Testament, a prophet was a

man set apart to speak God's words to His people so that they could know the will of God. As our prophet, Christ, who is the Word of God (John 1:1) reveals to us everything we need to know about our sin, the way of salvation and the path to serving God with all of our hearts.

Not only does Jesus hold the office of Prophet, He also holds the office of our great High Priest. As Priest, Jesus delivers us from the misery of our sin and guilt. In the Old Testament a Priest was anointed by God to act as an intercessor (*someone who intervenes on behalf of another*) by offering up prayers and sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of the people. Jesus as our great High Priest (Hebrews 5:5-6) has redeemed us by the one sacrifice of His body on the cross, and He is always continually praying for us, or interceding for us before the Father (Romans 8:34).

Finally, Jesus holds the office of our great and glorious King, who frees us from our bondage to sin, who leads us by His Word and Spirit, and who is constantly defending us and preserving us, working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). Over the next three days we will be looking more closely at each of Jesus' three offices and focusing on how comforting it is to know that Jesus is actively at work in our lives day by day, moment by moment as our great Prophet, Priest and King!

Dig Even Deeper into God's Word!

Acts 3:22

Hebrews 5:6

Psalm 2:6