

Lesson 16: Questions 27, 28, and 29

In our last lesson we considered the threefold office of Christ as our Redeemer. We saw that He executeth the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King, both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation (Q26). That answer gave us the frame. These three questions now fill in the substance. They show us how Christ carries out each office for the salvation, preservation, and good of His people, and they also help us see why every Christian home must look to Him as the source and standard of all faithful leadership.

27-29

Question 27: How is Christ a prophet?

- Q. How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?
A. Christ executeth the office of prophet in revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

Christ is our Prophet because He reveals. He does not merely offer wise religious reflections, moral advice, or elevated spiritual sentiment. He reveals “to us, by His Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.” That is necessary because fallen man is not only *guilty* before God. He is also *blind*. Left to ourselves, we do not know God savingly, nor do we discover the way of peace on our own.

John 1:18 says, “*No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.*” That is the prophetic office in its highest form. Christ does not guess at God. He does not speak from a distance. He comes from the Father and makes the Father known. The prophets of old were true servants and messengers, but Christ is more than a servant. He is the eternal Son. He *knows* the Father perfectly and therefore *reveals* Him perfectly.

This is why Christ is not merely one prophet among many. He is the great and final Prophet to Whom all the others pointed. **1 Peter 1:10-12** tells us that the prophets searched and inquired carefully concerning the salvation that was to come, and that it was “*the Spirit of Christ in them*” Who was indicating the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. Even before the incarnation, Christ was speaking. The prophetic ministry of the Old Covenant was already dependent on Him.

Then in the days of His flesh, He revealed the Father directly. In **John 15:15**, Jesus says to His disciples, “*for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.*” That is both *tender* and *authoritative*. He does not keep His people at a distance. He makes known to them what He has heard from the Father. His prophetic office is not *data transfer*. It is *self-disclosure* for the good of His people.

John 20:31 states the purpose of that revelation plainly: “*but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*” Christ reveals the will of God not to satisfy curiosity, but for our salvation. His teaching is saving teaching. He reveals so that sinners may believe and live.

The catechism also says that Christ reveals “by His word and Spirit”. We must hold those together. Christ reveals *by His Word*. The truth of salvation is *objective, spoken, written, preached, and heard*. But Christ also reveals *by His Spirit*. The same truth that strikes the ear *outwardly* must be applied *inwardly* by the Holy Spirit if sinners are to receive it rightly.

The Word without the Spirit leaves us with outward hearing only.

Claims of the Spirit without the Word leave us chasing imagination and subjectivity.

Christ joins both.

That matters for the life of the church, because faithful preaching is one of the appointed means by which Christ still exercises His prophetic office. He is present when His Word is read and preached faithfully. He still teaches His people. He still corrects them, illumines them, and leads them into truth.

Husbands and fathers are prophets in the home in *a real, though subordinate, sense*: not by receiving new revelation or *fore*-telling future things, but by *forth*-telling the Word of God and representing Him to their families. Their calling is to bring the voice of God to bear in the household through the faithful reading, teaching, application, and exhortation of Scripture. A husband therefore must not lead by whim, temperament, or mere pragmatism, but by the revealed Word of God. He is *not the source of truth*, but he is charged to speak it; *not a redeemer or mediator*, but a *covenant head* who must declare what God has said. When he teaches, corrects, warns, or leads family worship, he must do so as a man under authority, *echoing* the voice of Christ rather than *competing* with it. A faithful husband is a prophet to his family: bearing and declaring the light God has given.

So Christ executeth the office of a Prophet in revealing to us, by His Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation. He makes known the God we could not discover, the salvation we could not devise, and the truth we could never find on our own. And every faithful husband and father will reflect this role in the home for his family, “bringing God to His people”, as it were.

Question 28: How is Christ a priest?

Q. How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executeth the office of priest in his once offering up himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

If Christ as Prophet answers our *ignorance*, Christ as Priest answers our *guilt*. Here we are brought to the very heart of the gospel. The catechism tells us that Christ executes the office of a Priest in two great ways:

1. By once offering up Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God.
2. In making continual intercession for us.

Hebrews 9:14 says, *“how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”* Christ does not bring *another* offering. He offers *Himself*. He is *both* Priest *and* sacrifice. He is the spotless One Whom our sin required.

Hebrews 9:28 adds that Christ was *“offered once to bear the sins of many”*. That word *“once”* matters immensely. His priestly sacrifice is not repeated, because it does not need to be. *The cross is not an ongoing offering*. It is a *finished* sacrifice, *complete* and *sufficient*. Divine justice has been satisfied by the self-offering of the Son.

The catechism says that this sacrifice was made “to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God”. That language is necessary. Our problem is not *merely* that we feel far from God. Our problem is that we are *guilty* before a holy God. Sin deserves judgment. On the cross, Christ satisfies God’s justice for His people. **Hebrews 2:17** says, *“Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”* He turns away wrath by dealing with sin, bringing reconciliation made through priestly blood.

But Christ’s priestly work did not end at the cross. **Hebrews 7:24-25** says, *“but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”* The Priest Who died for us now lives for us. He appears before the Father on the basis of His finished work. His intercession is not an attempt to persuade an unwilling Father to become kind. The Father Himself *sent* the Son in love. Rather, Christ’s intercession is the continual presentation of His redemption for His people.

This is one of the sweetest comforts in the Christian faith. Our standing before God does not rest on the strength of our devotion, the consistency of our repentance, or the steadiness of our obedience. It rests on Christ our High Priest. He offered Himself *once for all*; He always lives to intercede.

A faithful husband will act as a priest in his home in *a real, though subordinate, sense*: not by offering atoning sacrifice or mediating between God and his family, but by interceding for them, seeking their peace, bearing burdens, leading them *in* and *to* worship, and giving himself for their good. He cannot make propitiation, but he can pray; he cannot reconcile his household to God by blood, but he can labor to lead them in the peace and order of Christ. He must not use headship as a cover for selfishness, harshness, or mere command, but must lead with tenderness and sacrificial care. In this way, a faithful husband is a priest to his family: not *competing* with Christ's unique priesthood, but *reflecting* it in a creaturely, dependent, and imperfect way.

So Christ executeth the office of a Priest by once offering up Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, and by making continual intercession for us. He is the faithful High Priest guilty sinners need. And every faithful husband and father will reflect this role in the home for his family, "bringing His people to God", as it were.

Question 29: How is Christ a king?

Q. How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling, and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

If Christ as Prophet answers our *ignorance* and Christ as Priest answers our *guilt*, Christ as King answers our *rebellion, weakness, and danger*. He does not *merely* teach us and cleanse us. He *rules* us. He gathers a people, subdues them to Himself, defends them, and triumphs over every enemy that stands against them.

The catechism begins with Christ "subduing us to himself". That is exactly where it should begin, because the first enemy Christ conquers in salvation is the rebel heart (think of Pastor Mike's "glory-robbing rebels" line here). Fallen sinners do not naturally submit to Christ. **Acts 15:14-16** speaks of God taking from the Gentiles "*a people for his name*" and connects that work to the restoration of David's fallen tent. Christ the King gathers His people and brings them under His gracious rule.

This subduing is not the *cruelty* of a tyrant, but the *mercy* of a Savior-King. He *subdues* us to *free* us from the bondage of sin. Before Christ rules us, sin rules us. His conquest is our liberation.

The catechism then says He executes the office of a King "in ruling". **Isaiah 33:22** says, "*For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; he will save us.*" Christ does not merely claim authority. He actually governs His people. He gives order, direction, law, and discipline. Faith is not mere admiration. It is allegiance.

Then the catechism says He executes the office of a King "in defending us". **Isaiah 32:1-2** says, "*Behold, a king will reign in righteousness*", and then describes refuge, shelter, and streams of water in a dry place. Christ's kingship is not only *authority* over His people; it is also *protection* for His people. He does not rule and then abandon. He guards what He governs.

Finally, the catechism says He restrains and conquers all His and our enemies. **1 Corinthians 15:25** says, "*For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet*". **Psalm 110** shows the same glorious reality. He reigns at the Father's right hand until every enemy is subdued. Some enemies He restrains now. Others He progressively conquers. All will finally fall beneath His feet. Sin, Satan, every hostile power, and finally, death, will not prevail against Him.

A faithful husband will act as a king in his home in *a real, though subordinate, sense*: not by possessing absolute authority, ruling a private kingdom, or demanding reverence for himself, but by providing and protecting, leading and ordering, loving and serving his household under the authority of Christ. He cannot rule as Christ rules, for Christ alone is King of the church, and all human authority is subordinate, accountable, and limited. But he can reflect Christ's kingly care by cultivating structure, making wise decisions, accepting responsibility, guarding the home from spiritual, moral, and physical danger, and establishing habits of worship, honesty, kindness, modesty, chastity, order, obedience, and repentance.

He must not rule with selfishness or harshness, but must lead with humility and love. He must not rule for his own convenience, but must lead for the flourishing of his family. He must not crush, but protect. He must not demand reverence for himself, but must cultivate reverence for Christ.

In this way, a faithful husband is a king to his family: not *competing* with Christ's unique kingship, but *reflecting* it in a creaturely, dependent, and imperfect way. A husband who *abdicates* leaves his family exposed. A husband who *dominates* wounds his family. A husband who *leads under Christ* seeks their good with steadiness, gravity, and love. He takes responsibility. He does not flee difficulty. He does not outsource spiritual development while retaining only the language of authority. He is first in repentance, first in responsibility, and first in bearing the weight of leadership.

So Christ executeth the office of a King in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies. He is the enthroned and reigning King His people need. And every faithful husband and father will reflect this role in the home for his family, providing and protecting in a way that echoes Christ's love for His bride, the Church.

Conclusion

Questions 27, 28, and 29 show us how Christ executes His offices for His people.

- Q27: As *Prophet*, He reveals to us, by His Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.
- Q28: As *Priest*, He offers up Himself once for all to satisfy divine justice, reconciles us to God, and ever lives to intercede for us.
- Q29: As *King*, He subdues us to Himself, rules and defends us, and restrains and conquers all His and our enemies.

Taken together, these questions show the completeness of our Redeemer. He does not save in fragments. He *teaches* the ignorant (Prophet), *atones* for the guilty (Priest), and *rules* the rebellious (King). He answers our darkness, our guilt, and our danger. There is no deficiency in Him.

And they also help us think more clearly about the home. Husbands and fathers must never *rival* Christ in these offices. They are *not* redeemers, *not* mediators, and *not* sovereigns. But under Christ they *are* called to reflect, in lesser, derivative, and subordinate ways, something of His prophetic, priestly, and kingly care by teaching the Word, praying sacrificially, and leading responsibly.

So take this lesson with you this week in two ways.

FIRST, let it shape what you *believe*: that Jesus Christ is the complete Redeemer of His people — our Prophet, Priest, and King. He *teaches* the ignorant, *atones* for the guilty, *intercedes* for the needy, *subdues* the rebellious, *rules* the weak, *defends* the endangered, and *conquers* every enemy.

And *believe* that Christ's offices give shape to godly order in the home. Our culture despises this, especially when applied to husbands and fathers. But Scripture is our standard, not culture. A husband is not Christ. He is not the Redeemer, the Mediator, or the lord of anyone's conscience. Yet under Christ, he is called to reflect something of Christ's prophetic, priestly, and kingly care.

Husbands and fathers, *believe* your leadership is a holy responsibility, not an optional preference.

Wives and mothers, *believe* this order is not a threat, but a gift when exercised under Christ.

Children, *believe* God's order in the home is for your good.

SECOND, let that corrected belief change what you *do*.

Husbands and fathers, do not abdicate, dominate, or drift. *Teach* the Word. *Pray for* and *with* your family. *Lead* in worship. *Protect* your household from spiritual, moral, and physical danger. *Confess* sin first. *Repent* quickly. *Lead* as a man under authority, remembering that your authority is never original, never absolute, and never for yourself.

Wives and mothers, *honor* what Christ honors. *Encourage* faithful leadership. *Submit* to your husband in everything as to the LORD. Do not despise imperfect obedience, but *help* with wisdom, patience, prayer, and honest, humble speech.

Children, *obey* your parents in the LORD. *Honor* your father and your mother. *Receive* instruction, correction, and discipline as gifts from the LORD.

We can live this way because Christ, as our Redeemer, is our perfect Prophet, Priest, and King.