

## **Catechism Sec. 6: The Work Of Christ In Salvation**

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### **Q22. What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?**

**A22. Christ as our Redeemer executes the offices of a prophet<sup>1</sup>, of a priest<sup>2</sup>, and of a king<sup>3</sup>, both in His state of humiliation and exaltation.**

- 1. 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.'*
- 2. Heb. 5:6, As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."*
- 3. Psalm 2:6, Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion.*

### **Comments:**

- God indicated that the coming Saviour would occupy the three offices by raising up men in the Old Testament who were prophets, priests, or kings, e.g. Abraham, Moses, and David. None of those men fulfilled the three offices fully or perfectly. Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator between God and man, fulfilled the three offices fully and perfectly.
- Man is made up of body and soul in his *person*, and he is made up of mind, heart (or affection) and will in his *personality*. When saved, he is redeemed in his total person by Jesus Christ, and he is transformed in his total personality by the Holy Spirit. Similarly, a church that truly acknowledges Christ's headship submits to Him in His three offices.

### **Q23. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?**

**A23. Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing<sup>1</sup>, by His Word<sup>2</sup>, and Spirit<sup>3</sup>, the will of God for the salvation of His people.**

**Notes:** We have changed "revealing to us... the will of God for our salvation" to "revealing... the will of God for the salvation of His people".

- 1. 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.*
- 2. John 20:31, But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*
- 3. 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 things that I said to you.*

**Comments:**

1. The function of a prophet was to reveal God's will. The writings of the prophets and apostle form the foundation of the church, with Christ as the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:19-20). The risen Christ continues to apply His word to His people by His Spirit (Eph. 5:26-27).
2. A true believer shows his submission to Christ's prophethood by receiving the gospel and believing Him as Saviour (John 14:7, 9; Acts 2:41). He hungers for God's word and grows spiritually in understanding and grace (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18). Similarly, a church that is submitted to Christ as prophet would value correct doctrine, shown by the central place given to preaching in the worship service, and submission to the sole authority of the word of God.

**Q24. How does Christ execute the office of a priest?**

**A24. Christ executes the office of a priest, in His once offering up Himself a sacrifice for the sins of His people to satisfy divine justice<sup>1</sup>, and to reconcile them to God<sup>2</sup>, and in making continual intercession for them<sup>3</sup>.**

**Notes:** We have added "for the sins of His people" and adjusted the rest of the answer accordingly.

1. *Heb. 9:28, So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.*
2. *Heb. 2:17, Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*
3. *Heb. 7:25, Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*

**Comments:**

1. Aaron was the high priest in the nation of Israel, and was succeeded by his sons. Jesus Christ's priesthood is "according to the order of Melchizedek", which means that it is superior to that of Aaron. Instead of offering up an animal sacrifice, He offered up Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of His people, thereby reconciling them to God. Christ continues to intercede for His people in heaven, i.e. speaking on their behalf, on the basis of His death for them.
2. A true believer shows his submission to Christ's priesthood by his life of worship and prayer. There is a love for God's people such that he regularly gathers with them (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 John 3:14). Similarly, a church that is submitted to the priesthood of Christ would have biblical worship, instead of pandering to the carnal desire, e.g. dancing, entertaining one another with song presentations, seeking personal enjoyment in hand-clapping and repetitive singing, etc.

**Q25. How does Christ execute the office of a king?**

**A25. Christ executes the office of a king in subduing His people unto Himself<sup>1</sup>, in ruling and defending them<sup>2</sup>, and in restraining and conquering all His and their enemies<sup>3</sup>.**

1. *Psalm 110:3, Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.*
2. *Matt. 2:6, But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.*

3. *1 Cor. 15:25, For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.*

**Comments:**

1. The function of a king in the Old Testament was to rule over His people and to lead them into battles. Christ subdues the chosen people of God through the hearing of the gospel, in the power of His Spirit. He gives them an inner desire to know His word and the ability to obey it, at the same time defending them from their enemies. The enemies are mainly spiritual ones (1 Pet. 5:8), including temptations from without (1 Cor. 10:13), sin from within (Gal. 5:24-25), and death (1 Cor. 15:26, 54). Christ also restrains the evil that befalls His people (Job 1:12; 2:6), and conquers their enemies by bringing them to nothing, as happened to Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:21-23), or converting them, as happened to Saul (Acts 9:15). Christ treats the enemies of His people as His personal enemies (cf. Acts 9:4, 5).
2. A true believer shows his submission to Christ's kingship by obedience to His word (John 14:21; 1 John 2:3-6). In the church, submission to Christ's kingship is shown by having biblical church government, including exercising church discipline, and engaging in outreach. The three offices of Christ are to be applied to the Christian life, as well as to the church, in that number and that order, viz. prophethood, priesthood, and kingship (cf. Rom. 6:17; 1 Tim. 1:7).

**Q26. What constituted Christ's humiliation?**

**A26. Christ's humiliation included His being born, in a low condition<sup>1</sup>, made under the law<sup>2</sup>; undergoing the miseries of this life<sup>3</sup>, the wrath of God<sup>4</sup>, and the cursed death of the cross<sup>5,6</sup>; being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time<sup>7</sup>.**

**Notes:** The question has been simplified from, "Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?" The answer has been tidied up under three sections, separated by semi-colons.

1. *Luke 2:7, And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*
2. *Gal. 4:4, But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.*
3. *Isa. 53:3, He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*
4. *Matt. 27:46, And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"*
5. *Phil. 2:8, And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*
6. *Gal 3:13, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree").*
7. *Matt. 12:40, For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

**Comments:**

1. When the Son of God became Man, He veiled His deity and took on frail humanity (Phil. 2:5-8). He did not "empty" (Greek, "kenosis", in Phil. 2:7) Himself of deity, as claimed in the "kenosis

theory” (cf. Luke 1:35; Acts 3:14-15). While we do not have a choice in the circumstances of our birth, Christ chose to be born in a manger, into the family of a carpenter, instead of a palace. He willingly placed Himself under the law, fulfilling it perfectly on behalf of His people. This has been called the “active obedience” of Christ which, together with His “passive obedience” of dying on the cross, fully paid for the sins of His people.

2. While on earth, Christ was hungry (Matt. 21:18), sad (John 11:35), provoked (John 2:14-17), tempted (Heb. 4:15), and in agony (Luke 22:44). While hanging on the cross, the full force of God’s wrath for the sins of His people fell upon Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). His was no ordinary death in that He willingly bore the curse due to the sins of His people (Gal. 3:13). Christ identified Himself with His people even in death, by being buried and remaining for a time under its power.

**Q27. What constitute Christ's exaltation?**

**A27. Christ's exaltation includes His rising again from the dead on the third day<sup>1</sup>, ascending up into heaven, sitting at the right hand of God the Father<sup>2</sup>, and coming to judge the world at the last day<sup>3</sup>.**

**Notes:** The question and answer have been slightly adjusted to accord with the earlier question.

1. *1 Cor. 15:4, And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*
2. *Mark 16:19, So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.*
3. *Acts 17:31, Because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.*

**Comments:**

1. The resurrection of Christ shows that the last stronghold of Satan has been overcome, thereby guaranteeing the resurrection of His people in glory (1 Cor. 15:20-21, 56-57). The resurrection of Christ has been denied by the liberals, when it is a fundamental teaching of the Bible (1 Cor. 15:12-19). Christ rose “on the third day”, not “after three days”. His ascension was a literal one, seen by the apostles and disciples (Acts 1:9-11). “To sit at the right hand” is a figurative expression, since God has no bodily parts. It means “the place of honour” which Christ now occupies (Acts 5:31; Phil. 2:9-10).
2. Just as certainly as Christ has died, risen from the dead, and been glorified, He will return to judge the world. No one knows the time of His return (Matt. 24:36). There will be no signs *indicating* His return, which must not be confused with the signs *accompanying* His return (Matt. 24:29-30; Acts 2:19-20; Rev. 6:12-17). The return of the Lord is compared to the flood of Noah and the thief in the night (Matt. 24:37, 43), showing that no one will know when that happens (Matt. 24:36, 44). What is important for us is that we be ready!

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