

DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Lesson 10

Three Offices of Christ

The Scriptures teach that Christ holds three primary offices i.e., prophet, priest, and king. Each of these offices is the tip of a large theological iceberg. Apart from focusing on what a prophet is we might discuss revelation, the Word of God, Jesus as the Word of God, Jesus as the author of revelation, or the fulfillment of Jesus as the great prophet. Under the office of priest we might discuss intercession, sacrifice, the atonement with all of its various subcategories, Jesus as a type of Melchizedek, or the tabernacle as a picture of Christ and His High Priestly work. With the office of King we might discuss sovereignty of Christ, His dominion, authority, the various aspects and phases of the kingdom, the necessary attributes one needs to possess to be an absolute monarch like omnipotence, omniscience, wisdom, etc. Everyone of these topics could easily be turned into an entire lesson or series of lessons. However, in this study we will survey the offices of Christ. In following lessons we will examine some of the subcategories mentioned above in more detail. By studying the offices of Christ it will help us understand who He is, what He has done, what He is doing and what He will do. We can also gain practical application for our lives today by understanding Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King.

I. KEY DEFINITIONS

A. Definition of Prophet

1. Luis Berkhof: *"We gather [from word studies] that a prophet is one who sees things, that is, who receives revelations, who is in the service of God, particularly as a messenger, and who speaks in His name."*¹
2. *Easton's Bible Dictionary: "Thus a prophet was a spokesman for God; he spake in God's name and by his authority (Ex. 7:1). He is the mouth by which God speaks to men (Jer. 1:9; Isa. 51:16), and hence what the prophet says is not of man but of God (2 Pet. 1:20, 21; comp. Heb. 3:7; Acts 4:25; 28:25). Prophets were the immediate organs of God for the communication of his mind and will to men (Deut. 18:18, 19). The whole Word of God may in this general sense be spoken of as prophetic, inasmuch as it was written by men who received the revelation they communicated from God, no matter what its nature might be. The foretelling of future events was not a necessary but only an incidental part of the prophetic office. The great task assigned to the prophets whom God raised up among the people was "to correct moral and religious abuses, to proclaim the great moral and religious truths which are connected with the character of God, and which lie at the foundation of his government."²*

¹Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 358.

²Easton's Bible dictionary. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

B. Definition of Priest

1. *Moody Handbook of Theology*: “Whereas the prophet revealed God to man, the priest represented man to God. Psalm 110:4 establishes Christ’s priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek (cf. Heb. 5:6-10; 6:20; 7:11, 17). As a priest: (1) Christ continually represents the believer because He lives forever (Heb. 7:24); (2) Christ completely saves the believer because His intercession never ceases (Heb. 7:25); (3) Christ has no personal sins to impede His work as priest (Heb. 7:27); (4) Christ finished His priestly work by one offering (Heb. 10:12).”³
2. John Walvoord: “Jesus Christ fulfilled to the utmost the office of prophet so also He qualifies as the High Priest and is the embodiment of all that is anticipated in the Old Testament priesthood. As a Priest, He fulfilled the primary definition of what constitutes a priest: “a man duly appointed to act for other men in things pertaining to God.”⁴

C. Definition of King

1. *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*: [The title “King”] “is in Scripture very generally used to denote one invested with authority, whether extensive or limited. . . This title is applied to God (1 Tim. 1:17), and to Christ, the Son of God (1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Matt. 27:11).”⁵
2. *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*: “The word *melek* (king) occurs more than 2,000 times in the Hebrew OT. It may refer to God (Ps 95:3) or to human rulers. Generally it designates one invested with ultimate authority and power over his subjects. . . The phrase “King of kings,” attributed to Jesus (1 Tm 6:15), is a Hebrew expression meaning supreme or greatest king.”⁶
3. John Walvoord: “As the Second Person in the Holy Trinity, the eternal Son, Christ naturally shares the dominion of God over all His creatures. His throne is established in the heavens and His Kingdom ruleth over all Ps. 103:19.”⁷

³ *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (238). Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press.

⁴ John Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, pg. 136.

⁵ *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁶ *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*. Tyndale reference library (773). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

⁷ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 406.

II. THOUGHTS TO PONDER

- A. Louis Berkhof: *“One who receives a revelation is not yet necessarily a prophet. Think of Abimelech, Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar, who all received revelations. What constitutes one a prophet, is the divine calling, the instruction, to communicate divine revelation to others.”*⁸
- B. Louis Berkhof: *“The Bible makes a broad but important distinction between a prophet and a priest. Both receive their appointment from God, Deut. 18:18, Heb. 5:4. But the prophet was appointed to be God’s representative with the people, to be His messenger, and to interpret His will. He was primarily a religious teacher. The priest on the other hand was man’s representative with God. He had the special privilege of approach to God and of speaking and acting in behalf of the people.”*⁹
- C. John Walvoord: *“Taken together, the three offices of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King are the key to the purpose of the incarnation. His prophetic office was concerned with the revelation of the truth of God; the priestly office was related to His work as Savior and Mediator; His kingly office had in view His right to reign over Israel and over the entire earth. In Christ the supreme dignity of these offices is reached.”*¹⁰
- D. C. H. Spurgeon: *“Jesus, the Redeemer, is altogether ours and ours for ever. All the offices of Christ are held on our behalf. He is king for us, priest for us, and prophet for us. Whenever we read a new title of the Redeemer, let us appropriate him as ours under that name as much as under any other. The shepherd’s staff, the father’s rod, the captain’s sword, the priest’s miter, the prince’s scepter, the prophet’s mantle, all are ours. Jesus hath no dignity which he will not employ for our exaltation, and no prerogative which he will not exercise for our defense. His fulness of Godhead is our unfailing, inexhaustible treasure-house.”*¹¹

⁸ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 358.

⁹ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 361.

¹⁰ John Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, pg. 137, or *Bibliotheca Sacra* Volume 118 (118:7). Dallas Theological Seminary.

¹¹ Spurgeon, C. H., *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings* (June 18 AM). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

III. SCRIPTURAL PROOF OF THE OFFICES OF CHRIST

A. **Prophet Promised – Deut. 18:15-18** “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. 16 “This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.’ 17 “The Lord said to me, ‘They have spoken well. 18 ‘I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

B. Promise of Prophet Fulfilled

1. **Jn. 7:40-43** Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.” 41 Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? 42 “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” 43 So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him.

2. **Acts 3:19-23** “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, 21 whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. 22 “Moses said, *‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed to everything He says to you. 23 ‘And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’*

C. Jesus Claimed to be a Prophet

1. **Mt. 13:57** And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.”

2. **Lk. 13:31-33** Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, “Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You.” 32 And He said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.’ 33 “Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem.

D. Jesus Proven to be a Prophet

1. **Mt. 21:10-11, 45-46** When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee." . . 45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. 46 When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet.
2. **Lk. 7:15-17** The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother. 16 Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and, "God has visited His people!" 17 This report concerning Him went out all over Judea and in all the surrounding district.
3. **Lk. 24:18-19** One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?" 19 And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people,
4. **Jn. 4:16-19** He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.
5. **Jn. 8:26-30** "I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world." 27 They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father. 28 So Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. 29 "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." 30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

E. Jesus Is Promised to Be a Priest

1. **Psa. 110:1, 4** The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." . . 4 The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

2. **Zech. 4:1-14** Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep. 2 He said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it; 3 also two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side." 4 Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, "What are these, my lord?" 5 So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts. 7 'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' " 8 Also the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. 10 "For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth." 11 Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?" 12 And I answered the second time and said to him, "What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?" 13 So he answered me, saying, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 14 Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth."

3. **Zech. 6:12-13** "Then say to him, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the Lord. 13 "Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the Lord, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices." ' "

F. **Jesus as Priest Fulfilled**

1. **Heb. 5:1-6** For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; 2 he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; 3 and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. 4 And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. 5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"; 6 just as He says also in another passage, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

2. **Heb. 6:20** where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.
 3. **Heb. 7:25-28** Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.
 4. **Heb. 8:1-6** Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "See," He says, "that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain." 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.
- G. **Jesus Is Proven to Be Priest**¹² – **Heb. 9:11-14** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

¹²The Priestly work of Christ is proven in His sacrificial death and His atoning work toward sinners which will be discussed in more detail in a separate lesson.

H. Jesus Promised to Be King

1. **Gen. 49:9-10** “Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? 10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
2. **Numb. 24:17** “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, And tear down all the sons of Sheth.
3. **II Sam. 7:14-17** “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 “Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.” ’ ’ 17 In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.
4. **Psa. 60:7** “Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter.¹³
5. **Isa. 9:6-7** For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.
6. **Jer. 23:5-6** “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 “In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The Lord our righteousness.’

I. Jesus as King Fulfilled¹⁴

1. **Mt. 2:2** [Magi speaking] “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.”

¹³Also Psa. 108:8

¹⁴There are many other texts that could be cited which refer to the Messiah as king e.g., Psa. 2; 110; Isa. 2:1-4; 4:1-6; 49:7; 52:15; etc.

2. **Lk. 1:30-33** The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”
3. **I Tim. 6:13-16** I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

J. **Jesus as King Claimed**

1. **Mt. 27:11** Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” And Jesus said to him, “It is as you say.”
2. **Mt. 28:18** And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
3. **Jn. 19:19-20** Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” 20 Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek.

K. **Jesus as King Proven**

1. **Mt. 8:23-27** When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. 25 And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing!” 26 He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?” Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. 27 The men were amazed, and said, “What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”
2. **Mk. 1:27** They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

3. **Jn. 18:4-9** So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” 5 They answered Him, “Jesus the Nazarene.” He said to them, “I am He.” And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. 6 So when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 Therefore He again asked them, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus the Nazarene.” 8 Jesus answered, “I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way,” 9 to fulfill the word which He spoke, “Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.”

IV. **APPLICATION OF THE OFFICES OF CHRIST**

A. **Prophet**

1. Jesus is a prophet sent to exhort you to turn from sin and pursue righteousness.
2. Jesus proclaims the Word of God to you as you read the Bible.
3. Jesus has promised His Spirit to illumine you so you can understand His Word.
4. The Word of God proclaimed by Jesus is the only reliable source for you to know God, His will for your life, and the future.

B. **Priest**

1. Jesus is your High Priest and always lives to mediate between you and the Father.
2. Jesus as priest offered Himself up as a sacrifice so you could have a relationship with God.
3. Jesus allows you to have continual access to God.
4. Jesus' sacrifice on your behalf was perfect and only needed to happen once.

C. **King**

1. Jesus is still the King of kings and reigns over heaven and earth. You don't need to worry about who is in control.
2. Jesus wants you to submit to Him as Lord of your life and follow His Word.

3. Jesus will allow all those who trust Him as Lord and Savior to rule and reign with Him forever.
4. Jesus will put an end to all sin, pain, hurt, and misery, establishing a kingdom of everlasting righteousness.

The Holy Ghost shows to us the offices of Christ. He is Prophet, Priest, King. Especially to you, sinner, Christ is a Savior. Now, if you know that he takes up the work of saving sinners, and that it is his business to save men, why then, dear friend, surely you will have confidence in him, and not be afraid to come to him! If I wanted my shoes mended, I should not take my hat off when I went into a cobbler's shop, and say, "Please excuse me. May I beg you to be so good as to mend my shoes?" No, it is his trade: it is his business. He is glad to see me. "What do you want, sir?" says he; and he is glad of work. And when Christ puts over his door, "Savior," I, wanting to be saved, go to him, for I believe that he knows his calling, and that he can carry it out, and that he will be glad to see me.¹⁵

Christ, to thee our spirits bow!
Prophet, Priest, and King art thou!
Christ, anointed of the Lord,
Evermore be thou adored.¹⁶

¹⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons: Volume 50* (electronic ed.). Logos Library System, Albany, OR: Ages Software.

¹⁶C. H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons: Volume 15* (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; Albany, OR: Ages Software.