**Calvin’s *Institutes of Christian Religion***

Lesson 15: The Work of Christ, Part 1 (Book 2, Chapters 15-16a)

**Chapter 15 – In Order to Know Why Christ Was Sent By the Father and What Christ Gave to Us, We Must Look Above All At His Three Offices: Prophet, Priest, and King**

1. Christ as Prophet
   1. Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be THE prophet of God- the last and final Word.
   2. Isaiah 61:1-2 – “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; **2**to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;” [Quoted in Luke 4:18-19]
   3. Christ brings an end to all prophecies. We should no longer expect any prophetic Word from God because God’s Word is complete in Scripture. If we add anything to God’s Word, we end up taking away from the authority of God’s Word.
   4. “Outside of Christ there is nothing worth knowing, and all who by faith perceive what He is like have grasped the whole immensity of heavenly benefits.”
   5. WLC Question 43: **How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?**

Answer: Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in his revealing to the church, (John 1:18) in all ages, by his Spirit and word, (1 Pet. 1:10–12) in divers ways of administration, (Heb. 1:1–2) the whole will of God, (John 15:15) in all things concerning their edification and salvation. (Acts 20:32, Eph. 4:11–13, John 20:31)

1. Christ as King
   1. Christ’s kingship is eternal and cannot be vanquished.
   2. Christ preserves His Church in the face of all adversaries and tribulations. “As often as we hear that Christ is armed with eternal power, let us learn that the perpetuity of the Church is thus effectually secured; that amid the turbulent agitations by which it is constantly harassed, and the grievous and fearful commotions which threaten innumerable disasters, it still remains safe.”
   3. Psalm 2:2-4 – “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, **3**‘Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.’ **4**He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.”
   4. “However numerous and powerful the enemies who conspire to assault the Church, they are not possessed of strength sufficient to prevail against the immortal decree by which he [God the Father] appointed his Son eternal King. Whence it follows that the devil, with the whole power of the world, can never possibly destroy the Church, which is founded on the eternal throne of Christ.”
   5. Because Christ’s Kingship is Spiritual in nature, we look away from earthly things and toward heavenly things. “Christ, therefore, to raise our hope to the heavens, declares that his kingdom is not of this world, (John 18:36.) In fine, let each of us, when he hears that the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, be roused by the thought to entertain the hope of a better life, and to expect that as it is now protected by the hand of Christ, so it will be fully realized in a future life.”
   6. “The happiness promised us in Christ does not consist in outward advantages—such as leading a joyous and peaceful life, having rich possessions, being safe from all harm, and abounding with delights such as the flesh commonly longs after. No, our happiness belongs to the heavenly life!”
   7. “As citizens of His kingdom we must forsake the kingdom of this world.” –J. Mark Beach
   8. Question 45: **How doth Christ execute the office of a king?**

Answer: Christ executeth the office of a king, in calling out of the world a people to himself, (Acts 15:14–16, Isa. 55:4–5, Gen. 49:10, Ps. 110:3) and giving them officers, (Eph. 4:11–12, 1 Cor. 12:28) laws, (Isa. 33:22) and censures, by which he visibly governs them; (Matt. 18:17–18, 1 Cor. 5:4–5) in bestowing saving grace upon his elect, (Acts 5:31) rewarding their obedience, (Rev. 22:12, Rev. 2:10) and correcting them for their sins, (Rev. 3:19) preserving and supporting them under all their temptations and sufferings, (Isa. 63:9) restraining and overcoming all their enemies, (1 Cor. 15:25, Ps. 110:1–2) and powerfully ordering all things for his own glory, (Rom. 14:10–11) and their good; (Rom. 8:28) and also in taking vengeance on the rest, who know not God, and obey not the gospel. (2 Thess. 1:8–9, Ps. 2:8–9)

1. Christ as Priest
   1. “as a Mediator, free from all taint, he may by his own holiness procure the favor of God for us.”
   2. “Wherefore, in order that Christ might fulfil this office, it behooved him to appear with a sacrifice.” And that sacrifice is Himself.
   3. “Whence it follows, that he by whose aid we obtain favor, must be a perpetual intercessor. From this again arises not only confidence in prayer, but also the tranquility of pious minds, while they recline in safety on the paternal indulgence of God, and feel assured, that whatever has been consecrated by the Mediator is pleasing to him.”
   4. Question 44: **How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?**

Answer: Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, (Heb. 9:14,28) to be reconciliation for the sins of his people; (Heb. 2:17) and in making continual intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25)

**Chapter 16 – How Christ Performed the Office of Redeemer in Procuring Our Salvation in His Death, Resurrection and Ascension**

1. “The name of Jesus was not given him at random, or fortuitously, or by the will of man, but was brought from heaven by an angel, as the herald of the supreme decree; the reason also being added, “for he shall save his people from their sins,” (Matt. 1:21.) In these words attention should be paid to what we have elsewhere observed, that the office of Redeemer was assigned him in order that he might be our Saviour.”
2. Jesus has been sent to be our Savior because God’s wrath must be appeased. All of us because of sin abide under God’s wrath and just judgment. We are estranged from Him, in rebellion against Him, under the curse of eternal death, and enslaved to Satan, unless Christ intercedes as our Savior and Advocate.
3. Christ’s work on our behalf occurs because of God’s love. “In His love God sends Christ to suffer His wrath on our behalf; and so we fix our eyes on Christ alone.” –J. Mark Beach
4. Christ Suffered Under Pontius Pilate
   1. “From the time when Christ took on the form of a servant, he began to pay the price of liberation to redeem us.” In other words, our salvation finds itself not only in the death of Christ, but also in the life of Christ. The whole of Christ’s life, from agreeing to be made flesh, to His baptism, to all of His life, is done in obedience and submission to the Father. Christ’s is our Savior not only because of His death but what makes His death acceptable is the fact that He lived a perfect life of obedience.
   2. But we must take special note of His death because death is the curse/penalty for sin. “One principal point in the narrative is his condemnation before Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, to teach us, that the punishment to which we were liable was inflicted on that Just One. We could not escape the fearful judgment of God; and Christ, that he might rescue us from it, submitted to be condemned by a mortal, nay, by a wicked and profane man.”
   3. “The peculiar form of Christ’s death, based on a trial and judicial sentence, was necessary to transfer to Himself the condemnation determined for us. The Sinless One had to die for the sinner.” –J. Mark Beach
   4. 2 Corinthians 5:21 – “For our sake he [the Father] made him [the Son] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him [the Son] we might become the righteousness of God.”
   5. “The transfer of our guilt onto Christ is something Calvin wants us to remember every day of our lives, for it frees us from fear and anxiety.” –J. Mark Beach