



The Ministry of Christ

Christ is the supreme minister of grace and gifts – or as our Confession states, He is the only Mediator between God and man. All other ministries are sub-ministries under Him. Without Christ's ministry there would be no ministries. The Church and believers only minister from what they in turn have received in and from Christ.

Christ of course, ministers to us in each of His three offices, as a Prophet and as a Priest and as a King. Each of these offices has a distinct function and ministry. We humans can only minister as individuals with the gifts endowed to us. God simply blesses our efforts at conveying in word or deed, His love and His mercy to others. Jesus is Himself the Prophet of all prophets, He is the Priest who actually and personally offered up Himself as a sacrifice, and He is the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

Ministry is a calling from God. Christ did not assume the high office of 'only Mediator'. His Father called Him to the office and work. Just as *"no one takes this honour for himself, but only when called by God"*, so Christ did not appoint Himself for the glorious work of redeeming mankind, but *"was appointed by Him who said to Him, 'You are My Son'"* (Heb 5:4, 5). In holy obedience to His Father, Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, humbled Himself and deliberately took our exact human nature, except the sin.

We hear today about our soldiers in Afghanistan not being equipped for the task at hand, but the Lord Jesus Christ was in and of Himself equipped to enter our sin-darkened world and defeat Satan and all the powers of darkness and obtain salvation for His people. Christ was anointed above measure with the Holy Spirit, having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and was full of grace and truth.

In ministering to us prophetically, Christ's life is a pure testimony of right living (righteousness) which when observed convicts us of our shortcomings. In reading of His upright and godly life, of His compassion and love, and of His holy responses to all that life threw at Him, we recognise our own personal failings – which are indeed nothing less than sins of omission as well as commission. As we contemplate His life, His Holy Spirit enlightens our minds and understandings in what righteousness really consists in, and convicts us of our need of complete regeneration. The prophetic ministry of Christ as Mediator, makes the gospel meaningful and relevant.

The ministry of Christ is administered through the Holy Spirit's operation on our minds and hearts. We are not privileged to witness first hand as those who lived during His lifetime on earth, His wonderful works.

However, we lose nothing of the blessing which these favoured contemporaries of Christ enjoyed, for the Holy Spirit reveals to us the great and deep truths of God. In fact, we are more privileged now in having the finished canon of truth readily to hand in the Word of God informing us of all that He is and has done for us. The apostle Peter was able to confidently say *"we have a more sure word of prophecy"* in Scripture (than the exhilarating experience of the transfiguration) (2 Pet 3:19 AV).

Reading Holy Scripture is encountering the Holy Spirit. Christ ministers to us in His Word by the Holy Spirit, so we are no less privileged today than those who actually saw the miracles and wonderful works of Christ.

In the Word, Christ reveals to us the 'unknown' things of the spiritual world. We are entirely dependent on God's revelation of Himself and reality, for unbelievers can only guess and have vague ideas of reality and truth and spiritual things. The minds of the world are darkened regarding spiritual things. Only God's Word can inform us accurately of the spiritual world, and what lies ahead for us after we leave this life. Christ's prophetic ministry to us in Word and Spirit is essential for our well being.

Christ also ministers to us in His office of priest. In history, He was both the sacrifice and the priest who offered the sacrifice. Those living with Him on earth stated that He was the Great High Priest who not only sympathised with us, but actually did something about our plight. Uncomplainingly and willingly He became the victim of God's wrath and curse in order to administer salvation to us.

His sacrifice ended the Levitical priesthood, which was only a 'show and symbol' of the real Priest. However Christ continues in His role of the Great High Priest. In the heavens, before the presence of God, Christ continues His calling to priesthood by interceding for us before the Father. He takes our 'offerings' of praise, thankfulness, prayers and good deeds, and sprinkles them all with His blood, cleansing them from all their imperfections and presenting them to the Father in His Name. Without this sprinkling of His blood all our prayers and good deeds would not be accepted. Christ's watchful eye is always upon His people down below, monitoring their every move and interceding for all their weaknesses and failures. Christ is now in heaven representing us before the Father and saying 'I and the children You gave Me'!

Finally, Christ also ministers to us in His office of King of kings. Having delivered us out of Satan's kingdom and place us in His own Kingdom, he protects us as the apple of His eye. We are precious and no real lasting harm can befall us. We are precious to Him.

As our King He provides for our every need, both physically and spiritually. Christ even equips us with armoury to defend against any enemy who may venture to attack us, so that we have "*strength in His might*". As Paul illustrates in Ephesians chapter 6, He has given us a sword, a breastplate, a helmet, shoes, a shield, and a belt to fight the good fight of faith. And of course we have the great resource of prayer which God has guaranteed to answer for our good.

To help us through this life and find the best possible enjoyment and peace, He has given us rules and regulations (His Law), which seem to the world to be nothing but 'kill-joys', but are actually defenses against the ills of the world. In addition, He has given us innumerable promises which He has pledged as our eternal security.

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