

# OUR PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING

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JOSH BLOUNT

“In what different ways does Jesus fulfill Old Testament promises about himself?” asks Question 58 of our family’s catechism book. To which my kids respond (on a good night): “He came to be a prophet, priest, and king!” The three offices of Christ are simple enough for a child, yet profound enough to be studied by the greatest of theologians and scholars.

In the eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards said, “There is an admirable conjunction of diverse excellencies in Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup> Christ is the Lion and the Lamb, exalted and humble, majestic and meek, full of justice and grace. The three offices of Christ are yet another way to behold the “diverse excellencies” of Jesus Christ.

Every Christian should grow in their knowledge of Christ, which includes understanding and treasuring his distinct work as prophet, priest, and king. This knowledge of Christ nourishes and transforms us in our daily lives.

What does it mean that we have a Savior who is our Prophet, Priest, and King?

## **A Prophet Who Reveals**

In one sentence, here is the meaning of Christ’s prophetic office: “Long ago,

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1. [HTTPS://WWW.MONERGISM.COM/THETHRESHOLD/ARTICLES/ONSITE/ADMIRABLE.HTML](https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/admirable.html)

at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son” (Heb. 1:1-2). There’s a past—“long ago”—and a present—“now.” There’s a continuity between the past and the present—“*our fathers*,” and “*us*”—and what unites us with the fathers is that we are both those to whom God speaks.

But what divides *then* from *now* is Jesus. “At many times and in many ways” —there’s a summary of all Old Testament revelation, of every genre and era. But now, a different kind of speech: “... he has spoken to us by his Son.”

The writer of Hebrews is reflecting what the Father himself proclaimed at Jesus’ baptism. As Calvin put it, “The Voice that thundered from heaven, ‘This is my beloved Son...hear him’...exalted him by a singular privilege

beyond the rank of all others.”<sup>2</sup> The prophetic word—the word that plucks up and breaks down, builds and plants (Jer. 1:10) that gives life to dead bones (Ezek. 37:4)—*that* word became a man. Jesus is our final Word, and we need no other!

*Who interprets all  
of life, all of reality  
for us? Jesus.*

Who reveals the Father’s will to us? Jesus. Who interprets all of life, all of reality, for us? Jesus. Whose words

comfort our suffering, correct our sin, and call us out as his chosen people? His words. This Prophet does not need to say, “Thus says the Lord...” but instead, “*I say to you...*” His words to us—ours for all generations through his commissioned apostles (John 14:26) and the written Word—give us life. They define us, past, present, and future. We have a prophet—his name is Jesus.

### **A Priest Who Saves**

Perhaps this office seems more familiar to us. Christ, our Great High Priest, has offered himself as a sacrifice in our stead. Once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that we might be reconciled to God.

This, as Calvin said, “is the principal point on which ... our whole salvation

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2. CALVIN, *INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION*, 2.15.3.

turns.”<sup>3</sup> If we have no priest, we have no salvation. But we do have a Priest! What all the Old Testament sacrifices and offerings pointed to, in one supreme act of obedience Christ has fulfilled. The Old Testament sacrifices were necessary but temporary. Our Priest’s sacrifice was also necessary but eternal: “he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26).

And yet, there is more. Our Priest’s work is not done. He will never need to make atonement again, yet he ever lives to make intercession for us. “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” (Heb. 7:25).

Have you drawn near to God through Christ? Your Priest will save you to the uttermost. No extremity of life in a fallen world can thwart him. Your Savior is praying for you. When you sin, his very presence at the right hand of God as the exalted yet nail-scarred Son testifies to all of heaven: those sins are remembered no more. When your faith is weak, he is praying for you so that your faith will not fail. We have a Priest—and his name is Jesus.

### **A King Who Reigns**

Lastly: the one who speaks to us, whose sacrifice and prayers save and sanctify us, also rules the world. And he does so *for our benefit*.

Make no mistake—it is not as though the eternal Son lacked power and then at some point received power. From eternity past to eternity future, Father, Son, and Spirit are absolutely sovereign. Yet, something new has happened in human history. At a point in time, on a single Sunday morning, the crucified Savior was raised to life. The Son took on our flesh to taste death (Heb. 2:14). The good Shepherd walked into the valley of the shadow of death and laid down his life for his sheep. And then—*he rose*.

At a point in time, on a single Sunday morning, our King crushed the head of the serpent, triumphed over the rulers and authorities, and delivered us from fear of death.

And then, forty days later, our King sat down on his throne. Visibly and bodily ascending into heaven, he assumed his rightful place of honor—but

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3. *INSTITUTES* 2.15.6.

now, and forever, as the Incarnate Son. This whole movement, from the opened tomb of Easter Sunday to the opened heavens of the ascension, is what Paul describes in Ephesians 1:20-22. And yet, it ends with a surprise. God the Father has put all things under Christ's feet ... and given him as head of all things to us, the church (1:22). Our King rules for his glory and our benefit. "He rules," Calvin wrote, "more for our own sake than his."<sup>4</sup>

And the kingship of Christ points us to his coming kingdom. We taste the kingdom now, but we have not inherited the kingdom. Yet. The day of Christ is coming. Lord's Day by Lord's Day, it is one week nearer. And even now, living between the times, our King rules. "Thus it is that we may patiently pass through this life with its misery, hunger, cold, contempt, reproaches, and other troubles—content with this one thing: that our King will never leave us destitute, but will provide for our needs until our warfare ended, we are called to triumph."<sup>5</sup> We have a King—and his name is Jesus.

Have you pondered and praised the diverse excellencies of our Savior? All that we need is found in him! "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

Consider the perfection of our Savior. Learn to apply his offices to your daily life. Hear and treasure his Word. Rest in his sacrifice, and rely on his intercession. Submit to his rule, and rejoice in it. And spread the good news—he came to be a Prophet, Priest, and King!

Jesus, Your name is glorious  
Our Prophet, Priest, and King  
Jesus, You're reigning over us  
And forevermore  
Your praises we will sing<sup>6</sup>

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4. *INSTITUTES* 2.15.4.

5. *IBID.*

6. "JOIN ALL THE GLORIOUS NAMES," ORIGINAL WORDS BY ISAAC WATTS, MUSIC AND ALTERNATE WORDS BY BOB KAUFMAN, 2000 SOVEREIGN GRACE PRAISE (BMI)

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