



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics)

Lesson 6.7 – The Doctrine of Jesus, Son of God, Messiah (Christology)

The Work of Christ as Our Savior and Mediator

Our Savior's personal name is Jesus, which means Savior. His official name is Christ, or the Christ, which means Anointed One in Greek. Messiah is Hebrew and also mean Anointed One. In the Old Testament there were three offices for which people were anointed: priests, prophets, and kings. Jesus, as the Christ and Messiah, held all three of these offices, but He was not anointed with a special oil, as were the priests, prophets, and kings in the Old Testament. At His baptism Holy Spirit descended like a dove and alighted upon Him to make public the fact that He was God's Anointed One (Matthew 3:16), but Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit even before that. He was anointed from His conception, for the angels at His birth said: **"There is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord"** (Luke 2:11). For in truth **"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power"** (Acts 10:38).

As we consider Jesus' role as Priest, Prophet, and King, we shall also consider His great work of redeeming or saving the human race from the clutches of Satan and removing sin and death and their consequences from the world.

Psalms 2 speaks of **"the LORD (JHVH)"** and **"His Anointed"** (the Christ). It then quotes the LORD as saying: **"Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion"** (Psalm 2:6). The LORD God appointed Jesus to be the Christ. In Psalm 40 we hear that the Christ willingly accepted His office: **"Then I said, 'Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of Me. I delight to do Your will, O My God, and Your law is within My heart'"** (Psalm 40:7-8; see also Hebrews 10:5-9). The prophet Zechariah declares: **"Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: 'Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! ...He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a Priest on His throne'"** (Zechariah 6:12-13). It was necessary for Jesus to be appointed and anointed by God for His office, for **"no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' As He also says in another place: 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'"** (Hebrews 5:4-6). It was God who anointed Jesus to be Priest, Prophet, and King.

Jesus spoke of His work of saving the world as an assignment from His Father. On one occasion Jesus said to His disciples: **"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work"** (John 4:34). Jesus said: **"I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father"** (John 10:17-18). In His long prayer on the night before His arrest Jesus said to His Father: **"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do... I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world"** (John 17:4-6).

It was God the Father who sent His Son into the world to carry out the great project of redeeming and saving the world. Jesus knew what His job was, for the Father had assigned it to Him and sent Him into the world to carry it out. Paul says: **"When the fullness of the time has come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons"** (Galatians 4:4-5). God sent His Son to redeem the world. **"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"** (1 Timothy 1:15). Jesus Himself was fully aware of this

assignment. He said: **“The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost”** (Luke 19:10). And everything that Jesus did, said, and experienced in carrying out His work was according to **“the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God”** (Acts 2:23), as Peter declared on Pentecost to those who had been responsible for the death of their Messiah.

When we say that Jesus is the Savior, and that His work is salvation, we mean that Jesus has saved us from sin, death, and damnation. When the angel told Joseph what to name Mary’s Child, he said to him: **“You shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins”** (Matthew 1:21). Jesus did not share this work of salvation with anyone else – neither with the angels, nor with His disciples, nor with His mother. Peter boldly testified before the Jewish council: **“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12). At the home of Cornelius Peter declared that the Old Testament prophets taught this truth: **“To Him (Jesus) all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins”** (Acts 10:43). We receive forgiveness of sins in Him, and in Him alone! **“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him”** (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10).

In Jesus’ work of salvation, He served as the Mediator between holy God and sinful man. That is, Jesus was the go-between between God and man who resolved the rift between God and man caused by man’s sin. Jesus was the only One who could be such a Mediator, for He Himself was both true God and true man at the same time. In fact, the Son of God became a true human being for this very purpose: so that He could mediate between God and men, and thus save lost mankind. We read in the letter to the Hebrews: **“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”** (Hebrews 2:14-15). He had to become man in order to die for us. He had to be God in order to destroy the devil and his power.

Jesus is the perfect Mediator. **“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all”** (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Moses was a mediator between God and the children of Israel in the giving of the law covenant at Mount Sinai. **“But now He (Jesus) has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises”** (Hebrews 8:6). This better covenant is the forgiveness of sins, won by our Mediator by His life, death, and resurrection. **“He (Jesus) is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance”** (Hebrews 9:15). Jesus is **“the Mediator of the new covenant”** (Hebrews 12:24).

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the name Jesus?
2. What is the meaning of the name Christ?
3. Which persons were anointed with oil in the Old Testament?
4. With what was Jesus anointed?
5. For what offices was Jesus anointed?
6. Who appointed and anointed Jesus for these offices?
7. Prove that Jesus was willing to accept the offices and work He was given.
8. What name is given to the work of Jesus?
9. Why is the work of Jesus so important for us?
10. How many others helped Jesus carry out His work?
11. What is a Mediator?
12. What kind of Mediator was Jesus?