

THE PRIEST OF MINISTRY

Matthew 28:18-20; Titus 2:11-3:8

How does Christ execute the office of a priest? Christ executes the office of a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people; and in making continual intercession for them.

Westminster Larger Catechism Question 44

I. WHAT THIS MEANS

II. WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE CHURCH

III. WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

An Overview of Ministry: Guiding Convictions

Why do we do what we do?

We all have a tendency to dissect some things in our minds, to ask deeper questions of meaning and purpose, to attempt to understand things on a fundamental level. Some do it with music lyrics, others with dreams, still others with resolutions for a new year; many others with dating and relationships. You could call this sort of reflection “metathinking” – a thinking about thinking. We metathink all the time about things that matter to us, even if some of those things aren’t as important as others.

When we consider the ministry of the Church, we could do worse than spend some time metathinking about what we do. The Heidelberg Catechism teaches us that Jesus ministers to His people through fulfilling the Biblical offices of Prophet, Priest, and King:

Why is he called Christ, that is, Anointed? Because he has been ordained by God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Spirit, to be our chief Prophet and Teacher, who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; our only High Priest, who by the one sacrifice of his body has redeemed us, and who continually intercedes for us before the Father; and our eternal King, who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.

If the Church is to stay faithful to our mission, we should derive all of our wisdom and power for ministry from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, our Prophet, Priest, and King. Our Guiding Convictions help us do just that, for they encapsulate fundamental biblical principles in a way that aligns us with Jesus’ ministry and keeps us on track with our mission in our world.



Kingdom

Jesus is the Lord. As His servants, His lordship affects every aspect of our being, including: our speech, our families, our jobs, our finances, and our politics. He is the Great King Who is bringing about His purposes for this world, and He calls us to be a part of that work. We want to demonstrate the rule and reign of Christ.

Gospel

Jesus is our Savior. So we are committed to tell the Good News of our Savior's work in and through us, not our own. Though God created the world in holiness, righteousness, and truth, mankind's fall into sin and rebellion shattered that beauty. The Good News is that Jesus has not only redeemed His people from sin, but He will also restore all things in Himself.

Theology

Jesus is the Truth. The Bible, as interpreted in the orthodox and Reformed confessions of the church, is our ultimate authority as the very Word of God. It trumps our culture, our traditions and ourselves. We will be a Word-centered church in our worship, small groups, and common life.

Shepherding

Jesus is the Chief Shepherd. Because He has appointed under-shepherds to care for His flock, we are thoughtfully Presbyterian (elder-structured). We want to love the Church just as Jesus loves the church. We want our church to be led by men who love and care for the flock, who are willing to lay down their lives for the sheep. We want people to hear, receive, learn, and grow in the Gospel of grace.

Community

Jesus is the Head of the Church, the household of God. Because we are a family, we are intentionally relational. We want to sharpen one another, life-on-life. We want to be warm and winsome in how we welcome and relate to others. We want to help everyone find their place in our fellowship. We want to love one another with the love of Christ.

Mission

Jesus is the Faithful Witness. Because He sends us out with His message, we are dedicated to spreading the faith in word and deed. The church is not merely an institution; rather, it is an enduring fellowship of people that God calls to love and serve the world in His name. Our church longs to have an outward face to see how we might serve Jesus in our community.