

2:42LifeGroups

GROWING TOGETHER IN THE GOSPEL

Life Group Study Guide Christ Is Our Priest Hebrews 4:14-16

Introduction

In the Old Testament, three roles (often called “offices”) were so important that they required the special help of God’s Spirit: the roles of prophet, priest, and king. Since *oil* was a symbol of God’s Spirit (1 Samuel 16:13; Luke 4:18), a leader would pour oil over the head of the one who was being commissioned as a prophet, priest or king, who would then be called an *anointed one* (see Psalm 105:15; Exodus 30:30; 1 Samuel 16:13; 24:6).

The English words “Messiah” and “Christ” come from the Hebrew and Greek words meaning “anointed one.” So when the writers of the New Testament refer to Jesus as *the Christ* they are saying that he is the ultimate Spirit-anointed one—the Prophet, Priest, and King, all wrapped up in one divine person (see Acts 10:38; 1 Samuel 24:6; 1 Samuel 16:13).

But why is this important for us? Here’s why we need a prophet, priest, and king.

- My view of God is *distorted*, so I need a PROPHET.
- My relationship with God is *disrupted*, so I need a PRIEST.
- Our world is *disordered*, so we need a KING.

Here’s another way to think about it:

- **TRUTH.** I need someone with *truth*. As Prophet, Jesus tells me the truth about God, myself, and the way to God.
- **LOVE.** I need someone with *love*. The truth he tells me is that God is holy, and I am sinful. As Priest, Jesus stands in my place before God—taking my punishment, and presenting me as righteous.
- **POWER.** I need someone with *power*. As King, he has the power to make everything as it should be.

Christ Our Priest

1. Hebrews 4:16 encourages us to “with confidence draw near to the throne of grace.” What do you know about God and about yourself that would make you feel like “drawing back” instead of “drawing near” to God’s presence?
2. Read Hebrews 2:14-18. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus can sympathize with us because he entered our sin-cursed world, and took upon himself real human body. What “weaknesses” do you experience that you are most thankful that Jesus also can identify with?
3. Consider the weaknesses discussed above. As fallen humans, what kind of sins might these weaknesses lead to?
4. Hebrews 4:15 makes this astonishing point: even though Jesus can identify with us in every way, he had no sin whatsoever. If Jesus were merely sympathetic and *not* sinless, he could not approach God. And if Jesus were merely sinless and *not* sympathetic, we could not approach him. But because he is both sinless and sympathetic, we can approach him, and he can approach God on our behalf. How does this truth affect . . .
 - . . . the way we view our trials?
 - . . . the way we view our sin?
 - . . . the attitude in which we approach God in prayer?
5. In what “times of need” do we especially feel we need God’s mercy and grace?
6. The writer of Hebrews often stresses the theme of “drawing near” in contrast with “shrinking back” (See Hebrews 6:18; 10:22, 39; 12:22; 13:13). Read Hebrews 10:19-25, and discuss what it looks like when Christians “draw near” to God.