

Sing before the service: Psalm 84:2, 5 (p. 424)

Our help is in the Name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

Beloved, grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Psalm of praise: 48:1, 4

Prayer

Psalm 26:5

Scripture reading: 1 John 5:1; Isaiah 9:1-6

Scripture text: 1 John 5:1; Catechism Lord's Day 12

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

(1 John 5:1 NIV-UK)

People who advocate heresy always take the Bible out of context by quoting only certain texts while ignoring other Scripture passages that deal with the same issue but throw light on them from a different angle. The most important matter is that we must know and remember the full truth of the Bible – and trust it.

In 1 John 5:1 we find words saturated with meaning:

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ . . .

These words include a certain group of people while they exclude another group.

- Those who believe that Jesus is the Anointed One – hence the official Saviour, are included in God's redeeming grace and in eternal life.
- The others – those who do not fully recognise the Lord Jesus as God's official Saviour for man, are excluded from the Lord's grace. They have no share in redemption and salvation.

Why do we refer to Jesus as the official Saviour? In order to understand this we should look at the Name of Jesus: *Christ or Messiah*.

- Both these names have the same meaning – *Anointed*.
- This is exactly why the Lord reveals Jesus to us by that Name because everyone who held a position of leadership had been anointed by God for that position so that everybody would know and recognise it.

In the book of Isaiah the Lord Jesus was foretold as the Saviour who would be Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace, in other words as everlasting God and Saviour.

Our Scripture text clearly shows the relation between the Lord Jesus and God the Father in exactly the same way the Old Testament reveals it. *Jesus is the Christ of God and we are saved through Him only.*

When we read 1 John 5:1 against this background it says: Everyone who believes that God redeems and saves him through his Anointed One is born of God.

- These words reveal to us the glory of the Son of God as his Anointed One.
- This Scripture text deals with Jesus Christ's complete redemptive ministry, but with special emphasis on his work as the Anointed One.

This revelation about Jesus Christ is not only of academic importance.

- We must know Jesus the Anointed of God personally, because we are warned about false Christs who will appear and pretend to be the true Christ.
- Many people will be deceived by these false Christs and will follow and worship them.
- The antichrist – who will be the greatest among them and will appear towards the end of time – will perform great signs and miracles to try and deceive even the elect.
- He will even be able to perform great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth.
 - *Of importance is the fact that this antichrist will use the Lord's Name when he introduces himself.*
 - *He will call himself the "Christ".*
 - *Hence those who do not have the power of discrimination will follow the untrue Christ.*

To enable us to distinguish and to continue in faith, without being overcome by doubt, the Lord reveals the following:

- There is only one true Christ and He can be recognised among the false Christs because of his anointment:
 - The true Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit in the presence of many people who saw it happen.
 - The true Christ is made competent by God to do his work.

The Bible reveals quite a number of things about the true Christ and who He is.

- A number of Scripture texts reveal *Jesus as God's Christ and Anointed*.
- Do you realise that this confession is the foundation on which the Christian church was founded and has been built?
- Listen again to Peter's speech in Acts 2:36:
Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Acts 2:36 NIV-UK)
- God made Jesus "both Lord and Christ".
 - God anointed Him.
 - This is how God appointed Jesus as Prophet and Teacher.

But the Lord Jesus was even more than this. In Hebrews 5 we read that the anointment of Jesus also meant that *God anointed Him as the only true High Priest*:

So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, You are my Son; today I have become your Father.
 (Hebrews 5:5 NIV-UK)

The Lord Jesus was not only God. **He was also man** – just like us. Remember what is written in Hebrews 2:17:

For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. (Hebrews 2:17 NIV-UK)

Also consider the words of Philippians 2:7:

but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (Philippians 2:7 NIV-UK)

Hence it is of great importance to also look at this from another angle – that of the humanity of Christ.

- Some of the early Christians had to be convinced that Jesus was not just an arrogant man.
- The antichrist, who will appear towards the end of time, will be exactly that.

Hence the Lord reveals that no man can take upon himself any glory.

- Neither could Jesus in his humanity do it.
- Hence He was anointed by God to be glorified.
- The Lord again confirms it in Hebrews 5:4:

No-one takes this honour upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was.
(Hebrews 5:4 NIV-UK)

Our Saviour was ordained by God before the beginning of time. If we believe in any other saviour, we will simply perish.

- God anointed no other saviour to reconcile Him to us.
- This means that there is no other saviour.
- Never doubt whether the Lord Jesus we worship is the truly Anointed One. When He came to earth the angels announced Him as such:

But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10-11 NIV-UK)

The message is clear: The Christ/Messiah, who will redeem you, is here. He is the one and only Saviour.

What do these things mean to us?

- Jesus was anointed by God as our only High Priest. **His sacrifice has set us free** from the miseries and eternal death clinging to us because of our sins. As High Priest **He has been praying to God every moment**, up to this very moment, for every one of us, **pleading for our forgiveness through his blood.**
- He is our Supreme Prophet who set us free from our short-sightedness to live in sin and find our future and pleasure in such a way.
- He is our King. Almighty. He destroyed the powers of hell and set us free to enter eternal life in his kingdom. Now He literally rules over all powers so that nothing can take away my salvation. The Holy Spirit states the following about Him:

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:17 NIV-UK)

which God will bring about in his own time— God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (1 Timothy 6:15 NIV-UK)

The Name *Christ* comprises the ransom for our lives. The anointment of Christ brought man either inside or outside of the boundaries of his redemptive ministry.

- He died for some people – those who confess Him as God's Anointed One – for eternal salvation.
- For those who deny or question this, He died for their eternal rejection and condemnation.

We know whether or not we share in this salvation because we bear his image, in other words, through his Name the Holy Spirit anointed us to be kings, prophets and priests (1 John 2:20; 1 Corinthians 1:21, 22).

- Hence every one of us – as king, prophet and priest – should declare to the world that we have been called and redeemed by the Anointed of God for ever and ever (1 Peter 2:9). **But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

When our articles of faith were drafted, the synod who dealt with it realised this problem and decided to include a special section about why Christ is called the Anointed One. Let's see what the Catechism Lord's Day 12 says about it.

31. Q. Why is He called Christ, that is, Anointed?

A. Because He has been ordained by God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Spirit,[1] to be our chief Prophet and Teacher,[2] who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption;[3] our only High Priest,[4] who by the one sacrifice of His body has redeemed us,[5] and who continually intercedes for us before the Father;[6] and our eternal King, [7] who governs us by His Word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.[8]

[1] Ps. 45:7 (Heb. 1:9); Is. 61:1 (Luke 4:18; Luke 3:21, 22. [2] Deut. 18:15 (Acts 3:22). [3] John 1:18; 15:15. [4] Ps. 110:4 (Heb. 7:17). [5] Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14. [6] Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; I John 2:1.

[7] Zach. 9:9 (Matt. 21:5); Luke 1:33. [8] Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:28; Rev. 12:10, 11.

32. Q. Why are you called a Christian?

A. Because I am a member of Christ by faith[1] and thus share in His anointing,[2] so that I may as prophet confess His Name,[3] as priest present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him,[4] and as king fight with a free and good conscience against sin and the devil in this life,[5] and hereafter reign with Him eternally over all creatures.[6]

[1] I Cor. 12:12-27. [2] Joel 2:28 (Acts 2:17); I John 2:27. [3] Matt. 10:32; Rom 10:9, 10; Heb. 13:15.

[4] Rom. 12:1; I Pet. 2:5, 9. [5] Gal. 5:16, 17; Eph. 6:11; I Tim. 1:18, 19. [6] Matt. 25:34; II Tim. 2:12.

Amen.

Closing prayer

Closing hymn: Psalm 118:2, 12

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

Amen.

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