

"Treasuring Jesus Our Ultimate Prophet"

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[0:00] I have a theory, and it's this. All dictionaries coming out in 2021, when you look up the word notorious, the year 2020. Yeah, I heard that amen.

It's been quite a year. Notorious. That means famous for bad reasons. When we say 2020 and the years to come, we're just going to be like, oh, I'm going to grimace.

So doesn't that mean, isn't it good to know that our Lord Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever?

He hasn't changed at all. He's wonderful, glorious, and all that He is. This Christmas 2020, we've been focusing on seeking to treasure Jesus as our prophet, priest, and king.

These are the three offices of the Messiah. And these offices, all throughout the Old Testament, for someone to serve in one of these offices, prophet, priest, or king, they were anointed.

[1:06] They were consecrated, set apart. So all throughout the Old Testament, we see men being anointed, consecrated to serve as kings, to rule over God's people.

All throughout the Old Testament, we see priests consecrated to make sacrifice and intercede on behalf of God's people. And all throughout the Old Testament, we see prophets who are anointed, consecrated, set apart in order to speak on behalf of God to the people.

Here's what you need to realize.

The greatest priest, prophet, and king. The baby born over 2,000 years ago is the greatest of all prophets because He's God in the flesh.

And He is still speaking today, brothers and sisters. Which brings me to the big idea that's in your bulletin. What's the point of this morning's sermon? It's this.

[2:34] Take Jesus' words to heart. Because He's the ultimate prophet. Take Jesus' words to heart.

So this morning, I'm going to walk you through three moves. The first one is this. I want you to see the profile of a prophet. There are boxes to check in terms of being a prophet. And I want to help you see that Jesus checks all the boxes.

But then, I want you to see from your Bible that Jesus is the ultimate prophet.

And then, finally, we're going to land this plane. And I want you to hear what Jesus is saying today.

So I've picked a bunch of different passages in which Jesus is speaking to each of us today.

That we must take them to heart. I could tell you that Jesus is the ultimate prophet. But you need to hear what He's saying. Today. Today. So having said all that, let's turn to this first point.

[3:37] The profile of a prophet. Basically, in the Old Testament, a prophet was someone who is appointed by God to speak for God to the people. And there are basically five points, five boxes to check when it comes to being a prophet.

First, prophets were set apart by God. We see that in Jeremiah. He was set apart in his mother's womb. Isaiah, Isaiah 6 was set apart. Ezekiel and Ezekiel 1 was set apart.

So you've got to be set apart by God. Second, you've got to be sent by God. Not only are you set apart, you're sent by God to go speak to a people.

Isaiah 6, remember that ends with God saying from the throne, who shall go for us, whom shall we send? Isaiah's like, here I am, send me. Sent. Ezekiel 2, Ezekiel sent.

Jonah, the naughty prophet. God sought to send him. He's like, no way, I'm going the other direction from Nineveh. He had a change of mind in the belly of the whale. Changed everything.

[4:45] When God sends someone, they eventually get sent. But maybe the third box to check is that which stands out about a prophet.

They speak on behalf of God. All throughout the Old Testament, prophets preface what they say with, thus says the Lord.

The holy God of the universe speaks through sinful, limited men to declare his will. They speak. And what we see is that a prophet will both foretell, which means they will speak of something of what's going to happen in the future. The judgment of God is to come.

Jerusalem will fall. But they also foretell. They call God's people to immediate response. In light of who God is.

[5:48] Live this way now. Which brings me to the fourth box to check.

What marks a prophet is the actual words they speak. They're God's words.

They are sanctifying words. It's the words the prophet speaks that God is speaking through these sinful men. These very words are intended to call a sinful people back into a covenant relationship with their God so that they walk in holiness to be holy for I am holy.

All throughout the prophets. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea. We see God calling his covenant people an unfaithful whore of a people.

And these prophets appeal to them. They say, come back to your God. Come back to your faithful husband. Come back. Come back. They're sanctifying words. Mark's a prophet.

And the fifth and final mark of a prophet is that they suffered for it. Jeremiah spent a long time in a cistern. It's said of Isaiah that he was sawn in two.

[7:03] The profile of a prophet is that they're set apart, sent from God, speak on behalf of God. They speak sanctifying words to reconcile people to God and they suffer for what they say.

So the question is, does Jesus check the boxes? Oh yeah. How's Jesus set apart? Well, do you know anybody else that is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin?

That sets him apart. And then if you fast forward to Matthew 4, the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus as a dove. It is his anointing for ministry.

He's set apart. And then Jesus is sent for God so loved the world that he gave. He sent his only begotten son. That whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Now, if you turn in your Bibles. By the way, we're going to be all over the place in our Bibles. In John chapter 12, verse 44, Jesus says this.

[8:11] And Jesus cried out and said, Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.

Jesus has been set apart as God. He has been sent as God. And he speaks for God as God.

If you're still in John 12, just look down a little bit to verses 49 and 50. This is Jesus speaking. For I have not spoken in my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment.

What to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me. Here is the word may flash saying, not only did God send me, but I speak his words in their eternal life.

Check that box. And Jesus' words sanctify. If you would turn to John chapter 17. This is in the midst of the high priestly prayer.

[9:20] Jesus says in verse 17, 17, 17. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

And for their sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth. The words of Jesus. The words of God himself. The words of eternal life. When believed, they sanctify. They transfer sinners from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of the beloved son.

They gradually transform us into the very image of God. They're sanctifying words. And yes, Jesus did suffer. Not just for what he said.

Jesus willingly, lovingly gave himself to suffer to accomplish our salvation. Amen. He checks all the boxes. He has set apart.

[10:23] Sent forth. Speaks for. Sanctifies. Suffers. All as God. In the flesh. Which brings me to the second point.

If he's a prophet. If he's a prophet. If he checks all the boxes. I want to convince you that he is the ultimate prophet. I want to convince you from the proof of God's word. So the second point is the proof that Jesus is our ultimate prophet. And I want to bring in before you three groups of witnesses. First is this. The witness of God the Father. Remember at the baptism of Jesus in Matthew chapter 4. Jesus is baptized. The clouds open. The spirit of God descends upon him as a dove. And then the Father speaks audibly. This is my beloved son with whom I'm well pleased. Now could you imagine that?

[11:28] As kind of the words of affirmation at the beginning. The public words of affirmation at the outset of your ministry. Because this was at the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry. But it's Matthew 17.

Another speaking of the Father of the Son. That I want you to turn your Bibles to right now. Matthew chapter 17. This is the transfiguration. In verse 3. Jesus has gone up to a mountain. He's surrounded by three of his closest disciples. And in verse 3. Behold there appeared with Jesus.

Moses and Elijah. The two great prophets. From the Old Testament. Peter kind of flips out. And then there's this bright cloud.

That overshadows everyone on this mountain. Jesus has been transfigured by the way. His pre-incarnate glory is demonstrated to Peter, James, and John. They're speechless.

[12:28] And here's this Jesus speaking with Moses and Elijah. And then this bright cloud comes over. The Shekinah glory. And out of the cloud hears this voice. This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

Listen to him. Listen to him. He's just hanging out with Moses and Elijah. Prophets. Listen to him. My son. The greatest prophet of all.

Who is the full and final expression of the will of God. That's the witness of the Father.

How about the witness of Jesus himself? Typically we think of Jesus as our king. Yes. I'm going to bow my knee. We think of Jesus as our great high priest. Thank you for your sacrifice once and for all for me.

And now you're interceding. You live to make intercession. But sometimes it's hard to get our heads around that Jesus is our prophet. What does Jesus have to say about that?

[13:32] Well, right after his baptism, his kind of going public with his ministry, the Holy Spirit has come upon him. He goes right into preaching the Sermon on the Mount. And he says something that when you are thinking about him as a prophet, it's astounding.

In chapter 5, verses 17 and 18, Jesus says, Do not think that I've come to abolish the law or prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them, to bring their full and final meaning to all who will hear me.

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. And for the rest of the sermon, he fills it out.

He explains why anger at the heart of it, the seed of it, anger is the seed of murder. He fills it out. And at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, those who were listening to him were amazed. They never heard anybody speak like this before. Because he's the ultimate prophet. But flip in your Bibles to Luke chapter 4.

[14:41] I can't get over that this Bible passage is in my Bible. Again, in Luke, Jesus has just been baptized. He's come through the wilderness of temptation faithfully.

And in chapter Luke 4, 16, Jesus comes back to his hometown of Nazareth. Isaiah chapter 16, and as was his custom, he went to the synagogue.

He regularly went to church. Well, he goes into the synagogue, and he stands up to read. And those attending give him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

And he unrolls the scroll in front of everybody. And he goes to Isaiah chapter 61, 1 and 2. And he goes on to say this. This is Jesus speaking, who was just anointed by the Holy Spirit at his baptism. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives. And recovering of sight to the blind.

[15:43] And to set at liberty those who are oppressed. To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Anointed. Proclaim. Proclaim. Proclaim. And Jesus rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.

And everybody in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on Jesus. And Jesus then says in verse 21, Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

The greatest prophet of all. The servant of Isaiah. Standing in this synagogue saying, Today's the day.

He's got something to say. Back in Matthew 21. I hope I'm not boring you. I love this. In Matthew 21. Jesus has just walked into Jerusalem. It's days away from his crucifixion. And in Matthew chapter 21. Jesus drops this parable.

[16:55] And it is astounding. It's in chapter 21 verse 33. It's the parable of the tenants. And here's what this parable is. Jesus says, There's this master of a vineyard.

He's talking about his father in heaven. And he leases out the vineyard to a bunch of tenants. The Jews of the day. And then the harvest comes along.

And the master of the vineyard sends to the tenants servants to collect what's due. The master. And he sends servant after servant to collect what's due.

And those servants are the prophets. And each prophet is run out of town by these tenants. And then finally, verse 37. This master.

This is Jesus saying this parable. Finally, verse 37. The master of the vineyard sends his son to them. Saying they will respect my son.

[17:56] But when the tenants saw the son. They said to themselves. This is the heir. Come. Let us kill him. And have his inheritance. This is Jesus speaking. He is the full and final representative of God to the people.

To make known God's will. It's astounding. Jesus understood himself.

Not just to be the coming king. Not just to be the great high priest. But our ultimate prophet as well. Now. Let me.

Bring out one more set of witnesses. The witnesses of the New Testament writers. Turn your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 1. If you're in Matthew.

Just start going right. Keep on going. Keep on going. If you come across Timothy. Keep going. Titus. Keep going. Philemon. Slow down. Because.

[19:00] You'll be looking right at Hebrews. Hebrews. This is where we called our service to worship this morning. Hebrews chapter 1. Verses 1 and 2. Long ago. At many times and in many ways.

God spoke. To our fathers. By the prophets. Jeremiah. Ezekiel. Hosea. Isaiah. But in these last days.

Now. He has spoken to us. By his son. Whom he. Appointed the heir.

Of all things. Through whom also he created the world. And he upholds the world. With the word of his power. How about that for speaking? The author of Hebrews.

Understood. That Jesus. Is the. Full. And final. Word. On the will of God. In these last days. Flip back now.

[20:04] To back to your left. To the book of Acts. Matthew. Mark. Luke. John. Acts. A-C-T-S. In Acts chapter 3. In verse 11.

We have this account. Of Peter and John. They had gone to the temple. And there's this lame beggar. Who's. Was kind of like. Hey. Give me some money. And Peter's like. I can't give any money.

But. In the name of Jesus. Be healed. Stand up and walk. And he walked. And Peter's got this opportunity. To preach an impromptu sermon. So. In verses 11 forward. Is this impromptu sermon. And in verse 22. He makes an appeal to Moses. From Deuteronomy 18. Verse 20. This is Peter. Quoting Moses.

Moses said. The Lord God. Will raise up for you. A prophet. Like me. From your brothers. You shall listen to him. In whatever he tells you. And it shall be.

[20:58] That every soul. Who does not listen. To that prophet. J-E-S-U-S. Shall be destroyed. From the people. And then Peter. Keeps on preaching. And he continues to say.

And all the prophets. Who have spoken. From Samuel. And those who came after him. Also proclaimed. These days. When God speaks. Through his son. You are sons of the prophets. And of the covenant. That God made. With your fathers. Saying to Abraham. And you. And your offspring. Singular. Paul from Galatians. Says that offspring. Jesus. Shall all the families. Of the earth. Be blessed. God having raised up. His servant. Jesus. Sent him to you first. To bless you. By turning every one of you.

From your wickedness. Peter. Understood that Jesus. Is the greater Moses. You have an amen.

[21:55] He's our ultimate prophet. If you want to see something else. That will just blow your categories. Look up 1 Peter chapter 1. Verses 10 and 11. The spirit of Christ. In the prophets.

Anticipating the coming of Christ. It's phenomenal. But my favorite spot. Is John chapter 1. You'll know John chapter 1.

One. One. In the beginning. Was the word. And the word was with God. And the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him. And without him. Was not anything made.

That was made. Verse 14. And the word became flesh. And dwelt among us. He's speaking of the birth of Jesus. And we have seen his glory. Glory as of the only son.

Son. From the father. Full of grace and truth. Verse 17. For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth. The fulfillment. Came through Jesus Christ.

[22:52] Verse 18. No one has ever seen. God the father. The only God. Who is at the father's right hand. The ascended son of God. He has made him known.

It's a great word. He has. Exegeted the father. Jesus has. He is the incarnate exegesis of the father. Who is unseen. Not just in words. But in his incarnation. The incarnate word. The incarnate expression of the will of God himself.

Jesus said. If you've seen me. You've seen the father. The witness of the New Testament writers. The witness of Jesus.

The witness of God the father. Point to Jesus as our ultimate prophet. So you need to take to heart what he says. So what does he say?

[23:52] Well for the balance of our time. Let me just give you. A whole bunch of stuff that he's presently saying. The first one. Our ultimate prophet is speaking today.

And if I can just kind of put this into the first person. I believe he would say to you this.

I'm all grown up. We have a way. Our culture has a way of sentimentalizing baby Jesus. We just want to hold baby Jesus.

We just want to write happy birthday cards to baby Jesus. But if you turn in your Bible to Revelation chapter 1 verses 12 through 16. If you were going to go there.

And see this prophetic word given to John by the risen Christ. You will see how Jesus is right now.

[24:57] Risen. Radiant. And reigning. Fire eyes. Glowing feet.

Spectacular hair. Wonderful golden sash. If you saw him. You'd fall at his feet. To worship him. The first thing that Jesus wants us to know is.

Hey. Don't perpetually keep me. As an infant in the manger. I'm the risen radiant and reigning one.

The second thing I think he would tell us today is. I've got some sober news for you. In Mark 2 verse 7. Jesus is eating and drinking with a bunch of sinners.

And a bunch of religious people get their nose bent out of shape over it. And they're like why is he doing this? And Jesus says at that moment to them. Those who are well have no need of a physician.

[26:03] But those who are sick. Jesus talks about our sin as this metastasized spiritual cancer. That affects all that we are.

But unlike cancer that we can really have limited things to control. We each of us are held responsible for all of our sinful choices before God. And what the Bible says is the wages of sin is death.

That sin leads to death. And after death every one of us faces judgment. Jesus taught that sin cancer is something we're responsible for.

And it affects all that we do and say. It's terminal. It will end in our death. And then will come judgment. That's the bad news Jesus says.

Speaking of that today. To everyone in our city and state, country and world. Everyone on this planet has this same terminal spiritual cancer called sin.

[27:13] And each and every one will stand before the judge someday. To have to explain themselves for it. The third thing I want to impress upon you that Jesus is saying.

Is Jesus is saying something like. I am the good news. I am your salvation. In Mark 2 when Jesus says.

That he came to call. Not the righteous but the sick. He's making himself out as the great soul physician. The one who has come.

To purify defiled hearts. To forgive sins. To deliver from death. And to deliver from judgment. And when I proclaim to you today.

That Jesus has come. And gave his life. So that you could live. What we learn from 2 Corinthians 5.20. Is that it's God making his appeal.

[28:11] Through those very words. To come be reconciled to him. So when Jesus says. Something to direct. I'm the good news. He's saying.

I'm your only good news. In Mark 10.45. Jesus says. I came not to be served. But to serve. And to give my life.

As a ransom. For many. The good physician. Who never sinned once. Died in the place of sinners. So that not only we would be forgiven. That we could live. Live for God. Jesus says. I'm your physician. And you're sick.

You need me. And I've given myself for you. The way to respond to that. Is the fourth thing that Jesus would say to you. And that is. Come follow me. Luke 9.23.

[29:11] If anyone would come after me. Jesus says. Let him take up his cross. Deny himself. Take up his cross. And follow me. The invitation. To all people on this planet.

From Jesus himself. Who is alive. Is to come follow me. To come obey me. To come live for me. To enter into a relationship with me. And find fullness of life.

Do you know what's unique about Jesus. As the ultimate prophet. Here's what's unique. When you look at the Old Testament prophets. Who say. Thus saith the Lord.

But there's sinful men saying that. Jesus says something like this. Come. To me. Do you understand?

Jesus. The incarnate God. The ultimate prophet. Invitation. To sinners. Is to come. To me. To him.

[30:10] Remember in Matthew 11. Jesus says. To all those who are weary. And heavy laden. Come unto me.

Find rest for your souls. Take my yoke upon you. And learn from me. For. For. I am humble of heart. Come to him.

Come. He's not a prophet. Who says. Go to God. He is. The prophet. God incarnate. Who says. Come to me. This next one.

Might make me cry. It's another invitation. Come join the chorus.

Jesus. Remember in Luke 2. The shepherds are out in the fields at night. An angel of the Lord appears before them.

[31:13] And lights up the place. They start to freak out. He says. Don't fear. Then. Appearing all around them. Is this multitude of angels. Who start singing. Glory to God in the highest.

And peace to. Man on earth. Amen. Gloria. In excelsis. Deo. Here's what you need to understand. This angelic chorus. Did not stop singing. In Luke 2. They continue to sing.

Flip in your Bibles to. Revelation chapter 5. Our Lord Jesus. Who is risen. And reigning on high. Is receiving.

Right now. The praise. Of this great multitude. Of angels. Chapter 5. Verse 9. They are singing to him.

[32:16] A new song. Worthy are you. To take this scroll. And to open it. Seals. For you were slain. And by your blood. You ransomed people. For God. From every tribe. And language. And people.

And nation. That's us. And you have made them. A kingdom. And priests to our God. And they shall reign on the earth. Look at verse 12. Worthy is the lamb. Who was slain.

They're singing right now. To receive. One. Power. Two. Wealth. Three. Wisdom. Fourth. Might. Fifth. Honor. Six. Glory. Seventh.

Blessing. Seven. Is fullness. All praise. And glory. And honor. And might. Be. To. The lamb.

They're singing right now. Jesus is inviting you. Come join my praises. Come join the chorus. Come sing with those who are singing to me. To him who sits on the throne and to the lamb.

[33:11] Be blessing. And honor. And glory. And might. Forever. And ever. Ever. The invitation is to come sing brothers and sisters. Do you know why I'm looking forward to being here at four o'clock on Friday or Friday afternoon even if it's 19 degrees?

Because I want to sing. Come join the chorus. Jesus invites. I'm going to have to speed up.

Six. You might be saying to yourself, I don't want to sing. Do you know what's going on in the world right now? I don't feel like singing. There's hundreds of thousands of people who are died or dying from this virus.

Do we really know what's going to happen when it comes to the racial tensions that we saw this past summer? And the political turmoil. It's been horrific to watch and be a part of.

And then there are the cyber attacks and the rumors of cyber attacks. You know what Jesus would say of all this stuff right now?

[34:15] I told you this was going to happen. I called them birth pains. In Matthew 24 verse 8. A birth pain is a contraction.

A pregnant mom experiences contractions before the goodness comes. She's in pain. There are global contractions going on right now because Jesus is coming back.

They're birth pains. This is our prophet speaking to our situation and saying, Hey, listen. I told you. Of course it's hard.

I told you it would be. But I'm coming. I'm one day closer. And if you're hearing this and you're like, Whoa.

It's actually good news. He's coming. The birth pains. Attached to that is the seventh thing. I'd say be warned. After Matthew 24 comes Matthew 25 in which Jesus depicts himself as a king who comes back and he judges all the nations of the world like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

[35:35] Jesus is warning us today. Judgment's coming. And if you fear that judgment, you run to the one who has come.

Jesus. Who is both savior and judge. Jesus would go on to say, for those of us who have bowed the knee to him, who've confessed him as our Lord, who've received his soul care.

He says to us in light of the coming judgment. But I've prepared a place for you. John 14, one through three.

And when you think about the place that defies explanation of what Jesus has prayed for us, do you know what that puts in your heart? It puts hope in your heart.

And hope is translate into this thing called perseverance. We press on through hardship knowing that Jesus has prepared a place for us.

[36:41] You would then go on and say, Oh, my brothers and sisters. Go make disciples. I've given you work to do.

Go. Go to the nations. Go proclaim to them, I am the good physician. Go proclaim to them to come follow me. Go proclaim to him that they can have hope in the midst of darkness if they trust me.

Take these words to heart. There's one more. I love you. I love you. I'm for you. I'm with you always. The Emmanuel of Matthew 1 is also the Emmanuel of Matthew 28. And I am with you always, even to the end of the age. What a comfort.

What a comfort. Jesus, our ultimate prophet, is speaking today. It's all in this book. It's his words to us.

[37:49] It's his words to us, living and active. He's the final word.

He's the incarnate God. So take these words to heart. Let me just finish

up by saying this.

Jesus is our ultimate prophet. Jesus is our great high priest. And Jesus is our one and only king. This is the one who was born in the manger and is now all grown up.

He's reigning on high. He's still speaking to us. He's still interceding for us. And he's still reigning over us in love to make us holy.

So brothers and sisters, this Christmas time, treasure Jesus as your prophet, priest, and king. He is a good, good savior. Let's pray.

God, thank you so much for a fresh reminder of who our Jesus is. And now, Lord, would you take these words and put them into our hearts so that we would live accordingly today and tomorrow and for the rest of the week.

[38:58] In your name we pray. Amen.