

# Jesus: Our Prophet

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good morning, friends. It's good to see you this morning. Our sermon text this morning is from the Gospel of Mark, chapter 9, verses 2 through 8.
- Let me invite you to turn there with me. That's page 844 in the Pew Bible. The time after Christmas in the church calendar is sometimes called Epiphany.
- Traditionally, January 6th is the date when the visit of the wise men is remembered. That's the 12th day of Christmas, which is what that song is all about with all those trees and birds and lords leaping and things like that.
- Matthew chapter 2 actually tells that story. There are no lords leaping, but there are wise men from the east. If you're part of the New Haven schools, you get what's called Three Kings Day Off as a holiday.
- Not bad. But Epiphany has actually historically been a good time of year for the church to focus in its time of gathered worship directly on the person and work of Jesus himself.
- [ 1 : 1 4 ] As the days are short and as the nights are long and as a new year begins, it's a good time to focus on the one who came into our darkness and said, I'm the light of the world and revealed himself to us and to all people.
- That's the significance of the Magi coming after all is that even to the nations, even to the Gentiles, even to those who seem to be far off, even to those Christ has come.
- So we're going to take a few weeks here as the year turns. Before diving back into 1 Corinthians, we're going to take a few weeks and focus directly on the person and work of Jesus.
- And we're going to do that by taking three weeks to unpack what's called Jesus' threefold office. As we think about why Jesus came and what he came to be and do for us, we can think about it through the lens of three Old Testament offices or roles that Jesus perfectly fulfilled.
- That of the prophet, the priest, and the king. What Christians profess is that in Jesus, the true and ultimate prophet, priest, and king has arrived.
- [ 2 : 2 8 ] That they all come together in him, in this one. So our hope over the next three weeks as we dive into Christ's work as prophet, as priest, as king, is simply that our understanding and our love of Jesus as a church will deepen and grow.
- And if you're here and you're not a Christian and you're exploring spiritual things, this is actually a great series for you to be a part of. Because hopefully you'll get a first-hand encounter with what Christianity is all about.
- Because Christianity at the end of the day is all about Jesus Christ. About who he is and what he's come to do. So this morning we're going to be considering Jesus as prophet.
- And with that in mind, let's read the Gospel of Mark, chapter 9, verses 2 through 9. Mark writes this, After six days, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up on a high mountain by themselves.
- And he was transfigured before them. And his clothes became radiant, intensely white as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses.

- [ 3 : 43 ] And they were talking with Jesus. And Peter said to Jesus, Rabbi, it's good that we're here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.
- For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. And a cloud overshadowed them. And a voice came out of the cloud. God, this is my beloved son.
- Listen to him. Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them. But Jesus only. Let's pray together.
- Lord, that is our longing that we would listen to you this morning. So by your Holy Spirit, we pray that you would come and you'd speak to us through this text and through the word proclaimed.
- God, we thank you that you're speaking, God. We ask that you would do so this morning. In Jesus' name, amen. Okay. So in our text here, we have this famous scene from the Gospels, the transfiguration.
- [ 4 : 48 ] Where for a moment, Jesus' heavenly glory and beauty is revealed to Peter and James and John. And in this scene, we actually get a powerful statement about Jesus as our true prophet.
- As the true prophet that God had promised and the prophet that we need. So real basically, I just want to look at three things this morning from this text. First, biblically speaking, what's a prophet and why do we need one?
- That's number one. Second, how does Jesus fulfill that need? And then third, what does that mean for us today? So first, what's a prophet and why do we need one?
- Here Mark tells us that Jesus takes Peter and James and John up on a mountain. And what happens? Well, they have what we would probably call today a profound spiritual experience.
- Spiritual not in the sense that it's not true or that it's merely personal or psychological, but spiritual in the sense that they have a very real experience of divine glory.
- [ 5 : 53 ] Jesus is transfigured before them. His clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. There's good evidence actually to think that Mark, the author of this account of Jesus' life, was a close associate of the apostle Peter.
- And that many of the details that Mark includes in his account here are primarily from Peter's own eyewitness testimony. And here in this phrase, you can almost hear the verbal retelling as perhaps Peter would have given it.
- He's practically grasping for language to describe what happened. It was radiant. It was intensely white. It was like no one on earth could actually bleach them. These three disciples have an experience of divine glory that they can barely put into words.
- And when Moses and Elijah show up and Peter does start speaking and putting into words, he sort of just bumbles something out, probably realizing even in the moment that he wasn't quite getting the point.
- He didn't know what to say for they were terrified. And their spiritual experience here continues in verse 7. God's presence suddenly is manifested to them and around them in the form of a cloud that overshadowed them like God's presence in the tabernacle in the Old Testament.
- [ 7 : 11 ] God's presence sort of makes itself manifest. And if you go and read Luke's account of the transfiguration, he says that when this cloud came again, they were terrified. A sense of holy fear and holy trembling came upon them.
- Now, I'm guessing that you probably haven't had an experience of divine glory this direct and this powerful. And yet, and yet, one of the things that the Bible tells us is that God reveals himself, his glory, in a general way through the things that he's made.

Psalms 19 says that the heavens are declaring the glory of God, and those with ears to hear everywhere can hear it. The grandeur of a mountain range, the intricacy of a spider spinning a web, the constancy of gravity, the stunning beauty of the stars on a winter night, and the sunrise that chases them away.

All of this is a declaration of the glory of God. Paul says much the same thing in Romans 1, that God's eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made.

Now, perhaps, even though you doubt at times, even though maybe you doubt quite a bit, perhaps you've had moments where the profundity of the world that is and the givenness and the majesty of things has been for you a declaration of God's glory, or a declaration of at least something that transcends the material order.

[ 9 : 04 ] And even more, maybe you've had spiritual experiences that are a little bit closer to what Peter and James and John have had here. Maybe you've had your own mountaintop experience. More than just an awareness of God's existence and power from the things that have been made, perhaps you've had a very personal sense that God is real and that the Holy God is impinging on your present moment.

Maybe it's something that happened upon you unawares when you were least expecting it, riding a motorcycle to the zoo. Or maybe it happened to you when you were in a worship gathering like this one.

I don't know. Not everyone has things like that. But you know, what we learn from this moment in the Gospels is that even the most undeniable encounter with God's general revelation in creation, or even in that sense of moral obligation that we have, and even the most profound spiritual experience, whether in a moment of quiet solitude or in a loud moment of gathered worship, even the most profound experience is actually insufficient.

We can be dumbstruck by the radiance. We can be terrified by the cloud. But like Peter and James and John, we can still be missing the point.

And we still need God to speak. You see, in order to have the kind of relationship with God that we were meant to have, in order to really know God, we need more than an experience.

[ 10 : 49 ] We need God to speak to us. And we have to listen. Think about getting to know another person, another human being.

You can study their appearance. That is what they look like. You can pay attention to the things that they do, their actions. You can even spend time in their presence. But, you know, if you really want to know someone, they need to speak to you, don't they?

And you need to listen. Imagine you're interested in dating someone. You've known them for quite some time. And you're quite smitten by them.

And at home, your parents start to realize that something is up. You're acting sort of funny. And they start asking you questions. Well, tell us about so-and-so. What's she like?

What's he like? And you say, well, he's tall and he's got a great sense of style. Or he's short and wears sandals and socks or whatever. Okay, well, what's he do?

[ 11 : 55 ] What's he into? Oh, he's a great athlete. He's a really talented musician. I've seen him play a bunch. Okay, well, what's he think about you? I mean, what do you guys talk about?

What do you have in common? Oh, I have no idea. We've never exchanged a single word. Now, of course, if that were the case, your parents, in their better moments, might gently tell you that, well, dear, you don't really know this person at all.

And friends, if that's true of our relationship with other people, how much more so is it true of our relationship with God, the one who is infinitely above us in being and in wisdom and in grandeur?

How much more so would we need that gap to be crossed by the self-exposure and revelation and the speaking and unfolding of God?

And God's general revelation is not enough, you see. We need his special revelation. We need his personal communication. We need him to speak. And that's exactly why we need a prophet.

[ 13 : 11 ] In the Old Testament, a prophet wasn't some spooky weirdo who tried to predict the future and bamboozle you out of your money. No, a prophet was simply God's spokesman.

They spoke forth the words God had entrusted to them. That's what the word prophet means, someone who speaks forth a message that they've been given. Imagine a king sending an important message to his subjects, a message of peace or a message of warning.

He would entrust this message to one of his authorized messengers, and that messenger on behalf of the king would go out, stand in the midst of the people, and say, Thus declares your king, your lord.

Hear what he has to say to you. And that's exactly what the prophets of the Old Testament did. God gave them a message, and they declared it to the people. A reading a little earlier from Hebrews that Caitlin read for us captured it well.

The writer to Hebrews begins his letter by saying, Long ago at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. God himself spoke.

[ 14 : 24 ] How? By means of his spokesman, by means of the prophets. Now let's pause for a second here and meditate on what truly good news that is.

First, that God speaks. That we aren't left in silence. When God made Adam and Eve and put them in the garden, the picture we get of Adam and Eve's relationship with God is one of a fellowship, of communication, of speaking and listening, of knowing and being known.

But then the fall changes all of that. And after the fall, there's a silence. There's a distance. And instead of God's words filling our ears and filling our hearts and filling our minds, after the fall, there's this cacophony of voices.

And most persistent was the lie spoken by the serpent and repeated again and again in our own hearts. Did God really say?

Does God really care about you? Does God actually know what's best? Did God actually say? And yet into that silence filled with so many voices, what the Bible says is that God actually speaks.

[ 15 : 56 ] And he speaks in a way that we can understand. You know, it's no embarrassment that God spoke through human agents.

I mean, how else would God have done it? Why not take one of the most brilliant capacities that humans possess, our ability to speak, our capacity to use language, why not take that thing that's so brilliantly capable of communicating ideas and thoughts and emotions and warnings and promises, why not take that thing and use it to reveal himself to us?

And why not then put those words in the hearts and mouths of humans so they can declare it publicly and make a written record of it and preserve it for as many people as possible? What a wonderful thing that God speaks and that he does so through human agents in a way we can understand.

Sometimes we think, well, I wish God would just make himself really clear. I wish he would write something across the sky. Well, friends, one weather pattern would go through and remove it. It's not a good idea.

What if he dropped an enormous rock down on my front yard? Well, I mean, things fall out of the sky all the time. Why not use the thing, one of the things that makes you you as a human being and actually speak to you?

[ 17 : 24 ] Isn't it a beautiful thing that God speaks to us through human agents? And he does it in a way that we can understand.

You know, after all, when I want my children to know that I love them, and when I want to communicate with them, what do I do? Well, I literally get down on their level, and then I use the best of what I know they understand, and I speak to them.

Long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. That's good news. But, you know, we see in this passage not just that we need a prophet, but second, we see that Jesus fulfills that need like no one else.

So, back in Mark chapter 9, who turns up in the middle of this experience of divine glory on the Mount of Transfiguration but Moses and Elijah, arguably the two greatest prophets in Israel's history, and the two figures who represented the major portions of the Hebrew Bible.

Here's Moses, the one through whom God gave the law, the first five books of the Old Testament. And here's Elijah, the representative figure of the prophetic books, which in Jesus' day would have included all those history books too, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings.

[ 18 : 59 ] So, here are Moses and Elijah, themselves great prophets, and in themselves representing the long history of God speaking to His people and making Himself known and breaking through the silence and the noise so that we can listen to His words and so that we can know Him.

Here they are. And Peter's response, although he's not quite sure what to say, being a bit terrified, which is understandable, by the way.

I mean, think about it. If you and I were hanging out on East Rock and suddenly your clothes exploded into the brightness of a thousand stars, I'd probably be a little freaked out. And I'd probably start saying things that I didn't quite understand.

You're on fire. No, you're not. What is going on? But Peter's response at first glance is fairly rational, isn't it? Let's build three tents.

One for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah. Now, why Peter wanted to actually build tents for them is a bit unclear. Perhaps he wanted to set up shrines for each one of them.

[ 20 : 03 ] We don't really know. But more importantly and more clearly, notice that Peter is putting all of them on the same level. One for Jesus, one for Moses, one for Elijah.

It's sort of like going to the basketball hall of fame and saying, look, let's have one room for magic, one room for bird, and one room for Jordan. Okay, and one room for LeBron, all right?

We'll put him in there too. And at first, Peter seems to be doing Jesus a big favor, doesn't he? I mean, Jesus on the same level as Elijah, even as Moses himself.

For a first century Jew, in fact, for an any century Jew, that's incredibly high praise. And you know, many today are very, very comfortable doing the same thing as Peter.

After all, at first, it seems like a pretty rational thing to do, to consider Jesus at the same height as Moses and Elijah, to think that he was a great religious teacher, just like them, just like the other great religious teachers.

[ 21 : 14 ] And of course, many other religions are very comfortable calling Jesus a prophet, putting him alongside other prophets. If you study Islam or Baha'i or certain streams of Hinduism or Buddhism, you'll find that Jesus is revered as a prophet alongside other prophets.

One for you, one for Moses. One for Elijah. But there's actually a problem with Peter's spur-of-the-moment construction plans for the Mountaintop Prophet Hall of Fame.

And the problem was Jesus himself. You see, at first in Jesus' ministry, people were amazed at his teaching because he taught with authority, not like the scribes.

You see, the customary teaching method of the day was to quote not just Scripture, but other biblical scholars. You made your case by citing authorities and relying on the voices of others to make your point.

But when Jesus taught in the synagogues, he wouldn't do that. He would teach like his word was authority enough and let it stand.

[ 22 : 37 ] Sometimes he would even preface his teaching by saying, truly, truly, I say to you. Literally, amen, amen, I say to you.

A double affirmation that what he's saying is totally true, completely trustworthy, and in need of no scholarly or human support. But then, Jesus' teaching was even more, what's the right word?

Strange, bold, audacious. Think about the famous Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. Jesus would say things like, you've heard it said, you shall not murder, but I say to you, everyone who is angry will be liable to judgment.

You've heard it said, quote God's law, but I say to you. Do you see what Jesus is saying and doing there? He's putting himself in the position of one who can speak authoritatively, not just from God's word, but about God's word.

Jesus gave his own teaching, his own words, the same weight as God's own word in the Mosaic law. And this is something he does again and again, over and over.

[ 24 : 06 ] It's all over. The historical records that we have about Jesus, you can't escape it. Jesus did not teach like any other prophet.

Every other Old Testament prophet says, thus says the Lord. But Jesus says, truly, truly, I say to you, you've heard it said, but I say to you. And then he says things like, I'm the way and the truth and the life.

And then he says, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words will never pass away. Who talks like that? No ordinary prophet.

One for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah. Jesus did not leave that option open.

Instead, he came to do something much more glorious. Why could Jesus speak like no other prophet spoke?

[ 25 : 10 ] Because he was a person like no other person. He had not come to continue the work of the prophets, but to fulfill it. You see, the prophets throughout the Old Testament spoke God's words on behalf of God.

True words, yes. Living words, yes. But when Jesus came, it was no longer speech on behalf of God, but God himself in human flesh speaking human words.

God himself face to face with the world he made and loved and had come to rescue. You see, it's kind of like the lover who sends letter after letter and messenger after messenger to his beloved until finally, when the time is right, when the fullness of time had come, the lover gets on the plane, crosses the ocean, rings the door, and then at long last, they're face to face.

And now all those previous letters and the messages that have been saved and stored and read and re-read, they aren't worthless. Just the opposite. They become even more dignified because the love that they spoke of has been confirmed.

He's arrived. He's done it. He's made good on his promise. But friends, neither would it make any sense to try to stick that person, flesh and blood, into the box with the rest of the letters, to try to stuff him down into the drawer of the desk where all those letters live and put him on the same level.

[ 26 : 55 ] Of course not. He's the fulfillment of all that had come before, and he's worthy of something far greater, to be known and loved and cherished and embraced.

And friends, the same is true of Jesus. Long ago at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days, he's spoken to us by his Son.

And all of this was according to plan. God had promised in the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy 18, that he would raise up another prophet like Moses with the implication that this new prophet would be something even greater.

And oh, how much greater he is. Hebrews says he's the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. To behold the Son is to behold the glory of God himself.

That's what Peter and James and John were getting a taste of in the transfiguration. The Gospel of John begins in the same way. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we've seen his glory.

[ 28 : 09 ] Glory is of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. And then John concludes by saying, no one has ever seen God, but the only God who's at the Father's side, He has made Him known.

Friends, Jesus at last has made God fully known, and in the midst of our fear and confusion, like those disciples in Mark 9, the voice of the Father speaks out of the cloud and says, this is my beloved Son.

Listen to Him. Because Jesus is who He is, the only Son of the Father, God Himself come to dwell among us.

He's the true and greatest prophet. He's the one who can dispel our ignorance, cut through the noise, and truly reveal God to us. But you know, there's even more.

The prophets in the Old Testament often walked a hard road. It wasn't a glamorous job description. In fact, God told Isaiah, one of the sort of most well-known prophets in the Old Testament, here's your job, Isaiah.

[ 29 : 27 ] Preach, preach, preach, and preach, and no one's going to listen. Have fun. The prophets often walked a hard road.

People often rejected their message. They were more often not misunderstood. They were quite frequently persecuted, and at times, they were even put to death. And at first glance, it seems like Jesus' own life kind of fits that pattern to a T.

At first, everyone thinks He's great, and then at the end of His life, He's betrayed and arrested and executed. But when you look a little closer, you see that Jesus' death was actually unlike any of the prophets.

Because all of the prophets, even if they were rejected by the people, knew that they continued to enjoy the acceptance of God. And that gave them strength to continue their ministry, even in the face of opposition.

But you know, when Jesus faced His final hour, when Jesus knew His death was to come, He knew that He wasn't merely going to face the rejection of the people, but that He was actually going to face the rejection of His heavenly Father as well.

[ 30 : 44 ] On the Mount of Transfiguration, the Father speaks audibly for all to hear, this is my beloved Son. But then on the Mount of Crucifixion, the Father is dead silent.

And the crowds taunt Him and say, you called yourself God's Son. Where is your Father now? And instead, the only voice that would be heard is the voice of Jesus crying out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

You see, friends, Jesus came not just to break our silence, but to take our silence. Because of our sins, we deserve to have God turn away and remain far off and unknown.

We deserve God's silence. But as our substitute, Jesus goes into that silence for us. He goes there on our behalf, bearing it for us so that we can hear the Father's voice again, so that we can hear the Father say over us the same words that He spoke over Jesus.

You are my beloved child, my son, my daughter. And unlike any prophet, on the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead.

[ 32 : 21 ] That Jesus actually broke the power of sin and death in His resurrection, and now He lives and reigns forever. And so, friends, His words are the words that will never fade and never grow old and never lose their relevance.

I mean, just think, every time that a sort of new, neat discovery is made, don't we sort of hang on the words of the one who made the breakthrough? A new diet that really seems to work.

Remember the Atkins diet? Man, we couldn't get enough of that. Or some parenting technique that really seems like it's the great breakthrough. One, two, three magic.

Yes, we will eat up your words. Teach us. Or some great medical discovery. Or some breakthrough in physics. Some wonderful feat of human intelligence and imagination.

Whatever it is, we listen intently to what they have to say. We gobble up their words. We invite them to our TED Talks. We do whatever we can until sooner or later something else comes along.

[ 33 : 30 ] Then we're on to the next thing, listening and gobbling. But friends, here is one who has solved the problem of problems, the problem of death itself.

Here is one who reigns forevermore, the one who has the power to give life and take it away, the one who has begun God's new creation in the midst of the old, the one through whom and in whom that new creation is breaking through.

How could the words of that one ever grow old? Who else has conquered death, been raised to incorruptible life, and says, come follow me and join the new creation?

Jesus is the prophet who fulfills for all time and for all people exactly what we need. Let's end by considering what all this means for us today.

And I think the application is right there in verse 7. This is my beloved son. Listen to him. Listen to him. Listen to him when he says, follow me.

[ 34 : 48 ] When he says, repent and believe, listen to him. When he says, I'm standing at the door and I'm knocking.

You who once knew me so well, I'm standing at the door and I'm knocking and I want you to open up so I can come and dine with you and sit with you and we can enjoy that festival, peace, and love together.

Listen to him. Well, you might ask, what counts as the words of Jesus? Where do I actually go to hear him? Well, the four gospels are obviously a pretty good place to start.

If you're new to the Bible, I would encourage you to read the rest of Mark's gospel with a Christian friend. Ask lots of questions, drink lots of coffee or whatever you like to drink, and really consider who Jesus is and why he came and what it would mean for me to actually listen to him.



In fact, I think it would do most of us Christians good to be constantly coming back to the gospels in our own Bible reading. Last year, I experimented with reading one of the gospels every three months.

[ 36 : 02 ] So in January, I read Matthew, and then in April, I read Mark, and then in July, Luke, and then in October, John. And it totally revolutionized my spiritual life. I promise you. I'm kidding.

It was really good, though. You should do it. Come up with your own way to be constantly coming back to the gospels in your own reading and prayer. This time of year is a great time of year to make some good resolutions about diving into Scripture afresh.

Why not this year, instead of trying to read through the Bible 800 times, why not just say, you know what, this year, I'm just going to read through the gospels. I'm going to set a goal I can actually meet and read through the four gospel accounts of Jesus' life.

It would do us great spiritual good to be constantly listening to the words of Jesus in the accounts of Jesus' life. But you know, this command to listen to Him actually extends beyond the four gospels.

And you actually get a sense of it here in Mark 9, don't you? That Jesus Himself stands at the center of all of Scripture. On the one hand, you have Moses and Elijah and the rest of the Old Testament Scriptures that they represent.

[ 37 : 12 ] And what we see in Jesus' ministry is that again and again He verifies and confirms that the Old Testament was indeed God's own Word, His own Word to us. And then here in Mark 9, on the other hand, you have Peter and James and John representing the rest of the apostles.

And friends, you see, their message, the apostolic message, what we have recorded in the rest of the New Testament, is the message that Jesus Himself authorized them to teach.

In Matthew 28, Jesus commissions them for the task. We know those verses well. Go and make disciples, the risen Lord Jesus told the apostles, and teach them everything that I taught you.

And you think, well, look at Peter and James and John in this passage. These are the guys we're trusting to give us the words of Jesus. Come on. That doesn't seem like a good plan. Well, at Pentecost, Jesus pours out His Spirit.

In the power of the resurrection, these men are totally changed. They're equipped for their task with Jesus' own presence of the Spirit, and He empowers them and inspires them to do just that, to give us the authorized instruction and message of Jesus Himself for all the church.

[ 38 : 25 ] So, what I'm saying, friends, is that we should read both the Old Testament and the New Testament as the words that Jesus wants us to hear. Now, that doesn't mean that we skip the sometimes hard work of interpretation.

We have to grapple with the many times and the many ways in which God revealed Himself. And yet, it does mean that the whole Bible, with Jesus at the center, is reliable and is profitable.

So, maybe you should read through the whole Bible in the coming year while you're reading through the Gospels. Give it a try. Well, with that being said, how do we listen to Him?

What does it look like to actually do this? Well, first, friends, we've put ourselves in the place where these canonical, scriptural words of Jesus, we put ourselves in the place where these words are being read and being taught and being pondered and being applied and being grappled with and being trusted and being cherished and being lived.

Put yourself in those places. This is something that the church does together. It's what we do when we gather on Sunday. It's what we do in small groups midweek.

[ 39 : 47 ] It's what we do in lunch or coffee with one another throughout the week and we do it in times of our own personal study and prayer. Every time we get together we want to be listening to Him in the Scriptures in the Bible and then we want to be ready to respond as the Holy Spirit does His work.

What would it look like to do that kind of listening? I like how one catechism puts it. The question is, how is the Word of God to be read and heard? And the answer they give is this, with diligence, preparation, and prayer so that we may accept it with faith, store it in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

That's a pretty good description of a kind of heart posture that we need to listen to Him with diligence, preparation, and prayer so that we may accept it with faith, store it in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

This is my beloved son. Listen to Him. Friends, who are you listening to this morning? I just got the new Coldplay album yesterday.

It's a pretty good listen. But amidst all the competing voices, amidst all the noise, who are you listening to? Listen to Him.

[ 41 : 26 ] Listen to Jesus. He is the only prophet who can truly speak for God because He is God in the flesh.

And friends, He is the only one who took our silence, defeated our death, and reigns forevermore. So may we accept His words with faith, store them in our hearts, and practice them in our lives.

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we worship You this morning as the true prophet that we need. Lord, we confess that it's often hard to listen to Your words.

God, we have so many doubts. We have so many questions. There are so many competing concerns in our lives. And yet, Jesus, You are such a sympathetic prophet that You know what it's like to wrestle and to struggle because You've come and lived among us.

So, Lord, we pray that in Your kindness, You would soften and open our hearts to listen to You. God, I pray for those who might be struggling and wrestling this morning that You would remind and confirm and open their ears and hearts and minds to really hear You and to listen.

[ 42 : 51 ] God, make us a church that listens well. God, we often feel like there's so much we need to say and yet our first task is to listen.

So, make us a listening church, God, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.