

Jesus is a Prophet

Jesus Is: Part 5 “Jesus is a Prophet”

Rev. Cameron D St. Michael – February 14, 2021

Transfiguration Sunday

Readings: Mark 9:2-9

Reflection: Psalm 50:1-6

Greeting: For it is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Prayer: O Lord God, your chosen dwelling is the heart of the lowly. We give you thanks that you revealed yourself in the holy child Jesus, thereby sanctifying all childhood in him. Make us humble in faith and love, that we may know the joy of the gospel hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. This we ask in the name of the One, who, wearing our mortal flesh, grew in wisdom and in favor with God and all people, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reflection: Psalm 50

From the rising of the sun to where it sets, God, the Lord God, speaks, calling out to the earth. From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines brightly. Our God is coming; he won't keep quiet. A devouring fire is before him; a storm rages all around him. God calls out to the skies above and to the earth in order to judge his people: “Bring my faithful to me, those who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” The skies proclaim his righteousness because God himself is the judge.

(Psalm 50:1-6 CEB+)

We read the words of Psalm 50 and hear of God's glory and judgement. That will gather the faithful, the people of his covenant. That our God is a God of truth and justice. That we are called to see the righteousness of God. How can we seek justice to honor God? How do we respond to God's call to righteousness? What does it mean to you to live in God's covenant? How can we share God's beauty and glory with others? How do we share God's message?

Prayer: Oh Lord, help us as we remember all that has been done for us. Let us recall all the ways that you help us and are there for us. Especially in this time, help us to recognize all the ways that your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, is in our lives. Help us to see all the ways that he is with us. Let us turn to him as a your messenger of the good news you have for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Now let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Sermon:

Our scripture reading for today comes from the Common English Bible. Our reading is from Mark chapter 9, verses 2 through 9.

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain where they were alone. He was transformed in front of them, and his clothes were amazingly bright, brighter than if they had been bleached white. Elijah and Moses appeared and were talking with Jesus. Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, "Rabbi, it's good that we're here. Let's make three shrines—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He said this because he didn't know how to respond, for the three of them were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice spoke from the cloud, "This is my Son, whom I dearly love. Listen to him!" Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Human One had risen from the dead.

(Mark 9:2-9 CEB+)

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

So, I have to be a little bit honest here. Transfiguration Sunday is always an odd one for me. I think it's because the Transfiguration itself can be a little bit mystifying. And the account that we get is just a little of what the disciples saw. But I wanted to look at this in the same vein that we have been going for these last few weeks about "Jesus Is." And so, for this last message in our series, I want to look at the idea of Jesus is a prophet. And, one might try to say that that doesn't seem like a very good title. That it's not a very fitting one because there's so much more. But I thought that it fit in when we were talking about all the different things that Jesus is. Because not one of them by themselves helps us to fully understand Christ. Now, if we were to say Jesus was only a prophet, then we'd have a problem. But that's not what we're going to say. When we look at what a prophet is, the prophet is one who speaks on behalf of God. That's the most basic meaning of a prophet in the Bible. That it would be one inspired by God for the Holy Spirit to deliver a message. I believe that fits. When we see Christ's baptism, we see the Holy Spirit descend on him like a dove. And then he begins his public ministry, preaching the good news. Everything that Christ does is a message from God the Father about how we should live, about what we should do, about how we should treat each other, and about how we should love. In the sense of being a prophet as a messenger, he fits that role perfectly.

Now, the reason I bring it up on Transfiguration Sunday is because of the fact that we see Jesus with two other prophets. He's seen with Moses, often considered the greatest prophet of Israel. That it was even told that there would be a prophet that would come after that would be greater, and we see that in Christ. A prophet that brings the message and the new

covenant. The prophet that speaks about what it is we truly need for salvation. Now the one that might throw people off would be Elijah. Elijah is there, but we might not understand why him at first. But there's something about Elijah that's important in what happens. That we see Jesus with Moses and Elijah. And we see Christ transformed in glory and they're talking together. Elijah bears a distinction amongst the prophets. Elijah was taken up. Elijah was always prophesied as returning. Because he was taken up, he didn't taste death, and that he would return. It's the reason that when people are asked about who John the Baptist is that some suggest Elijah. Elijah was to return. When Jesus asks the disciples, who are people saying I am, Elijah is one of the names brought up. Peter replies that he is the Christ, he is the chosen the anointed one, the Son of God. What we have here when we see Elijah there, we also see that fulfillment. Because Elijah has returned. Elijah came back for this moment. Where we see the great prophet Moses, the prophet taken up who is set to return, Elijah, and we see Christ, the fulfillment of God's message. It plays an important role because of the fact that it helps to tie those things together. That it in some ways ties up the loose ends for anyone saying "where was Elijah? Where did Elijah come back?" There. There is Elijah. There is Moses. And there's Christ. The culmination of the law and the prophets. The one to deliver God's message to all.

I wanted to talk about that idea of a prophet today because of the fact that this day can feel a little confusing when you read that scripture. But the good news is that it was also confusing to the people who were there. That Peter wasn't even sure what to say. We just have Peter, James and John watching this happen. This tremendous event unfolding before them, and they don't know how to take it. And then we get what might feel even stranger, that they're told not to tell anyone. And if I had to say why, I'd say it's because the prophet was not done delivering his message. I can only imagine what kind of scandal it would stir up if the story was suddenly floating about while he's trying to teach, that he was seen with Moses and Elijah. We saw how people treated them. Jesus talks about prophets being rejected in their hometown when his hometown can't understand why they should give him any respect. We see it happen when the Holy Spirit descends upon Peter and the disciples. When people say that they're drunk. My personal take is that it wasn't the right time because Jesus' role as a prophet was not yet complete. But it would be after he had risen from the dead. Because then his message would be complete.

When we think about Jesus as a prophet, we don't have to box him in by saying only a prophet. Because I think that we've been showing that over these last few weeks that the reason Jesus gets so many titles is because he is so many things. That if we see him as only one thing, we don't get a complete picture. And we deprive ourselves of the goodness that comes from knowing Jesus Christ in our hearts. And so, when we think about Jesus as a prophet, I want us to think about the message that he delivered. Because in many ways, Jesus didn't want who he was to overshadow the message that he had. And I think that's the other reason for telling them not to say anything. Because an interesting thing that you can do is to take everything that Jesus teaches, take his name from it and you'll still be left with solid good

teaching. You'll still be left with an honest message, dedicated to doing God's will. That the message isn't so much about who he is initially. The message is about what he represents. And in a fascinating way, when we do that, we understand better the way that Christ taught. Because we can see his message by itself as something that we would expect from any good prophet. That he spoke of God's will, that he gave God's message to God's people. As it happens, Christ is so much more than a prophet. But that doesn't take away from his role as a prophet.

I want to close with something about who Jesus is by asking you to reflect on that question with this one. Who is Jesus to you? To me, Jesus is a close friend that I can rely on in any situation. Jesus is somebody that I can rely on to keep me in check and to look after me. Jesus is someone I can look up to as a mentor, a teacher, and a leader. Jesus is someone I can depend on in every moment. He always has been there, that he is there, and he always will be there. I can look to Christ as someone whose message is sound. Not somebody that had to use a lot of flourish in order to get people to listen, but somebody who got people to listen because he spoke the truth. To me Jesus is a friend, a shepherd, the all in all, a prophet, Lord, Savior, Messiah, King, servant, counselor, confidant, and so much more. I could probably continue on for many more weeks talking about what Jesus is in my life. But I want to leave you with reflection of what is Jesus to you? Who is Jesus in your heart? What role does Jesus play in your life? What titles would you add? And let me know. Because if I hear enough of them, we may come back to this with all the ways that Jesus impacts your lives that I didn't touch on. Because when it comes to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, there's always more story to tell. Because we are right now living his story. Each and every one of us that proclaims that Christ is Lord, who accepts his baptism. Every one of us that accepts life in Christ, so that we may live in Christ that we may die in Christ and we may rise in Christ. Each of us that awaits his coming and final glory. Each of us is part of his story. And each of us helps to show who Jesus is. Amen.

Prayer of Confession and Pardon: Almighty and all-loving God, through your Son Jesus Christ you have reconciled the world to yourself. Help us now to be reconciled with one another, that again we might dwell in the warmth of your love. Inspire us with your Holy Spirit to put aside the cloak of pride and put on Christ, that we might forgive and be forgiven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offering: If you are so moved to make an offering, you may send it to the church treasurer, or you may send it to the PO Box listed below. We are still the church, and the church still needs your support to keep doing all the important work that we do.

Lord's Prayer

Dismissal with Blessing: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer List

Rev Charliam Renner	Bishop Frank Beard	Our Conference	Our Healthcare Workers
Angie Veach	Diane Washburn	Eric Veach	Cathy Devall
Brock McMorris	Ed & Verna Titus	Hayden Kanizer	Henry Catey
Jake Kiser	Laura Eubank Allison	Cindy Cisney	Patti Corder & Crew
Nancy Hoke	Don Wells	Tricia Adkins	Ronnie & Elaine Carlen
Don Stewart	Anne Winkler Heinrichs		Michael & Makenzie Reynolds
Ronnie Winstead	John Millsap	Annie McMorris	Dwight Parsons
Trinity Powers	Richard Durham	Kathy Hanks	Nora Werner & Family
Wayne Carrell	Gary & Mary Winterrowd	Family of Lois Woolever	Mary White
Nick Nichols	Leo Smith	Bonnie Hite	Greg Williams
Eloise Buffenmeyer	Martha Roberts	Charlie & Charlotte Baxter	Paul Schulte
Kim Hennes	Residents of the Greenup Nursing Center		

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