

Luke 4: 17-26, 28-30
The Five Faces of Jesus: Prophets
Sunday August 18th, 2016

Again, the title of this series is “The Five Faces of Jesus”. Today we will address Prophets. The 5 faces of Jesus are the 5 ways that we see Jesus expressing his ministry while here on earth. These are also the 5 ways that Jesus continues his ministry here on earth through his followers. Each of us is gifted in at least one of these ways of doing ministry in order to continue Jesus’ ministry through us here on earth.

We all have what is called a “base” ministry and when called by Jesus through the circumstances in life we can work in another ministry role for a phase in our life. Truly, as Christians in life and ministry, we can say, **“this is just a phase I am going through”** and then when the circumstances pass we return to the base gifting that Jesus has given us.

The purpose for each having different gifts is that we truly can’t be all things to all people and we need all of the gifts to be a healthy church, to be able to build up the body of Christ. To paraphrase Paul, it would be sort of boring if in the Body of Christ we were all an eyeball. Sorta boring and a bit creepy. We need the entire body of Christ and all the members there of.

The 5 ministries interact with each other to equip each other for the building up of the body. Now if you have taken the “5 Fold Ministry” test, you will note that you are not devoid of being gifting in any area. Each of us has some gifting in each area, but we each have an area where we are strongest, where the true “you” is. Today we will talk about Prophets and...

As Rev. Mike Breen says;

“Not all are called to be apostles but all are called to go with Jesus.”

“Not all are called to be prophets, but all are called to hear the voice of God.” Remember I always ask, “What is God saying to you?”

“Not all are called to be evangelists, but all are called to be witnesses.”

“Not all are called to be pastors, but all are called to care.”

“Not all are called to teach, but all are called to know the truth and stand by it.”



A story is told about “A guy who drove his car into a ditch in a rural area. Luckily, a local farmer came by to help with his big strong horse, named Buddy. He hitched Buddy up to the car and yelled, “Pull, Nellie, pull!” Buddy didn’t move.

Then the farmer hollered, “Pull, Buster, pull!” Buddy just stood there.

Once more the farmer commanded, “Pull, Coco, pull!” Nothing.

Then the farmer said, nonchalantly, “Pull, Buddy, pull!” And the horse easily dragged the car out of the ditch.

The motorist was most appreciative and very curious. He asked the farmer why he called his horse by the wrong name three times.

The farmer said, “Oh, Buddy is blind and if he thought he was the only one pulling, he wouldn’t even try.” Mikey’s Funnies

The point is this, in the church we don’t have imaginary helpers, nor do we need to think we have them. We truly have each other.

Now prophets, who are they? They are people who are drawn to the voice of God to attend to what God is saying. **Prophets love to spend time alone with God listening for God’s voice.** We often see

Jesus doing this in the scriptures as he would draw away to a lonely place for a nighttime of prayer. There are very few people who score highly as prophets in each church.

Now Jesus Christ as a prophet we see in the classic and common view of a prophet in Matthew 24 & 25 where he speaks of the events at the end of time. We see Jesus in his prophetic role as he speaks of his crucifixion and resurrection. In the common understanding of prophets we see them as foretelling coming doom and condemnation, but prophets, especially in the New Testament, are much more than that.

They indeed love to listen for the voice of God and to tell what they hear to others. And the voice of God for those who have heard it, know that it is not all doom and gloom: it is freedom, salvation and love.

Words that would describe a prophet are “Waiting, retreating, seeking God’s heart.” They enjoy, “Being alone with God, waiting on God and listening to God.” They are almost always introverts.

Prophets are more about “TELLING FORTH” the word of God than “FORTELLING” the future. Examples in Jesus’ life come from the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus tells us the heart of God. That God will provide so we need not be anxious. That God will forgive. That God cares for us like a doting father in the parable of the prodigal son and in so many other places.

Even when Jesus is foretelling the doom of Jerusalem, he “forth tells” the sorrow in the heart of God. Jesus said, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you,*

how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” Matthew 13:34

“The prophet FORTELLS and TELLS FORTH revelation from God. Often they are able to stand back from circumstances to get a clear

*picture of what is happening and therefore see creative solutions and develop a vision for situations others don't see. **They understand the times and what people should do.*** Copyrighted content and excerpted from *Building a Discipling Culture*

Prophets being introverts don't speak much or hog the limelight but when they do speak **it is in our utmost self interest to listen.** Prophets have an intuitive understanding of the world and people that comes from their intimate time spent with God.



In our Luke scripture in verses 18-19 we see “forth telling.” Jesus is laying out things as they are using a prophecy from Isaiah.

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Jesus “forth tells” the situation in Israel in terms of his ministry. **He said to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”**

He tells it how it is and then he “foretells” what is going to happen if things don't change. God is going to go to people outside the Faith of Israel to heal them like he did in the past.

So the mood of the synagogue crowd switched from **“All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips.”:**

to... **“All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.”** and they tried to throw him off of a cliff.

It is sometimes very hard for us to hear what God is really thinking.

Prophets have a firm grasp on what is obvious to others, but not acknowledged or acted on. A story is told about "A fire training officer who gathered the firemen around a table in the fire station to discuss the behavior of fire. He posed this question, "You pull up to a house and notice puffs of smoke coming from the eaves, blackened windows and little or no visible flame. What does this tell you?"

He was expecting to hear that the house was in a back draft situation which is extremely dangerous. Instead he heard someone in the back shout, "You got the right house." Mikey's Funnies

Now the prophets' place in the church is to receive the word from God and turn it over to the Body for the building up of the Body. New Testament prophets don't work alone. 1 Corinthians 14:1-6 reads, *Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. ..., those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.*

Those who speak in a tongue build up themselves, but those who prophesy build up the church.

Now I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.

One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

Remember this is extremely important for the prophet to know they don't work alone and practice that for the purpose of the 5 Fold Ministries or giftings as found in Ephesians 4:11-12 "The gifts he gave were ... to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ until all of us come to the

unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."

The purpose of the 5 Fold Ministries is to build up the body of Christ. In particular, **God speaks to the prophets so that they can build up, encourage and console the other members of the body of Christ.** In this they are very much like the Pastors, but I believe they are more in tune with God. And Prophets can indeed and do speak a word of warning to the Church, but their word is one that inspires more through encouragement than condemnation.

Prophets work like this. A story is told about



“A foursome of senior golfers who hit the course with waning enthusiasm for the sport.

“These hills are getting steeper as the years go by,” one complained.

“These fairways seem to be getting longer too,” wheezed another.

“And somehow, the sand traps seem to be bigger than I remember them,” groaned the third.

Hearing just about enough from his buddies, the oldest---and wisest of the foursome, at 87-years-old, piped up and said,

“Oh my friends, just be thankful we’re still on THIS side of the sod!!” Mikey's Funnies

About two months from now we are going to have a **“Dream Sunday”** here. During worship, that will be like a prayer service, we are going to hear from everyone present their thoughts, hopes and dreams for the future of this your church Vista de la Montana UMC. If you are not a prophet by gifting; you will work in that phase or role for this season and that day.

Between now and then I want you to be in prayer like Jesus, seeking God's direction for this church. I want you to write down what you hear from God and bring it there that Sunday morning to share around tables set up for worship, prayer and sharing.

Our Long Range Planning task force will take those ideas collate, summarize and categorize them for the church and for our church council to use for direction for the next 5 years.

Remember prophecy is principally given for the encouragement and upbuilding and consoling of others. What is God saying to you, to us as a church to build the church up, to build each other up and minister to the world?

In the end the 5 Faces of Jesus must be seen in and through us. Remember we are sheep and shepherds?

I tell a final story today *"about a little girl who, on the way home from church, turned to her mother and said, "Mommy, the Preacher's sermon this morning confused me."*

The mother said, "Oh! Why is that?"

The girl replied, "Well, he said that God is bigger than we are. Is that true?" "Yes, that's true," the mother replied.

"He also said that God lives within us. Is that true, too?"

Again the mother replied, "Yes."

"Well," said the little girl. "If God is bigger than us and He lives in us, shouldn't He show through?"



In Jesus name, amen!

