

## **Christology- The Offices Of Christ (Part 1)**

### **Selected Scriptures**

**April 22, 2018**

*Tom Pennington, Pastor-Teacher  
Countryside Bible Church, Southlake, Texas*

Well tonight we continue our study in the *Anchored* series looking at *The Offices of Christ*. And perhaps you've never heard that expression before, I think by the time we're done, you'll understand just how important it is for you to hear it, to understand it, and to embrace it by faith.

It was in Genesis 3:15 that God first promised that He would send a Redeemer. This is what is written there, "I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He will bruise you on the head, And you will bruise him on the heel." He, a Person, will come, who will bruise you, Satan, on the head. A unique person because He's of the seed of the woman. So from the very beginning, from the very beginning of human history, God said, there is going to be a person, a unique person, who will come to deal with man's sin. As the Old Testament continues the sort of funnel gets smaller and smaller, and points more and more specifically at who He would be. When you come to Genesis 12:1-3, we learn that this unique deliverer would come through the nation, descending from the loins of Abraham.

Later in the book of Genesis in Genesis 17:19, we learn that He would come through Abraham and Sarah's only son together and that is Isaac. Then it becomes clear, that Isaac's younger son Jacob would be the progenitor of the Redeemer in Genesis 25:23. You come to the end of the book of Genesis, in Genesis 49:10, we learn which of the tribes, that come from the 12 sons of Jacob, that the Redeemer would come from, and it is the tribe of Judah. The scepter would not depart from Judah. So we know the tribe, it's Judah.

But again as the Old Testament unfolds the prophesies become more specific. In 2 Samuel 7:16, we learn that it would be through one family in the tribe of Judah, He would be a descendant of David. As the Old Testament record unfolds, this coming Redeemer, comes to be known by the title, The Messiah. The Messiah. In Hebrew, it's *Ha Meshiach*. It literally means, the anointed One. The anointed One is coming. Now why would this Redeemer, this One promised from the beginning, why would He be called that? Well obviously because He is the One specially selected by God, but I think the title, the Messiah, the anointed One hints at even more than that. Because in the Old Testament, when God appointed a man to a particular office, that man was

anointed, he was anointed with oil. The Messiah's called, the anointed One. Well in Old Testament history, what specific offices were anointed?

Well it happened with kings; they were anointed. It happened with priests, they too were anointed, and on occasion, prophets, as well, were anointed designating them for their specific tasks. It denoted their consecration to that specific responsibility. It also implied, the anointing implied, that the Spirit would empower that man for the task to which God had called him.

Now with that background, I want you to start with me tonight in Isaiah. Turn to Isaiah chapter 61. Isaiah chapter 61 is one of those portions in Isaiah's prophesy which looks forward to the coming of the Messiah. Which looks forward to the coming of the servant of YHWH, as He's called in Isaiah's prophesy.

And here we learn something about this coming one, notice Isaiah 61:1, this is the Messiah speaking, this is the Servant speaking. In fact, you'll notice in verse 1, you have a clear reference to all three members of the Trinity. You have first of all, the One speaking, then you have a reference to the Spirit of the Lord, and then you have a reference to YHWH Himself, that is, to the Father. So notice, verse 1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me," there it is, He has consecrated Me, He has anointed me, "to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me," that is, the gospel, that's to bring good news in Greek terms is the euangelion, to bring the gospel. He has sent me, "to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to those who are spiritually captive, And freedom to those who are spiritual prisoners."

Listen, that's what sins does to all of us, did to all of us before Christ, and the Messiah says, God has sent His Spirit upon Me, has anointed Me, I am the anointed One to bring the gospel. Verse 2, "To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord," that is, this is the time, God is at work, respond to Him now. You'll remember that in Luke 4, Jesus was handed the scroll of Isaiah, and in His hometown synagogue in Nazareth, He read that portion that I just read to you, and that's where He stopped. Why? Because He went on to say, that, "has been fulfilled today in your hearing."

Why did He stop there? Because notice the next line, it wasn't fulfilled in the first advent. He came to proclaim, "the day of vengeance of our God." And then he goes on to describe what will happen at the end of time. He will, "comfort all of those who mourn," those who have suffered countless generations of suffering because of their faithfulness to Him. To grant those who mourn, "in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."

Those verses have to do with the Second Coming. And so Jesus stopped, after He began the second verse. But what I want you to understand in this text, is the Messiah says He has been anointed by God to perform His specific duties and tasks. As I mentioned to you early in His ministry, our Lord applied the first part of this prophesy to Himself. And He said, it was fulfilled in His first advent. Now in light of Jesus having been anointed to accomplish specific tasks, some of the early church fathers spoke of the different offices or duties to which Christ had been consecrated. To which He had been set apart. But it was John Calvin, who first recognized the crucial importance of distinguishing between three offices to which the Father had appointed Christ. In fact, he devotes an entire chapter of his *Institutes*, to this issue. But it wasn't just Calvin, the Reformers as a whole understood that Jesus had been anointed, He was the anointed One, why? He had been anointed to fulfill specific offices on behalf of God. This has consistently remained an important way to understand the ministry of our Mediator, the Lord, Jesus Christ. The Father has appointed our Lord to serve in three distinct offices: prophet, priest, and king, the very offices that in the Old Testament, called for anointing. He's been anointed to fulfill these offices. He is the anointed One, the Ha Meshiach, the One who has been anointed to fulfill this.

Now in the Old Testament, here is how these offices function. The prophet existed to reveal God's word to the people on God's behalf. By the way, the prophet would sometimes preach, but that's not what distinguished a prophet. A prophet in Old Testament terms, and New Testament as well, was distinguished as one who spoke new revelation from God. That's what distinguished a prophet. He revealed God's revelation to the people on God's behalf.

Secondly, there was the priest. And in the Old Testament, the priest offered sacrifices and prayers to God on behalf of the people. And finally, there was the king in Old Testament Israel, and the king ruled over the people of God on God's behalf. What I want you to see is that those three real Old Testament offices in Israel actually pictured and foreshadowed the work of Jesus Christ. All of the other Christological titles or tasks or responsibilities of the Messiah ultimately fall under one of these three general offices. And it's crucial for you as a New Testament believer to understand how these offices that Christ fulfilled on your behalf, the ones He has accomplished for you, meet all of the needs that you have. He is your prophet, He is your priest, He is your king. He meets all of the needs that you and I have.

So tonight, we want to begin to look at these offices together, and Lord willing next week we'll complete our study of this topic. Now all of the major reformation creeds underscore the importance of these offices. Here's the Westminster Confession, "It pleased God in His eternal purpose to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, to be the mediator between God and man, the prophet, priest and king.

Here's the Westminster Larger Catechism,

"Why was our mediator called Christ? Or the anointed One?" Christ is the Greek term, Christos, that simply is the equivalent of the Old Testament Messiah or Ha Meshiach. The anointed One, wherever you see that name Christ, that is not Jesus' last name. Okay. Some people think, you know it's like Tom Pennington. Jesus Christ, no. Christ is a title, it's the Greek equivalent of Messiah, Jesus Messiah.

"Why was our mediator called Messiah?"

Our Mediator was called Christ or Messiah, because He was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure, and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the offices of prophet, priest, and king of His church, in the estate of both His humiliation and His exaltation.

In other words, He did this when He was here, and He still does this.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism, "What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?"

Christ, as our Redeemer executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in His estate of His humiliation, [that is, in the incarnation when He was here], and in His exaltation, [after His resurrection, ascension and session at God's right hand].

No different among the Baptists. here's the Baptist Confession of 1689,

This office of mediator between God and man is proper only to Christ, who is the prophet, priest, and king of the church of God. This number and order of offices is essential because of our ignorance, we need His prophetic office. Because of our alienation from God in the imperfection of the best of our service, we need His priestly office to reconcile us and present us to God as acceptable. Because of our aversion to and utter inability to return to God and for our rescue and keeping from our spiritual enemies, we need His kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us until we reach His heavenly kingdom.

Now, before we look at the specific offices that are listed here, there are a couple of general observations that are important to make. First of all, Christ fulfills all three of these responsibilities at the same time. That's unique, because in the Old Testament, there were prophets, and there were priests, and there were kings. Occasionally, there were men who held two of those offices at the same time. For example, Moses, was both a prophet and a priest. David was both a prophet and a king. The mysterious Melchizedek, of Genesis, King of Salem, was both a priest and a king. But Christ occupies all three of these offices at the very same time.

The second general observation I want to make was made in a couple of those Reformation Creeds I read to you. And that is Christ exercised all three of these offices both in His humiliation during the incarnation, and He continues to exercise all of these offices in His

exaltation, that is, after the resurrection, ascension and during His session at God's right hand, His being seated at God's right hand.

So, let's examine then these three offices together. Again, what I want you to see in this is Christ meets every need we have in the execution of these three offices. Let's first of all, look at Christ, our prophet. Christ, our prophet, again, I'll start with the Creeds just so you see that, we'll look at Scripture together.

The Westminster Larger catechism says, "How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?"

Christ executes the office of a prophet in His revealing to the church in all ages by His Spirit and Word, and in different ways of administration the whole will of God in all things concerning their edification, and salvation.

In other words, the fact that you have the truth is because Jesus is your prophet. The fact that you understand anything about God is because Jesus is your prophet.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism says, "How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?"

He executes the office of a prophet in revealing to us by His Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

Think about the fact if Jesus Christ was not a prophet, and had not through His work of a prophet, revealed God's truth to us, imagine for a moment, I want you just to think about this, imagine you didn't have the Word of God. And you knew nothing about God except what you see in general revelation. You knew nothing about how to be reconciled to God. You knew nothing about how to respond to the guilt of your own conscience. You knew nothing about whether God would accept you or not. You knew nothing about the gospel. You knew nothing about what He expects of you. You see how important it is for Christ to be our prophet. He is the One who has revealed all things to us. He is the mediator, who is the ultimate prophet.

Let's look at the biblical data together. I want to start with the Old Testament background. It's important to understand that Moses was the first major prophet. We normally speak of the major prophets as those large books that, by the way, you understand, I hope, that when we talk about the prophets in the Old Testament, the writing prophets, and we call some major and some minor, it's not because some of them are more important than others. The major prophets are the ones that were large enough that they required their own scroll. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel. The minor prophets were small enough that they could be combined together, that's the only distinction, it's not that one is more important than the other.

Moses was the first major prophet, and I use this word, not in that sense, but in the sense of the first one who really speaks on God's behalf in a serious way. Now, we learn the job description of a prophet from Moses and Aaron. I want you to go back to Exodus. And specifically to Exodus 6. Exodus 6:28. This is the job description of a prophet for Moses and for Christ, here it is. Exodus 6:28,

Now it came about on the day when the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, that the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "I am YHWH; speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak to you." But Moses said before the Lord, "Behold, I am unskilled in speech; how then will Pharaoh listen to me?"

You remember that story and how it unfolded back earlier in Exodus.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I make you as God to Pharaoh [listen to the way He describes it. I make you, like God, to Pharaoh], and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. [Okay, well what does it mean to be a prophet? Here it is, verse 2]. "You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

In other words, the job description of a prophet is to take the words that come from God, in this case, Aaron is like a prophet to Moses. To take the words that come from God, and to pass them

on to the people. In Aaron's case to Pharaoh. Now go back to Exodus 4. The job description of a prophet then has an active element and a passive element. On the one hand, he passively receives divine revelation from God, that's part of his job description. On the other hand, he actively passes that revelation on to the people.

Now, notice chapter 4 of Exodus, verse 1, here's the fuller expression of this,

Moses said, "What if they will not believe me, or listen to what I say? For they may say, 'The Lord has not appeared to you.'" [He's speaking for God, but how are they going to know that he's speaking for God? That's his question; it's like, anyone can say, I speak for God, in fact, people do it all the time. So how are they going to know? Verse 2], the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." Then He said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. But the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand and grasp it by its tail." [Now that would have been a hard one to obey, wouldn't it?] So he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand, [now watch what God says], "that they may believe that YHWH, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

What is He saying? He's saying, you are going to speak for Me. I am going to tell you what to say, just like when I said, Aaron is going to be like your prophet, and he is going to say what you say. Moses, you're My prophet, you're going to say what I say, and here's how they're going to know that you are, in fact, My real prophet, I am going to validate your message with what? Miracles. I am going to validate your message with miracles. So, that's how the office of prophets really begins. The prophet receives revelation from God, he speaks it to the people, and if God so chooses, He will validate that prophet's message with miracles.

Now, in Deuteronomy, under the inspiration of the Spirit, Moses, clearly God's prophet, and by the way, you know those 2 million Jews, gathered around the foot of Mount Sinai? When all of that unfolded that you read about in Exodus 19 and 20? Not one of them doubted that God was



speaking through Moses. So, God established, he is My prophet. Now Moses then, writing under the inspiration of the Spirit in Deuteronomy, laid down the criteria for evaluating the genuineness of all future prophets.

There are three of them. Three criteria for discerning a true prophet. First of all, in Deuteronomy 18:21-22, the true prophet's predictions must always come true. You know today we have people who want to be prophets. And, you know, they're batting about 20%. In Old Testament times, they would have been termed a false prophet and stoned. A true prophet's predictions must always come true, but that isn't enough. That's not the only criteria.

Secondly, Deuteronomy 13:1-5 says that if God chose to authenticate a true prophet, He would do so by empowering him to work miracles as He did with Moses. So perhaps, there are miracles. But that isn't all, because Satan, we know, can work miracles at times, he can at least, through slight of hand, and through the power that God has allowed him to have, can do things that deceive. So, how do you know, even then? Well here's the third criteria, and it's very important, also there in Deuteronomy 13, it says that the true prophet's message must always be in complete doctrinal agreement with previous revelation. In other words, even if he can work miracles, don't believe him, if what he says is contrary to what has already been revealed. That also takes care of a whole lot of modern day prophets.

Now, Moses wrote that God would continue to raise up men like Himself to speak for God. Look at Deuteronomy 18. Those are the criteria for evaluating a true prophet, and, by the way, I am getting ahead of myself. But look at that little list. Clearly, Jesus meets all of those. His predictions always came true. He was authenticated by miracles. And what He said was always in complete agreement with previous revelation. But look at Deuteronomy 18:15,

"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let us not hear again the voice of the Lord my God directly, let us not see this great fire anymore, or we will die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. I

will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words, [watch this, here's the prophet again, God says, I will put My words], in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. [Verse 19], It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him."

Now, clearly Moses was describing an institution of prophesy that was already active in his day, and would continue throughout the Old Testament. But it is equally clear that he is looking forward to the Great Prophet, ultimately the Messiah. In fact, turn over to Acts 3. Acts 3, Peter here, makes it clear that this is Jesus. Verse 22 of Acts 3. Peter says,

"Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brethren; to Him you shall give heed to everything He says to you. [Verse 23], 'And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among his people.' And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, announced these days."

He's saying, it's Jesus. He's the Great Prophet, the One promised to come. Peter applies Moses' prophesy to Christ. So Christ is a prophet. What was the prophet's role? It was to reveal God's and His truth to man. So when Scripture predicts that Messiah would be a prophet, it was saying that He would communicate the mind and will of God to us. So let's look then at the work of Jesus, as our prophet.

He is a prophet, but He is greater than all other prophets, why is that? Well, all other prophets prophesied about Him. In Luke 24, I won't have you turn there, but in Luke 24, you remember after the resurrection, He says "Let Me tell you all that the prophets said about Me." And He explained it to them.

But Jesus was also unique because He didn't merely receive truth from the Father, although He did, we'll see that in a moment, but He also had the right and authority to speak authoritatively Himself. No other prophet had that right. No other prophet said, okay, hit the pause button, that's

what God said, now let Me tell you what I want you to know. But Jesus did. In fact, this is a shocking statement if Jesus is anything, but God. Listen to what He says in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away." Jesus claimed for His own teaching the same authority and permanence that He had earlier given to God's Word. He is the ultimate prophet.

Now, let's look at His work as a prophet before the incarnation. Yes, before He came in Bethlehem, Jesus was fulfilling the role of a prophet. How did He do this? Well, first of all, He revealed the truth of God to mankind through various theophanies. That word, *theophany*, means *theos*, *God*, and a word which means *to appear*. And especially in the appearance of the angel of the Lord. You see, 1 Timothy 2:5 says, "there is one God, and there is also one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." But the second person of the Trinity has always been the mediator between God and man. Have you thought about this? The Old Testament is filled with the second person of the Trinity. This is before He was Jesus. Before He was a man, He was the eternal Son of God. But the Old Testament is filled with Him. He's the One through whom God created all things, John 1, right? He's the One who walked in the cool of the day and taught Adam and Eve in the garden. It was God, the Son, who performed the first wedding. It was God, the Son, who instituted marriage. It was God, the Son, who spent 80 days with Moses on the top of Mount Sinai. It was He who led His people through the wilderness.

First Corinthians 10:4, says, speaking of those people in the wilderness, "they all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; the rock was Messiah." He's the One that was with them in the wilderness. He was the pillar of fire and the cloud. He was also the One who gave them priests, and prophets, and kings of whom He would eventually be the perfect fulfillment.

Charles Hodge writes,

Under the old dispensation or before His advent in the flesh, He made known God in His purposes and will, not only by personal manifestations of Himself, to the patriarchs and the prophets, [in other words, He showed up and displayed

Himself, even in human form], but also by His Spirit in revealing the truth and will of God in inspiring those appointed to record these revelations and in illuminating the minds of His people.

And that brings us to the second way Christ acted as our prophet before the incarnation, He revealed the truth of God through His Spirit to the Old Testament authors. Listen to 1 Peter 1:10-11,

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, they made careful searches and inquiries, [they wanted to know what person was being talked about, and what time this would happen. But notice specifically, how Peter says it], seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Messiah within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Messiah and the glories to follow.

In other words, the eternal Son, before He came onto this planet as the Messiah, was functioning through His Spirit in bringing revelation to His people.

What about during the incarnation? John Walvoord writes,

Without question Christ is the greatest of the prophets. [You get that? Without question Christ is the greatest of the prophets]. His teachings contained in the four Gospels demonstrate a greater variety of subjects, a broader scope of prophesy, and a more comprehensive revelation, than is found in any of the Old Testament records of the prophets.

He is the *sine qua non* of the prophets. He is the greatest, the apex. The high point of the prophets. Jesus thought of Himself, referred to Himself, as a prophet. In Luke 13:33, "I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem." It's referring to Himself, He says, I am a prophet. And, of course, the

people often speculated, and sometimes actually acknowledged Him to be the prophet. In Matthew 21:11, "the crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.'"

Matthew 21:46, "they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because the people considered Him to be a prophet." Luke 24:19, Jesus said to the disciples, there on the Emmaus road, "'What things have gone on?' And they said, 'The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people.'"

John 6:14, "Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, 'This is truly', notice capital *P*, 'the Prophet.'"

Deuteronomy 18, "This is the prophet who was to come into the world, the one Moses described."

It's interesting also that on the day of Pentecost, Peter states that the main reason the spirit empowered Jesus to work miracles was to confirm that He spoke the very words of God, just like God empowered Moses as a prophet to do. In fact, look at it, look at Acts 2. Acts 2:22. "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene," watch this, "a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know." Look at what he says, God attested with miracles, wonders, and signs to the reality of who Jesus was; that He was a prophet, a true prophet speaking on behalf of God to the people.

How exactly in the incarnation was Jesus a prophet? How did He reveal the truth of God during the incarnation? First of all, He revealed the Father in His person. John Walvoord writes, "Unlike all other prophets, Christ revealed God, not only in His spoken ministry, but in His life and person. Jesus was a declaration in human flesh of all that God is." Isn't that what John writes in John 1, "No one has seen God at any time, but the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father," literally, He has explained Him. He has exegeted God. How did Jesus exegete God, simply by being who He was. Remember what He says in John 14? "If you've seen me," what? "You've seen the Father."

He revealed God in His person. But, of course, that's not all that He did, He also brought new revelation to God's people. That's what prophets did, right? They took the revelation from God, and they spoke to the people. Jesus did exactly this. Let me show you this. Turn to John's Gospel, and Jesus made a big point of this. This was not something minor in Jesus' life and ministry, this was huge. John 8, and notice verse 26.

I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me, the Father, is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world. [Couldn't be any clearer, right? He's operating as a prophet. Then He goes on to say in verse 27], They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father, [when He said the One who sent Me], so Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know," [that I am], "that I am He," [I am the One], "and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me."

Listen, Jesus spoke as a prophet, the very truth of God on God's behalf, just like the prophets before Him. He was a unique prophet obviously because of who He was. But He functioned as a prophet. Go over to John 12. John 12:49, He says,

For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment, as to what to say, and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.

Jesus said listen, I am a prophet, I speak on behalf of God. And, of course, His miracles validated that He was a legitimate prophet and in addition to that, nothing He said contradicted previous revelation. He met the criteria that Moses had laid down in the inspiration of the Spirit in Deuteronomy. You know what that means practically? It means God takes it personally when you don't listen to the One He sent, because He speaks on God's behalf.

We understand that in family settings, right? I mean if I send one of my daughters saying listen, I want you to go tell your sister, I said to come here. Now if that daughter goes and delivers her message, how ever badly she might deliver it, if the daughter knows that the other daughter, the one who is supposed to come, knows that that message came from dad and doesn't come, guess what? I'm upset, why? Because her refusal to listen to the messenger I sent, is an affront to me in the authority that I have. It's the same with you and God. It's absolutely the same with every one of us and God. Refuse to listen to the messengers God sent, and God takes it very personally. It's as if you are refusing to listen to Him personally. So, He teaches in this way.

Go over to chapter 14, chapter 14, verse 10. "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works." Look down at verse 24 of the same chapter. "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me." This is why it is such an affront not to listen to Jesus Christ. This is why it is such an affront not to receive His teachings, not to follow Him, not to obey Him. You might as well slap God in the face. You're saying I refuse your authority in my life. I will be god. Because He spoke on God's behalf.

Look at chapter 15, verse 15, "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you." Listen, you read the New Testament, you read the Gospels, you hear what Jesus says. He sometimes speaks on His own authority because He's a unique prophet, He is the prophet who is both truly human, but also truly God. But, most of the time He speaks, He speaks what God, in fact, all of the time He speaks, He speaks what God has Him speak. Listen to Him.

A third way that He was our prophet during incarnation is He taught God's existing truth. That is, He taught God's word. If you look at Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, you see this, right? In that case, He's not bringing new revelation, He is explaining previous revelation. This is what is written, this is what the scribes have told you, now let me tell you what it really means. Jesus

did that again and again, He taught God's truth to the people. In fact, this was the thrust of His ministry.

We had a mini elders retreat on Friday, we got away just for a day of planning, and I started that day by sharing with them something that I have read recently in my reading of the Gospels. I was struck again with Mark 1, where Jesus has this amazing healing ministry. Everybody shows up after the Sabbath is over on Saturday night, everybody in Capernaum shows up at his house, at Peter's house. And He's healing one after another, and He's laying hands on them and healing them, and the next morning, He gets up early and goes out to pray, and the disciples are looking for Him, they find Him, and they say Jesus the crowd is back, this is great! Social justice. And Jesus says, no, we are not going back. We are going to leave and go somewhere else so that I can preach because that is what I came for. I came to teach God's truth. He did both by the way, I am not denigrating the need and compassion to care for people. My point is He clearly made the Word His priority.

Number four, He predicted the future. He predicted the future, read Matthew 24 and 25 as He lays out what's going to happen in the Great Tribulation. What will happen in the church age, what will happen in the Great Tribulation, the seven year period when God reigns out His wrath upon this planet. The Second Coming, it's all predicted there. He acted as a prophet in predicting the future. Hodge says, "While on earth He continued the exercise of His prophetic office by His personal instruction in His discourses, parables, and expositions of the law and of the prophets and in all that He taught concerning His own person and work."

What about since the incarnation? How has He functioned as a prophet since He was on this planet. First of all, through His Spirit and the writing of His apostles, He has continued to reveal His truth to us. Look at John 16. John 16, and notice verse 12, Jesus says, this is in the upper room discourse. Judas is gone, it's just the faithful 11, those who are truly His. And He says,

I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will



disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me; for He will take of Mine, and disclose it to you. [Verse 15], All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you.

He's basically telling the apostles, listen I am going to continue to teach you through my Spirit, and you are going to write down what the Spirit teaches you, and through you I will continue to teach my people. That's what we do every Lord's day. Listen Romans was written by the apostle Paul, but it wasn't solely written by the apostle Paul, it is Christ acting as a prophet saying, here's what I want you to know. Here's what's important, He has continues to reveal the truth in that way.

Number two, since the incarnation through His Spirit, He illumines our understanding of the Word. He illumines our understanding of the Word. First Corinthians 2:16, says that we have in the Scriptures, when the Holy Spirit illumines our understanding of it, we have here, between the covers of this book, are you ready for this, "the mind of Christ." You want to know what Christ thinks about anything, it's right here, it's in this book, it's His revelation. All of the prophets, were His prophets. All of the writers of Scriptures, they were His writers. They have simply revealed His mind to us. We have, Paul says, that's an amazing statement, "we have the mind of Christ." And in that chapter, He's talking about this, this Book, God's revelation to us inspired by the Spirit, the mind of Christ. When we understand it, we understand what Christ thinks about everything that's revealed in this Book.

Number three, Christ, since the incarnation, has given gifted men to the church in order to equip His people. Look at Ephesians, Ephesians 4, it speaks about Christ ascending into heaven and in His ascension, He gave gifts to men. What gifts? Well He gave individual spiritual gifts to every believer. But He also gave gifted men to the church. Verse 11, Ephesians 4 this is how the church is supposed to function, the church of Jesus Christ. "Christ gave some," this is to His church, "as apostles, and as prophets," that was in the early days of the church, they are the foundation according to Ephesians 2 on which the church has now been built, "and some as evangelists, and some as pastor teachers," one kind of hyphenated word is the idea there, one office, the office of elder, the office of pastor teacher, why? Why did God give these gifted men

to His church? "For the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ."

Listen, you know one way Christ continues to teach you as your prophet? It's through the properly qualified, gifted and appointed men who serve the church. That sounds self-serving. I am just telling you, that's what Christ does. Now that doesn't mean that you accept every word that I or the elders teach. You shouldn't. You should be like the Bereans in the book of Acts who tested even the words of the apostles against the Scripture. But nevertheless this is the plan. Christ is your prophet, He is teaching you, He is continuing to help you understand through the gifted men He's given the church.

Number four, He teaches us through His example. You remember, He Himself made this connection. In John 13 when He washed the disciples feet, what did He say? I have left you an example. Humbly serve one another in the menial tasks of life, just like I have. Or Philippians 2:5, copy Christ's humility who didn't consider His equality with God a thing to be held onto, but instead was willing to humble Himself for the good of others. First Peter 2:22 again refers to Christ as our example. So He teaches us as we read the Gospels, as we see His story, we learn through the example of His life. He is our prophet.

Again, Hodge writes this. Listen to this quote, you can read it with me,

Since His ascension, He performs the same office, not only in the fuller revelation of the gospel made to the apostles, and in their inspiration as infallible teachers, but also in the institution of the ministry, [that is the pastoral ministry], and constantly calling men to that office, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit who cooperates with the truth in every human heart, and renders it effectual to the sanctification and salvation of His own people.

After this age, will Jesus still be our prophet in heaven? Will He still be our prophet in eternity? The answer is absolutely, yes. Because we can never, think about this, we are finite beings. We can never learn, never learn, all that there is to know about an infinite God. And so we will

continue to learn through all eternity, and Jesus will continue to be our prophet, teaching us new and amazing things about our God. No one has ever more fully revealed the Father, than the Son. And no one can ever know the truth of God, apart from knowing the truth of God through His Son. Remember what he said in John 14:6? "I am," what? "The way, the truth, and the life."

Christ Himself is the truth, and He is the One who has given you all truth. As you sit here tonight understand this. everything you have in this Book. Everything you know about God that matters, it came to you from your prophet, Jesus Christ.

Let's pray together.

Our Father, we thank You, that though we are by nature ignorant, You have given us a prophet to teach us. Thank You that He has done so through His life, through the appearances of Himself in the Old Testament, but most of all, through the pages of Scripture. Thank You that here in this Book, we have the mind of Christ, and even now, He continues that work as He sits at Your right hand, not only interceding as our priest, but continuing to teach us as our prophet.

Lord, we love You, and we thank You that You have taught us what we need to know about the Father. We thank You that You have taught us what we need to know about ourselves, what we need to know about salvation, what we need to know about living the Christian life, what we need to know about the future. You've taught us everything we need to know. We praise You, as our prophet, priest, and king.

And it's in Your name, we lift this prayer.

Amen.

