

## Mark 8:22-33

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[ 0 : 00 ] I have taken a couple week break from preaching and during that time had some opportunity to reflect upon the nature of preaching and what makes for good preaching.

Enough for me to be a good orator, I'm not even sure that I am, or to have clever illustrations which I very rarely do. To speak with any level of eloquence, I often find when I try to search for an eloquent word to make a point, I come up blank and fill it in with something random or I invent a word even at times.

The true mark of what makes a good preacher is a person who takes the scriptures and exalts Jesus Christ in them. And so we have a text before us today that gives us great opportunity for that. But before I get there, I want to say that the same is true of fathers on Father's Day. The measure of success for us as fathers is not necessarily just in the way that we provide or the way that we protect the home, but the way in which we point our children to Jesus.

So dads, let that be the measure today as we celebrate being fathers. Let us, in that process, point our kids to Christ.

[ 1 : 37 ] We'll be reading together today from Mark chapter 8, beginning in verse 22 and reading down through verse 33. And they came to Bethsaida, and some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him.

And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. And when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, Do you see anything? And he looked up and said, I see men, but they look like trees walking.

Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again, and he opened his eyes. His sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. And he sent him to his home, saying, Do not even enter the village.

And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, Who do people say that I am? And they told him, John the Baptist, and others say Elijah, and others one of the prophets.

And he asked them, But who do you say that I am? Peter answered him, You are the Christ. And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

[ 2 : 47 ] And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly.

And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

This is God's word to us. It was written for his glory and for our good. We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and to obey its commands.

Let's pray together. Father, we do thank you this day for the blessing of your word. The very pages we hold in front of us.

The English translation of the original language by which you inspired it. And we thank you, Father, for your word incarnate. That is Jesus, the Christ.

[ 3 : 46 ] And I pray, Lord, by your spirit, as we study your word today, you will use it to divide the very marrow of our souls.

That you will use it to drive out the dark places of our hearts. That you will further conform us into the image of your Son. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

So it was fitting, not intentional, but fitting that we took a little break in the preaching through Mark as we've been working through it, verse by verse, story by story, where we did.

And I didn't know that I was doing it, but we really took a break at the end of sort of an act one of Mark's gospel account. And we now get into the beginning of what's very commonly understood to be the second act, which is beginning in verse 22.

It starts this journey, this kind of this end as he's been transitioning out of his Galilean ministry, where he spent the majority of his time thus far. And he's beginning to work his way toward Jerusalem, up to the passion, to the crucifixion, the resurrection of Christ.

[ 4 : 55 ] And we see this kind of in-between time, which is primarily focused in on the apostles. And we see interchangeably here, disciples and apostles. He's really pouring into and connecting the gospel truths into their lives.

He's setting them up for what's going to happen and their ministry beyond that. So he moves. He's been in Galilee, southwest of the Sea of Galilee, functioning there.

And we see some movement. He heads north for a little while. We see in our story here, he goes from Bethsaida, which is on the west coast, to up to Caesarea Philippi, which is located about 23 miles north of there, north of the Sea of Galilee, for a bit of a retreat.

He's getting away from the Jewish population, from those people who had a misunderstanding of who he is and who he was claiming to be in order to spend time teaching the apostles.

Healings now in these next couple of chapters have almost ceased. We see a couple of them as this focus shifts. We see another exorcism in chapter 9.

[ 6 : 04 ] And we see two accounts of the healing of blind men. And this second act is framed by that. First, we see this healing of a man at Bethsaida. And then we see the healing of Bartimaeus at the end of chapter 10.

So that kind of sets this up for us and where we are. After we see this proclamation by Peter as a spokesman of the apostles that Jesus is the Christ, he also begins to teach them what his ministry will finally and fully accomplish.

And that is his crucifixion and resurrection. And we see three different passion predictions here in this next act. In chapter 8, verse 31. In chapter 9, verse 31.

And in chapter 10, verses 33 and 34. And we'll, of course, address one of those incidents today. Because we see in all of the cases that he makes these predictions, the apostles' immediate response as a misunderstanding of the kingdom of God.

In fact, it would seem that all of this passage, these three and a half, two and a half chapters, kind of hang on these passion predictions. And so we'll be looking at those in detail in the coming weeks.

[ 7 : 19 ] But here we see, as the central part of our text today, verse 22 through verse 33, we see this incredible proclamation on Peter's part.

It seems that the scales are being lifted, that their eyes are being opened as he responds, but who do you say that I am? And Peter responds, you are the Christ.

But before we look at that in a little more detail, let's back up just a bit to briefly look through the first act, so to speak, of this book. Many commentators, in a rather over-reductionary kind of way, have said that Mark's gospel account is ultimately a passion account, a story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, with a long introduction.

Almost the first half of the book, seven and a half chapters, seems to be just this long introduction. And there's some truth in that, because he really speeds us along through this process. He's really pushing very quickly.

Some people have said that Mark is kind of the comic book version of the synoptic gospels as he's pressing us along, but we're going to find that he suddenly slows everything down.

[ 8 : 28 ] We get greater detail, greater account, as Jesus is teaching the apostles, and therefore, teaching us. So we see in these first eight chapters, words often used like immediately, immediately, now, and.

If you ever have an English professor, college students, that tells you that you cannot start a sentence with and, show them Mark's gospel. They're everywhere in Mark's gospel. It is totally appropriate to do so.

Right? And he starts his gospel account with a one-sentence introduction. Mark 1.1. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

And then in verses 2 and 3, he legitimizes John the Baptist's ministry, who he's just about to talk about, as the forebearer of Jesus, with a quotation from Isaiah. And then we are off and running.

Right? We don't get the account of Jesus' birth. We're right here at the very, very front of his ministry, as we see him then, later on in chapter 1, coming and being baptized by John.

[ 9 : 32 ] And then we have the record in verse 14 of chapter 1. Jesus came into Galilee, begins his Galilean ministry, proclaiming the gospel of God and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the gospel. And he spends the majority of his time, we see him venture outside of Galilee a bit. He goes to the Decapolis, a largely Gentile region.

He goes off to Tyre and Sidon for a while, kind of as a retreat from the ministry he has been doing. He's gathering large crowds. He's teaching far and wide. He's healing.

But the great theme that we see as far as mankind's response to the teaching of Jesus Christ is a general rejection. We see some positive response.

We see people believing that he can heal. But we see very little discipleship. We see very little of people leaving everything and following him. We see the example of the apostles doing that, leaving behind nets and following him.

[ 10 : 34 ] But they just don't get it. Again and again and again, we can see that they've been given faith to follow, but they don't really fully comprehend who it is that they're following.

We see in chapter 3, verse 21, Jesus' family thinks he's a lunatic. In verse 22, the religious elite of the day accused him of operating under Satan's power. This was all by design.

In chapter 4, the apostles asked Jesus why it is that he speaks in parables. Verse 11 and 12, he says to them, to you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything is in parables.

And then he quotes Isaiah 6, 9, and 10. They may indeed see, but not perceive. It may indeed hear, but not understand. Lest they should turn and be forgiven. And there's this theme running through these first eight and a half chapters of spiritual blindness.

People can't see and can't understand, even though he's demonstrating in so many miraculous ways and legitimizing his ministry and his message in so many ways, people cannot see who he is.

[ 11 : 43 ] In fact, up until our text today, the beings who get Jesus most rightly are the demons. They're the ones that Jesus comes and casts out, puts them in pigs, drowns them.

Chapter 1, verse 24, we see demons say, call him Jesus of Nazareth, the Holy One of God. Later in chapter 1, verse 34, the account is, and he healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak because they knew him. They knew who he was. Chapter 5, verse 7, the great proclamation that Jesus is the Son of the Most High God.

It's not made by man. It's made by something spiritual, a demon, an angel of darkness. And so we get this shift here in chapter 8, verse 22, as a teaching time, as a pulling away, as a stepping away time, and it's been introduced to us by these questions that Jesus asks in chapter 8, verse 17, 18, and 21.

So look at those with me. After some confusion about bread, Jesus has provided abundantly. He's fed huge crowds, 5,000 and 4,000, likely more like 25,000 people, 16,000 to 20,000 people that are worried about provision.

[ 13 : 09 ] They forgot to bring more than one loaf of bread on a boat. And he says in verse 17, Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?

Having eyes do you not see? And having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? And then verse 21, Do you not yet understand? They still had yet to fully wrap their minds and therefore their hearts around who it is that Jesus is.

And so he steps away as he's beginning his journey towards Jerusalem to begin to teach them more about who he is, to have them come to realize it and therefore serve him with their lives. He states this rather emphatically in chapter 9, verse 30, in the first half of 31. They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know for he was teaching his disciples.

They made a secret journey through Galilee towards their destination because this was the task of this second part of the Gospel of Mark. As previously stated, apart from the healing of two blind men and an exorcism in nine, Jesus focuses entirely on the teaching of the apostles.

[14:17] In fact, even these three miracles in this section seem to be aimed at the fact that Jesus is the Lord of physical blindness and therefore spiritual blindness. They seem to be set up in such a way both carried out in reality and recorded for us to observe because we're being taught something as the apostles were being taught something about who Jesus is.

So we come to our test. Now I'm going to take it a little bit out of order because I want you to see and fully realize why it is that Jesus responds in the way he does and why it is that Mark was inspired to record it in the way that he did.

So let's start very first with Peter's confession beginning in verse 27. Jesus asks the question. He says, Who do people say that I am? And there's much debate about Jesus' humanity and his deity and how those things coexisted, the exact nature of that.

Some people presume that Jesus, because he was human but still God, knew things that were going to happen. He could predict things. We see some evidence of this. He can perceive in men's hearts what's going on.

So sometimes he answers a question that they haven't even vocalized yet. Maybe this is true. Maybe it's not. Maybe in his humanity he really didn't know and all he did is he submitted himself to the Father.

[15:34] We see accounts of this. We know that all Jesus did was do the things that God told him to do, God the Father, and say the things that God the Father told him to do or to say. Not incredibly important.

So Jesus either asks the question knowing what their answer will be or he's just not really sure in his humanity but they're on the edges of the crowd and they're walking around and he wants to know, Who are people saying that I am?

But either way, the people had an opinion of him. John the Baptist. Others say Elijah, a great prophet of old, reincarnate. And some say one of the prophets.

And these would have been flattering terms. Any of us, if you were to think me, John the Baptist, or Elijah, or one of the prophets risen from the dead, that'd be very flattering to me.

But these were mere forerunners of who Jesus is. To think Jesus is one of these things would actually be an insult to who he is. Not a compliment to it. But this was common.

[16:33] Jesus is doing miraculous things. You can't deny that. Something's going on with this man. Right? Not just a couple people here and here, but far and wide. He's doing amazing, amazing things.

He's calming storms. He's walking on water. He's feeding multitudes. He's casting out demons. He's proclaiming the forgiveness of sin. Doing incredible things. There must be something special about this man.

And many people had many, many opinions about who he was. In fact, it's important for us to know that the name itself, Jesus, was not a particularly special name in this time.

Often pronounced in the Hebrew, Yeshua. Sounds a lot like Joshua. Doesn't it? Right? This was a fairly common name in the time. It'd be like, if there was a period of time here at the church where we had four or five Johns.

It was really confusing. Who are we talking about when we talk about John? This was Jesus of Nazareth. There's always these qualifiers put on who he is. He was a Galilean. We had to know where it was that this Josh came from.

[17:36] Rightly, we've given him from the Greek a more specific name. Not too many people use the name Jesus. Some cultures do. We've got Jesus's out there.

But typically, we've reserved this Jesus name now for him. So, people had a, had just, Josh was going around and he was doing stuff. He was doing miraculous things and they didn't understand. They didn't have the spiritual sight to get that he was the Savior.

He was the Messiah. The one that was promised from days of old. In fact, the name Yeshua, Joshua, means Savior or Deliverer.

But they come to this, this idea of Messiah, this idea of the Christ. Christ. As a Jewish culture that was very religious in nature, the teaching was far and wide that there would someday be a man that would come and he would take away the sorrows of Israel, that he would reign as a perfect king, that he'd be in the lineage of David, David the greatest king who ever lived, who restored peace and power to Israel, that he would be in that line and he would come and he would do it once again.

There was a massive cultural misunderstanding, a lens by which they understood who the Messiah was meant to be. And so when a humble carpenter boy shows up, they couldn't see him for who he really was and is now.

[ 19 : 04 ] In fact, the wide acceptance, and it still is true of many people of Jewish descent, think of the Messiah as someone who's going to come and is going to reign militarily and politically.

You remember Roman rule reigned across this region in this day and the Jews were oppressed. They didn't have the same national fervor that they once had, the same status that they had enjoyed in the centuries past.

They were oppressed by Roman rule and so they were looking for someone to come and to take over and to rule in the way they wanted him to rule, which is in fact likely the reason that Jesus is constantly pressing secrecy.

That he's constantly doing something and then commanding somebody to not talk about it. We see two different occasions of that. The man he heals, the blind man, he tells them not to even enter the village. Don't even go around people because people are going to see you walking around, not blind, and they're going to know that something miraculous happened.

And he tells the opposite thing we would think he would tell the apostles. When Jesus says you are the Christ, he goes, shut it. We'll talk about that right now. It's not the time for these things to be revealed.

[ 20 : 12 ] The likely danger was that people would have taken him by force and made him king. And that is not the way he came to serve. He came to die rather than to rule over them in the earthly sense.

So there's this massive misunderstanding as they come to this idea of who the Messiah is. So you see a breakthrough, this incredible proclamation on Peter's behalf.

Likely it was something that the apostles agreed upon together. He was often the spokesman, the first one to rush in and make the comment. Verse 30, Jesus says, or Mark records, and he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

They were all coming to this realization that he is the Christ, the anointed one of God. But isn't it fascinating that we see that even the apostles, as they make this proclamation, still don't quite get it. They get it, but they don't get it. They're not all the way there yet. They haven't fully come to comprehend who it is that Jesus is. That he has come as a suffering servant who will be a reigning king.

[ 21 : 27 ] So Jesus goes on to teach them. They make this proclamation, and he makes a passion prediction. Verse 31, 32, and 33, he begins to teach them that the son of man, that he himself, must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

And I love this little phrase at the beginning of verse 32, and he said this plainly. Right? No parables at this point. He just said to them straightforward, this is what's going to happen to me.

And then the audacity of Peter, who takes him aside, away from the other apostles, and rebukes him. So you have Peter making this proclamation, you are the Christ, you are the Messiah, you are the anointed one of God.

We'll get into what that means further in just a moment. And then he tells him in the next moment, but you don't get the way you were meant to come and serve. That's what he says to him. And Jesus' response to him is a rebuke in return.

But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, get behind me, Satan. Now is he literally calling Peter Satan in this case? No, but Peter's being a mouthpiece for Satan.

[ 22 : 38 ] Satan's work in this day was to thwart at every turn, to do everything he possibly could do to prevent the crucifixion of Christ. He knew that his death sentence was made final when Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected.

And so Peter's serving Satan's purposes at this point, and he elaborates on that by saying, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man. You have a wrong perspective, a culturally defined perspective of who the Christ is.

Are we that way? Do we often have a culturally defined perspective of who Jesus is? I believe that those of us who are in the faith, who have recognized Jesus as the Christ, still are tainted in this way so often.

And as we look around at the culture around us, they are constantly at the work of making Jesus into their image, that they might worship him rather than lifting him and exalting him as the risen and reigning king, the Christ, and conforming themselves to him's image.

And so here we see this story back up at the beginning of our text, verse 22 through 26, this rather odd healing. Did it strike you as strange when we read through it together?

[ 23 : 56 ] You see Jesus doing amazing miracles. People are touching him and being healed. It's said that as he traveled through the land that he was eradicating sickness in the areas that he traveled in.

And here he has a man who was blind that he just doesn't seem to have enough power to get it on the first go around. Did he not meter the power right? He gave him power to heal?

Not quite enough. And he gave him more power to heal? Or did he do it in this way specifically to teach us something? Of course that's the answer to my rhetorical question.

Now note in verse 23 we see again Jesus leads outside of the village. He's again going to do something physical so this blind man can understand where the very power for his healing has come from.

He does something physical with him and he doesn't want anybody to be confused back in the village about what it is that healed this man. He doesn't want people to think that spitting on eyes is what heals people but that is the power of God that heals people.

[ 24 : 58 ] We talked about this at length earlier when we looked at the healing of the deaf and mute man. So he does this. He goes through this action to say to this man I am Lord over sickness and asks him do you see anything?

His response is I see people but they look like trees walking and there's some debate out there if we actually saw trees or if we actually saw people. It doesn't really matter. He just didn't quite see clearly enough.

He saw some version of reality but not quite the full reality. And then Jesus lays his hands on his eyes again and he opens his eyes and his sight was restored. And the Greek here means literally put back to new and he saw everything clearly.

So what is Jesus trying to teach us as he begins this teaching as he's going through a process of a number of chapters of teaching the apostles something and that thing is that he is the Lord of physical and he's also the Lord of spiritual blindness.

That he is unfolding who he is to the apostles in the exact way that he intends to. That these people are coming into a fuller more clear picture of who Jesus is.

[ 26 : 10 ] Isn't that cool? The healing we see at the end of the second act is a full final healing. There's no stages in it at all. So these stories are very cleverly placed in this order under inspiration and I believe acted out in this way to be a teaching tool for the apostles and therefore for us spiritual clarity of sight is a work of the Lord.

And as such those who are outside the faith and those who are in should pray that God would give us clear eyes. That we should see properly who Jesus is.

We should start our mornings in that way. Lord don't let any cultural misunderstanding work into my mind and my heart about who you are. I want to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I want to follow him in purity. I want to follow the true Jesus not some different version of him. We have so many different versions of who Jesus is.

These are my own titles. These aren't official so please don't think that. We have hippie Jesus. Right? Peace, love, happiness. Everybody get along. Tolerance Jesus. This is not the Jesus of the Bible and it's certainly not the Jesus who reigns on high now.

[ 27 : 27 ] We have slot machine Jesus. If you just hang out with him long enough it's going to pay off big for you. Right? He's going to put the money in your pockets. Heresy. We have the puzzle Jesus.

If you get the equation just right salvation is yours. Do it this way. Walk this way. Pray this way. Do this thing. Then salvation or whatever promise people want to attach to that is yours.

We need to be so careful that we don't make Jesus in our image. That we don't bring him down on our level. This is why I think it's really important that we speak properly about who Jesus is.

Luke 6.45 says the good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

The things we say give evidence to what we think. And so have you noticed I have in the past couple of decades the use of the word Christ is declining.

[ 28 : 36 ] Lots of Jesus. Not a lot of Jesus Christ. How we speak of him matters. I think the effort has been to make him more relatable to talk about our buddy Josh.

And there is a relatable, personal, we are co-heirs, we are siblings with Jesus, he cares about us, he's a near friend, all these things are wonderful and true, but he is the king.

He is Jesus Christ, the anointed one, prophet, priest, and king. The Old Testament almost always refers to him as Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus, it rarely refers to him simply as Jesus.

Now I'm not saying we can't. I think I've done it a bunch of times just here in this sermon. But we need to be careful about how it is we speak of our Lord. Jesus is the Christ.

We need to get a very clear picture of who he is. Paul prays for the believers at Ephesus. Believers, right?

[ 29 : 43 ] Believers. People who have believed that Jesus is the Christ. This is his prayer for them in Ephesians 1, 15-18. He says, For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love to all the saints.

These people are regenerate. As far as we can tell, they have placed faith in Jesus Christ. Verse 16, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints?

And he elaborates on what that means. I would encourage you to continue reading that for the sake of time. I stopped it there. But his prayer, Paul's prayer for the church at Ephesus, is that having placed faith in Christ, they will have their eyes and their hearts enlightened.

That they will continually see in a more clear way the hope to which we have been called, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints? The psalmist, Psalm 119, 18, says, open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

Charles Spurgeon in a sermon on the parallel passage found in Matthew, I believe, chapter 16, said, if you know more of Christ, if you know no more of Christ than the world knows, than the learned know, than the philosophical know, you have not found the blessing.

[ 31 : 15 ] If you know no more of Christ than you have found out for yourselves, even by reading the word of God, unaided by the Father, you are not blessed. If you know no more of Jesus than flesh and blood has revealed to you, it has brought you no more blessing than the conjectures of their age brought to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who remained an adulterous and unbelieving generation.

we must have a clear vision of who Jesus is. I hope I'm setting you up to spend time in the rest of the gospel of Mark.

Nonetheless, even though we see Peter here says to Jesus, you are the Christ, and then seems to foul it all up in his very next response, it is still an emphatic and beautiful and important confession. It seems that they're beginning to see and beginning to understand. He is saying to Jesus that you are the anointed one. That's what this word literally means. And there were three Old Testament offices that were inaugurated, that were brought into being by an anointing.

This culture would have totally understood that title, what it meant to be the Christ, right? The article is there, not a Christ, but the Christ, the anointed ones. And those three offices were the office of prophet, of priest, and of king.

[ 32 : 39 ] In fact, we see Jesus anointed in Mark 1, 9-11, a cleansing in the baptism of John, and then the descending of the Spirit of God, not as a dove, but like a dove, and God speaking out of heaven, this is my Son with whom I am well pleased.

This was Jesus' anointing to fulfill and to perfectly fulfill these offices forever, those offices of prophet, of priest, and of king.

So I don't think that the apostles totally understood the proclamation that they were making. I don't think they were quite there yet when they said, you are the Christ. But we are now on this side of revelation.

We now have the scriptures. We can see a more clear picture than they could at the time, and so we should. I hope you're with me on that. Right? Jesus fills the role of prophet, the perfect prophet.

It was the job of a prophet in the Old Testament to speak on behalf of God, to warn the people of God of God's coming judgment for their sin if they would not repent. Brought the words of God to the people of God to tell them of the danger of their sins.

[ 33 : 52 ] Stop what you're doing and turn back to God. The Old Testament is riddled with this. So much of it is about calling God's people back together. The writer of Hebrews 1, verse 1, first half of verse 2 says, long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

But in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. Jesus is the prophet of God. John's account, gospel account, John chapter 1, verse 1, and the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Jesus Himself is the very incarnate Word of God. And then down in verse 14, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus lived and died and rose again and reigns now to speak to us the words of God, to call us back to God.

Jesus fills the office of priest. It was the job of the Old Testament priest to make sacrifice on behalf of the people of God, to make atonement for their sins, to stand in the gap between them and God.

[ 35 : 13 ] Hebrews chapter 7, so much of Hebrews is thematically about Jesus being the perfect priest. Hebrews chapter 7 beginning in verse 23, the former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office.

They died. They couldn't do it forever and ever. But he, being Jesus, holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever. Consequently, he's able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them, to stand between them and God.

The wonderful truth that when God sees us, he sees Jesus. Our righteousness righteousness is now given to us because God granted it to us in Christ.

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need like those high priests to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

So Jesus fulfills this office, the priest, the perfect priest. He's also the sacrifice that was made on our behalf. Jesus fills the office of king.

[ 36 : 35 ] I hope that these are programming into your mind. You say, what offices did Jesus fill? Prophet, priest, and king. It was the job of the king to reign over the people of God, but not the way most of us think. I think most of us growing up and living in a democracy think of kings as dictators.

We see lots of unhealthy dictatorships around the world. Someone who comes and lords unjustly over the people. That is not the way God established kings in the Old Testament.

That was not their task. They were to reign over the people, but they were to be the people's protector. They were to protect them physically, fortify cities, have armies, protect them from the enemy outside, but they were also meant to protect them spiritually.

It was his major task to lead the people of God in the ways of God. There are tale after tale after tale in the Old Testament of kings who failed rather miserably at this task given to them, but Jesus is the perfect king who reigns forever.

In an interaction found in John 1, verse 49, a man named Nathaniel answers to Jesus, Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the king of Israel.

[ 37 : 47 ] So Jesus is the anointed one, the prophet, the priest, and the king. He is the one that the Old Testament has talked about. He is the one that the New Testament continues to unfold the realities of. He is the very central theme of all that we understand.

He is the central theme of the universe. All things were created in him and through him and for him. It's an incredible reality that Jesus is the Christ. And at this point, I think rightly, if you're a good listener, you should say, okay, I'm with you.

Jesus is the Christ. What does it mean for me? What does it mean for me today? Does it have any real, does it have a reality? Is there an implication, an explicit implication? How should I live in response to that reality?

Well, let me say to you, as Christians, our image-bearing capacity has been restored. Our hearts have been made new. The old heart, the one that was spoiled by sin, had been replaced,

metaphorically, with a new heart.

We have the Spirit of God that now lives within us. We have the ability, once again, to be human. To live as the creation of God was meant to live.

[ 38 : 54 ] To worship Him and to honor Him with all that we do. And in that way, we also, in service to Jesus, play out these types of roles in our living.

Jesus, prophet, priest, king. We are Christians. We are little Christ. We do this in a lesser way than our Lord, but we are His ambassadors and so we carry out His will and His work in this world.

So as Christians, we have a prophetic role to play. We proclaim the Gospel of truth. It's our major job as believers is to propagate the truth of God far and wide, to call men and women back to God. To tell them of the danger of sin. To say to them, there is an eternal state for you. It will be heaven or it will be hell. It will be punishment or it will be reward.

And there is a way and that way is Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 5, 17-18, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. New.

[ 39 : 56 ] We're now citizens of God's kingdom. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come. All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, bringing about peace.

This enmity that exists between mankind and God. It is our job. It is our ministry to bring about peace. We bear the message of Jesus.

As His ambassadors, we find in Mark 1, 15, this is our message. This is our message. The very message that Jesus preached. The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the gospel. As Christians, we have a priestly role to play. Peter, in 1 Peter, calls us a royal priesthood.

Chapter 2, verse 9. The author of Hebrews views us as priests as Hebrews 10, 19-22 states, Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, this would have been the place that the priest would have gone into in the temple to make sacrifice on behalf of the people of God, we now have confidence to enter the holy places by the perfect sacrifice of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh.

[ 41 : 13 ] And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

These were priestly activities that took place, a purifying to enter into the presence of God. We now have been granted that in Jesus. And later in Hebrews, chapter 13, 15 and 16, through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God.

That is the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. So we make sacrifice now in the way in which we praise God.

Right? Lips that acknowledge His name and the doing of good and the sharing of what we have for those around us. The Apostle Paul had a priestly duty in mind. In Romans 12, verse 1, he says, I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice.

Present yourself as a sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. We're to be priests. We're to offer sacrifice to God.

[ 42 : 25 ] And we have, as Christians, a kingly role to play. Jesus has risen and He is reigning. Paul states in Ephesians 2, 4-7, that we have been raised with Him.

Verse 4, But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace, you have been saved.

And raised us up with Him. This is a present reality. And raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For His glory, He raised us up and He has seated us with Him in the heavenly places. We reign in a sense along with Jesus. This reality has an abounding future implication for us.

A massive, massive, forever future implication for us. But it's also pertinent to today. We have been given power over sin.

[ 43 : 29 ] It does not reign over us, but we reign over it. And the same way the kings of old were meant to protect the people of God, we are to do the same thing. To reign over and purge out sin in the lives of others.

Romans 6, chapter 12, excuse me, chapter 6, verses 12-14. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions.

Do not let it reign in you who has the power in that situation. We do. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life.

Right? Not in degree, but in kind. We once were dead, we are now alive. And your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law, but under grace.

We reign over this. We have been set free from it. And we can now fulfill these priestly, these kingly, and these prophetic roles in the world because Jesus is the Christ.

[ 44 : 40 ] Beloved, we've been given great blessing. These men stood in an interesting place in history. It's a fascinating thing that they were doing here as they were seeing the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy as all of this misunderstanding was being brought into right light and being brought together for them.

But we now have the full revelation of God. We are immensely blessed to have this book. And beyond that, in the century in which we live, we now have resource upon resource upon resource upon resource to help us understand this book more rightly.

We have the shoulders of spiritual giants to stand on who have gone before us and have worked and labored through the understanding of these texts. We find in 1 Peter, soon in chapter 9, we're going to see an account of the transfiguration.

And Peter talks about getting to be with Jesus on the mountain. And then he says, and we have a more sure thing. And that's the Scriptures. We are blessed. You think it would have been great to walk with Jesus.

Wouldn't that have been awesome to get to be with Him? Yes, it most certainly would have been. I would take that, but I would take this over that because He's given me a helper. He's given me the Spirit of God. He's given me the Scriptures that we might have a full and right understanding of who He is.

[ 45 : 58 ] There's eternal consequence to this question. Who is Jesus? Who do you say that I am? All of us will one day stand before Him in judgment and He'll ask that question of us.

What are you going to say? And will your life reflect a proper understanding of who He is? Those of us who are found in Christ, we can confidently stand before Him and say, you are the Christ.

But I believe there will be reward beyond that for those of us who are faithful to Him, who are disciples in every respect, who didn't just recognize this thing and do this little act and give kind of the paltry leftovers of our life to Jesus, but we followed Him.

Everything we had, we left the nets and we went, and we went to the point of death serving our Lord. This question has to ring and resonate in all of our ears.

Jesus is the anointed prophet, priest, and king. This is a reality. It's not a subjective thing. It is an objective truth. We should align our minds and our hearts with it.

[ 46 : 58 ] We would do well to worship Him as such. Let us praise God that this has meaning for us. It's not some abstract thing that Jesus lived in this day, worked in this fashion, did what He did, accomplished things for us.

For now, it means something today. Our imagery and responsibility as God's creation has been restored. Our lives have beautiful meaning as we live in service to Jesus, the Christ.

Let's pray together. Let's pray together.