

DCF:

Each one of us has a different role in life, depending on who we're with. Take Betty, for instance. Betty is a mom to her kids, a grandma to her grandkids. She's a wife to her husband, an employee to her boss and a friend to her friends. She has different responsibilities and reactions with each group, depending on her relationship with them and their expectations from her. Her actions depend on the role she plays in their lives. Betty does mom things with the kids, grandma things with the grandkids and work things for her boss. Different roles, different actions.

For the past few weeks, we've been studying different aspects, different characteristics of our Savior Jesus Christ. That's what the season of Epiphany is all about - revealing who Jesus is. At His baptism, Jesus was given three positions, or roles to fulfill. They are prophet, priest and king. Today, let's look at the first position or role that God the Father placed Him in. Prophet. As we study the gospel of Mark, we'll see that **“JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE PROPHET.”** He has the authority and He tells us the truth.

Part One: He has the authority

We meet up with Jesus as He starts His public ministry. His focus in this world was proclaiming the truth about God. What better place to start than in one of the churches of His day, the synagogue? As He talked to the people present, they were at first struck by one thing. ***“The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.”*** He spoke with conviction. He spoke with power.

Now, you may wonder why the people were amazed. Hadn't they ever experienced a dynamic speaker before? Chances are, they hadn't. The teachers and rabbis of Jesus' day didn't do a lot of proclaiming of God's truths. Oh, they talked about God's Word some. But they mainly talked about what other rabbis said and presented human reasons why you should believe one thing or another. It's as if today a pastor got up and talked about what Martin Luther said about the Bible without ever digging into what the Bible itself said.

Not Jesus. He got up and spoke plainly about what God says. Simple statements. Simple commands. Notice how He cast out the demon from that individual. ***“Be quiet!... Come out of him!”*** No reasoning. No appeal to another power. He spoke from the authority He had.

Jesus is the ultimate prophet and He has the authority to command anyone and anything in this world. The events of our text show this quite clearly. Jesus is God, through whom all things were made in this universe. Jesus is God, who has all authority in heaven and earth. He dominates this universe because He created it. He has the right, the power and the authority to command the winds and waves. He has the authority to cast out demons, heal the sick and raise the dead. He has this authority because He is God.

The almighty God, the ultimate authority in all things, came to this earth and put on human flesh. The ultimate prophet came to declare to all what God had planned and what God would do. Until now, God had sent human prophets, men chosen to bring a message from the Lord. For thousands of years they brought message after message from the Lord. Now, God Himself came to earth to tell us in person what He desires and what He had planned. And that was one of Jesus' jobs. To be the ultimate prophet who would tell us in person what God's will is.

How humbling this is, isn't it? God coming in person? To us? Why, it would floor us if our president would come to our house in person to explain some executive action that he put forth. From Washington DC to my house in Green Bay just to tell me in person? Just think. Jesus came from His throne in heaven to tell us His executive action. He came to tell us He would die for our sins and give us eternal life. Amazing!

Since Jesus is God, we can trust Him in what He says. He has the authority, right? I mean, we trust earthly authorities, don't we? They know what they're talking about. We trust Einstein when it comes to the theory of relativity. We trust Stephen Hawking when it comes to black holes. We trust Bill Gates when it comes to the Windows operating system.

Who has authority in your life? Who do you trust? We trust doctors when it comes to our health. We

trust mechanics when it comes to our cars. We trust our financial advisors and our plumbers. But who do we trust when it comes to our spiritual lives, our ultimate destination? We can trust the ultimate prophet Jesus Christ. He has the authority to tell us the truth.

And He does.

Part Two: He tells us the truth

It seems to me that today we have a problem with the truth. For many, there's no such thing as objective truth. Objective truth is something that is true no matter what anyone believes. Objective truth is something that does not change. Unfortunately, many don't believe that there is objective truth when it comes to God and His will. We like subjective truth, believing what we want to believe is true.

That fits in with our lives, doesn't it? After all, we have so many options to choose from in life. We can choose what to buy and where to buy it. We can choose between different cars, houses, cell phones and groceries. We can choose where to live and work. We choose our colleges, our clothes and the company that we keep. Why not choose what to believe about God? Or even if there is a God?

Even the demon knew who Jesus was. ***“What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”*** There was no choice. Jesus proved who He was and by doing so, put God's stamp of approval on His message. Jesus is the ultimate prophet who has told us the objective truth about reality. Oh, you can choose to believe something else, but that will never change the truth that Jesus reveals to us. His will is clear. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Many so-called authorities tell us all sorts of things when it comes to God and His will. Youtube is filled with lots of religious videos if you choose to watch them. Some teachers tell you that there is no God or heaven or hell, so just live a good life and be happy. Some teachers tell you that you must be kind and generous to earn your way into heaven. Some will tell you that we all worship the same Lord. Some declare that Jesus didn't rise from the dead. Oh, there are all sorts of teachers bending, modifying and denying the objective truth of God. And people choose what to believe. Subjective truth, what's true for me.

Is this smart, rejecting the objective truth of God for your own chosen subjective truth? Let me ask you this. If your mechanic told you that your car needed brakes (objective truth) and you decided that no, they're just fine (subjective truth) the result just might be your death in an accident. In the same way, if you reject the objective truth that Jesus is the Savior, the result is your eternal death in hell.

Jesus came to this world to tell us the truth. He said we are created by God to serve Him. He tells us that sin is a disease that corrupts us and separates us from our Lord. He tells us that He came to live a perfect life in our place and die to pay for our sins. He laid down His life to pay for the time we told a lie about someone we were jealous of, the time we had sexual thoughts as we watched porn on the web, the time we padded our deductions when doing our taxes, the time we let our minds drift as our pastor was talking to us about Jesus. All our sins of thought, word and deed were nailed to the cross and burned away by God's anger. Now, Jesus tells us, we are free from sin and guilt. We are worthy of eternal life with Him.

Jesus tells you the truth about life. Trust the ultimate prophet. Trust Him, not because His thoughts agree with yours. Trust Him because He is God and has the authority to tell you exactly what the truth is. Trust Him because He cares about you. He is intimately involved in your life. In fact, because you believe in Him, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are living in you right now. Trust Him because He wants you to be with Him in paradise forever. Trust Him, and listen to the Word He has placed in your life.

Betty had several roles in her life, didn't she? And, depending on the people she was with, she did different things. If you are a believer in Jesus, I know what your role is because I share the same role. We are called to serve Him in our lives and listen to what He says. After all, **“JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE PROPHET”**. He definitely has the authority to tell us the truth. And He does, thank the Lord!

AMEN