

The Message Needs A Messenger

Promise: God equips us and provides opportunity for our salvation

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Ezekiel 2:1-5; Ps 123; 2 Corinthians 12:1-10; Mk 6:1-13

(Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, 7/4/21)

And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them. — v. 5

Lead In – On June 5, 1983, at Christ Chapel on the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN a record 20 candidates were ordained to the Pastoral Office of Word and Sacrament in the Minnesota Synod of the former LCA, the Lutheran Church in America. We were certainly admonished to faithfully proclaim the Gospel Message just as it had been faithfully handed down and entrusted to us. And I don't recall how much was said about what kind of reception our message might receive, but certainly the dismal picture painted for Ezekiel was not what I remember...

I. Faithful Students Know Of the Varied Receptions

- Why Judah was in exile in the first place...
- What a prophet is, and what a prophet announces...
- 3 examples of people refusing to hear Jesus...

II. Why Would Good News Not Be Welcomed?

- Understanding the root sin and difficulty of humility...
- Instant versus Delayed Gratification...
- Only looking to the things that are seen...

III. Why It Is Important to Know A Prophet Had Been...

- Equal opportunity and knowing why consequences!
- Ezekiel's picture of the watchman on the wall...
- The spectacle of shooting such a messenger...

Parting Shot – Perhaps the greatest temptation for the messenger is to have an inordinate desire to be well liked. This often results in toying with the message. And this usually means soft peddling sin, and only emphasizing God's mercy and love. People may want to hear such a message, but it is not authentic or saving. God loves us too much to leave us in the deadly throes of our sins. "Repent and believe in God's mercy at the expense of Christ's death." That is the truly good news!

Prophet – A prophet is not primarily one who can foretell the future! Rather, a prophet is a mouthpiece or spokesperson for God. He is a messenger who is to faithfully deliver the message entrusted to him. And that message is one of repentance and replacing trust in God and his promises.

Mk 1:14-15 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, 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."

Ezekiel 2:1-5 ESV

Ezekiel's Call

¹And he said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." ²And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. ³And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. ⁴The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God.' ⁵And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them.

Mk 6:3c-4 And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household."

Jn 6:53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Jn 6:60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"

Jn 6:66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

Mk 10:21-22 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Is 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Seven Deadly Sins: Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath, Sloth.

Lk 18:9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:

2Co 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Jn 15:20 Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

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Psalm 123

¹To you I lift **up** my eyes,*
to you enthroned **in** the heavens.

²As the eyes of servants
look to the hand **of** their masters,*
and the eyes of a maid
to the hand **of** her mistress,

³so our eyes look to the **LORD** our God,*
until he show **us** his mercy.

⁴Have mercy upon us, O **LORD**,
have mercy,*
for we have had
more than enough **of** contempt,

⁵too much of the scorn
of the **indolent** rich,*
and of the derision **of** the proud.

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