

"The Prophets – Preparing Us for Certain Types of Prayer"

The Ministry of the Prophets

August 3, 2025

What if...

...What if God's people would perhaps find themselves in a time/season in which they had become off-course, distant and dull? ...Rather than living within earshot of the voice of God, they would be consumed with the voices of their day. They would be entangled and educated by the trends, the catchy, the shiny, the popular, the pleasurable—Something! To take the edge off L.U.T.S. ...and over time they would even stop noticing that they've been adrift?

—What might the "Ministry of the Word" sound like in that setting, in that day, in that season?

"The Ministry of the Word" (...particularly The Prophets)

2Pet 1:20-21 ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2Tim 3:14-17 ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

"When Paul says "Holy Scriptures" and "all Scripture," he means the whole of what we call the Old Testament. Read what Paul says here about the Old Testament and notice the reasons Paul gives to Timothy for preaching and teaching from it. ...First, the "Holy Scriptures" (and remember, he meant the Old Testament) are able to lead people to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. They prepare the way for Jesus the Messiah and show how the same God who had so often saved his people in the past has now acted through Jesus to bring salvation to people everywhere. Paul knew this because he had spent his life bringing people to faith in Jesus, using the Old Testament to make his case and prove his point. So the Old Testament is not a "dead book." It contains salvation and points to the Saviour." **Christopher Wright**, "How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth", p. 19

"Third, Paul says the Old Testament Scriptures are "useful." Then he gives a list of the kinds of ways that Scripture functions "usefully" ("teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness") — all of which are things that should happen within the church community to help people live now in the way God wants us to. This is why Paul immediately tells Timothy to "preach the word." It's not just that the Old Testament functioned in the past to lead people to faith and salvation in Christ. It's not something that we then leave behind once we have come to Christ. No. Because it comes from God and so carries the authority of God, it continues to be relevant for us. We can and should use the Old Testament for teaching and guidance for life — as Paul tells Timothy to do." **Christopher Wright**, "How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth", p. 20

The "Fire & Brimstone People"??

...The Prophets are typically "UNDER-READ" portions of Scripture

...**BUT**... The Prophets were filled & inspired by the Holy Spirit. ...You're not reading some out of touch dude in a bad mood on a Podcast-Rant

2Tim 3:16 ... ***“the Scriptures are profitable... for reproof, for correction”***

...Correction has Fallen on Hard Times! ...

...Simple Realization - L.U.T.S. = we are fallen creatures, living life in a fallen world where sin is active and Satan is scheming! ...thus there's a LOT of missteps, vulnerable emotional moments, bad ideas, life-patterns that are off, and life-priorities that are out of place!

...Correction is NOT something to go to war with. ...That would be like having an "AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE"

What if... The Prophets are Unique Agents of Change? ...They show up in moments where the Forces of “L.U.T.S.” have set God’s people’s lives ADRIFT—and Some Kind of Meaningful Change is Needed

Malachi’s Moment

Malachi (~460 BC)

“Although the urging of Haggai and Zechariah had brought the completion of the temple (516 B.C.), this had not produced the messianic age many expected. The warm response to Zechariah’s call to repentance had grown cold, because God apparently had not restored the covenant blessings. Malachi, writing a short time later, called the people to repentance with respect to: the priesthood, which had become corrupt; worship, which had become routine; divorce, which was widespread; social justice, which was being ignored; and tithing, which was neglected. (ESV – Introduction)

Malachi 1:1-5 The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

² “I have loved you,” says the LORD. But you say, “How have you loved us?” “Is not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob ³ but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.” ⁴ If Edom says, “We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins,” the LORD of hosts says, “They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called ‘the wicked country,’ and ‘the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.’” ⁵ Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, “Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!”

v. 2 ...**Note the “Distance & Disconnection”** ...Here's a People who have stopped "FEELING" the Love of God in their lives!

v. 3-4 ...**Their “Esau & Edoms”** ...It’s Obviously Been a “SEASON of COMPARISON” in their L.U.T.S.
...they’ve been thumbing through their Instagram Feed and noticing—“Other People Have it Better Than Us”

What if... God’s NOT OK with us Not Tasting, Seeing, Enjoying & Delighting in His Great Love for Us???

Malachi 1:6 “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, ‘How have we despised your name?’”

v. 6 ... What happened to their HONOR & FEAR? ...Where’d Your sense of AWE, Amazement, Holy Wonder, and Cautious Trembling Go??

...This Loss is Always a Huge Concern!

- From the earliest days of the Tabernacle – Nadab & Abihu offering strange fire—Lev. 10!!

- To the days of Jesus ministry – **Matt 15:7-9** “You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: ⁸ ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. ⁹ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”
- **Disaffectioned, Unamazed Worship has NEVER Been Ok with God!**
...“Honor, Fear of God, Affection for God's Name” ...These are INNER QUALITIES! **They are the "Steam in a Steam Turbine" that Generate the Power!!** ...You can still do church without a heart that is Affectionate, Honoring, and Fearing God—But it will only be a FORM!

What if... God wants more for us than “Outward Form”?—What if He wants Inner Steam!

Col 3:12-17 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Mal 2:13-14 ¹³ And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD'S altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. ¹⁴ But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

Mal 2:17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, “How have we wearied him?” By saying, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them.” Or by asking, “Where is the God of justice?”

Mal 3:7-10 ⁷ From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ ⁸ Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

...God's Prophet brings a word from heaven ...and God's people on earth respond with—“What's Wrong with You? What on earth are you talking about?”

A Prophetic Voice into Our 21st Century Moment

What if... We are in a “Course-Correction-Moment” where God is about to Do Something

...What's happening in the "Here & Now" of Our World? (Our moment isn't 536BC in a Post-Exilic Moment ...Ours is 2025 AD America—a moment that's been Ripening for 60 years!)

—**1968 - Beatles - "Revolution"** >> Something Started in Our World in the 60's that was like a "YEAST" implantation that grew and it "informed & infected" the minds and the mindsets of people for the next 4 Generations!

"Revolution Culture" (drop out, cast-off, break with all traditions/inst.'s) => **"Pleasure Culture"** (70's - Sex, Drugs, Rock-n-Roll) => **"Material Enjoyment Culture"** (80's - wealth, Wall Street, Lifestyle of Rich & Famous) => **Self-Esteem, Self-Worth, Self-Image Culture** - 90's [then finally] => **"Self-Identity Culture"** (2010-Pres)

...it is a way of thinking about Yourself, Your World, Your Experiences, People, Priorities, Processing of Info, etc.--but it's cohesive center is YOU! ...the World has worked hard to make the Individual Human Being the CENTER of All Things!

A PRAYER MEETING – Wed. Aug 6th

What if... We are in a "Course-Correction-Moment" where God is about to Do Something

PRAYER TARGETS/STATIONS

- **Revival** (mindful of the unique ways that Revival Might Impact Our various Generations)
 - A Depth of Personal Heart Impact—STEAM! For the Heart Engines of Our Souls
 - Personal Encounters with God (His Word & Presence)
- **Our Core 4 Ministries** - Intercession & Faith for: Sunday Gatherings (worship & Word) ...Fellowship/SG Ministry/Relational Connections ...Evangelism/Outreach ...Discipleship (teaching & equipping the church)
- **Particular Prayer for Our 18-30 yr olds** and the future of ministry to that group at LCC
- **Wisdom ...The Elders season of Prayer & Planning** ...we're not simply seeking to do the next thing that has made since for churches to do, since 1990 or 2000! ...If the mission field has shifted, we need to hear from God afresh! ...If the philosophy of the age is changing, we need to be ready to speak to that ...If Suburban-Digital-America is our landscape, we need to have God's wisdom to engage that! ...If particular doctrines or biblical ministries have been neglected, we need to have God's discernment!