

June 24th and 25th, 2017

The 3rd Sunday in Pentecost

Texts for this week's Blended (Traditional) and Contemporary Services:

Jeremiah 20:7-1 (NIRV) Romans 6: 12-23 (NIRV) Matthew 10:5a, 21-33 (ESV)



Pastor as Prophet

For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, "I will not mention him or speak any more in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary withholding it in, and I cannot.

(Jeremiah 20:8-9)

Intro –

Continuing this week to look at how the readings invite reflection on the pastoral office. This week's OT reading and Gospel invite us to consider the experience of the prophet.

I. Prophet as God's representative

- a. In the OT, the prophet was God's spokesman to declare the word of the Lord. When Jesus comes, he, himself, fills a prophetic role and then passes on to the apostles this calling – to declare the word of the Lord to all people.
- b. All Christians, today, have the prophetic call to share the Good News of God in Christ with the world. The pastoral office is assigned the task, today, of regularly proclaiming the word of the Lord.
- ✓ **Key Point** – Whatever else pastors are given to do, preaching and teaching the Word is certainly at the top of the list. Much as the prophet spoke for God, so the pastor is given to speak for God. Jeremiah's experience is significant – the Word of God shapes him to his core!

II. Prophet as God's persecuted representative

- a. Prophets, because they often spoke both Law and Gospel, were often persecuted for what they said and did. So also, in the NT era the faithful are often persecuted for witnessing to God's rule in the world.
- b. Jesus, himself, was crucified and died as a prophet. But unlike a prophet who spoke for God, Jesus WAS God. And if this happened to him, no wonder he says, "The disciple is not above the teacher". (Matthew 10). Pastors and people will be persecuted as our Lord, himself, was when we are faithful witnesses.
- ✓ **Key Point** – We ought to be afraid of what might happen to us, but God has declared otherwise. Jesus said, "Fear not!" Though trouble may come to us, because we are his witnesses, God has promised to protect us and watch over us!

III. Prophet as God's courageous representative

- a. In the painting of Jeremiah by Michelangelo, he is depicted as a deeply troubled man. Jeremiah is often called the "weeping prophet". Why did he weep? Perhaps it is because he had the heart of God.
- b. Jeremiah declares that the Word is a burning fire inside him, and he cannot hold it in.
- ✓ **Key Point** – The fire today is the Holy Spirit that cries out to declare the Gospel – no matter the difficulty and no matter the cost.

Conclusion – Pastors aren't able to see the future and declare what will happen. Rather, the prophetic office sees Christ and declares what did happen!