

Prophet, Priest and King
Hebrews 1:1 - 3

So this morning, applied for a job recently?
I wonder if anyone has heard of these positions:

Customer Experience Enhancement Consultant	- Shop assistant
Gastronomical Hygiene Technician	- Dishwasher
Petroleum Transfer Engineer	- Petrol station attendant
Alphabet Re-Arrangement Technician	- Writer

Munus Triplex?

Munus Triplex is a Latin description of Jesus.

And whereas these other titles are overblown, with Jesus it means so much more.

You see, when you do the study in Scripture and theology what you discover is that Jesus has what is called three offices – not work spaces 😊 – but roles of authority and power.

And you find them in our reading this morning.

Do you remember what they are?

Prophet, priest and King.

So few years ago I touched on these just a little.

But as we move through Lent and head towards Easter, I want us to explore this some more this morning.

So first:

Jesus as Prophet

What is a prophet and what do prophets do?

If you were to ask most Kiwis in 21st Century New Zealand they would say a prophet tells the future.

Or in the church, just people acting strangely:

Picture the scene. It's Sunday morning and it's come to a part in the service where people are waiting quietly on the Lord. A woman stands claiming to

have a word of prophecy. She stood in a trancelike state, and when she spoke an unnatural heavy voice came out of her. Everyone waited with intense anticipation as she said boldly, "Thus saith the Lord... even as Moses led the animals into the ark, even so shall I lead My people to safety, if they trust in Me."

After delivering this direct message from the Lord, the woman sat down. Then the whispering started. Throughout the congregation people leaned over to one another and said, "Did she say *Moses*? I think she said *Moses*!" Then the woman stood up again. And again, supposedly still in a trance, she belted out, "Thus saith the Lord... it wasn't *Moses*, it was *Noah*!"¹

In *Scripture* prophets had a central role of not only revealing the future but speaking to the present.

As we heard:

"In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways..."

Prophet's speak for God; they pass on God's message to His people.

So often the prophets would warn, comfort, encourage, teach, remind God's people of their responsibilities to their God and even scold.

And then we hear:

"But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son."

What that means is that when you read your Bibles and when you read what Jesus taught and spoke, *it is God Himself speaking to you*.

And what we find with Jesus is that he a brilliant teacher.

He is communicator par excellence.

There is none better.

He will give you the right answer about the big questions of life.

You can know God's will.

He gives moral guidelines for healthy living.

We can know truth from error, right from wrong, black and white, good and evil.

And as Prophet, the one who speaks as God, Jesus always tells the truth.

That is one of the reasons why, in the Protestant stream of faith, we have emphasised the role and place of *Scripture*.

¹ Tony Campolo, *Let Me Tell You a Story* (USA: Word, 2000), 37 – 38.

That is one of the reasons for stressing the place of Biblical preaching.
Preaching has prophetic element.
It's one of the reasons we have accentuated contemplating and meditating on Scripture.

As prophet he continues to lead and to guide through the Holy Spirit.
We you read through history you find stories where time and time again, God had given the right guidance at just the time it was needed.

And I think we need to increasingly open ourselves up to that possibility.

***“So for you, how has Jesus been your guide?
Is there a way He has led you recently?”***

So what I feel to do at the moment, is stop and pray for any of us who facing life-decisions.

Jesus as Priest

He is our great high priest.

As background the priests would serve God in His Temple in Jerusalem.
The Temple was this massive structure - think something around the size of Eden Park - where people would go to the temple and offer sacrifices and gifts to God through a priest.

The High Priest would have the most important job of all: one day a year, called the Day of Atonement, the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place of the temple.

The Most Holy Place could only entered on that one day.
There the High Priest would slaughter animals as prescribed by God as a way of having sin cleansed and forgiven.

It was a very bloody process.
And this had to happen year after year after year after year.

We don't need animal sacrifices anymore because Jesus perfectly obeyed God and resisted sin and is the perfect sacrifice.

Let me tell you a story, a true story.
Once upon a time I had a shirt.

It was a brand-name shirt. It was this great blue colour and it fitted me perfectly. It was comfortable, I looked great in it and it looked great on me. It was my favourite shirt.

(Have you ever had a favourite shirt or item of clothing?)

Then it happened: one day I found a mark right on the front of my favourite shirt.

There was nothing I could do to remove that mark, that blemish, that stain. The shirt was ruined before its time.

Do you get it?

All of us have marks, blemishes that perhaps no one else can see.

Try as we might, nothing seems to take it away.

It's like it's left a mark on our souls.

But as priest, as our High Priest, Jesus has offered Himself on our behalf.

Jesus, he provided purification for our sins

That means He forgives.

He pardons.

He cleanses

He opens a way so that you can have a living relationship with God.

Whatever has left its mark, its stain, he can wash away.

Jesus has taken our sin on Himself.

I mean, the God the Father so loved the world that He gave Jesus to us.

Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

As priest he introduces us to the Father.

Jesus brings us before the Father and we experience the Father's embrace.

Not only that but as priest, he not only takes away, but he gives.

We can have a new beginning.

As I said some weeks ago, you can make progress in areas that didn't think were even possible.

For me, in the area of shyness and public speaking.

Jesus is the life-changer.

So again, I'd like to pause and pray for those who perhaps carrying a great burden of guilt, or stain that causes shame or feel they are at a dead end.

Jesus as King

Jesus said, ““The time has come. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the good news!”

Jesus is King, Jesus is Lord, who establishing his rule on this planet. He is the “heir of all things” and “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven”.

When you read the Gospels carefully, that is the good news.

As King is the world’s true ruler.
He is all powerful and without evil.
Jesus absolutely good and powerful and deserving our worship and adoration.

Jesus established this rule in his birth, in his miracles, in his teaching and in his life. When you read the story, it’s all about Jesus who, innocent as He was, died at the hands of cruel oppressors.

Yet Jesus overcame all this and rose from the dead in the power of the Spirit as a sign of God’s absolute approval.

He has been given the name above all names.

He has been raised up far above all rule and authority, power and dominion.

As the world’s true King Jesus invites people to come under His good rule.

As King, Jesus is the highest authority there is.

As King he gives commands and gives orders.

“So... what commands do people find most difficult today?”

But you know, that’s confronting today.

The message our culture communicates to us is this: it’s all about radical self-autonomy.

Radical self-autonomy about excessive self-regard and self-rule, choosing self over God; becoming a law unto ourselves.

It’s all about being true to yourself and following your dreams.

My life is my own.

I mean, who are you to tell me what to do???

And when we hear about Jesus as King who gives orders, even in the church, we get our hackles up!

But we need to remind others and ourselves the Jesus isn't like other rulers.

He is not tyrant who rules through intimidation and fear.
Nor is he a politician who needs his ego stroked with an image to protect and systems to implement.

Jesus has this way of preferring others above himself.
He is a King who is self-giving and that is exemplified on the cross.

Under his rule He frees and transforms and liberates.
Jesus is the world's true king, and He summons everyone on this planet to come under his *good* rule; to come and serve the true risen King.

We are called to completely abandon our lives to Him - that is the call of our King.
He is and His rule is the best.

So to Joe Biden, with all due respect, Jesus the King says, "Come follow me."

To Jacinda Ardern, with all due respect, Jesus says, "Come follow me."

To every person in New Zealand Jesus says, "Come follow me."

To every person in this room Jesus the King says, "Come follow me."

What we need to also remember is that Jesus' rule is an active Kingship.
He's not a figurehead - he's no passive ruler.

The role of the King is also to defends us; He comes to our aid.
In the battles you face He is by Your side.
In the circumstances of our lives he will not abandon us.
Your battle is His battle.

And it may be this morning, that's you.

You are in a battle and for you need for Jesus to be your strong defender.
Or you may be wrestler with the commands of God.

So again, I'd like to pause and pray.