

The Church as a Prophetic Presence

by Art Katz

The church must constitute a prophetic presence within the nation, characterized by a jealousy for truth, a love for God, and a willingness to speak truth to the world.

Duration: 57:22

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 4:18-19, Acts 2:42-47, Acts 5:1-11, Acts 8:26-40, Ephesians 5:22-33

Topics: "Prophetic Call"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Elijah and the corrupt waters in his nation. The people recognized that their economy and life were paralyzed due to the lack of clean water. Elijah instructed them to bring a new jar and put salt in it, and when the salt was sprinkled into the corrupt waters, the streams became fresh and the land prospered. The speaker emphasizes the importance of interpreting events in the nation's history and future in the light of Scripture in order to warn the people. Additionally, the speaker shares personal experiences of humiliation and the restoration of marriage and family life.

Transcript

...from Cebu City, and when you get up to the waterfront again, the floating filth, the corruption, the pollution, the thick, stagnant water that is a mixture of so many impure elements, suggested to me that that is almost a spiritual picture of what has been coming in to the Philippines through Spain, through Catholicism, through America, through the Orient, through China, dark spirits, occultic things. All of the filth has somehow been poured in to this nation, and the waters are very stagnant and corrupt with these elements, and God wants to break forth a pure stream, not only to bless the nation, but to flow out from the nation, free from corruption and defilement of any kind. That's why Jim had that burden this morning, and I have this thought also to share with you.

I was up early this morning, and reading about Elijah and Elisha, I may be speaking to you about one or both of these great prophets, because Elijah is the quintessential prophet. That's a fancy word. It means that he typifies and sums up in himself what are the constituent elements of the prophetic calling in any generation.

He was a historical personality, but there's something about the nature of himself as a wilderness prophet confronting the powers of government and society and religion and apostasy that is a picture for us in the last days. In fact, Jesus himself said to his disciples that he would not come again until Elijah first comes and restores all things. So there's something about the character of the Elijah prophetic ministry that

should occupy all of us, because as I've said now, though we may not all have personally a calling to be prophets, we are called corporately to constitute a prophetic presence within the nation as the church.

The church that is not prophetic is not the church. God intends that there be a presence in every nation by which the things that are characteristic of the prophet, his way of seeing, his perception of reality, his boldness and his lack of fear and intimidation to speak directly to those that are opposing God, even in the places of government and religion, is something that I think will characterize the church of the last days. And a man who lives by faith, by the word of God, free from any dependency on systems, he's the man of the wilderness, and God can direct him by his word through the spirit, and he's a man who's obedient.

And so he did according to the word of the Lord. I remember some years ago, I said, if ever you have occasion to bury me, just make that one statement on my tombstone. And so he went and did according to the word of the Lord.

Lord, I don't want to go any further without praying, because I know that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And if we have an erroneous view of what is prophetic, if we have a romantic view or an imaginary view, or we are impressed with men who seem to be those things and are not, then we threaten the very foundation of the church itself. And somehow there's a remarkable verse that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

That there's a conjunction between what is prophetic and the very nature of the Lord himself. And that somehow to reject the prophet, and to reject the prophetic word, is to constitute a rejection of you yourself. So Lord, I'm asking not only to speak about things prophetic, but to display and to demonstrate the genius of what the prophetic thing is, that comes spontaneously, that is given in the moment by God to men who are utterly cast upon him and dependent for every word.

Come and demonstrate by God as well as explain and raise up by the hearing of that word a prophetic people who will stand for you in these last days, and individual men who indeed may have that calling and may not have recognized it until now. So we bless you Lord and we ask, we're not ashamed to ask, that our time together this morning and in these days would be nothing less than historic. That the hour has come and the time is short when something has got to come in to the church that bears your name in this land.

Your remnant people come Lord and so utilize this time to lay those foundations that will be immovable and will be down to your everlasting glory. We thank you and give you the praise in Jesus name and God's people said, Amen. One of the words that we need to rescue as a prophetic people is the word glory itself.

A prophetic person and a prophetic church is concerned with language and the meaning of words. It will not allow words to be cheapened and for truth to lie in the streets. It will struggle for the integrity of God's meaning as I shared a little bit last night.

So we're suffering an attack, an onslaught on truth itself and what is a prophet if he's not jealous for the truth and I mean insanely jealous for the truth. We came from to Philippines from Japan and on our first morning we, Jim and I went out for a walk. Beautiful day.

I've been in that country before. I had spoken to ministers in that country and I said, if you think that the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was simply a military expedient, you don't understand at all that it was a judgment from God of a preliminary kind from a nation that has kept God at a distance and

celebrates religions that are self-serving for the state and for the ruling classes called Shintoism and that these burnings are a preliminary judgment of what will be an eternal burning of a fire that will not be quenched if you'll not repent. And a man leaped up out of his seat and he cried out.

The minister, he said, God, he said, make me a prophet for my nation. What is he saying? Give me the ability to interpret events in my nation in its history and in its past and things that are future in the light of scripture so as to warn a people. So we took a walk on this trip that first morning and some people were out.

It was a Japanese holiday, the New Year's. No work, they were out. And a man was flying a kite with his children.

And when I saw that man, my mouth watered. Do you ever get that? When the juice begins to run in your mouth? You don't get that? Like, for example, when you hear the word glory, doesn't something begin to run in your mouth? Truth. I often say that if the juice is not running, you don't yet have the truth of it.

We're too dry-eyed and we're too dry. We're too clinical. We're too mechanical.

So let it dribble down your chin a little bit. When I saw this man, I could taste, I so yearned for his salvation, I could taste it. There was something about his face that I said, Lord, he must be with you eternally.

He must be in your kingdom. But unfortunately, how can I communicate to him? I don't speak Japanese. And so I just walked by like that, feeling so sorrowful, when the man all of a sudden says, Do you know anything about flying kites? In English.

I said, Wow! So we got into a conversation. And I said to him, You know, I would love to see the inside of a Japanese home. I want to see your life and how you live.

We have no ulterior motives. So I told him that we're Christians and ministers and so on, and that he was a Buddhist. I said, We'll not try to convert you.

I'll only answer whatever questions you might ask. And then he said, Well, what do you do? I said, Well, I travel and I've written some books. I said, The title of my last book is called The Spirit of Truth.

And he looked at me, he said, What is that about? I said, Well, it's an examination of what truth itself is. And how foundational it is to our human existence. And I said, It's more than just measuring something empirically.

Forgive me if I get a little fancy. You know the way the Japanese mind works? Truth is to measure something from this point to that point. Truth is something that works electronically according to certain principles.

The Japanese have no capacity for abstract speculation for philosophical or metaphysical or spiritual contemplation as, for example, what is truth? It's not something that a Japanese would think. And so I turned to him and I said, Do you love truth? And all of a sudden the man went blank. He just shook, his eyes blinked.

He could not comprehend my question. Do you love truth? That's a great question for us. Do we love truth? Because there's a reason why you have to love it.

Merely to admire it or to respect it is not enough. That will still make you a candidate for deception. God abandons to a lie those who forsake the love of the truth.

Why is that? Why is the love of the truth so essential? Because it is inconvenient. Because it is difficult. Because it is painful.

Because it is embarrassing. Like this girl that had to cry out in that meeting in Cairo, Egypt. I haven't heard a word you said because you're Jewish.

Well, okay. But it's true. That was her place.

That was her condition. And it's only on the ground of truth that the grace of God will meet us. Never when we're phonies.

Never when we're putting on a spiritual affectation or a show. But when God sees truth, his grace is there because he came full of grace and truth. And truth requires grace.

So I would ask you, do you love truth? If you're going to be a prophetic presence in your nation, you have got to love truth. For your nation to allow a criminal to make a movie within his penitentiary to celebrate himself in some kind of romantic and dramatic way and allow that film to be exhibited in theaters as a profit-making motive is a lie. A lie that was perpetrated because money was involved.

Profit. Something happens to our ability to discern the issues of truth when we allow ourselves to remain silent when an issue of truth comes up and we allow it to go unattended. Now Jim and I can pack our bags and fly home.

I just gave you something so precious it's worth the whole trip. But did you hear it? Truth is a moment-by-moment consideration. And God is looking for a church whose ground and pillar is the truth.

The foundations of the church through and through. Not only what we believe. Not only what we say.

But what we are. How we look. Our faces.

Our eyes. Our voice. There's nothing about us that is affected, that is phony, that is a put-on or a show.

We are what we are by the grace of God. And we're moving from faith to faith and from glory to glory. And truth is such an urgent question because the whole world lies in the father of lies, in false advertising, in promotions, in every kind of... It's everywhere about us in the very air that we breathe that to be vigilant for the truth takes a moment-by-moment watch care and jealousy because you love the truth.

And it's so demanding that I don't think that any one of us can do it by ourselves. I have been saved from deception as a mature believer many years in the Lord not by some appeal to ambition or something like that but what I thought was actually something spiritual, something that has to do with my own Jewish people and I was saved from my deception in the community of which I was part by something that was spoken to me not by one of the mature members or leaders but by one of the youngest and weakest in the body. He said one line to me and the moment that I heard it my head fell on my chest and I was convicted and I was aware in that moment that I had been deceived.

God saved me from deception not of a carnal kind but of a spiritual kind through the operation of His Spirit through one of the youngest and weakest members in the body. Hmm? The whole example? You want me

to spell this out? Oh, okay. Well, just to be very truthful my wife and I were having marital problems.

That's what happens when you're a Jew and you marry a Gentile who is the complete opposite of all that you are. There's a lot of friction but there's a mystery also in the God making the two one new man. Taking the Gentile and the Jew who have been at historic enmity with each other throughout history and making of them one new man.

You'll meet my wife one day and you'll see the grace of God. This is a woman to this day who does not understand a single message that I speak. I just confuse and bewilder her.

She doesn't know why any Christian would be interested in what I have to say and can't you be funny like other speakers? Well, we were having friction and it had gone on for some time and some brother suggested that we should leave the community because of the intensity of the community life and go aside with our family and have a chance to be restored in marriage and family relationships. And God seemed to attest to that and so we moved to Kansas City some 600 miles south of Minnesota and we stayed there for a number of months. I was not to enter into ministry that was not the object.

I was to give myself fully to the restoration of marriage and family life. So what happens? Six o'clock one morning there's a man at my door, a Jewish doctor and he had gotten saved and he doesn't want to expose himself publicly by going to a church but he needs instruction and he's heard about me and would I be so kind to spend some time with him in the scriptures? Well, how can you say no to that? And the next week it was a lawyer and the next week and before I knew it in a matter of weeks I had a little Bible study going for Jewish converts and it began to increase but just as it was becoming important I got the message from the community it's time to come home. I said, oh listen to those guys.

How immature can you be? And don't they understand what God is doing in Kansas City which is called the heart of America in a ministry that I was not looking for that has simply happened by the grace of God and they want now to interrupt that and I should go back up to northern Minnesota and play in the woods with them? Just so they have the security of having their founder present with them? Well, I'll go and straighten them out. So I took two mature Jewish brothers with me in the faith and we flew up to Minnesota and we had a community meeting and I rehearsed with them how it is that we went to Kansas City and how without seeking it these Jewish believers were coming to me and God was doing something authentic and spontaneous and significant and now you want me to come back to the woods and just stay up here and forsake all that this tremendous potential that God is doing?

See the spiritual temptation?

And we discussed it back and forth and back and forth and there was no no breakthrough there was no way we were just at ends and finally at that last moment the way the Lord usually waits here was this Jewish brother young, immature, weak his voice was cracked nothing to look at, nothing impressive well Artie said you know what we believe here that the ministry flows out of the life and the life flows out of the relations and if you are not in relationship with us then where is the ministry? and the moment that that word came it was like a sword right into my heart and my head fell to my chest and I heard the Lord saying come back and I came back so I say all that to say this the church the true church the organic body of Christ that can speak face to face one to another is God's life

saving provision to keep us from deception in the last days and the subtlety of deception and the subtlety of lies if we can hear his still small voice not through only the most mature brothers but even the weakest

saves us from our own ambitions for God but are you in that kind of relationship? because I'll tell you this 10,000 Sundays will never produce it if your church experience is nothing more than a succession of Sunday services there is no way that you can come into the grit of this organic thing by which the spirit of truth works and that is inconvenient and that's a suffering and that's more than most of us want to bear we like our privacy and it's enough Sunday and midweek service but the church in the beginning went from house to house daily breaking bread and the spirit of

truth was so guarded that when someone came to make a contribution to the church and to lay the proceeds at the feet of the apostles Peter immediately discerned that it was a half truth that they were not giving the full amount that they had gotten from their sale but they were allowing the appearance to be communicated that it was the full amount and Peter said you have not only lied to men you have lied to God you have lied to the Holy Spirit of God and you're going to be carried out feet first what we would have done with someone making as handsome a contribution as that is to at least make them an elder in the church or put them on the board of deacons Peter immediately discerned by the spirit of truth of something that was being made to stand for the truth that was only partially

true and in my book I say every child knows the truth is the whole truth and nothing but the truth or it's a lie and it wasn't long after that Peter himself was being confronted by Paul because he did one thing with the Jewish believers and another thing with the non-Jewish believers and Paul nailed him publicly before all for the truth of the gospel's sake you know why the condition of truth is so low in the Philippines why men make political statements political promises and contradict them as soon as they get in power why almost anything goes in any kind of deception because the church itself is not the plumb line of God a standard by which the world can measure itself and align itself the church is the ground and pillar of truth and if it is careless about truth what can we expect

from the world around it so at the heart of the prophetic call is a jealousy for truth and you don't love truth any more than you love God and you don't love God any more than you love truth for God is the way the life and the truth and the truth is the whole truth and nothing but the truth or it's not true not only what our thought is and what our speech is but what we are through and through the true thing and that's so difficult in a world that is steeped in lies that it requires the encouragement the prayer the exhortations and the rebukes that comes in the church from its ministers and from the body we need to be corrected because we all have a blind side that cannot see certain things for itself and we'll only see it because someone loves us enough and loves the truth enough to

speak it to us and that we love the truth and love the sacrifice of the saint who's doing it with his heart and his mouth to receive it with grace and to be blessed by it and thankful for it and that's the kind of church that must be in every nation no matter what the culture of that nation is it's timeless it's eternal the church of Jesus Christ the eternal masterpiece of God unto him be glory in the church so I was looking this morning at a little episode out of the life of Elisha who is the successor to Elijah and who inherited Elijah's mantle in chapter 2 of 2 Kings and I'm really asking for your participation in this I don't have a clear understanding but maybe as we discuss it and interact over this the Lord will give us an insight and a breakthrough in verse 19 of chapter 2 of 2

Kings the men of the city said to Elisha now the men of the city are not necessarily believers they are secular men coming to the prophet as I believe in the last days the world will be coming to the church who alone will have wisdom and understanding and they said behold now the situation of the city is pleasant as my Lord can see but the water is bad and the land is unfruitful stagnant full of all kinds of corruptions and

vile things and thick, turbid, mixed with all of the corruptive elements that have been swirling for generations that have come out of America out of Spain out of Catholicism out of the Orient out even of the indigenous people that lived here before any one came from outside of the Philippines don't think that if you are descendant from Malaysians that you are somehow

of a purer kind than those who came from abroad every people have contributed their own particular corruption and it seems to have become compacted and infested and just swirls in the stink of it is in many places the land is beautiful there is a wonderful potential but the water is bad and the land is unfruitful water is life and he said bring me a new jar and put salt in it so they brought it to him and he went out to the springs of water and threw salt in it and said thus says the Lord I have purified these waters there shall not be from their death or unfruitfulness any longer so the waters have been purified to this day according to the word of Elisha which he spoke so what interpretation do we give this historical episode what possible application for ourself what is the

significance or the symbolism what is the meaning of that what is the salt and why did it require a new jar I'm giving you a little taste of our prophetic school we don't establish the school because we have answers we establish the school because we have questions yeah so a good question a real question a searching question is infinitely better than a shallow and mechanical truth we need to learn to ask real questions to examine something because that's what truth requires so what do you think this is a four verse little episode from the life of a significant prophet of Israel and the men who came to him were not believers but men from the city who recognized that their economy and their life was paralyzed that they were condemned to a certain unfruitfulness and barrenness because

though the land itself was pleasant and had the potential to be fruitful it lacked clear clean pure water their water was corrupt and mingled and so Elijah said bring me a new jar and put salt in it and out of that jar and that salt sprinkled into the corrupt waters the streams were made fresh to this day and the land was prospered who can interpret that what would you think that the jar represents why couldn't any receptacle be adequate that could hold salt but somehow the spirit of God required in Elisha a new jar and he thought the fact that the Lord has turned my attention to that early this morning must have something to do with his purposes with us in these days and I will continue to brood over this and maybe I'll hear an answer out of my own mouth when I least expect it as the

Lord is pleased to give light on that but just as a thought now I'm wondering if the Lord is talking about the structure of the church itself that you can't put new wine into old wineskins that God is looking for another container of salt which is a preservative what kind of properties does salt have it preserves it brings out flavor it purifies it's a remarkable commodity and maybe it's the word of God the truth of God that needs to go into the nation but God is looking for a receptacle and that he requires that which is new and maybe the old forms will not lend themselves to truth maybe that's why you have to have a new jar I don't know but I'm just asking you to take that into your consideration and ponder that and think on that and ask the Lord what does that mean what's the

application for us because if we can find it or be it and cast that salt into the polluted waters this can be a very fruitful land in fact I have this suspicion that the purified waters will not only make this land to prosper and to flourish but will go out from this land into nations it's interesting where we ourselves are located in northern Minnesota I don't know what you know about American geography I'm a New Yorker by birth I'm completely out of my element where God has brought us for 21 years but he brought us there supernaturally by his word just as he spoke to Elijah go by the brook Sheriff and I have commanded the

ravens to feed thee there and so he arose and he went to the place where the Lord had commanded him and in the morning and the evening the ravens brought him meat and

bread and he drank from the stream in the same way the Lord spoke to me I was living near New York City about 20 miles away from two and a half million Jews and God brought me all the way up to where we presently are where there are no Jews at all but a native American Indian tribe the Chippewa Nation the native indigenous people and when I got up there I opened a map to see exactly where we are and we are 20 miles away from the origin of the Mississippi River I usually take the students that come up to our prophetic school on an outing and we go to this park where you can actually lift your pants up and take your shoes off and go in in your bare feet into the very water that is coming up out of the ground that is the origin of the Mississippi River and goes right through the heart of

the nation and goes out into the Gulf of Mexico and into the nations and as I opened the map the Lord dropped a plumb line right from that point and gave the impression that pure waters of life would spring up in the place where we were in the relationships in the authentic daily relationship of a community of people living in a hard place together that the issues of truth and reality would be worked out in that daily life and that water would come up and go through the heart of the nation and out to the nation to the nations and that in fact is what we have been seeing in recent years and I suspect that there is something like that for you if the waters of life can be made pure by the salt of the word of the kind that we heard this morning an exhortation to purity of heart and holiness

to confession of sin to acknowledgement to breaking the power of it to walking in the way to being truthful and that's why my first question to you before I went any further was is there anybody having a problem with the fact that I'm white and come from America does that reinforce your stereotype of the ministers who come from that country who think that they are going to tell you what it's all about and how to do it and that you have a problem seeing me and Jim by the spirit and that we need to talk about that before we go any further you see what I was after I was after truth and it may have been embarrassing for someone to say yes I have this problem with you I see you like some American hot shot who thinks he knows it all and you're going to tell the church in the Philippines how to

do it I'm tired of your type well that would have been embarrassing but I told you that truth is inconvenience but in the end it's glorious now if the church is going to be a prophetic presence in the nation it's very important even to consider the word glory unto him be glory in the church world without end throughout all ages by Christ Jesus is the conclusion of chapter 3 of the epistle to the Ephesians by Paul unto him be glory in the church not success and unless this is our conscious motive and deepest jealousy and purpose for being we will not have that kind of church we will simply have something by which we can have a succession of services and programs that are calculated for the benefit of men but we will not have glory so if I don't say anything else in the Philippines I want

to make this one statement the church is not the church cannot be a prophetic presence, cannot be an apostolic reality until it consciously has chosen as its first purpose for being that unto him be glory in the church not unto us it's not for our benefit it is for his glory and only when it is for his glory is it to our benefit so long as the church is predicated on man and the benefits that they receive by attending there's no possibility that Paul's cry can be fulfilled I forgot where it was whether it was Japan or Manila someone said do you pray for the sick do you minister to the people afterwards there are great needs I said not as a rule I can pray for healing and often God will honor that but no more than any other believer but I'm wondering if we will always continue to be sick

and always have need of healing until we put God's glory first so long as it's man and his need we will always be sick in one form or another that is our sickness and that is the sickness of the modern church man is at its center and not God and his glory and if I know anything about the Lord and his way and his word the glory is always preceded first by a suffering it's the suffering that precedes the glory and the church that has no stomach for suffering will not see the glory and true church is a suffering before it's a glory if your church experience is pleasant and enjoyable it's not likely going to be a prospect for God's glory listen I have been kicked at, I have been spit upon I have been insulted I have been threatened by my own Jewish people in speaking the gospel message to

unbelieving Jews but that's nothing next to the suffering that I have experienced for thirty years in the church there's a quality of suffering in the church that should not surprise us we should not be naive and it's not because there's anyone who is mean or malicious or wants to go out of his way to cause that suffering suffering in the church is the inevitable and natural outworking of God's sanctifying work with his people to bring them from where they presently are to where they need to be to bring them from the things that are earthly to the things that are heavenly to bring them from the things that are soulish to the things that are spiritual it's painful before it's glorious and there's no reason why anyone should be willing to bear that kind of painful reality in the church

except that they are jealous for the glory of God most of us don't stay long enough together or are not intensively enough together to pass through the suffering unto the glory just when the suffering begins in some issue some tension is when we leave and find another place where the services are happier, the preaching is groovier and the music is better, etc, etc we're a bunch of butterflies floating around but we're not planted organically in relationship in the locality where God has called us and are willing to suffer the humiliation the indignity the passing through the veil of disillusionment not only with each other but with yourself in a way that you would not see it unless you were authentically in relationship with God's people long enough and intensively enough and you'll not

run away because we are in covenant relationship with each other and where shall we go I hadn't planned to say anything like this this morning it's interesting that both Elijah and Elisha were related to what the school of the prophets the original word there is not school, it wasn't sitting behind a desk it was a collegium from which we get the modern word a community of like minded people of the same kind of heart and spirit and intention that are called to be God's people together and a prophetic presence in the land so for myself 21 years ago when the call of God came I was living in a 17 room house in New Jersey 20 miles from New York City I had a Volvo car used and it was a nice lifestyle not lush but adequate and my wife loved that gothic house we had privacy we had a German

shepherd dog that we loved dearly that was more aristocratic than me he had papers he was a blue blood and I can only guess at what my Jewish ancestry is and what a handsome animal but once in a while he would get a little out of control and the mailman would come and just as he turns he would grab him by the seat of the pants or do some other embarrassing things you know what I knew I knew that I was entering the school of humiliation I knew that things that could have been kept private because I was a minister and anointed you had a chance to see that last night that when people who looked up with great appreciation and esteem at God's man of anointing would see me on Monday in whatever mood Monday would bring and then they would hear things that could not be concealed like my wife

slamming the door in my face as I went to the morning prayer meeting and shouting as loud as anyone could hear go tell them what a great saint you are how do you like to come to a prayer meeting after

having that being said and you slip into your chair and everyone has heard it community or true church is the place of humiliation it's the place of suffering before the place of glory but our present institutional model which resembles a theater looking up to a platform does not lend itself to this kind of reality the scripture says that by beholding in each other's faces we are moved from glory to glory we had a precious Japanese girl we're not just talking about average Christians I'm talking about the best of God's people would sacrifice to come up where we are in that severe cold

weather and she was a model of a charismatic saint who had everything together she was quiet well ordered you never see her ruffled until within a matter of weeks unavoidably as the tensions build up something cracks and breaks and the stuffing comes out of the doll and the doll loses its image and the truth of the condition becomes revealed and this precious little Japanese girl threw a shoe at my wife in her exasperation and frustration can we love each other enough to bear that and to bear the disillusionment that must come because God is not in the illusion business movies are in the illusion business they want to create illusions of grandeur, of strength, of power of sexual vitality of all the kinds of things that people sit in the dark theater and suck up and want secretly to become

and live the lie of illusion God disillusion us, he strips us of our illusions because the church is the ground and pillar of truth if it's going to be a glory unto him not only in this age but in the ages to come and only when we remember that God is working and building not just for this age but for eternity then we are willing for the sacrifice and the suffering we're required to bear from each other so you know what I've learned there are few in the modern church today who have any consideration at all for the ages to come we're stuck in this age now this is the sum all and the substance of all that we think about is this present life and this present world we have not taken eternity into our consideration it's something that we think will happen after we die and that we need not

consider now you know what the great lie in the world is the unwillingness to consider the things that lie beyond this life Jews have no consideration for what lies beyond the grave they just want to make it now and you know how they affect their eternal future by being successful now becoming famous now establishing a fortune now but they don't think that there's anything beyond this life you know why they don't think it because there's not been a church in their midst that has demonstrated and revealed the truth of eternity because the church like the world is fixed in time can you follow me and if you don't take eternity into consideration you're not living in the truth because eternity is even a greater truth than this present age isn't that true? according to the word of God heaven

and earth will pass away but the word of God abides forever there will be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness this is only preparation this is only just the stage for the last and final enactments of God's controversy with the powers of darkness this is just a place where the church does its basic training the real issue is eternally ruling and reigning with Christ from heavenly places that changes everything when you see that the two great motives that enable us to rise above culture above time and above place and all of the other powerful earthly worldly things that want to bring us down is the glory of God forever not only in this age but in the ages to come and I can show you text after text in the scripture that completely confirms that this was the view of

the early apostolic church that made it so distinguished and glorious a church people lived as if what matter if I'm stripped of my goods because I have in heaven a more enduring and glorious reward they took their stripping with joy knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a more enduring substance do you know it?

I tell you dear children this is so liberating this is so liberating or else we will be intimidated by the world the world seems to have all the marbles it seems to have all the things that are impressive prestigious, wealth, power it's a puff it will fade away but once you glimpse the things that are eternal you are so freed for the present the prophetic church is the church that brings eternity into the present now the prophetic church is the church that brings heaven into the secular and earthly considerations now it's a witness to the world of the ages to come because Paul says we have tasted of the Holy Spirit of the power of the ages to come you'll never be more relevant for this life now than you will be when you take eternity into your deepest heart and consideration because it happens to be the truth

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3124.mp3>

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