

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S PROPHETIC MISSION

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The characteristics of God's prophetic mission can be seen all throughout the Old Testament and into the New. Through the lives and witnesses of those God called and chose to lead His people and then ultimately through the life of His Son, Jesus; who was sent as the Word of God but to give His very life for us on the cross. A major characteristic of the prophetic mission of God is the His spoken and written Word. The Prophets were communicating God's Word to His chosen people, Israel for generations. Even today the scriptures we read and pray are the inspired Word of God; these words demonstrate God's missionary spirit and invite us to partake in His plan for our lives and salvation. From the beginning of the Bible in the book of Genesis, the prophetic mission was spoken by God and then it came to be. For example, "And God said, 'Let there be light' and there was light."¹



And then the Gospel of John tells us, "In the Beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things came to be through Him..."²

These beginning Words of the Father are echoed throughout Salvation History to reclaim His covenant with the Israelites and bring His people back in union with Him. His Word alone has power and authority but it demands a response from the people of God. This response was and is a missionary spirit that enfleshes and enflames the words and desires of God. All the Prophets made a choice to respond to the Word of God with a missionary spirit; even if it was at first protested they finally succumbed to His desires as in the life of the prophet Jonah. All the way to the life of Jesus, the Lord continues to reveal the power of the Word of God. For example in the miracle of the Centurion's slave he had such great faith in the authority and power of His word that he did not rely on the presence of Jesus. Rather he trusted in the Word of Jesus to heal his slave.³ Jesus commands the twelve with this same Word calling them to enflesh this missionary spirit through missionary mandate to, Go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you..."⁴ This missionary spirit and Word of God is preached to not only the Israelite people but it has become a universal mission as written about in the Acts of the Apostles; and still further by St. Paul who response to the call of Christ with a great missionary spirit.

The Word of God throughout history has called for a missionary spirit to fulfill the prophetic mission of the Israelites, and the whole people of God. "Missionary activity, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament was to restore human beings to their blissful state."⁵ To fulfill this salvific plan of redemption.

¹ Genesis 1:3, Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition; Ignatius.

² John 1:1-3a, Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition; Ignatius.

³ Cf; Luke 7:1-10, Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition; Ignatius.

⁴ Mathew 28: 19-20, Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition; Ignatius.

⁵ Fr. Dominic Anaeto,, Lesson summaries, Lesson Four: The Biblical foundation for Mission and Evangelization.

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