

East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:

The Church as a Prophetic Witness

Speaker: Pastor Keith Jenkins

Date: October 20, 2024

Introduction:

In this powerful sermon, Pastor Keith Jenkins concluded the "Citizens of Heaven" series by focusing on the Church's role as a prophetic witness in the world. He emphasized the importance of the Church living out its calling to be a voice of truth, justice, and moral integrity in society.

1. The Church's Identity as "Called Out":

Pastor Keith explained the meaning of "Ekklesia" (church) as "those who are called out."

Discussion Questions:

1. How has your understanding of being "called out" as a Christian impacted your daily life?
2. In what ways can we live as those "called out" without isolating ourselves from the world?

Supporting Verse:

1 Peter 2:9 - "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Peter was writing to early Christians facing persecution and societal pressure.

- **Theological Significance:** This verse emphasizes the distinct identity and purpose of believers in the world.
- **Application:** We should live in a way that reflects our unique calling and identity in Christ.

2. Proclaiming God's Vision for Human Flourishing:

Pastor Keith discussed the Church's role in proclaiming God's vision for humanity.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does God's vision for human flourishing differ from what our culture often promotes?
2. In what ways can we practically demonstrate God's vision for humanity in our daily lives?

Supporting Verse:

Genesis 1:27-28 - "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.'"

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** This passage describes God's original intention for humanity at creation.
- **Theological Significance:** It emphasizes humanity's unique status as image-bearers of God and our role in creation.
- **Application:** We should seek to reflect God's character and fulfill His purposes in all aspects of our lives.

3. Calling for Justice and Speaking Truth to Power:

Pastor Keith emphasized the Church's responsibility to advocate for justice and speak truth to those in authority.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can we balance speaking truth to power with respecting authority as Christians?
2. What are some current issues where the Church needs to be a stronger voice for justice?

Supporting Verses:

Micah 6:8 - "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Luke 4:18-19 - "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: These passages reflect God's consistent call for His people to pursue justice and care for the vulnerable.
- Theological Significance: They emphasize that true faith is expressed through active engagement in social justice.
- Application: We should actively seek ways to promote justice and speak truth in our spheres of influence.

Conclusion:

Pastor Keith Jenkins' message reminded us that as the Church, we are called to be a prophetic witness in the world. This involves living out our distinct identity as those called by God, proclaiming His vision for humanity, and actively pursuing justice and truth in society.

Reflection Questions:

1. How can you more fully embrace your role as part of the Church's prophetic witness?

2. What steps can you take to better understand and address issues of injustice in your community?

3. How can our church community grow in its ability to speak truth to power while maintaining a spirit of love and humility?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for calling us out to be Your people and Your witnesses in the world. Help us to live in a way that reflects Your vision for humanity. Give us courage to speak truth to power and to actively pursue justice. May our lives and our church be a prophetic witness that draws others to You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

References:

Primary Sources:

"The Church as a Prophetic Witness," East Hill Church, 10/20/2024. Delivered by Pastor Keith Jenkins.

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Keller, Timothy. "Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just." Penguin Books, 2010.

Collaborative Contributions:

LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided sermon notes and biblical passages.

LLM Training Data:

LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to April 2024.