

Sermon – Who is Jesus? Teacher

Pastor Ed Blonski | February 12, 2023

Continued Sermon Series

We are continuing this message series called “Who is Jesus?”

Kind of a strange question to ask in a Lutheran Christian worship service, don't you think?

Of course everyone here knows who Jesus is!

Jesus the Preacher

But as we explored last week, there are some things that even life-long Christians can learn about who Jesus is.

We saw that Jesus was the greatest preacher in history.

But we also learned that Jesus is more than a preacher. His very life is a sermon.

And more than that, when we become followers of Jesus, we become “Jesus Sermons” to other people!

Jesus the Teacher

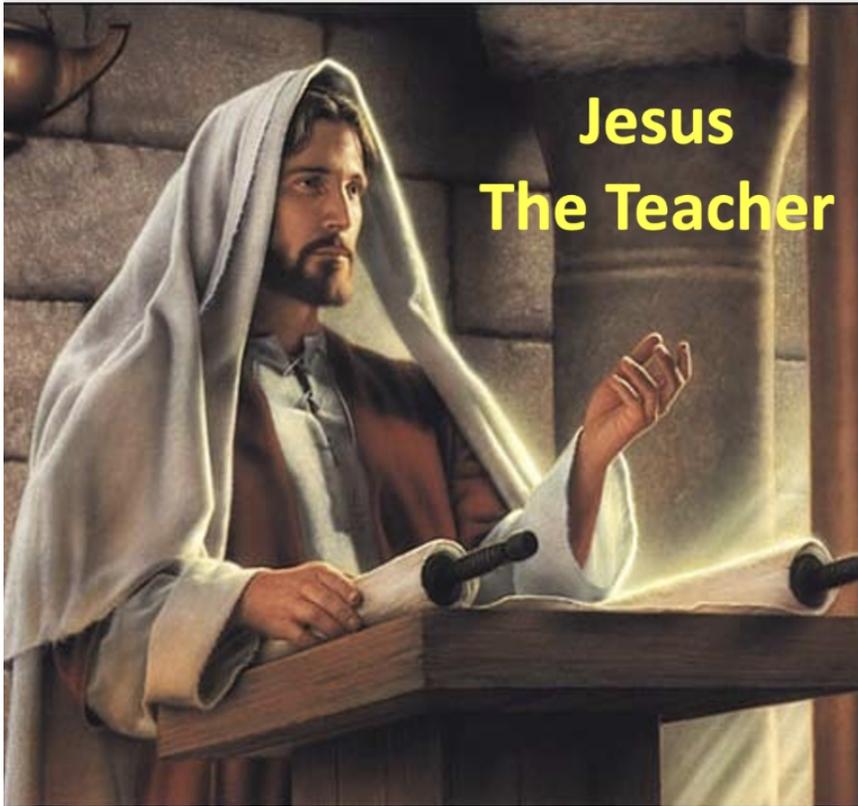
This week we'll explore another aspect of Jesus.

Who is Jesus? He is a teacher!

Jesus the Son of God

And next week we'll wrap up this message series by answering the question, “Who is Jesus?” with “The Son of God” as we conclude the Epiphany season of the Church Year with our celebration of the Transfiguration of our Lord.

Who is Jesus? A Teacher



Sermon:

"Who is Jesus? Teacher" Matthew 5:19

Who is Jesus? He is a teacher.

Or, as he was called often by His followers and others, *rabbi*, the Aramaic word for teacher.

The Greatest Teacher in History

I'm not exaggerating when I say that I think Jesus is the greatest teacher in history.

Jesus has almost been universally accepted as a great teacher throughout history.

In fact, there are many people today who – while having little use for the Church or for religion – will concede that Jesus was a great teacher.

But I believe that not only was Jesus a great teacher, but more than just a teacher. He was a great preacher.

Jesus is also the Son of God!

Through His Teachings He Touched More Lives Than Anyone Else

And because Jesus was also a preacher and the Son of God, through His teachings Jesus touched more lives than anyone else in history.

In fact, I think a case could be made that Jesus touched and changed more lives than anyone else in history *combined*.

But His Teachers are More than Just Teachings – They Are Life Itself!

And just as He is more than just a great teacher, Jesus' *teachings* are more than just great teachings.

Jesus' teachings are *life itself*.

You don't just learn things from Jesus. How to live a certain way – that is a *good* way, don't get me wrong!

Or how to act in certain situations – which you certainly do learn from Jesus, and they are good!

Because Jesus is the *Son of God*, His teachings actually bring life itself to His “students” or followers.

And I'll go deeper into that next time with the message “Who is Jesus? The Son of God”

Teachings Come and Go

The common thing about many of the teachings in the world is that they come and go.

Typing Class Became “Key Boarding”

For example, I was probably the last generation that actually learned how to “type.”

On a typewriter.

Putting two spaces after a period that ends a sentence.

1. Pica and Elite

Remember being taught the difference between pica and elite?

Remember learning about the “home row” and the significance of “a quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog”?

Now kids these days learn “keyboarding” and typing with their thumbs!



Old Math Became New Math which became Common Core Math

Remember being taught long division?

Old math became new math and now there's a push to change again to Common Core Math!

Teachers Had to Adapt or Find a New Profession

Teachings come and teachings go.

And teachers have to adapt or find a new profession.

Good Teachers Never Stop Learning

A good teacher never stops learning. That's a tried and true adage.

Where would we be if teachers in the 1600's decided that Copernicus was a quack and still taught the sun revolved around the earth? We might never have learned the Laws of Motion, the Laws of Gravity, and almost certainly would never have reached the moon in 1969!

No, good teachers never stop learning. And we all have had good teachers.

Great Teachers Touch the Lives of their Students

But let me take that even further.

Good teachers never stop learning.

Great teachers touch the lives of their students!

We All Have a Favorite Teacher

Think of your favorite teacher. Nearly all of you have at least one.

I actually have *four* – all at different times of my life.



My Favorites

1. Fred Lams

Grade school was Fred Lams.

He inspired me to love religion and Lutheranism.

2. Hazel Fish

High school was Hazel Fish.

She inspired me to love reading and literature – especially mythology, fantasy and folklore.

3. Tim Maschke

College was Tim Maschke.

Dr. Maschke inspired me to take religion – and especially Lutheranism – and learn and present it in exciting and fun ways.

4. Norman Nagel

And post-graduate – seminary, actually – was Norman Nagel.

Dr. Nagel taught me to look at the things and ways of Jesus from different angles – sometimes literally! He would lecture on who Jesus is and what Jesus taught while pacing around a room with his eyes closed *and never ran into a wall or desk*.

What Makes a Great Teacher

So, what makes for a great teacher? I think there are at least four things that make a teacher great.

They Know Their Stuff

First, *they know their stuff*.

You'd expect a teacher of math to know how to do math.

You'd expect a history teacher to know the history they teach.

A great teacher knows what they teach – and a little bit more, to always lead a student beyond what they are learning.

They Love What They Do

Another thing that makes a teacher great is that *they love what they do*.

Great teachers teach with *passion*.

They often and regularly go beyond the syllabus of what is required to teach, learn, and pass the class.

A great teacher will also be willing to go beyond the classroom to teach and share knowledge.

They Love Their Students

A third thing that makes a teacher great is that *they love their students*.

They see those faces two, three, sometimes five days a week. They are interested in their lives outside the classroom.

They encourage them beyond the classroom.

They are *invested* in the success of their students.

All this stems from their love of teaching and their love of their students.

They Inspire a Number of Students Per Year

And, finally, what makes a teacher great is that *they inspire a number of students per year*.

Fred Lams, Hazel Fish, Tim Maschke, Norman Nagel, all inspired me to be a better student, a better person, a better pastor.

A great teacher inspires all students, but there are also one or two students per class or per academic year that goes beyond getting a good grade.

A great teacher will inspire a student to greatness.

Jesus Exceeds Even the Greatest of Teachers

And these four things

they know their stuff

they love what they do

they love their students

they inspire a number of students per year

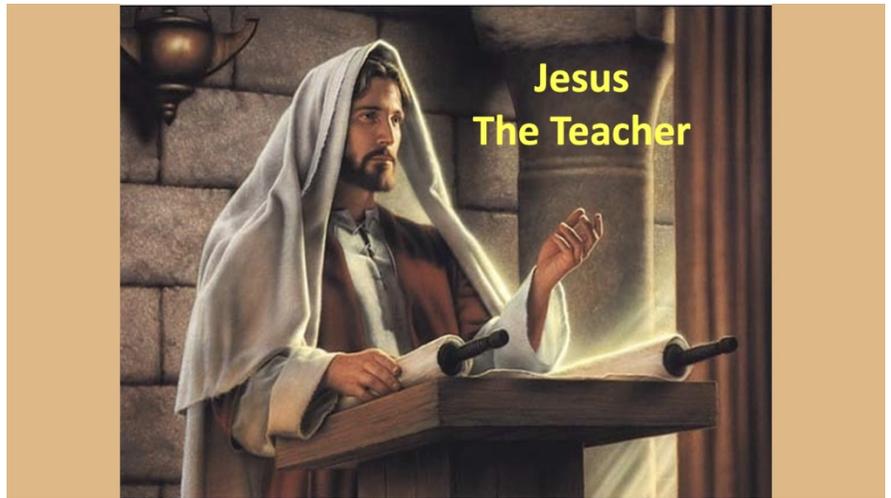
can also describe Jesus Christ, the greatest teacher of all time!

Jesus Knew His Stuff Better Than Anyone Else

No one knew the stuff He taught better than Jesus.

Because what Jesus taught was God and His love for all people.

And no one knows God better than Jesus *because Jesus is God!*



Jesus Loves What He Does

Jesus also loved what He did!

He gave up the throne of heaven, became a human being, and lived among us as one of us for 30 some odd years because he loved doing what was needed to save all people.

Jesus Loves His “Students”

So, it should come as no surprise that Jesus was the greatest teacher because He loved all His students!

Jesus came to save everyone descended from Adam and Eve – and that’s every single human being – because He loved us all with *agape* love.

The proof of that love is that Jesus did what was necessary to save all people from their sins.

Jesus took all the sins of all people on Himself and was nailed to a cross.

By taking our sins on Himself, then pouring out His own blood as payment for those sins, Jesus shows how much He loves us.

Jesus was willing to pay the cost for sin Himself for us.

Yes, Jesus loves His students. Look no further than a cross to see that!

Jesus Inspires More People Than Anyone

And Jesus inspires more people than anyone else!

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus inspires His followers to live in that love and to share that love with all others.

The Problem Student

Yet, we don't do that very well sometimes, do we?

Even Great Teachers Have a Student Who is a Huge Challenge

Even great teachers have a student – or students – that are a huge challenge.

You know the kind.

Maybe *you* were that kind of student!

I know I was a times!

And yet great teachers never give up, even on the problem students!

And thank God for that!



We Are All Problem Students to Teacher Jesus

But let's be honest about this.

We *all* are problem students to Teacher Jesus!

He went to the cross for us. He loves us.

And yet, "*As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool repeats his folly*"

Who said that?

My *teachers* taught me that it is from Proverbs 26:11 and 2 Peter 2:22!

We all sin, every day. Even we who have been followers of Jesus all our lives – pastors, teachers, life-long church members.

We sin every day.

Which is why Martin Luther – another great teacher – taught us that our Baptisms *indicate that the Old Adam [our sinful human nature] in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.*

Notice what Luther teaches us – *daily* tap into the power of our Baptisms, that itself tapped into the power of the cross of Jesus Christ!

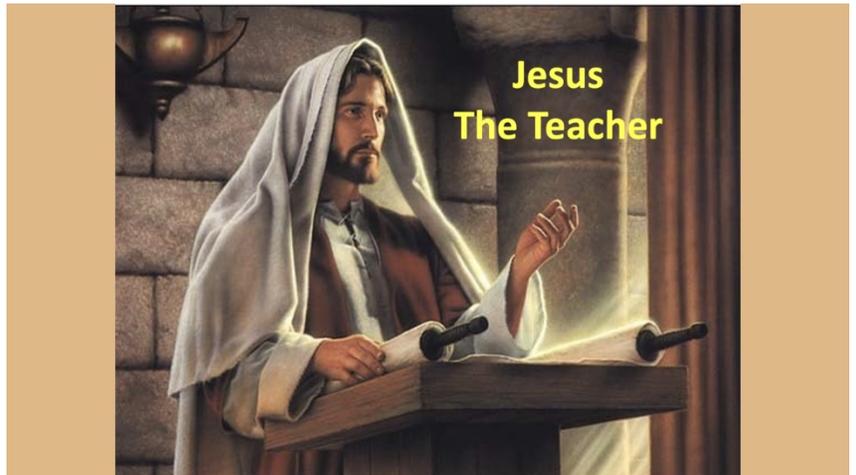
Jesus Exceeds All Other Teachers

Because Jesus Actually Died For His Students – All of Us!

I said earlier that Jesus is the greatest teacher and here is what I meant.

Jesus far exceeds all other teachers, in that He not only teaches us what we need to learn – about God, about righteousness, about life.

But Jesus goes so far beyond teaching!



Remember this, if nothing else, from this message:

Jesus actually died for His students – that's you and me!

That's how much He loves us. Jesus did what it took to save us.

So that we could live forever with Him in heaven!

Jesus Inspires All of You In Different Ways

And that is why Jesus inspires us. He does so much for us, gives all the benefits of His sacrifice to us by grace.

That can inspire us! So, this week, see if you aren't inspired in a least four ways:

To Help Your Neighbor in Specific Way

Help your neighbor in a specific way.

Of course, you can pray for them – and you should.

Of course, you can be nice to them, wave at them, smile at them – and you should.

But see if there's some specific *need* you can meet by being inspired by the *love* of Jesus Christ!

Cook a meal. Shovel a walk. Stop at the pharmacy.

Be inspired by Jesus to seek out the need around you!

To Become a Pastor (desperately needed)

You could be inspired by Jesus to become a pastor.

That's not something I talk about enough – and I'm going to change that.

Because we in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod need more men to consider going into the ministry!

We have seven wonderful universities – although one is more wonderful than the others – that's my opinion, however.

We have two awesome seminaries – although one is more awesome than the other – again, my opinion.

Consider visiting them to see if Jesus is inspiring you to be a pastor.

To Become a Teacher (desperately needed)

Or a Lutheran teacher, or a director of Christian education, director of church ministry, director of church music, director of Christian outreach, or a deaconess.

We need more of all the professional, full-time, church workers!

To Live Your Life so Others Can Meet Jesus

But even if Jesus isn't inspiring you to go into the full-time professional ministry, you can be inspired to live your life so that others can meet Jesus through you.

As I said last week, you become the best "Jesus sermon" for a person that can change their lives!

Jesus – The Greatest Teacher Ever

Jesus is the greatest teacher ever.

He Loves You

Because He loves you – look at the cross to see that.

He Inspires You

Because He inspires you to live a life full of love and hope that meets the needs of others.

Teaches Others Through You

Because He actually teaches others through you!

Who is Jesus? He is the greatest teacher of all time, *your* greatest teacher.

Be inspired to live the life Jesus teaches and gives you.