



PROPHET & LOSS
THE COST OF FAITHFULNESS

SERIES COMPANION | HIGHROCK 2025

INTRODUCTION

This September, we're diving into what it truly means to be a prophetic voice in the modern world. In our new series, Prophet & Loss: The Cost of Faithfulness, we'll confront the difficult truth that prophets are rarely popular in their own time. We'll explore the lives of biblical figures who spoke inconvenient truths and faced rejection for their unwavering faith and commitment to God's justice. Join us as we uncover what their stories can teach us about our own calling, and what it truly costs to speak truth in a world that doesn't always want to hear it.

RESOURCE OVERVIEW

Here we provide space to take notes on the sermon and Scripture text and answer reflection questions that you can discuss with others. When considering the reflection questions, remember that the goal is not to have all the "right" answers—instead, let these questions serve as a starting point for curiosity in your conversation with God and others. See the Appendix of this guide for more resources and opportunities to engage with this study.

Please note this discussion guide is created before the series begins. Discussion questions are prepared before the sermons are written and based on the theme and text for the week. Thank you for your understanding that the topic and focus of the sermon as the pastor writes it may differ from what is written in the discussion questions.

APPENDIX (page 15)

Offers a deeper dive into the topic as well as resources for Bible study, leading small groups, and links for further support.

- Additional Resources
- Online Bibles
- Prayer Tools
- "Icebreaker" Questions
- Tips for Guiding Conversations
- General Resources for Individual Support

SERMON SCHEDULE & SCRIPTURE READING

**Subject to change at the discretion of the pastors.*

Sermon	Topic & Scripture Passage
Week 1	Calling of a Prophet: Ezekiel 2:1-9, 3:1-8
*Week 2/3	Hard Truths: Jeremiah 7:1-15
*Week 2/3	God's Desire for Justice: Amos 5:4-7, 10-12, 21-24
Week 4	Restoration: Hosea 14:1-9

*For weeks 2 and 3 use the topic/passage in the Sermon Discussion Guide covered in the sermon from your Highrock congregation on Sunday. The other topics/passage will be covered the following week.

WEEKLY FORMAT

SERMON DISCUSSION

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT: Listen to the sermon, read weekly selections/view video links (if provided), read scripture passages, and answer reflection questions. (30-40 mins)

RELATE: Discuss reflection questions with your small group. (50 mins)

PRAY: Use the suggested prayer prompt to conclude your time (5-10 mins)

CONVERSATION COVENANT

We hope all small group discussions are lively and enriching, but sometimes tough topics will be discussed. The Conversation Covenant* is an agreement to hold respect and grace toward all participants within a small group, no matter the conversation. Please adhere to the Conversation Covenant or consider creating one that fits your context.

*Adapted from <https://conversational-leadership.net/conversation-covenant/>

I pledge:

To act in good faith, with curiosity. I will assume the best about my conversation partners when entering into our groups. I will give the benefit of the doubt, recognizing that they may know something I don't.

To show respect. I will show respect. I will be polite and give due regard to the feelings and traditions of others. I understand that I do not have to agree with someone to show them respect.

To speak the truth. I won't use rhetorical tricks to try to win an argument. I will speak what I genuinely believe is the nuanced truth.

To aim to discover the truth. I will not enter into a conversation with the purpose of changing the mind of anyone to my way of thinking.

To focus on what we can change. I will focus on what we can do differently in the future since we cannot change what we did in the past.

To take responsibility for the conversation. I will take responsibility for the quality of the conversation and the abidance of the rules both in principle and in spirit.

To follow the covenant even when others fail to do so. I will abide by the rules regardless of whether another person breaks them.

To respect the confidentiality of the group. I will not share the stories of group members verbally or in written form (including on social media and online outlets).

To lighten up and approach the conversation in good humor. I recognize that humor is a hallmark of a constructive, generative conversation and take the conversation in good humor.

PREPARE

The following questions are jumping-off points for personal reflection. Engage with them to awaken your awareness of themes in this sermon series. Pay attention to the questions that stand out to you and look back on them throughout the series to see how God might be speaking to you.

CONSIDER

- What, if anything, are your first impressions of prophets? Coming into this sermon series, are there things you've been taught that the biblical prophets do? What are they?
- What questions do you have about the biblical prophets? What would you like to learn about? What confusions about the prophets or points of curiosity do you hope to explore?
- What do you hope to get out of this series spiritually? What's going on in your life that might impact, negatively or positively, how you approach this series? Consider writing out one or two things below, and bring those to God in prayer as we begin this series.

WEEK 1: Calling of a Prophet

Ezekiel 2 - 3:8

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights
- ☐ Read Ezekiel 2 -3:8

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon or reading has brought up new questions or interesting points you would like to discuss?
2. As we begin this sermon series on biblical prophets, what are your initial impressions of prophets and their role? What do you hope to learn about them? In what ways did this sermon shape or deepen your understanding of a prophet's calling?
3. This passage includes striking imagery, such as Ezekiel consuming a scroll (Ezekiel 3:1-2). How did the sermon help you interpret or make sense of these images? What meaning(s) do you see in them?
4. Consider God's words to the prophet. How does the way God speaks to the prophet reveal God's care and how God gives a sense of calling? How does this shape your understanding of who God is?
5. Likewise, what does it mean to you that God continues to reach out to a people who have turned away from God? What does this tell us about God's heart and plans for us?
6. Is there an invitation you sense God making through your conversation or reflections this week? Is there a next step you could take in how you engage, act, or relate to others?

PRAY | God, show us more about yourself through the prophets. Show us what it means to listen for your voice, to be ready to change our ways, and to have a more genuine hope for renewal and justice to come. We need your grace, all of us, everywhere. May it come quickly. Amen.

Ezekiel 2 - 3:8

1 He said to me, "Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you." 2 As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.

3 He said: "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have been in revolt against me to this very day. 4 The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says.' 5 And whether they listen or fail to listen—for they are a rebellious people—they will know that a prophet has been among them. 6 And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words. Do not be afraid, though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or be terrified by them, though they are a rebellious people. 7 You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious. 8 But you, son of man, listen to what I say to you. Do not rebel like that rebellious people; open your mouth and eat what I give you."

9 Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll 10 which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe.

(chapter 3) 1 And he said to me, "Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat.

3 Then he said to me, "Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.

4 He then said to me: "Son of man, go now to the people of Israel and speak my words to them. 5 You are not being sent to a people of obscure speech and strange language, but to the people of Israel— 6 not to many peoples of obscure speech and strange language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely if I had sent you to them, they would have listened to you. 7 But the people of Israel are not willing to listen to you because they are not willing to listen to me, for all the Israelites are hardened and obstinate. 8 But I will make you as unyielding and hardened as they are.

WEEK 2/3*: Hard Truths

Jeremiah 7:1-15

*For weeks 2 and 3 use the topic/passage in the Sermon Discussion Guide covered in the sermon from your Highrock congregation on Sunday. The other topics/passage will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights
- ☐ Read Jeremiah 7:1-15, or the selected parts that were used in the sermon

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon has brought up new questions or interesting points you would like to discuss?
2. Drawing from the sermon, what was the temptation and false promise the people of God gave into? Do you see connections to your own life either this temptation or in Israel's shortcomings?
3. Jeremiah calls out a false trust in deceptive words. What does it look like for you to hear honest words, words you can trust and that you believe are good for you and others? What can be challenging about that? What would it look like to be more intentional about pursuing and being open to more truthful, though perhaps challenging, words in your life?
4. What are the 'hard truths' you see in this sermon and Scripture passage? How can we still see evidence of God's goodness and grace in these truths, or how do they bring out the good God wills for us even more clearly?
5. Is there an invitation you sense God making through your conversation or reflections this week? Is there a next step you could take in how you engage, act, or relate to others?

PRAY | God, we are a people who need guidance and mercy. We need words of truth to correct our ways. As we cling to your steadfast goodness, help us be open to hear these words. Trusting in your grace, help us align our ways with yours. Make us more the kind of people who welcome the stranger, care for the vulnerable and pursue peace in a violent world. In the name of Jesus we pray, amen.

Jeremiah 7:1-15

1 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2 "Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there proclaim this message:

"Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. 3 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. 4 Do not trust in deceptive words and say, "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!" 5 If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, 6 if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, 7 then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever. 8 But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.

9 "'Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, 10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe"—safe to do all these detestable things? 11 Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.

12 “Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. 13 While you were doing all these things, declares the LORD, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer. 14 Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your ancestors. 15 I will thrust you from my presence, just as I did all your fellow Israelites, the people of Ephraim.’

WEEK 2/3*: God's Desire for Justice

Amos 5:4-7, 10-12, 21-24

*For weeks 2 and 3 use the topic/passage in the Sermon Discussion Guide covered in the sermon from your Highrock congregation on Sunday. The other topics/passage will be covered the following week.

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights
- ☐ Read Amos 5:4-7, 10-12, 21-24

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon or reading has brought up new questions or interesting points you would like to discuss?
2. This passage, with its strong emphasis on justice, begins with a lament (5:1). Why might this be important? What could lamenting look like for you, and how do you think it could make a difference in the way you approach questions of justice?
3. Drawing from the sermon and biblical passage, what is the charge of God against God's people? What wrong have they done, and what does it tell us about the kind of justice God cares about? How do you see ways that the call for justice translates into our world and our lives today?
4. Read the famous passage, Amos 5: together: "let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" What impression does it leave you with? Hope? Conviction? Something else? How might you bring those impressions into your week (in how you pray, in what you do)?
5. How does the message of this passage (and the sermon) challenge you personally? Also, where do you see an invitation in this passage? Is there a next step you could take in responding to this challenge and/or invitation?

PRAY | God of justice, mercy and faithfulness, forgive us for the ways we have not done what we should have done, remained silent when we should have said something, or acted unjustly ourselves. We believe your love is unfailing and your invitation to new life remains. Help us admit our shortcomings and see the way to new life, day by day, guided by your grace that can transform us and our world.

Amos 5:4-7, 10-12, 21-24

4 This is what the LORD says to Israel:

"Seek me and live;

5 do not seek Bethel,
do not go to Gilgal,
do not journey to Beersheba.

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For Gilgal will surely go into exile,
and Bethel will be reduced to nothing."

6 Seek the LORD and live,
or he will sweep through the tribes of Joseph like a fire;
it will devour them,
and Bethel will have no one to quench it.

7 There are those who turn justice into bitterness
and cast righteousness to the ground.

10 There are those who hate the one who upholds justice in court
and detest the one who tells the truth.

11 You levy a straw tax on the poor
and impose a tax on their grain.
Therefore, though you have built stone mansions,
you will not live in them;
though you have planted lush vineyards,
you will not drink their wine.

12 For I know how many are your offenses
and how great your sins.

There are those who oppress the innocent and take bribes
and deprive the poor of justice in the courts.

21 "I hate, I despise your religious festivals;
your assemblies are a stench to me.

22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them.
Though you bring choice fellowship offerings,
I will have no regard for them.

23 Away with the noise of your songs!
I will not listen to the music of your harps.

24 But let justice roll on like a river,
righteousness like a never-failing stream!

25 "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings
forty years in the wilderness, people of Israel?

26 You have lifted up the shrine of your king,
the pedestal of your idols,
the star of your god—
which you made for yourselves.

27 Therefore I will send you into exile beyond Damascus,"
says the LORD, whose name is God Almighty.

WEEK 4: Restoration

Hosea 14:1-9

(PRE-WORK) REFLECT | Before your small group gathering, complete the following and reflect on the discussion questions. These will be the basis for your small group time.

- ☐ Listen to the Sermon on Highrock's [YouTube channel](#) and note any reactions you had – curiosities, concerns, or delights
- ☐ Read Hosea 14:1-9

RELATE | Use these questions as a launching point for your small group conversation or personal reflection.

1. What from the sermon or reading has brought up new questions or interesting points you would like to discuss?
2. This sermon series has emphasized the high-calling of the prophets, how we are called to justice and turn away from evil. What has this meant for you? What's one thing in your life right now, big or small, you either are trying to change or want to change in order to more faithfully serve God?
3. The prophetic message includes hope and restoration. How are you able to hear the prophets (or prophetic teachings) differently knowing that God has your good (and others) in view?
4. What's something you hope to be restored, to get better, but feels like it's at a standstill (or worse) right now? What does it look like to pray for this situation? What, if anything, gives you hope?
5. Where do you see God possibly beginning or continuing with the work of restoration? How does this give you (and others) hope?
6. Looking back at this sermon series, what's one invitation you sense God making through your conversations or reflections? Is there a next step you could take in how you engage, act, or relate to others?

PRAY | God, you have begun the work of restoration. Continue this work in us, your church, and this world until it is complete. Until then, give us enough strength, courage, and conviction to continue in our faith as well, and make us open to ongoing change and transformation in order to better reflect your prophetic love to this world. Amen.

Hosea 14:1-9

1 Return, Israel, to the LORD your God.
Your sins have been your downfall!

2 Take words with you
and return to the LORD.
Say to him:
"Forgive all our sins
and receive us graciously,
that we may offer the fruit of our lips.

3 Assyria cannot save us;
we will not mount warhorses.
We will never again say 'Our gods'

to what our own hands have made,
for in you the fatherless find compassion."

4 "I will heal their waywardness
and love them freely,
for my anger has turned away from them.

5 I will be like the dew to Israel;
he will blossom like a lily.
Like a cedar of Lebanon
he will send down his roots;

6 his young shoots will grow.
His splendor will be like an olive tree,
his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.

7 People will dwell again in his shade;
they will flourish like the grain,
they will blossom like the vine—
Israel's fame will be like the wine of Lebanon.

8 Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols?
I will answer him and care for him.
I am like a flourishing juniper;
your fruitfulness comes from me."

9 Who is wise? Let them realize these things.
Who is discerning? Let them understand.
The ways of the LORD are right;
the righteous walk in them,
but the rebellious stumble in them

APPENDIX

Below are resources to look into if you are interested in diving deeper into some of the topics covered in this series. If you need resources that more specifically address your own experience, demographic, or faith journey, please reach out to a Highrock pastor or to smallgroups@highrock.org and we will be happy to help!

ONLINE BIBLES

- [Blue Letter Bible](#)
- [Bible Gateway](#)

PRAYER TOOLS

- [The Prayer of Examen: Tracking Our Moods](#)
- [Breath Prayer/Prayer of the Heart](#)
- [Divine/Fixed Hour Prayer](#)
- [SoulCare guide to Imaginative Prayer Spiritual Practice](#)
- [Imaginative Prayer/Ignatian Contemplation](#)
- [SoulCare guide to Recall & Paraphrase Spiritual Practice](#)
- [Lament](#)
- [Laughter and Prayer](#)
- [Palms Up, Palms Down](#)
- [Pray a Psalm in a Nature Setting](#)
- [Praying with your Body](#)
- [Welcoming Prayer](#)

“ICEBREAKER” QUESTIONS

- What was a small win from your week?
- Share a High/Low from your day or week.
- On a scale of 1-10, how are you doing coming into this meeting?
- If you were to describe yourself as a weather forecast today, what would you be? Example: sunny, partly cloudy, rainy with a chance of snow, etc.
- What song would be the theme track for the day you had?

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

- [Spiritual Practices](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Parenting & Kids—Understanding each other through Milestones](#)

TIPS FOR GUIDING CONVERSATION

- Allow everyone space to share. It's ok to ask what people are thinking even if they don't volunteer to share right away. But always give people the option to decline to share. Example: "Hey, Fred, you've been a little quiet and I'm curious to know what you think. Would you like to share anything?"
- Remember there aren't necessarily "right" answers. Encourage participants to simply be curious about what came up for them or others without the pressure of feeling like they "should" have thought or felt anything in particular. Example: Instead of asking "What is this story supposed to be communicating?" ask "What did you notice?"

- Embrace the differences. Affirm that different people can come to different conclusions regarding the same thing. Example: "Interestingly, the text reminded Susie of ABC, while it reminded José of XYZ. Both can be present and true."
- Adapt to suit your group's needs. Sometimes conversation is free-flowing and sometimes it's easier to move through discussion questions one at a time. Do what feels suitable for your group, but don't feel pressured to answer/discuss every single question.
- Encourage curiosity by modeling curiosity. Asking someone "Tell me more about XYZ" can be a really simple but effective tool to go deeper in conversation.
- Don't be afraid of silence. It's natural to want to fill silences or pauses in a conversation. But don't be afraid to sit in silence with your group members. Sometimes thoughts just need time to percolate, so don't feel like you have to rush to another question if no one shares immediately.
- Refer back to the Conversation Covenant. This is the posture that we as Highrock hold as we gather in groups. When the conversation gets tough, you can always refer back to the Conversation Covenant to remind the group that everyone has agreed to abide by this covenant in small group meetings.