

***“THE MESSIAH’S JOB DESCRIPTION”***

**A SERMON BASED ON THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH (61:1-4, 8-11) AND PRESENTED AT ORLEAN UMC ON DECEMBER 14, 2014----ADVENT #3**

**LAST WEEK WE LOOKED AT MARK’S GOSPEL AND THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST -----WHO CAME PROCLAIMING THE ARRIVAL OF THE SAVIOR AND PREPARING THE WAY BEFORE HIM.**

**IN DOING THIS, JOHN FULFILLED THE JOB DESCRIPTION SET FORTH FOR HIM BY THE PROPHET ISAIAH -----**

**IN THE FORTIETH CHAPTER OF ISAIAH’S PROPHECY ----- JOHN HIMSELF SAYS, “I AM THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘*MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,*’----- ISAIAH REPORTS THAT ....” JOHN CAME TO PROCLAIM THE COMING OF THE ONE COMING AFTER HIM.”**

**BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT ONE COMING AFTER HIM? -----  
COMING AFTER JOHN?-----WHAT WAS HIS JOB  
DESCRIPTION? -----THE CHRIST--WHAT WILL HE  
COME TO DO? -----WELL, THAT TOO WE FIND THROUGH  
THE PROPHET ISAIAH, ONLY THIS TIME IN CHAPTER 61,  
THE OLD TESTAMENT READING FOR TODAY. THERE WE  
FIND “THE MESSIAH’S JOB DESCRIPTION.”**

**YOU KNOW, FRIENDS, CHRISTMAS IS JUST TWO WEEKS  
FROM TODAY. WHY IS THE CELEBRATION OF  
CHRISTMAS AN OCCASION OF SUCH GREAT JOY? THE  
REASON IS BECAUSE OF WHAT THE COMING OF THE  
CHRIST MEANS FOR US.**

**IT ALL HINGES ON WHAT HE COMES TO DO. AND HERE IN THIS CHAPTER, HE TELLS US.**

**THE TEXT BEGINS WITH WORDS THAT COME FROM THE MESSIAH HIMSELF: “*THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD GOD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE THE LORD HAS ANOINTED ME.*”**

**THIS IS THE CHRIST SPEAKING HERE. *THE MESSIAH. “CHRIST” IS THE GREEK TERM; “MESSIAH” IS THE HEBREW. THEY BOTH MEAN THE SAME THING: THE “ANOINTED ONE.”***

**AS *KINGS AND PRIESTS AND* PROPHETS WERE ANOINTED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT--THEY LITERALLY HAD OIL Poured OVER THEIR HEADS, DESIGNATING THEM AS GOD’S CHOSEN SERVANTS, HAVING HIS**

**POWER AND BLESSING AND SPIRIT RESTING UPON THEM--IN AN EVEN GREATER WAY WOULD THE GREAT KING, THE MESSIAH, BE ANOINTED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, EMPOWERING THE CHRIST FOR HIS OFFICE, SHOWING THAT THIS MAN IS GOD'S CHOICE.....**

**OF COURSE, THIS IS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO JESUS AT HIS BAPTISM, WHEN THE SPIRIT CAME TO REST UPON HIM IN THE FORM OF A DOVE, AND THE FATHER'S VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED."**

**AND THIS ANOINTING, THIS EMPOWERMENT, IS FOR A PURPOSE: TO ENABLE THE CHRIST TO CARRY OUT HIS OFFICE..... WHAT FOLLOWS, THEN, IS THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THE MESSIAH IS CALLED TO DO. AS WE LOOK AT THE LIST OF THOSE VARIOUS ITEMS, I THINK WE CAN GROUP THEM INTO TWO SECTIONS. THE MESSIAH IS COMING TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS AND TO PROVIDE NEW GARMENTS..... LET'S LOOK AT EACH.**

**FIRST, TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS. THAT WOULD COVER WHAT'S SAID HERE IN THE FIRST COUPLE OF VERSES:**

***“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD GOD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE THE LORD HAS ANOINTED ME TO BRING GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR; HE HAS SENT ME TO BIND UP THE BROKENHEARTED, TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES, AND THE OPENING OF THE PRISON TO THOSE WHO ARE BOUND;***

***TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR, AND  
THE DAY OF VENGEANCE OF OUR GOD."***

**THIS IS THE MESSIAH'S WORK OF PROCLAMATION.**

**LOOK HOW MANY OF THESE THINGS HAVE TO DO WITH  
PROCLAIMING, ANNOUNCING, PREACHING.**

**JESUS CHRIST IS THE WORD OF GOD COME FROM  
HEAVEN. HE IS THE WORD MADE FLESH. HE COMES TO  
MAKE GOD KNOWN TO US. HIS PREACHING, HIS WHOLE  
MINISTRY, HIS VERY SELF--CHRIST HIMSELF IN HIS  
COMING IS THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOOD NEWS.**

**HE COMES ANNOUNCING THE ARRIVAL OF THE  
KINGDOM OF GOD, THE KINGDOM OF ETERNAL  
BLESSING, NOW HERE, IN AND THROUGH GOD'S SON.**

**LOOK AT THE THINGS HE PROCLAIMS: GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR; BINDING UP OF THE BROKENHEARTED; LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES; AND THE OPENING OF THE PRISON TO THOSE WHO ARE BOUND. DOES ANY OF THIS WORK FOR YOU????? ARE YOU IN NEED OF CHRIST???**

**HOW ABOUT YOU? DO ANY OF THOSE SITUATIONS DESCRIBE YOU? POOR, BROKENHEARTED, CAPTIVE, PRISON-BOUND? ARE ANY OF THOSE TRUE OF YOU, EITHER LITERALLY OR FIGURATIVELY? ARE YOU ECONOMICALLY POOR?**

**THE MESSIAH HAS GOOD NEWS FOR YOU..... GOD IS FOR YOU, AND HE WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU.....**

**DO YOU REALIZE YOUR SPIRITUAL POVERTY? GOOD NEWS FOR YOU.....FOR GOD BESTOWS THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE PRECISELY ON THE EMPTY-HANDED.**

**HOW ABOUT BROKENHEARTED? IS THAT YOU? SO MANY DISAPPOINTMENTS IN YOUR LIFE, A SENSE OF LOSS, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH MAY BE HOW YOU'VE LET YOURSELF DOWN..... GOOD NEWS: THE LORD GOD IS SENDING THE MESSIAH TO BIND UP YOUR WOUNDS..... GOD HEALS BROKEN HEARTS. HE RESTORES OUR WHOLENESS AS PERSONS, BEGINNING NOW, AND FULLY WHEN THE MESSIAH COMES AGAIN ...**

**“TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES, AND THE OPENING OF THE PRISON TO THOSE WHO ARE BOUND.”**



**WE PUT OURSELVES IN PRISONS OF OUR OWN MAKING.  
SATAN ----- AND YES SATAN IS AS REAL AS YOU OR I -----  
TRIES TO TRAP US WITH HIS TRICKS, AND SOMETIMES  
HE SUCCEEDS....BUT CHRIST COMES TO BURST THOSE  
BARS..... “IF THE SON SETS YOU FREE, YOU SHALL BE  
FREE INDEED.”**

**THERE’S MORE: “TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE  
LORD’S FAVOR, AND THE DAY OF VENGEANCE OF OUR  
GOD.” TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN..... FAVOR FOR  
US, VENGEANCE ON THE ENEMIES OF OUR SOULS. “THE  
YEAR OF THE LORD’S FAVOR” MEANS THE TIME OF HIS  
GRACE, “GOD’S RICHES AT CHRIST’S EXPENSE.”**

**IT MEANS THE CANCELING OF ALL OUR DEBTS, THE GREAT JUBILEE. “THE DAY OF VENGEANCE OF OUR GOD” MEANS THAT GOD DEFEATS FOR US OUR BIGGEST ENEMIES, SIN, DEATH, AND SATAN.....**

**GOOD-NEWSING THE POOR, BINDING THE BROKENHEARTED, LIBERATING THE CAPTIVES, RELEASING THE PRISONERS, FAVORING US AND DEFEATING OUR ENEMIES--THESE ALL ARE THE THINGS THAT THE MESSIAH COMES TO PROCLAIM..... BUT HE COMES NOT ONLY TO PROCLAIM THEM, HE COMES TO PERFORM THEM! HE NOT ONLY ANNOUNCES THESE THINGS, HE ACHIEVES THEM. HE DOESN'T JUST SPEAK ABOUT THESE WONDERFUL WORKS, HE DOES THEM.**

**HOW?----- THE CHRIST PERFORMS WHAT HE  
PROCLAIMS BY COMING AMONG US POOR AND  
BROKENHEARTED ONES, ENTERING OUR HALL OF  
DEATH, SHARING OUR SORROWS, AND SUFFERING -----  
AND THEN DYING TO PUT AN END TO THEM..... JESUS  
HIMSELF WAS LED CAPTIVE TO THE CROSS, WHERE,  
IRONICALLY ENOUGH, HE DEFEATED OUR ENEMIES BY  
TAKING ALL OUR SINS UPON HIMSELF AND TAKING THE  
DEATH THAT WE ALL DESERVE. -----AS A RESULT, THIS  
NOW IS THE YEAR OF GOD'S FAVOR TOWARD US. WE  
BENEFIT BY RECEIVING THE RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE,  
IN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND ETERNAL LIFE AND  
SALVATION. GOOD NEWS, PROCLAIMED AND  
PERFORMED!**

**SO THAT'S THE FIRST PART OF THE MESSIAH'S JOB DESCRIPTION: TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS..... THE SECOND PART THEN FOLLOWS: TO PROVIDE NEW GARMENTS.**

**HERE'S WHAT I MEAN. WHEN THE MESSIAH SAYS WHAT THE LORD HAS ANOINTED HIM TO DO, HE CONTINUES BY SAYING: "TO COMFORT ALL WHO MOURN; TO GRANT TO THOSE WHO MOURN IN ZION--TO GIVE THEM A BEAUTIFUL HEADDRESS INSTEAD OF ASHES, THE OIL OF GLADNESS INSTEAD OF MOURNING, THE GARMENT OF PRAISE INSTEAD OF A FAINT SPIRIT." THERE'S A CLOTHING EXCHANGE HERE. *THERE'S A TAKING OFF OF GRIEF GARMENTS GOING ON, AND A PUTTING ON OF JOYFUL, LIVELY CLOTHES. NEW CLOTHING, A WHOLE NEW WARDROBE.***

**DEATH, DISEASE, SICKNESS, SORROW, THE LOSS OF LOVED ONES, THE AGING PROCESS, OUR BODIES WEARING DOWN, JUST AN OVERALL SENSE OF LOSS AND REGRET--THE TRAVAILS OF THIS LIFE CAN WEAR US DOWN, CAUSE US SADNESS, EVEN MOURNING. WE'VE GOT OUR GRIEF GARMENTS ON, AND THAT CAN CERTAINLY BE UNDERSTANDABLE, LIVING AS WE DO IN THIS VALE OF TEARS.**

**BUT THEN HERE COMES THIS BIG SURPRISE. THE MESSIAH IS COMING, AND HE'S GOT A WHOLE NEW LINE OF CLOTHING FOR US TO TRY ON. IF YOU'VE BEEN WEARING ASHES TO SYMBOLIZE YOUR "BURNOUT," IF YOU WILL, AND THE HUMBLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HOW ROTTEN OF A SINNER YOU'VE BEEN,**

**THEN THE MESSIAH HAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR YOU TO WEAR: A BEAUTIFUL HEADDRESS, SOMETHING THAT A PRIEST OR A KING WOULD WEAR..... THIS IS INDEED NOBLE STUFF.....**

**IN PLACE OF THE EMBLEMS OF MOURNING AND SADNESS, THE MESSIAH PUTS ON YOUR HEAD THE OIL OF GLADNESS..... YOU TOO GET TO BE ANOINTED AND FEEL THE REFRESHMENT OF GOD'S SPIRIT!**

**HAVE YOU BEEN FAINTHEARTED, DESPAIRING, LACKING CONFIDENCE IN GOD? HERE COMES THE CHRIST, AND HE PLACES ON YOUR SHOULDERS THE GARMENT OF PRAISE..... IT'S A BRAND-NEW, BEAUTIFUL CHOIR ROBE, AS YOU JOIN THE CHORUS OF PRAISE TO OUR GOD.**

**TO PROVIDE NEW GARMENTS TO REPLACE THE OLD,  
WORN-OUT CLOTHES THAT GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE BEEN  
WEARING--THIS IS ALSO IN THE MESSIAH'S JOB  
DESCRIPTION..... AND THAT THEN BECOMES OUR SONG  
OF JOY BEFORE GOD.....**

**AS OUR TEXT SAYS....AND THIS IS NOW US SPEAKING:**

***“I WILL GREATLY REJOICE IN THE LORD; MY SOUL  
SHALL EXULT IN MY GOD, FOR HE HAS CLOTHED ME  
WITH THE GARMENTS OF SALVATION; HE HAS COVERED  
ME WITH THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AS A  
BRIDEGROOM DECKS HIMSELF LIKE A PRIEST WITH A  
BEAUTIFUL HEADDRESS, AND AS A BRIDE ADORNS  
HERSELF WITH HER JEWELS.”***

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS--- IN HOLY BAPTISM, THE LORD  
GOD CLOTHED YOU WITH THE ROBE OF CHRIST'S  
PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS..... THIS IS YOUR NEW  
GARMENT, WHICH YOU WEAR DAILY. THIS IS THE WHITE  
ROBE YOU WILL WEAR FOR ETERNITY  
WHAT A WARDROBE THE MESSIAH HAS PROVIDED FOR  
YOU! YOUR SINS WASHED AWAY, CHRIST'S  
RIGHTEOUSNESS COVERING YOU--I TELL YOU, THIS NEW  
GARMENT IS YOU! ----WELL -----ACTUALLY, IT IS CHRIST,  
AND HIS ROBE FITS YOU PERFECTLY.**

**TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS AND TO PROVIDE NEW  
GARMENTS--THIS IS THE MESSIAH'S JOB DESCRIPTION,  
AS RELAYED TO US TODAY BY THE PROPHET ISAIAH....**



**JESUS CHRIST IS THAT ANOINTED ONE.....AND JOHN  
THE BAPTIST ANNOUNCES HIS ARRIVAL.**

**MY FRIENDS ....IF YOU COULD USE SOME GOOD NEWS,  
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO WEAR THOSE NEW GARMENTS,  
THE MESSIAH IS ON HIS WAY, AND HE WILL DO THE JOB.**

**PRAISE GOD AND MAY IT BE SO FOR YOU AND FOR  
ME.....AMEN**