

Anointed to Preach Good News to the Poor

Brynmawr Family Church Sermon
Stuart Wheatman, Sunday 14th August 2011

Intro-

- We are about to have a week's outreach. Why are we doing this? How does it reflect what Jesus came to do? How did He see His own mission, and how can we learn from this?
- We will look at a passage from the Old Testament from the book of Isaiah. This passage was quoted by Jesus when He spoke in the Synagogue in His home town of Nazareth. He said that He was fulfilling this passage.
- We will look at the passage He quoted from and see how it applies also to us today in our mission.

Read Isa 61:1-7

- **Evangelism is a key outworking of the anointing of the Spirit-** v1 *'anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor'*
- Jesus was anointed for a purpose- to preach good news to the poor- so are we. We love to be filled with the Spirit. Toronto. We are to enjoy God etc. But that is not the end of the story- we are filled to spill. We are filled for a purpose- to share Jesus. Jesus could have come to the earth and had a great time being filled with the Spirit and kept himself to himself, but we would have been no better off
- Disciples told by Jesus they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came on them and they would be His witnesses.
- We cannot lead anyone to God apart from the work of the Holy Spirit- we work in conjunction with Him- He convicts and brings revelation etc.
- We have been anointed to bring a message. v1-'good tidings'= good news = euangelion in Greek =evangelism. The word used to describe when a messenger comes from the battle with good news of victory- they cannot wait to comfort people with the news. That is how we are to be with the gospel. We have a message of comfort that people are literally dying to hear.
- We have been anointed on behalf of the poor. v1 'the poor'= those who spiritually see their need for God. Jesus said if people reject the message move on to the next person- we are responsible to give the message, not for people's response. Often we see that when people are physically poor they are not self-trusting or trusting in riches (but not always) and are often more open to the gospel- as Jesus said, it is hard for the rich to enter, but not impossible.

Application-

- If not been filled, or dry ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit and you will be empowered to share Jesus effectively.
- If have been filled, are you sharing the gospel? Choose to share Jesus with others.
- Don't just expect God to fill you in meetings- He wants to fill you outside to have boldness to share Him.
- God's heart yearns for the poor- those who don't know Him. Allow Him to touch your heart with His heart for the lost. Search out those who are 'poor'- those who 'hunger for God'.

The anointing speaks of kingly authority to release captives- v1 'liberty to the captives'

- 'The acceptable year of the Lord' in verse 2 reminds us of the year of Jubilee (Lev

25:8-55). This was at the end of 7 cycles of 7 years=49 years. Therefore in the 50th year there was to be a special celebration. Its climax was the great Day of Atonement. This was marked by the blowing of trumpets (a ram's horn, shofar). In fact our word 'jubilee' comes from this occasion. The Jewish word is 'yobel' which in turn derives from yobhel, meaning 'ram'. Debts were cancelled and all Hebrew slaves were set free and all land returned to its original owner or owner's family. After being slaves for so long in Egypt and then under Joshua moving into the promised land each family was allotted a portion of land. Every adult male among them became a land owner. This land was a permanent possession that could never depart from his family. If a man became poor he could sell part or all of his land, but only temporarily. It would always revert to him or his descendants at the year of jubilee. Also if he had to sell himself to another as a slave in order to pay off his debts he had to be released in the year of jubilee. This passage is predicting that when the Messiah comes it will be like the year of Jubilee.

- This passage quoted by Jesus at Synagogue in Nazareth in Lk 4:18 as being fulfilled in their hearing. He was referring to the message He was preaching, in particular that it had been accompanied by signs and wonders in Capernaum. He was claiming to be the king and the specific marks of His kingship were signs and wonders- i.e. the kingly authority and power to set captives free. The gospel has the power to set prisoners free on many levels.
- Anointing speaks of a king- they used to anoint a king with oil- hence in 1Sam both Saul and David were anointed by Samuel. Sometimes the king was not referred to as king, but simply 'the anointed one'- David called Saul 'The Lord's anointed'. The word 'anointed one' in Hebrew is 'Mashiach' ('Messiah') and in Greek is 'Khristos' ('Christ'). When we say 'Jesus Christ' we are really saying that we believe Jesus is the King that God promised to send through the hundreds of prophecies in scripture.
- Kings can do things that others cannot do. They have great power and authority. When they invaded other countries they could choose to put people under their yoke and exact tribute from them. They could also choose to set people free from yokes that had been put upon them by a former dictator- see Isa 10:27- the yoke is destroyed because of the kingly anointing.
- This is exactly what Cyrus chose to do. In Isa 44:28-45:7 an amazing prediction happens. Written in about 700BC, Isaiah predicts that, even though the Jewish temple is presently standing and fully operational it will have been destroyed and that a King named Cyrus who does not worship Israel's God would give a command to have it rebuilt and that the Israelites will have been taken captive and He will give the decree for them to go home. The prediction came true. The temple was sacked 114 years later in 586BC by the Babylonians and the Jews were taken as captive into Babylonia. In about 539 BC, the Babylonian Empire was conquered by the Persians. Shortly after, a Persian king named Cyrus issued a formal decree that the Jews could return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple. Over 100 years before he was born and about 160 years prior to his decree Cyrus' name and what he would do was predicted by Isaiah. Cyrus' proclamation of freedom is recorded in Ezra 1:1-4. A man named Xenophon, a Greek writer contemporary with Cyrus and fought in his army, described him as *psuchen philanthropotaton*, i.e., as a humane, benevolent, loving soul (8.7.3; cf. 1.2.1). In 1879, an explorer discovered at the site of ancient Babylon a 9-inch barrel-shaped piece of clay with cuneiform writing outlining Cyrus' policies to captives. It says in one place:

"I returned to these sacred cities on the other side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been ruins for a long time, the images which [used] to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I [also] gathered all their [former] inhabitants and returned [to them] their habitations" (Pritchard, 208).

You can see this 'Cyrus cylinder' in the British Museum.

- In Isa 45:1 Cyrus, is actually named as God's anointed ('Messiah!'). As the 'anointed one' he set the Jewish captives free from their yoke to Babylon. Our passage in Isa 61 has dual fulfillment in both Cyrus and Jesus. When Jesus came as the Messiah the Jews were expecting Him to do the same as Cyrus did when Cyrus threw off the Babylonian yoke from the Israelite captives. They thought He had come to release them from the yoke of Rome. Instead Jesus came to release them from the yoke of Satan's kingdom. He came to break the power and results of sin in people's lives. He, as king, had the power to release people from demonic strongholds because His kingship was stronger than the head of the kingdom of darkness. It was the same with sickness. Jesus, as king, was invading Satan's territory and plundering it by a greater power.
- When John the Baptist started to doubt if Jesus was the Messiah Jesus sent the messengers back with the report of the signs of His kingship they were witnessing: the blind seeing, the lame walking, lepers cleansed, the deaf hearing, the dead raised and the poor having the gospel preached to them (Luke 7:22). These are the signs that He is the King who invades where Satan has tried to have territory.
- When Jesus ascended to Heaven He was taking His rightful place as the ultimate King- the ruler of the universe. Just as an earthly king is anointed when He is ascends the throne, so too in some way, the Holy Spirit coming in power at Pentecost seems to be a confirmation sign that Jesus is indeed on the throne. Miracles today also confirm His kingship. We are His ambassadors, working in His kingly authority to do the same things He does. As we go in His name (authority) so whatever does not belong to His kingdom has to give way for His Kingdom to come in power.

Application-

- Because Jesus is King and we are part of His kingdom we bring His rule and reign into situation here on earth. He has delegated authority to us to do His works. Let's believe this and speak to situations as if we believe it and we will see things happen.
- If we only speak the good news and never demonstrate it then we are preaching half a gospel. Sure, we need to do good works in the community, but the real good works God has prepared for us consist of setting people free from bondage and sickness- there is a supernatural element. Let's choose to lay hands more on the sick and also to take authority over demonic strongholds that oppress people.
- We have a testimony of how God has saved us. This is powerful evidence of King Jesus' power to change lives. Let's use our testimony and testimony in general to build faith and to witness to others.
- Just as Cyrus had compassion on captives, so too Jesus had compassion on those held captive in some way by Satan. It was compassion that drove Jesus to do miracles- this should drive us to do the same.

As we sow ourselves on behalf of others so they too shall build us up- v4

- The result of God sending out King Cyrus on a mission (even though he didn't worship Jehovah) was that the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt. Even pagans were commanded by the king to pay for the costs of rebuilding.
- The result of Jesus going out and sowing His own life in preaching the kingdom was the building up of a people, the Church.
- In the same way, as we sow ourselves into the preaching of the gospel the result is not that we dwindle away, but that we, as God's house, are edified, built up.
- The temptation for the Church in the West is damage limitation and being insular, building ourselves up, so that one day, possibly, we may be strong enough to take the message out of the four walls. This will have the opposite effect- it is as we are

obedient and 'go' that we are in fact built up ourselves and grow spiritually and numerically.

- The Church in the West has become too comfortable. There is another word for this- 'selfish'. Whilst we are stuffing our faces on bible teaching and worship times there are generations growing up around us who don't even know the first thing about who this Jesus person is. Who will tell them?

Application-

- What has discouraged you from going out? Have there been times when you have been more active in sharing your faith? What changed? Do you, like Timothy need to stir up gifts within you, or to do the work of an evangelist?

Summary

- Evangelism is a key outworking of the anointing of the Spirit
- The anointing speaks of kingly authority to release captives
- As we sow ourselves on behalf of others so they too shall build us up

Song: The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon us