

TEXT: 61 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners...

Dear Friends in Christ,

Do you know the reason you have the name you have? The reason you have the family name you have is easy. You have your family name because that is the name your parents have or because that is the name your husband had when you married him, if you took his name when you got married. Do you know why you have the first name you have? Someone chose that name for you, usually your parents? Why did they pick the name they gave you? Have you ever asked them? Was it to honor a great believer in the Bible...or to honor a relative, a brother, a parent or a grandparent? We named our oldest son, Jared. Now Jared is a name you can find in the Bible, but that's not the reason we chose that name. Rather Jared was a name we liked. When Jared was born there was a popular Western television show by the name of "The Big Valley." The oldest son in the family of that show was "Jared." He was a strong, wise, level-headed leader in the family, the kind of person we hoped our son would become. What's the story behind your name?

1

Today let's ask that same question about **the names that were given to our Savior**. We know him by the designations Jesus Christ. The Scriptures tell us the story behind his first name, Jesus. In Matthew chapter 1 we read that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt. 1:20-21) The angel Gabriel told Mary the same thing. (Luke 1:31) God the Father gave Jesus his name and sent his messenger to tell Mary and Joseph what to call their baby boy. The name God picked reflected the work that God the Father sent his Son to accomplish, to save people from their sins.

But what about the name "Christ?" At the end of his Gospel John tells us, "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:30,31) The name Messiah is the Hebrew title for the office that Christ has. That same designation in the Greek language is "Christ." Christ and Messiah are the same name in different languages.

The meaning of those two names is "the anointed one." In the Old Testament prophets, priests and kings were anointed. The basic meaning of anointing was to "to apply oil to a person or a thing." It was a common custom among Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks and Romans. Oil was applied for several reasons. Sometimes it was simply a part of grooming. After washing or bathing, people anointed themselves (Ruth 3:3). Anointing was also an expression of joy. (Ps. 23:5; 45:7) Hosts anointed their guests as an act of courtesy and respect. (Luke 7:46)

Anointing was also done as an act of consecration and at a person's induction to the office of prophet, priest or king. (Genesis 28:18, Exodus 30:23-26; 40:15; 1 Samuel 9:16) Under the Mosaic Law persons and things set apart for sacred purposes were anointed with the "oil of holy ointment" (Ex. 30:23-26; 29:27) Those that God had chosen to be set apart for service as prophet, priest or king were anointed. The anointment with oil was a symbol of endowment with the Spirit of God (1 Samuel 10:1,6; 16:13, Is. 61:1) for the duties of the office to which a person was consecrated. (Lev. 8)

John says that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. He is saying that Jesus is the anointed one, chosen and sent by God, equipped by the Spirit to serve God. What office or offices, what work was Jesus set apart to do? The first verse of our text answers that question partially. Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be a prophet. Isaiah prophesied, "**The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach...**" Prophets preach what God has communicated to them for the people. Moses was the greatest prophet in the Old Testament but God told his people through Moses that an even greater prophet was to come after Moses. That prophet was Jesus in the New Testament. Jesus verified that himself when preaching on Isaiah words in our text he said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:21) Jesus is the fulfillment of Moses' prophecy, the one Isaiah was referring to in our Old Testament lesson this morning. He is our anointed prophet. Old Testament prophets were anointed to tell people God's Word, especially the good news about the coming Savior. As prophet Christ Jesus preached God's Word, especially the good news of eternal life. It was Jesus who preached, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life. Jesus was anointed not by oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, but directly by the Spirit at his baptism. On that day the Holy Spirit descended on him inducting him into his work, his mission of saving people from their sins. From that day he began preaching as the anointed prophet Isaiah prophesied.

2

What did Jesus preach? Isaiah tells us prophetically what his message would be.

61 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me. (THE ANOINTING OF THE MESSIAH)



- The Holy Spirit anointed (sent) Jesus at his baptism. Jesus is our Prophet, Priest and King. Anointing signified calling or sending.

to preach good news to the poor. (THE PURPOSE OF THAT ANOINTING) (BRING NEWS GOOD OR BAD) (POOR=WITH REFERENCE TO ONE WHO PITIES HIMSELF-DEJECTED-MISERABLE PERSON)



- As our great *prophet*, Jesus preached the gospel to those poor (here couched in terms suited to the conditions of the exile) TROUBLED, AFFLICTED, PLAGUED, DEJECTED, MISERABLE, UNFORTUNATE referring to those who are morally and spiritually afflicted, that is those who have felt the rod of the LAW, and whose consciences have been smitten because of their sin. (Mt. 5:3 – “poor in spirit”) They are those who see in all affliction the heavy hand of God. (Ps. 32:4) To these the Servant of the Lord shall preach the glad tidings of forgiveness, life, freedom and salvation.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,



- the captives endured physical bruises to be sure but hearts were also bruised and broken. Guilt because of sins for what happened to Judah, depression and sadness because they thought they would never see their homeland again, grief because so many of their loved ones lost their lives, loneliness because they despaired perhaps never seeing loved ones left behind or their homes again. Greatest of all was hopelessness because they feared that the promise of a Messiah was forever lost. Who would bind up these wounds, these broken hearts? Christ came to do this! Christ solves our heart problems, our guilt, our depression, our sadness, our grief, our loneliness, our despair, our hopelessness, our fear by preaching good news to the brokenhearted. His words replace our guilt with peace; our depression and despair with hope; our sadness with joy and happiness; our grief, sorrow, anguish and remorse with rejoicing; our loneliness and dejection with fellowship.

to proclaim freedom for the captives



- The exiles were captives of the Babylonians. They lost their freedom to worship, to speak, etc. But they endured a worse captivity. They were captives of their sins, captives of death, captives of the devil, captives of hell. Christ came to preach freedom. Freedom from sin, death, hell, and the devil.

and release from darkness for the prisoners,



- The exiles were prisoners of Babylon. As prisoners they were subjected to the powers of darkness. They lived in spiritual darkness in their unbelief. But Christ came to preach the good news that their release from prison has come. Through his preaching the Holy Spirit would lead them out of spiritual darkness into his wonderful light.

Jesus' preaching is good news to us. We are those "poor" today. We are "brokenhearted." We are "captives" who need freedom, "prisoners" of darkness who need to be released into the light. Jesus has some good news for us who live today in this terrible time, in this sin-filled world which approached the Day of Judgment. Jesus preaches good news.

Are you suffering spiritually because of the sins you have committed and now have a guilty conscience? Here is what Jesus tells us: "**The Son of Man has not come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for your sins.**" (Mt. 20:28) From the cross he preaches, "**It is finished!**" (John 19:30)

Are you suffering from a broken heart? Has a friend betrayed you? Has your family abandoned you? Or have others at work or school maybe treated you badly because you are a believer and want to do what Jesus tells you to do? Here is what Jesus says. "**Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**" (Mt. 5:11-12)

Have you lost a tremendous amount of earthly wealth in the latest round of market sell-offs? Or have additional bills come into your mailbox because of health concerns, treatments or surgeries? Here is what Jesus says. "**Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear...Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?**" (Matthew 6:25-27) You are so valuable to God that He sent his Son to save you, to die for you on the cross. God says in his Word, "**He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?**" (Romans 8:32)

Does it seem like your life is going nowhere? You can't find a job or the job you have just doesn't support you, not even for the basics in life? Do you worry about the future and what God's will for your life is? Here is what Jesus says. "**Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.**" "**Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things**

(the basic necessities of life) **will be given to you as well.**" (Mt. 6:34, 33)

God speaks good news to us through his anointed Prophet, his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. He speaks through Jesus in the Word of God. Jesus' words are full of grace and truth. (John 1:17) We can trust in what he tells us because he speaks the truth. We can trust that He tells us what he tells us because he love us with an undeserved love. Through faith in his Son and in his Word the Holy Spirit gives us joy, peace, comfort, hope, contentment, assurance and much more.

The name that your parents have given you may not have any meaning concerning you. With God's Son it was different. He is the one who has come to save us from our sins. He did that on the cross. He is the anointed Prophet sent to us to communicate God's good news and love. He is our anointed Prophet sent to comfort us. We would do well to obey our Heavenly Father who tells us to "**Listen to Him!**" (Mk. 9:7) Amen.