

THOUGHTS FROM CHAPLAIN RICHARD

I wonder how we respond to the words of Jesus in Luke 4:18,19? (quoting Isaiah 62:1,2)

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the afflicted.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."
"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing"*

The original promise was to the Israelites captured by the Babylonians; the extension in Jesus is to those in darkness held captive by sin. Us.

The great commentator Matthew Henry makes these points:

Jesus was qualified for the work - he had the Spirit without measure Jn 3:34

Jesus was commissioned for the work - sent to make free. *'The Son of God came for this purpose: to destroy the devil's work'* 1 Jn 3:8

Those whom God appoints for any service He anoints for it.

Jesus' work was:

To be a great **prophet**, anointed to preach:

Deliverance to captives. The gospel is a proclamation of liberty from the bondage of guilt and corruption for all who are willing to be ruled by Him.

Recovery of sight to the blind. If our prayer is 'Lord, please open our eyes', He will respond 'Receive thy sight!'

The year of the Lord's favour. In the year of jubilee, slaves were made free. His offer is now. 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts' Heb 3:15

To be the great **physician**, to heal:

the broken hearted. Matt 11:28 *'Come to me you who are weary and burdened, take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls'*

To be a great **redeemer**:

He came in God's name to discharge poor sinners that were debtors and prisoners to divine justice. The prophets could but *proclaim* liberty, but Christ, as one having authority, as one that had the power on earth to forgive sins, came to *give* liberty.

What could be greater than knowing Christ and his salvation? What about to then be anointed by the Spirit of God to take His Name and His message to others? To be sent as Jesus ambassador? This is exactly what the Lord does! So the very things we received by grace, he tasks us to proclaim on his behalf, for his glory.

I commend to you the reading of 2 Corinthians 2:12 – 5:21. It's a bit long to write out here, but look for the themes...the Spirit with us, our anointing, calling and message.

Here's some excerpts:

Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us. spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.

For we are to God the aroma of Christ to those who are being saved...the fragrance of life.

Not that we are competent in ourselves, but our competence comes from God.

He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant...of the Spirit...for the Spirit gives life.

How glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness.

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold.

By setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord.

This all surpassing power is from God and not from us.

With the Spirit of faith we believe and therefore speak.

If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

God reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them.

He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, *as though God were making his appeal through us.*

We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

God made him who had no sin to be a sin offering for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

I wonder if after reading that we can see that this statement of Jesus is one that he graciously gives to us also?

(Not to accomplish the result, but to proclaim that Jesus has achieved it and offers these things to all men.)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on us,
because he has anointed us
to proclaim good news to the afflicted.
He has sent us to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to offer his liberty to those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Remember always to be gentle and respectful. 1 Pet 3:15

I hope this is an encouragement to you; the wonder of our God, his presence with us, and his calling for us.

Your brother in Him,
Richard