

Advent 4—The Good News Has Come and He will Proclaim it!

- I. Introduction
 - a. In these Advent sermons, we have been looking for ways to identify the Child to be born on Christmas. Some of those promises are not immediately obvious until we see what he does during his life. While last week's promises mostly pointed to things surrounding his birth, this week's promise will reveal itself in what this Christ Child will do.
 - i. I think it's extremely important to see these promises to involve all of this Child's life. It would not be hard to fabricate the fulfilling of a few promises like where he was born to create a counterfeit. But the authenticity of his identity stretches over all his life through many different promises.
 - ii. He must fulfill all that is promised or he is not the Christ Child!
 - b. Who would have ever thought that the way to meet the greatest need of the human race would not only be the giving of this particular Child at Christmas but from our promise today, the greatest need is met by way of proclamation—preaching, teaching, telling, writing—the good news!
 - c. And not only does this Child bring good news, he is the good news! Those who believe this good news “God sent us salvation, that blessed Christmas morn! Go tell it on the Mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!”
- II. Main Point
 - a. This Child was born to preach good news to the needy and proclaim liberty to the captives! The year of Jubilee has come!
- III. Outline
 - a. Filled with the Spirit
 - b. Setting the Captives Free
 - c. Jesus' Mission is the mission of the church
 - d. The Day of Vengeance delayed! The Mission us urgent!
- IV. Exposition
 - a. Now that we have read this promise in Isaiah, let's now focus our attention on its fulfillment in Luke. Let's start with the all important “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.” Is this who was promised?
 - i. Let's start where we were last week—the virgin birth.
 1. Mary gets a visit from an angel. These are usually frightening encounters. This is no exception. (Lk. 1:30-33) ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."
 2. There's much we could linger over here but when Mary hears this, there are a number of things she could have responded to like “the Son of the Most High” and “he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.”
 - a. There's just one problem and Mary asks this important question: (Lk. 1:34) "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"
 - b. (Lk. 1:35) ³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy-- the Son of God.
 - c. The unique birth of this Child will happen through the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit.

3. Therefore, from the beginning of the incarnation of God's Son, the Holy Spirit is at work to accomplish this great salvation that was promised and has come.
 4. The same is true for us. God saves. The Holy Spirit is at work in us from beginning to end.
- ii. The next stop we need to see in Luke concerning the Holy Spirit is at Jesus' baptism. The promise that the Spirit would be upon me from Isaiah is the mark we are looking for. Jesus' birth began exactly how Isaiah promised but the Spirit must also be upon him.
 1. (Lk. 3:21-22) ²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
 - a. Among all the people baptized, the Holy Spirit only descended upon one.
 - b. We hear a voice from heaven who is most certainly the Father saying this is my beloved Son!
 - i. This lines up perfect with what was promised to Mary that he would be the Son of the Most High.
 - ii. But was this promised beforehand? Let's sneak back to Isaiah and take a quick look. With Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6 from last week in mind, there's another promise in chapter 11 describing this Child to be born.
 1. (Isa. 11:1-2) There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. ² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him.
 2. I think Luke sees this as an important link to make for us because immediately after Jesus is baptized and the Spirit comes upon him, he describes Jesus' family history so that we know who this one is: (Lk. 3:31-32) the son of David, ³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed.
 3. This marks the beginning of his ministry.
 - c. Baptism not only marks off our new life in Christ but it also marks the beginning of ministry for all of us too. All of us are given things to do.
 - iii. So, how does the Spirit-filled Jesus begin ministry? It begins with testing! I'm sure you recall that he was a tested stone from our previous text from Psalm 118. Well, Luke portrays Jesus as leaving his baptism to being tested.
 1. (Lk. 4:1-2) And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ² for forty days, being tempted by the devil.
 - a. When reading this, we tend to over spiritualize things like this. But Jesus was really tempted and he responded in the power of the Holy Spirit and according to God's word.
 - iv. Jesus stepped into the chaos of this world and walked in the power of the Holy Spirit. He came that we too might live our lives in the power of the Spirit and obey God's word. Even amid the chaos in our lives, we can resist the devil and draw near to God.
 1. He came to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. We too are called to serve and he provides the resources to do this. We stand and serve in the strength that he provides and he gets the glory!
- b. But before any of that can happen, we need the ministry of Jesus. We need what he came to do. In fact, we need what God had promised this anointed one would do in Isaiah. We, the captives, need to be set free.

- i. Though Jesus resists being a captive of Satan in the wilderness, he has come to release the captives of that ancient foe. Ever since the Garden, no one has resisted the temptation of that old snake except this one! And he alone can set us free.
- ii. Following Jesus' testing, Luke records this scene in Galilee where he would begin his ministry by teaching in the synagogues now that he had been tested and did not fall like Adam and like us!
 1. He soon finds his way to his hometown. (Lk. 4:16-21) ¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."
 2. Indeed, their eyes were fixed on him! Then what emerges is a mixed response. All were amazed at his words and they also were saying, "Is this not the son of Joseph?"
 - a. Are they asking this question in a way of affirmation—like the Messiah will be a Son of David from whom Joseph came or of rejection?
 - b. Jesus' response points to the latter and his response enrages the crowd. They run him out of town! They had plans to cast him over the side but Jesus alludes them because it is not time.
- iii. The rejection of this tested Stone affirms he is the Promised One. But we want to look at how Jesus fulfills what this Promised One came to do and see it as evidence that he is the One we most need.
 1. How will he set the captives free? And in what sense are they captives? In other words, are the captives and the poor just to be understood as just physical needs or are they spiritual needs?
 - a. Well, if they are merely physical needs to be met, then means Jesus uses seems less than adequate because what he came to do is preach and proclaim.
 - i. Did the good news Jesus came to preach to the poor have anything to do with a new economic plan?
 - ii. Or did the Father send him to proclaim to the captives freedom from prison? Freedom from what?
 - iii. While Jesus did meet many of these physical needs, their greatest need was something else.
 1. The poor know what it means to be needy. But their greatest need is not more money but to put their trust in the Jesus Christ. It reminds of the man who was let down through the roof and the first thing Jesus did was to forgive his sins then he told him to get up and walk.
 2. These captives that need to be set free have this idea of exile. When Isaiah prophesied that this one would come to set the captives free, they were in exile.
 - a. But why were they in exile? Was it not because of their sin?

- b. Therefore, the image of the captives is that of bondage to sin. That's why Jesus said he was sent to proclaim to the captives forgiveness! It is the truth of the gospel that will set them free!
 - 3. The same is true of the blind. Bartimaeus was given his sight but he also then followed Jesus! In other words, he was not only physically blind but spiritually blind. Both were healed that day.
 - 2. The purpose of Christmas is the salvation of his people! But only this Messiah...this anointed One could do it. But the only thing Jesus has done thus far is claim that it was fulfilled in him. Did he actually do these things?
 - a. While John the Baptist was in prison, he sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the Promised One. Here's what he said in (Lk. 7:20-23) "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" ²¹ In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²² And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."
 - b. Yes, he did! His identity is revealed in what he does.
 - c. "The one in Isa. 61 brings a message of God's deliverance to exiles. The deliverance imagery parallels the description of the Jubilee year in Lev. 25, when debts were cancelled and slaves were freed every fiftieth year. It is a picture of forgiveness and spiritual liberation, which is at the center of Jesus' message." (Bock 406).
 - c. His mission is our mission
 - i. We will hopefully get to this passage in a few weeks, but let's hear it now. (Jn. 20:21) ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."
 - 1. His ministry was marked by proclamation. It is the means by which sinners hear the good news. And faith comes by hearing the word of Christ.
 - 2. We are the extension of Christ's ministry. It continues through us. Those who have been born again receive the Holy Spirit within us to accomplish God's work.
 - 3. If you have seen the Light, then you are to shine the light of Christ!
 - ii. Until he returns, this is our mission! Let's do it!
 - iii. This one who was promised to come and set the captives free had a glorious future ahead for those captives.
 - 1. If we were to turn back to Isaiah for a moment I think would see that glorious future in (Isa. 60:20) ²⁰ Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.
 - d. And finally, we need to notice something Jesus didn't say when he quoted Isaiah 61—the day of vengeance. That day is coming but for now it hasn't come.
 - i. In our promise from Isaiah, Jesus stops short of reading the whole promise. That's not say it's not going to happen. But the delay is intentional until all the captives are set free.
 - 1. (Isa. 61:2) and the day of vengeance of our God. Isaiah saw the whole picture. And yet Jesus came to fulfill it all but not all at one time.
 - a. He comes to set the captives free and that mission continues through the church.

- b. What makes this mission extremely important and urgent is the fact that the day of vengeance is coming.
- c. One day, the mission will be over but until then we have the opportunity to make disciples of Christ.
- d. It says in (Eph. 4:8) "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."
- e. Notice this instruction to Timothy from Paul about what is job is in (2 Tim. 2:24-26) ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.
 - i. There are many who trapped. They are in bondage to their sin. They need the Savior. And we participate in that by telling the gospel to them.
- ii. What is it that awaits those who turn from darkness to Light! The glorious news that Isaiah envisions cannot hardly be better.
 - 1. (Isa. 61:2-3) to comfort all who mourn; ³ 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; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.
 - a. Just notice the "instead of".
 - i. A beautiful headdress instead of ashes.
 - ii. The oil of gladness instead of mourning.
 - iii. the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit.
 - b. Why? What's the result? That those who believe may be oaks of righteousness!
 - i. Who desires to be a fruitful, strong tree of righteousness?
 - ii. This tree will stand. Its leaves will not wither.
 - c. All of this great salvation through this child is for "the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified."

V. Response

- a. If you are in bondage to sin, come to Jesus. The truth will set you free. Come receive his forgiveness. Come out of the darkness. Stop hiding. He already knows what you've done. There's nothing that Christ will not forgive. Come. You will not be disappointed.