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Sermon Notes

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The Messiah Announces Good News

Isaiah 61:1-11

I close my eyes and picture one of the most dramatic moments in redemptive history (Luke 4:16-30). The Lord Jesus Christ had returned to his hometown of Nazareth. Reports about the amazing things he had already done in Capernaum had reached his neighbors, and the town was abuzz with the news. The Sabbath day came, and everyone assembled in the synagogue. Jesus rose and went forward, and the scroll of Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled it to the very place we are considering this morning – Isaiah 61, and read the ancient words powerfully and with Spirit-endued passion. You could have heard a pin drop. He read these words to the enthralled assembly in the synagogue:

Isaiah 61:1-2 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, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor

After he finished reading verses 1-2, he rolled up the scroll and handed it to the attendant. He sat down and the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. He opened his mouth and spoke, and the world has never been the same since: **"Today... in your hearing... this scripture is fulfilled!"**

The word *fulfilled* must have hit everyone there like a thunderbolt. The passage had been written by the prophet Isaiah over seven centuries before that electric moment. Now, a man they had watched grow up from a little boy in that tiny locale was claiming to have fulfilled this prophecy!

Our faith is a SUPERNATURAL faith... what sets it apart from every other religion in the world is FULFILLED PROPEHCY...

Through the prophets, God told the human race ahead of time what he would do... and then, in Christ, he did it. No other religion in the world has this element of fulfilled prophecy.

Isaiah 46:9-10 I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. ¹⁰ I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you."

No prophecies in scripture are as significant as those centered around the coming Savior of the world, the anointed one, the Christ, the Messiah... Jesus

These prophecies set Jesus apart from every religious leader and conquering king in human history. They set him apart as the unique Savior of the world, sent from God on high to save a world drowning in sin.

This morning, we get to look carefully at this prophecy... written by Isaiah seven centuries before Jesus was born. We get to thrill to every word in this ancient scroll. We will find light and life and health and peace and hope from considering the mission Almighty God sent His Son to accomplish.

I. The Messiah and His Mission (vs. 1-3)

A. The Messiah Anointed with the Spirit (vs.1)

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

1. Interpretive key: these words could be Isaiah the prophet himself, but they aren't

2. Jesus himself settled who these words were speaking about when he said they were fulfilled in HIM
3. The coming Savior was ANOINTED by the Sovereign Lord... literally “Adonai Yahweh”... a doubled expression of exalted power and greatness
4. This, the God of the universe, is also MY LORD, the personal King of all the redeemed... the Spirit of THIS GOD was upon “ME” says the text
 - a. The text is written in the FIRST PERSON... Jesus is speaking directly through the prophet Isaiah about his mission
 - b. The Spirit made plain the mission of Christ seven centuries beforehand through Isaiah’s writing... this is the essence of predictive prophecy

1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

2 Peter 1:21 prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 19:10 the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

It was the glorious work of the Holy Spirit to put into the mind of Isaiah the prophet these words that speak on behalf of the future Savior, Jesus Christ

The words are really Jesus’ words, spoken by the Holy Spirit seven hundred years early

5. The prediction here is that the same Spirit of the Sovereign Lord who inspired Isaiah to speak for Jesus would also ANOINT JESUS Himself as well... come upon him with power for his mission

Anointing... in the Old Testament, key people were anointed with OIL: prophets, priests, kings... the oil would pour down on their heads

- a. The Holy Spirit really is God's active agent of power on earth
- b. This is mind-boggling to ponder, for the Trinity and the Incarnation are infinitely mysterious doctrines
- c. We Christians believe in one God who has eternally existed in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
- d. Each of the persons of the Trinity has all the attributes of God, and are co-equal with each other
- e. BUT each person of the Trinity has a different role to play in God's redemptive plan
 - i) The Father MAKES the plan
 - ii) The Son takes on a human body, does mighty miracles, speaks perfect words, lives a sinless life, dies an atoning death, and rises from the dead
 - iii) The Spirit ENABLES Jesus to do all those things...it is BY THE SPIRIT that Jesus was born of the Virgin, BY THE SPIRIT that he was led into the desert to be tempted by the devil, BY THE SPIRIT that he successfully defeated all the devil's temptations, BY THE SPIRIT that he did great signs and wonders, BY THE SPIRIT that he taught perfect teachings, BY THE SPIRIT that he was strengthened in the garden of Gethsemane to die on the cross, BY THE SPIRIT he was raised to life on the third day....

Acts 10:38 God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

- iv) Jesus did NOTHING apart from the Spirit's power! That is an infinite mystery

John 5:19 "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."

This is true of Jesus and the Father... it is also true of Jesus and the Holy Spirit

- v) And after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, it was by the power of the outpoured Holy Spirit that the name of Jesus spread to the ends of the earth

Acts 1:8 you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- 6. Specifically in Isaiah 61:1... the Spirit anointed Jesus with power to PREACH GOOD NEWS to the poor:

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

- a. Jesus was the greatest PREACHER of all time... and only by the power of the Spirit

John 7:45-46 the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" ⁴⁶ "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

Matthew 7:28-29 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law

- b. The good news is preached to the POOR... meaning those who have nothing to offer... that is ALL OF US... spiritual BEGGARS

Matthew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

- B. The Messiah's Mission to Poor Prisoners (vs. 1-3)

Isaiah 61:1-3 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, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

1. This is the fullness of Jesus' mission... Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit first and foremost to PREACH... to PROCLAIM the word of Good News for all people, the gospel of salvation... a message in words
 - a. It was a message of joy for the brokenhearted
 - b. A message of freedom for the captives
 - c. A message of release from darkness for prisoners
 - d. A message of the gracious forgiveness of Almighty God to those who deserved his vengeance
 - e. This is the essence of the gospel: freedom from the slavery and punishment due to SIN

John 8:32-36 you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³ They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" ³⁴ ¶ Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Satan has enslaved the entire human race in invisible chains that we are powerless to break; we are held in chains of sin, bad habits that flow from corrupted hearts, evil actions that consummate wicked lusts... this is the nature of Satan's dark realm, his evil kingdom... we all of us sat in the gloomy dungeons of sin and no one could break free

Jesus was sent to proclaim LIBERTY, freedom for the captives... to lead us up and out of Satan's dark prison of sin

What incredible good news! Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to make this joyful proclamation to the whole world... if you trust in me and believe my words you will have eternal life:

John 5:24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

2. Beyond that, Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to perform mighty works of HEALING

Verse 1: He sent me to BIND UP THE BROKENHEARTED

- a. This “binding up” is literally related to shattering, as in pottery... but it is often used of crippled and lame people... people whose bodies have been shattered by injury, or disease
- b. The phrase implies Jesus has power to put shattered pieces of pottery back together as though they were brand new
- c. The broken bodies and broken hearts of sinners Jesus was equally skilled as a physician to heal
- d. But it was his physical healings that made it obvious to our five senses that he also had the spiritual power to forgive the sins that had caused the brokenness to begin with
- e. This message of healing and grace and power for sinful captives changes everything... we were mourning and powerless, now we are forgiven and embraced

Isaiah 61:2-3 to comfort all who mourn, ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to proclaim a message of salvation so radiant that it changes everything that causes mourning on earth to a joyful celebration of the saving power of God

This message is as relevant today as it was in his day! Sin leaves people's lives totally shattered, our hearts breaking. Think about the incredible comfort Jesus has brought to people trapped by chemical addictions, or enslaved by pornography, or struggling with emptiness and desperation and enticed by thoughts of suicide... again and again, Jesus has been there to comfort those who mourn over their own sin. Not only that, the triumph of Jesus over death and hell has changed our terror of death forever... we do not GRIEVE LIKE THOSE WHO HAVE NO HOPE!

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

So, Isaiah 61 predicts the comfort Jesus will bring to a mourning world... a world ripped apart and ruined by sin and death

C. Where Jesus Stopped in the Reading... but the Word is Still Given

1. Jesus dramatically stopped reading in the middle of the verse...

Luke 4:18-20 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him

2. He ended at the proclamation of the YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR... or grace

- a. Jesus came to proclaim that God was issuing a universal amnesty for all sins committed by any who would repent and trust in him
- b. The floodgates of heavenly grace were wide open... the "year" of the Lord's favor must call to mind the "Year of Jubilee" which the Lord ordained to occur essentially once in a Jew's lifetime... in which all debts are cancelled and the slaves are all

set free; and the Jews can return to their ancestral allotted inheritance of land... a beautiful picture of salvation

- c. It implies a once in a lifetime opportunity, but one that lasts for a year... it's not just a brief glimmer...
- d. It is a time of extended favor from the Lord... but it is FINITE in duration
- e. That time is NOW:

Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

2 Corinthians 6:2 "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

3. BUT the text of Isaiah goes BEYOND that

Isaiah 61:2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God

- a. God has a DAY OF VENGEANCE still for those who do not receive this grace of the Lord
- b. That day is REAL and it is COMING!

Romans 2:5-8 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done." ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

- c. Jesus regularly warned about the day of God's vengeance in his preaching ministry

Matthew 12:36 I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.

Matthew 13:41-42 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:41 Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

- d. So... why did Jesus STOP THE READING at that point? Well, the reason Jesus came into the world, the reason he was incarnate by the Spirit and anointed by the Spirit and empowered by the Spirit was to work SALVATION for sinners, not condemnation

John 3:17 God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

- e. Jesus stopped dramatically at that point because his whole FIRST COMING was about working salvation for the elect...
- f. But the focus of the SECOND COMING will be wrath for the rebellious

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

STOP: we are NOW in the "YEAR of the Lord's favor!" Now is the day of salvation... trust in Christ and rejoice and know the freedom that he alone can give

II. The Transformation of the Messiah's People (vs. 3-9)

Not only does Jesus PROCLAIM and HEAL, but he also TRANSFORMS God's chosen people... they are made entirely different by the work of Christ in their lives

A. From Weak Captives to Mighty Trees of Righteousness (vs. 3)

Isaiah 61:3 to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

1. These people Christ found languishing in Satan's dark and stinking dungeon of sin
2. They were evil in their hearts and minds, and it showed in their sinful lives
3. They were slaves to sin... completely corrupted in God's sight
4. BUT with the Spirit-anointed proclamation of the gospel by Jesus Christ, everything changes for them
5. They put on radiant garments of righteousness instead of stinking clothes of sin
 - a. **"a crown of beauty instead of ashes"**: we were ugly in God's sight; through the imputed righteousness of Christ, we are now radiantly beautiful to God
 - b. **"the oil of gladness instead of mourning"**: Christ is everything... these exact words are spoken of Christ because of his HEART AFFECTIONS:

Hebrews 1:9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

- c. In like manner, those Christ saves he makes truly beautiful in our HEARTS as well... we are transformed to love righteousness and hate wickedness... therefore God pours out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit because he LOVES how beautiful our hearts are now... and our sorrow is changed forever into eternal joy
- d. **"a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair"**: apart from Christ, life was HOPELESS—bleak and empty, purposeless, and we had nothing to look forward to except the just wrath of God in death; now in Christ, we have a joyful life

of service to God in this world, followed by eternity celebrating God in praise and worship

6. **They will be called OAKS of RIGHTEOUSNESS, a PLANTING of the Lord:**

- a. We were “bruised reeds”... weak, pathetic, easily blown and tossed by the winds of temptation... we were POWERLESS to withstand Satan’s temptations and false doctrines
- b. Now in Christ, we have become MIGHTY... oaks with deep root-systems; not blown and tossed by the waves of false doctrine... no longer DOUBLE-MINDED, now withstanding all Satan’s attacks
- c. At least, that is what we CAN BE by the power of the Spirit
- d. And that is what we WILL BE in heaven... living, immovable

Illus.: Summer of 1984, drove down Pacific Coast Rte. 1 and saw the mighty redwoods... the tallest trees in the world, mighty, awesome, living things... some of them you could drive a car through, their trunks were so wide in diameter...

These amazing trees live as long as eighteen centuries and grow as tall as 379 feet, with a maximum diameter of almost 30 feet

The drive through those massive awesome trees is called “The Avenue of the Giants”

Massive displays of LIFE, of POWER and STATUE... that’s what the Lord can do in the life of a believer... deeply rooted in the infinite grace of God, drinking in the water of life and the nutrients of biblical truth, growing and growing in STABILITY in Christ

Ephesians 3:17-18 I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ

Colossians 2:6-7 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

The love of Christ is our vastly deep ROOT SYSTEM... from that system, we draw living water and grow stronger and stronger in holiness and righteousness

Church history is a study of men and women whose growth in Christ made them like the Redwoods... OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, a planting of the Lord for the display of his glory: the martyrs of the Roman era, the missionaries that risked their lives to lead the pagan tribes of Germany and Scotland and the terrifying Vikings to faith in Christ; the Reformers who braved the persecution of a false church and the threat of being burned at the stake to establish the true gospel; the Puritans who were attacked and criticized and imprisoned, but who kept preaching and living the truth in Christ; missionaries who took the gospel to the Amazonian jungle and through the Iron Curtain...

The Avenue of the Giants!!! Men and women of God, whose roots in Christ went deep and whose works for Christ spread upward with eternal glory!

Don't you want to live a life like that??!!

7. The point of all of it: the DISPLAY OF HIS GLORY!!!

Isaiah 61:3 They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

Ephesians 1:4-6 In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace

B. Rebuilding Ancient Ruins (vs. 4)

Isaiah 61:4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

1. The immediate context obviously is the rebuilding of the ruins of Jerusalem and the Promised Land... destroyed by the Babylonians, prowled by wild animals... amazingly rebuilt under Ezra and Nehemiah after the exile
2. But that is just a picture of the ongoing work the people of God do in every generation... people who work in the Church of Jesus Christ to recover and live out the gospel
 - a. Obviously Martin Luther and John Calvin, who rescued the gospel of Justification by faith in Christ alone from centuries of ruin under the medieval Roman Catholic error... they were rebuilders of ancient ruins DOCTRINALLY... recovering the gospel that had long lain fallow, devastated for generations
 - b. The same concerning the modern missions movement... recovering the zeal of the Apostle Paul to take the gospel to people who had not yet heard it
 - c. Satan is a DESTROYER, and he ruins works that once soared for the glory of God... churches become cold and lifeless; colleges and seminaries turn away from the pure doctrine and power of their founders to false doctrines... those institutions lay in ruins
 - d. God through his Spirit can move the people of God to a FRESH VISION and an IRRESISTABLE POWER
3. The central “building work” of God is the RISING CHURCH of Jesus Christ... as we’ve seen again and again:

To build the New Jerusalem living stone by living stone, quarried from Satan’s dark kingdom. Certainly the church has done literal rebuilding of physical ruins: after earthquakes, after wars, after flood... the church is there to help rebuild. But the real rebuilding of ruins is done within a single human heart who genuinely repents of sin and turns to God through Christ. From that moment on, the marriage improves, the parenting improves, the neighboring improves, the citizenship improves. The rubble of sin is cleared away and a “tree of righteousness” grows up for all to see.

C. Enriched, Not Enslaved, by the Nations (vs. 5-9)

Isaiah 61:5-6 Aliens will shepherd your flocks; foreigners will work your fields and vineyards. ⁶ And you will be called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God. You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast.

1. Here Isaiah predicts the enriching of the Jewish nation after the exile... but only as a TYPE and SHADOW of the riches of the growing church of Jesus Christ
2. The spread of the gospel leads aliens and former enemies to become SHEPHERDS of God's flock, working the fields and vineyards of the Kingdom of God
3. These converted Gentiles will be called "priests of the Lord"

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

4. They will FEED ON THE WEALTH OF THE NATIONS and in their RICHES Zion will boast
 - a. As we saw in the last chapter, the flowing of riches from the nations into the gates of the New Jerusalem has to do with hearts and lives given in total consecration to Jesus... the PEOPLE are the riches
 - b. Nowadays, the "health and wealth" prosperity gospel has spread theological destruction all over the world... people are constantly looking to verses like this one to say that God wants you to have YOUR BEST LIFE NOW... including

Joel Osteen: "God wants us to prosper financially, to have plenty of money, to fulfill the destiny he has laid out for us."

Kenneth Copeland in his book *The Laws of Prosperity*, "Since God's covenant has been established and prosperity is a provision of

this covenant, you need to realize that prosperity belongs to you now!"

5. The RICHES of the NATIONS are spiritual... genuine worship from powerfully converted people from all over the world
6. Look at the transformation!!

Isaiah 61:7-9 Instead of their shame my people will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a double portion in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs. ⁸ "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity. In my faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹ Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed."

7. This is the change that God works through Christ... shame and disgrace were Israel's lot for their sin... the rebuilding of Jerusalem was a kind of vindication from the Lord... but again, merely a TYPE and SHADOW... the reality is in Christ
8. All over the world, shame-filled sinners are given a DOUBLE PORTION of grace to cover all their sins, and we will find our inheritance in Christ: eternal life in heaven
9. God will cause the people to turn away from wickedness and live out the NEW COVENANT of a transformed life by the power of the Holy Spirit
10. Their descendants will be richly blessed as well, not merely the physical children, but their sons and daughters IN THE FAITH... as Paul called Timothy "my true son in the faith"
11. The worldwide church of Jesus Christ will be acknowledged as a people the Lord has blessed!!

III. The Messiah's Garments of Joy, Righteousness and Salvation (vs. 10-11)

A. The Messiah's Garments (vs. 10)

Isaiah 61:10-11 I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

1. The chapter began with Jesus speaking to us through the words of the Prophet Isaiah
2. So I am interpreting these last two verses in the same light
3. However, it could also be a statement ANY BELIEVER IN CHRIST could make as well... clothed IN CHRIST with garments of salvation, a robe of righteousness
4. Honestly this is really true at every level... our righteousness is an IMPUTED righteousness, given to us IN CHRIST... his GARMENT of salvation is given to us as a GIFT, his righteousness CLOTHES US and makes us radiantly beautiful IN HIM

Philippians 3:8-9 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

B. The Messiah's Harvest of Righteousness (vs. 11)

Isaiah 61:11 For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

1. This is Christ's worldwide harvest!!

2. Righteousness and salvation will spring up among ALL NATIONS

IV. Application

First, stand in AWE of the amazing moment when Jesus rolled open that scroll and read those amazing words about his ANOINTING as the Messiah.

As we read this chapter, we must begin where the chapter ends up: worship. If we have been redeemed by the mission of the Messiah, the clearest evidence will be the desire we have to give him praise and worship. So, we should worship Jesus for the perfection of his character and the power of his mission on earth.

Secondly, we are led to meditate on the amazing grace of God to such degraded sinners as we were. This chapter, couched in language of overwhelming joy and victory, should lead us to meditate on what kind of grace God the Father has shown us in Christ, for we were enslaved through our own willful rebellion. The ashes of disgrace on us were well-earned. We were not merely victims of sin and Satan's oppression, but we were oppressors ourselves. But God, in the richness of his mercy and love toward us, has given us a crown, oil, and rich garments instead of our chains, rags, and stench.

So, COME TO CHRIST... if you are an outsider!!

Third, we should desire to become more and more MIGHTY OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS as we grow in Christ... like the stable and powerful heroes of old... let's live pure lives, and grow more and more like Christ

Fourth, we should be energetic in the mission Christ has entrusted to us: to proclaim liberty to the captives all over the earth. He has appointed us as priest for the Lord and minister of our God, messengers of his gospel. By proclaiming and living out the truth of his word, we will rebuild ancient cities and clear away piles of rubble. This points to the need to build healthy local churches that are obedient to the full commands of the Bible by

the power of the Holy Spirit. Healthy local churches are colonies of heaven, havens of peaceful order in the midst of a war zone of sin's destruction. So let us build wisely on the foundation that has already been laid, who is Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:10-11) Healthy local churches are the clearest fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61:4.

Fifth, if you are struggling with depression, the words of this chapter have power to lift you up so you can see your future:

Isaiah 61:2-3 to comfort all who mourn, ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.