

## Sermon Outline

### THE YEAR IN OUR LORD, 2012-2013

#### The Advent and Christmas Messages:

- ♦ Nov 25: Christ Jesus for the Poor (Isa 61:1) ♦ Dec 9: Christ Jesus for the Sad (Isa61:1)
- ♦ Dec 16: Christ Jesus for the Captives (Isa 61:1) ♦ Dec 23: Christ Jesus for Offenders (Isa 61:2)
- ♦ Dec 25: Christ Jesus Is Born (Lk 2:1-12)

#### CHRIST JESUS FOR THE OFFENDERS: AN ADVENT MESSAGE (ISAIAH 61:2)

### I. An Offensive Truth

Romans 3:23: “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

### II. The Mission of the Messiah

- A. Isaiah 61:1, 2 gives us Jesus’ mission statement.
  - 1. Our Lord himself quotes this passage when he begins his ministry (Lk 4:18-19).
  - 2. Jesus understood his life’s work in terms of Isaiah 61.
- B. Isaiah 61:2 tells us that the Anointed One has come...

*to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;*

- C. Isaiah 61:2 is a restatement of everything that we have read before.
  - 1. While these words do not say anything entirely new to us, they do emphasize the *pleasure* that God takes in those whom he sets free.
  - 2. When God frees from our sins, God actually favors and comforts his people.
  - 3. What we have in 61:2 is a vision of God’s affection for his ransomed people—the affection that he communicates through his Anointed One.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) How does Isaiah 61:1, 2 relate to Christ? (2) What does Isaiah 61:2 tell us about the Messiah’s work?

### III. To Proclaim the Year of YHWH’s Favor

- A. The Scripture says that the Anointed One will come “to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor...”
- B. Like all the other works that the Anointed One will do, we must understand this work as a result of God’s Spirit being upon him.  
—By placing his Holy Spirit upon the Lord Jesus, God authorizes the Lord Jesus Christ to act on his behalf, and to set the captives free.
- C. The background of “the year of the LORD’s favor” is in the Old Testament.
1. In the laws of ancient Israel, God instituted *the year of Jubilee*.
  2. The laws regarding the Year of Jubilee are found in Leviticus 25.
    - a. According to this portion of Scripture, the Jubilee year is to take place every fifty years (25:10).  
—Leviticus 25:10: “And you shall consecrate *the fiftieth year*, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. *It shall be a jubilee for you*, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.”
    - b. One of the key features of the Year of Jubilee is the redemption of slaves.
      - i. In Leviticus 25:47, the Lord lays down this rule.
 

*<sup>47</sup> “If a stranger or sojourner with you becomes rich, and your brother beside him becomes poor and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner with you or to a member of the stranger’s clan, <sup>48</sup> then after he is sold he may be redeemed. One of his brothers may redeem him, <sup>49</sup> or his uncle or his cousin may redeem him, or a close relative from his clan may redeem him. Or if he grows rich he may redeem himself.*
      - ii. No Israelite needs to be a slave forever.
        - (A) He can be bought out of his slavery by a relative.
        - (B) He can purchase his own freedom if he has become financially able to do so.
      - iii. What happens if the slave has no one to purchase freedom for him, or is unable to purchase freedom for himself?
        - (A) Leviticus 25:54: “And if he is not redeemed by these means, then he and his children with him shall be released in the year of jubilee.”
        - (B) On the year of Jubilee, all slaves will be freely released.
        - (C) Upon their release, God allows for all slaves to return to their families, clans, and properties.
  3. God explains the rationale for this in 25:55: “For it is to *me* that the people of Israel are servants. They are *my* servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”

- a. God wants poor Israelites to be released from slavery every Jubilee year because each Israelite is first and foremost a servant of God.
  - b. God, not man, is the true owner of each Israelite. —Therefore, no Israelite needs to remain a slave to man forever.
- D. If our ears have been sensitized to the Gospel, we can sense that the Jubilee year has much greater significance than reasons related to social justice.
- 1. The Jubilee year points to that great age when mankind will finally be set free from sin to serve God.
  - 2. In Isaiah, the Old Testament legislation for the Jubilee year becomes a full-blown eschatological program for the future.
    - a. Consider Isaiah 51:11:

*And the ransomed of the LORD shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain gladness and joy,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

- b. While the specific terminology of Jubilee is absent in Isaiah 51:11, the concept of freeing the captives is clearly in the background.
- c. Just as slaves were freed on the year of Jubilee to return to their homes, so the exiles of Israel shall be freed to return to their land.
- d. This great liberation takes place when the Lord God himself returns to his people in his Anointed One.
- e. We can see the connection between the year of the Lord's favor in Isaiah and the year of Jubilee in Leviticus, simply by comparing Leviticus 25:10 to Isaiah 61:1, 2.

<b>Lev 25:10</b>	<b>Is 61:2</b>
And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and <i>proclaim liberty</i> throughout the land to all its inhabitants...	The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to <i>proclaim liberty</i> to the captives,...
i	to <i>proclaim the year</i> of the LORD's favor...
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the passages talk about a special year that God has set aside.

- ii. Both mention the proclamation of liberty.

3. This is why the Lord's return to his people is called the year of the Lord's favor—it is the great Jubilee.  
—It is the age when all debts are cancelled, all slaves are set free, and all exiles are finally allowed to return home to be reunited with their loved ones again.
4. The Lord's Anointed One, Jesus Christ, will announce the beginning of the great Jubilee.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) Who will proclaim the year of the LORD's favor? (2) Where in the Old Testament can we find the background of "the year of the LORD's favor"? (3) What does Leviticus 25:54 teach about the redemption of those who cannot redeem themselves? When can these people go free? (4) According to 25:55, what is the rationale for the year of Jubilee? (5) "The Jubilee year points to that great age when mankind will finally be set free to serve God." Discuss. (6) How does the jubilee theme appear in Isaiah 51:11?

#### IV. To Proclaim the Day of Vengeance of our God

- A. As the Anointed One proclaims the year of the Lord's favor, he also proclaims "the day of vengeance of our God..."
  1. How is the year of the Lord's favor related to the day of the Lord's vengeance?  
—*The year of the Lord's favor is also the day the Lord avenges his people.*
  2. The oppressors of God's people are ultimately the world powers of evil.
  3. When the year of the Lord's favor begins, all these evil world powers along with their human agents will be summoned to account for their deeds.
  4. While God may have used these powers to punish the sins of his people, the fact that these powers willingly and deliberately did evil makes them guilty also of sin.
  5. While God used their evil for *his* purposes, what they did was still evil (Gen 50:20).
  6. So when God comes to free his people, he will deal with those who oppressed them.
- B. There is great comfort in this truth of God's vengeance.  
—It means evil will not prevail in the end—there will be restoration and resurrection.
- C. In Isaiah 63:3, 4, we see the arrival of God on his day of vengeance.

*"I have trodden the winepress alone,  
and from the peoples no one was with me;  
I trod them in my anger  
and trampled them in my wrath;  
their lifeblood spattered on my garments,  
and stained all my apparel.*

*For the day of vengeance was in my heart,  
and my year of redemption had come.”*

1. The day of vengeance and the year of redemption are two sides of the same coin!
2. In Revelation 19:11-16, the face of the divine warrior king is finally revealed—it is the face of Jesus our Lord.

*<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. <sup>13</sup> He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*

3. When the Anointed One comes, he will not only inaugurate the great jubilee—he will bring the judgment of God on all who are evil.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) How is the year of the Lord’s favor related to the day of the Lord’s vengeance? (2) What comfort can we find from the promise of God’s vengeance? (3) How does Isaiah 63:3, 4 describe the day of judgment? How does it relate “the day of vengeance” to “my year of redemption”? (4) How does Revelation 19:11-16 describe the return of the Lord Jesus Christ?

## V. To Comfort All Who Mourn

- A. But our portion of Scripture concludes on a glorious note.
- B. God’s vengeance is a means to an end—and the end is, finally, “to comfort all who mourn.”
- C. To those who belong to the evil one, God shows himself strong.—God shows himself as the divine warrior, unapologetically pounding his enemies into the ground.
- D. But to those who are his, God shows himself as the tender father, the loving King who comforts those who are broken.
- E. God gathers his children to himself through his Anointed One.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) How does God treat those who mourn?

## VI. Cherishing Jesus the Anointed One

**The Lord Jesus is our Savior King. He is the counselor who comforts those who mourn. He is the prophet who announces the day of God’s vengeance**

and the year of God's favor. He is the healer who binds up the sad and the depressed. He is the heavenly herald who announces good news to the poor and liberty to the captives. Jesus is all these things because the Spirit of the Lord God dwells in him. He himself is the living temple of almighty God. We must cherish this Lord and Savior whom God has given to us. We must trust in him for salvation. We must devote our whole lives to him.