



“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD...” Isaiah 61:1 – 2a

This is the ministry of our Lord Jesus. He came to release those bound by sin. He came to liberate the sinner from the prison house of every imaginable bondage. This is truly a message of good news, hope and joy! It is also our message! “As My Father has sent Me, so send I you!” (John 20:21).

Our ministry continues and reaches deep into men and women’s hearts. “...to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto those who mourn in Zion, to give to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified.” (Isaiah 61:2 – 3).

The Gospel’s message and ministry, with all of its positive hope, encouragement and acceptance, must also proclaim – as Isaiah saw it – the mention of the “day of the vengeance of our God.” Why then did Jesus, when quoting this passage, stop short of the full text from Isaiah? Many would say that is because we now have a Gospel of grace and that judgment is no longer a part of the spiritual equation. While that sounds reasonable to our humanistically tuned ears, it isn’t the all inclusive truth! Jesus had yet to be offered as the Sacrifice Lamb. Had Israel received Him at His first advent then that portion of Isaiah’s prophecy would not have been necessary.

Many people today – because the Church has failed to proclaim “the day of the Lord’s judgment”- assume (and falsely so) that a God of love will not punish them for their sins. Unfortunately, such assumptions often cause new believers to fall away when they encounter trials. (Mark 4:16 -17). The fear of the Lord brings a certain soberness to our lives and ministries.

“My son, there is a Heaven to gain, but there is also a hell to shun!”

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