

We have so many things to be thankful for.

I am so thankful for what God has done in Brooklyn Church over the past few years.

God got us through the COVID pandemic. It was no small thing.

I am thankful for so many of you and how you have loved one another.

I am thankful for the new families that have joined us. It is such an encouragement.

I am thankful for the leadership and service so many people have given. The generosity has been amazing.

I am so thankful for a family of believers that loves the Word of God. You have no idea...

Most of all I am thankful for my Savior, Jesus Christ, and that He has made me His own.

When I was in High School my best friend, Andrew, was a Ronald Reagan Republican.

He had a picture of the president on the wall in his bedroom, which was quite a thing for a teenager.

He would often speak to me of the glories of President Reagan, that he would save the world.

Andrew was both persuasive and persistent.

And to be honest, I was almost convinced. I wanted to be convinced.

I was searching for solutions for the world and meaning and purpose for my life.

What really kept me guarded against the political temptations was that I had begun reading the Bible.

I suppose I had read all over, especially in the New Testament.

The Old Testament seemed so confusing and messy.

I recall reading Acts, I loved Paul, and the book of Revelation more than any other.

When I read it, I felt the truth of it, like God was speaking to me.

I was deeply taken by Jesus, the Lion of Judah, the Lamb slain, Compassionate Messiah, Mighty Warrior.

One of the things I found deeply attractive was that, amid all sorts of injustice and conflict...

Jesus and His disciples were consistently compassionate and joyful.

In a world that is characterized by anger and arguing and slander and depression and darkness...

Where people seem obsessed with their hatreds...

The Muslims hate the Jews, Hindus hate the Christians, Christians hate the Muslims...

Democrats hate the Republicans, Republicans hate the Democrats, and everybody hates Trump.

I such a world, you and I as Christians are called to be joyful because our Savior makes us joyful.

The Messiah brings joy to His people.

We are in the middle of the final major section of Isaiah.

1-39 The Book of the King... to sinful, rebellious, corrupted Israel.

40-55 The Book of the Servant... to exiled, oppressed, enslaved Israel.

56-66 The Book of the Conqueror

Though injustice reigns, and God's people are sinful and powerless, the Conquering Messiah is coming.

This is such an important message. After all, what does this world look like?

Isaiah 56:10-12

Isaiah 59:7-8

This is the human problem. We are our own worst enemy. We wreck our own lives.

We need a Savior to rescue us. *In this, my friend Andrew was correct, he just had the wrong savior.*

I should say that later Andrew became a believer in Jesus Christ.

So, the conquering Messiah King is coming and in preparation He is working on changing people.

Because people need changing. Have you noticed?

Chapters 56-58 describe those who faithfully seek God against the backdrop of the fake worship of most people.

In chapter 59 God's people realize their sin and the justice of God's condemnation. They need a Savior.

The Lord tells them that He is coming Himself to save them. No one else can do it.

Now we are reading of the conquest of the Messiah and the future glory of Israel.

In chapter 60 we read of His restoration of His special people. Now we read about Him.

I. Jesus is the Spirit-anointed Conquering King.

Isaiah 61:1-3

These first lines of Isaiah 61 are among the most important in the book. This is because Jesus made them so. These are the verses Jesus reads aloud in the synagogue in Nazareth as He began his ministry.

Luke 4:14-21 What follows there in Nazareth is a bit of a ruckus.

People knew Jesus and didn't know what to do with what He had just said. Why?

It's because Jesus had just identified Himself as the one anointed by the Spirit of the Lord in Isaiah 61.

He had just identified Himself as the Messiah, which means "Anointed One."

Messiah is translated into Greek as "Christ." Therefore, we call Him Jesus Christ.

What is it that Jesus is saying about Himself as He quotes this passage?

The Spirit of Yahweh Elohim is upon Him. **Isaiah 11:2-5**

He has been anointed to bring good news to the afflicted, the humbled, those who know they need a Savior.

The New Testament has a word that means "good news." Do you know it?

"He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted." = healing for damaged people. **Isaiah 42:1-3**

"To proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners." = God's people are prisoners in two senses.

They are captives of the Babylonians and now the Persians.

In Jesus' day they were captives of the Romans. They experience political oppression.

They will be rescued from all that, not right away, but eventually God's kingdom will prevail.

But they are captives in another sense. They are slaves to sin.

The New Testament makes this even more clear.

People cannot do good even when they know they should. Romans 1-7 makes this clear.

Jesus frees from sin all who trust in Him.

He has paid the death price for your sin... freeing you from the penalty of sin.

He gives you His Spirit to live right... freeing you from the power of sin.

He will completely defeat sin and Satan forever... freeing you from the presence of sin.

And He's anointed "to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." = Something begins when Messiah comes.

The anointed one is a king. He is the King and when He arrives His kingdom begins.

Even now we begin our calendars with His arrival. It is a good year.

Finally, notice where Jesus leaves off quoting from Isaiah 61.

He does not go on to quote "and the day of vengeance of our God." Why?

Well, his first coming is not yet the day of vengeance. That day is still to come.

The Spirit-anointed Conquering King is coming for His people but withholding His day of vengeance.

Look at the end of verse 2 and all of verse three.

Jesus brings for His people comfort, joy, praise, and spiritual growth.

Do you know Jesus? Do you trust Him? He will make you joyful and strong.

You say, "I don't feel very joyful or strong." Ok. Keep seeking Him and trusting Him.

II. Jesus transforms His people.

Isaiah 61:4-9

One might be tempted to read these verses as the promise of a rebuilt Jerusalem that began in 538 BC.

You can read about this in Ezra and Nehemiah. It is amazing.

And, that is a partial fulfillment of this prophesy, but not the ultimate fulfillment.

If that is what this prophesy is referring to, it becomes rather disappointing.

Moreover, if that is so, how could Jesus be saying that He's the one who brings it?

No. The ultimate fulfillment of this prophesy is still future for us. It is still coming.

And some of the things that we read here have already begun.

God is rebuilding His ruined people. (vs. 4)

He is bringing into His kingdom strangers and foreigners, like us! (vs. 5)

He calls us His priests and ministers. (vs. 5) **1 Peter 2:9-10** You have the Spirit of God living in you!

In verses 6(latter half)-9 what we read of is even now mostly future.

He will give His people the riches of the nations. It is hard to see so far.

He will give His people complete possession of the land.

We will have everlasting joy. Do you know what that means? It means joy forever.

He will faithfully complete all His covenant promises to His people, to us.

All the nations on earth will recognize His children for who they are, special to the Lord God...

All creation even now looks forward to seeing His children whom He has blessed forever. **Romans 8:19**

This is what's coming.

The only reason that it is sometimes difficult to believe is that it hasn't happened yet.

I know it will happen because I have learned to believe what I read in the Bible.

God has demonstrated the truth of His Word and His promises to me over and over.

Over the years I have had doubts. I have asked God questions. Every time He has answered by doubts.

After the Lord has shown His faithfulness over and over it is reasonable to have unshakable faith.

I verse 10 we begin reading the response of the people of God, the people of the Anointed King Jesus.

Their response is because they believe all that the prophet has spoken about what Jesus will do.

What is their response?

You can read it in the first two lines of verse 10. Joy. Great rejoicing.

You might say, "Well, pastor, that is all well and good, but I don't feel very joyful. Not most of the time."

I'd like to share with you the key to lasting, consistent joy.

This is no secret. You see it here and find it throughout the Bible.

You watch it in the behavior of believers like Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Peter, and Paul.

What is the key to lasting consistent joy?

Faith in God's future grace and faithfulness to His promises.

When you know what is coming, and that God will reward your faith with blessing...

Then you have joy in the present.

When you know how it all ends you have joy now.

It is a simple concept, and you see the truth of it all over.

When an athlete knows he is going to win, all of the suffering along the way is worth it.

When a mother knows she will have a baby, the pregnancy is filled with happiness.

When a student knows that Christmas is coming, it makes finals week bearable.

When you know the end, it transforms the present.

And you know the end.

That is the reason for verse 10 and following.

III. Jesus saves His people in righteousness.

Isaiah 61:10-11

Notice that the rejoicing in "in the Lord." The exaltation is "in my God."

This is no momentary happiness because we won a football game or have more money.

This is lasting joy because you and I know that God will win, and He will bring us along with Him.

This is joy because "He has clothed me in garments of salvation."

This is joy because "He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness."

This is joy because I am trusting in Him, and I know the destiny of all who trust in Him.

It does not matter whether you are poor or despised or in pain or terminally ill.

If you are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, your destiny is wrapped up in His.

How can you not be joyful now? You know that the Lord is eagerly planning to bless you!

All the nations of the earth will see it. (vs. 11) And they will see the rightness of it.

Of course the Lord God blesses and rewards those who trust in Him. Why wouldn't He?

All His faithful disciples over the ages have been sure of this.

And now here we are. We ought to be the most joy-filled people on the planet.