

Nazareth

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Date: 12 October 2008

[0:00] Just one other notice I neglected to mention of course the baptisms are on today so there's a couple of folks getting baptized so and the address is 56 Balmoral circuit! 56 Balmoral circuit, Clayfield.

So please join with us, Roy and Hazel's daughter is kindly off at her house where they've got a swimming pool. So we'd love as many of you as can make it to come and watch and join in. We'd love you to be able to join in and watch and be part of the witness there. So, oh yes actually there's one point for prayer actually. You might just make a special prayer just on behalf of Ralph. Ralph's been moved by the Lord to do some witnessing in the hospital to be a chaplain and visit people that are sick in hospital. And he's asked for prayer for that, that the Lord will lead his way. So maybe we'll just pray for Ralph just now. Heavenly Father we lift up Ralph to you in his feeling mood to serve you in this way. We pray Lord that you'd open doors for him in the hospital work that as he goes in may talk to people and pray with them and encourage them.

[1:14] Just chat with them Lord that you use him as your vessel Lord to open the way Lord with the necessary steps he has to take to organise that.

And Lord that the hospital would be accommodating and Lord that you just make it possible as you lead him that he can be used by you. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Please turn with me to Luke 4. If you've got your Bibles there. Luke chapter 4. I'm going to read from verse 14. Luke 4.14. We've got it on the board display here too.

So Luke chapter 4 and verse 14. Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14.

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Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14. Luke 4.14. day and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written.

The spirit of the Lord is now upon me because he had anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He had sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book and he gave it again to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. I'm just going to do a quick technical stuff here.

[3:36] So if anyone has one line, we've got to switch to something else. So I'll give you a moment. Yeah. Yeah, the set's at the top there too.

Oh, where it says set? Yeah. Oh no, sorry, PowerPoint. Yeah. Sorry. We'll get there. And the slide here. That's PowerPoint.

Okay, great. Sorry about that. We're just trying to get used to some of this.

So I wanted to talk about the mission of the Lord Jesus, the mission of our Saviour. And really it's captured in these verses that we just read in Luke chapter 4 and verse 14 onwards.

The mission of the Lord Jesus. And it says that he came to Nazareth in verse 16. He came to Nazareth. Nazareth was a place and I was talking to someone lately who was talking about Nazareth and kind of compared Nazareth to Elizabeth.

[4:40] Nazareth is a place that was kind of neglected, a place that was kind of put to one side. In John chapter 1 verse 46, Nathanael said, can

there any good thing come out of Nazareth?

Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? And Philip said unto him, come and see. That was John 1 verse 46. Nazareth. Here's a picture of it here.

It had a reputation. A place that was likely wicked, immoral. A very ordinary place. Humble. Despised.

Nathanael asked, can anything come out of Nazareth that's good? This was Jesus' hometown where our Lord and Savior grew up. And it's interesting, isn't it, that Jesus of Nazareth is one of his very titles, one of his names.

The Messiah would be a branch sprouting from the stump, from David's line. It tells us in Isaiah 11 verse 1, one of the very names of the Messiah would be the branch.

[5:46] And this word branch is the word in this tongue, Netzer, from which we derive the word Nazarene. So it was actually a title of the Messiah, that he would be a Nazarene.

And it stood for the reproach. Nazareth stood for the reproach that Jesus bore as the Messiah. Where he came from was this lowly town, this lowly place that he grew up in.

He was a branch, a Netzer, a Nazarene, sprung out of David's roots, out of David's lineage. So the Lord Jesus started his ministry in this lowly place too.

The Lord Jesus, he starts his mission. And to whom will he go? To whom will the Lord Jesus go? The Lord Jesus goes to these folk, the folk that are lonely and needy and hurting.

As we see, as in this passage we've read, the kind of people that our Lord Jesus spoke of, that he was anointed to preach the gospel to. Our Lord Jesus, he gets the book of Isaiah and he opens it and he reads in verse 18, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he had anointed me.

[7:02] Why? Number one, to preach the gospel to the poor. To preach the gospel to the poor. When I think of poor people, people who don't have too much to rub together, I think of people that are the vulnerable people in our society.

Vulnerable people. Empty people. Searching people. These are the kind of people that the Lord Jesus says he wants to preach the gospel to the poor. And he opens that vast treasure chest, those vast treasure vaults of heaven for the poor and needy.

This one who holds the earth in his very hand. Of whom it says in John 10 verse 28, And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Here is the one who fashioned the earth and the heavens with his very hand. The earth and the heavens, it's his handiwork, displayed every night and day as we look skyward.

Here is the one who holds us in his very hand. And what do the poor need? The poor need help. The poor need help. They need hope. They need a hand. Now, of course in practical terms but I think spiritually too.

[8:14] The poor people in our world are spiritually poor. They need help. They need the Saviour's help. The Lord Jesus is our helper. The Holy Spirit is our helper.

It says of the Lord God, he is our help. He is our stronghold. He is our strength. He is the one who gives hope. Hope to the hopeless and a hand that he reaches out.

What did the Lord Jesus do? He was God manifest in the flesh. He treads the earth with human feet. He touches the sinful with human hand. He weeps with human eye and he bleeds with human blood.

This is our Saviour, the Messiah, our Lord and Saviour. This is good news that somebody does care. Somebody cares for those that are poor and weak and lowly in this life.

Somebody cares for the down and outers, the people that are doing it tough. Somebody reaches out and somebody stops to listen and his name is Jesus. His name is our Lord Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

[9:13] He is the one who comes in and he nourishes us. He nourishes us and he reaches out to us. He preaches the gospel to the poor. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me.

Another group of people is the brokenhearted. The Lord Jesus says that he has come, he's anointed to heal the brokenhearted. Christ has an ear to listen to the broken in heart, to the weeping ones, the unointed one.

He wants to come, he wants to soothe our wounds. He sees those crushed and hurting and breaking hearts. He sees the inner pain of those that have had a troubled history, troubled past. He brings healing to our inner hurts, whatever it might be. Isn't it wonderful to know that this Lord and Saviour cares enough to calm our troubled breasts.

He cares enough to reach down on the inside of us. And here's the one who reaches out to the torn, the despairing and the crushed. I think of someone who's brokenhearted and I think of someone who's torn.

[10:18] Maybe they've gone through torment and trauma, abuse. Those that have had despairs and have loaded themselves down with heavy loads, with heavy weights, with heavy burdens and the crushed.

Those that our world would count as insignificant, as unworthy, inadequate. These are the ones the Lord Jesus specifically says to us that He has come to heal you, to heal those both that are broken in heart.

And when I think of healing, I think of how how He, I missed the slide there, that's okay. There it is. When I think of those that are broken in heart, I think that these are the ones who need care.

They need comfort. They need compassion. And who else can you look to that can give that care on the inside, that care on the deep level of your very heart, of your very soul?

He brings that precious care that only He can give. You know, it says of Him that He cares for the sparrow. He counts the hairs on the head. He knows when even one sparrow falls to the ground, He knows of those things.

[11:29] He cares for you. The Bible says that cast Him all your care on Him for He careth for you. He certainly cares. And He's the comforter in the person of the Holy Spirit.

He's the great comforter, the heavenly comforter. And He brings compassion. When He saw the city, He beheld it and He wept over it. He had compassion. He is the one who preaches the gospel to the poor and He heals the brokenhearted.

And He goes on and He says, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He had anointed me to preach deliverance to the captives. Here's another group of people that our Lord and Saviour specifically tells us that He's commissioned to go to.

His mission is to go to preach deliverance to the captives. This word captives, it means prisoners. You could even understand it to mean prisoners of war.

The Lord Jesus says specifically to you, to us today, that He has come to bring deliverance, to bring release for those that are in prison, to those that are in bondage, to those that are bound.

[12:34] And Christ sees the bondages that hold people prisoner. People are bound and imprisoned in our community where we live today, in our society where we live.

There's people who are held captive, held prisoner. And He wants to declare freedom to you. He wants to declare deliverance to you. There's people tied up in chains all around the streets in which we live.

People tied up in chains of doubt, chains of hate, chains of bitterness. And when I think of captives, I think of these three kinds of people here. The addicts.

There's people who are addicted. They're in bondage. They're enslaved. They're trapped in the addiction that is holding them fast and holding them captive to that which is snaring them and trapping them and tripping them up.

It's doing their health no good. It's doing their minds no good. It's doing their families no good. It's doing their pockets no good. They're prisons. They're in prison by the addiction that they're in.

[13:34] I think of runaways too. I think I've heard of various teenagers running away from home. You know, they think they've escaped. They think they've got freedom but they're trapped in the bondage of their rebellion against their home, against law and order, against their families, against respect for parents, for elderly.

They're runaways in our society. They're in prison. They're held captive, chained up in locked bars. And these are the people that Christ wants to come. They're trapped. They're trapped and they're in bondage.

Friends today, these are the ones that the Lord Jesus wants us to think about as He did of these folk that Christ has come. He says, the Lord has anointed me to preach, to take the message to these people.

And what does the Lord Jesus do for the captives? The Lord Jesus, He opens that prison door. He opens that cell door and opens the way to freedom, to liberty, to being set free. He wants to bring deliverance, to bring rescue, to lives that are chained and imprisoned in bondage. And friends today, if you're in that state today, this very morning, you can be free from the prison cell, whatever it is for you, whatever it is that's holding you back from living the Christian life, from living life to the full.

[14:53] You can be free from that prison cell, whether it's a prison cell of loneliness. Some people lock themselves away. They're in prison in that sense of loneliness or hopelessness. Maybe it's a prison cell of guilt.

There's things that you're falling back into that you know are displeasing to the Lord. Maybe it's the prison cell of shame. There's past memories.

There's sinful things that you just can't let go of that you're constantly being drawn back to. If you've asked the Lord for forgiveness, it's gone. It's washed away. It's blotted out as fully as the blood of Christ can remove it, which is in full, in total.

And maybe it's the prison cell of addictions that bind and control you. The Lord Jesus wants to set you free. Free. Totally free.

Delivered and set free from that prison cell. Some are prisoners in their own mind to habits that they can't seem to break. The Lord Jesus has power to help you.

[15:53] The Bible says that I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. whatever it is that is holding you captive, you can, with God's help, with Christ as your strength, you can be set free.

The anointed one, he comes and he speaks peace to the troubled soul. And he invites the prisoner to receive pardon. There's wonderful pardon available for the prisoner.

You know, the story's told of people on death's road and how the governor has issued a pardon and they just thought it was a joke and they kind of shut the door.

And they were executed. And yet, there was pardon there, freely offered, freely extended to the prisoner to be completely pardoned and guiltless and forgiven of their sin, of their crime.

And likewise too, Christ extends a pardon for every soul that will open their ears and their heart and receive it. There's wonderful peace for the prisoner that will receive it from Christ.

[16:56] and there's wonderful purpose. He opens that prison door and there's a whole new way of living, a whole new dimension opens up. You needn't be a prisoner. You needn't be held captive anymore.

He preaches the gospel to the poor. He heals the brokenhearted. He preaches deliverance to the captives. And he says further, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He had anointed me to bring recovering of sight to the blind.

Here's another group of people that our Saviour specifically tells us that He has come to reach out to. And Christ is the one who opens the eyes. He opens the eyes.

He gives sight to the blinded eyes. You know, the Bible talks about people likewise that have got blinded minds and says of Satan that he has blinded the minds of those who believe not.

There's people with blinded hearts with blinded lives. And blindness to me is a symbol of these people who have these three things. People who are foolish, careless and carnal.

[18:00] Now, to illustrate this, I must confess, Julie's as bad as me. She gets prepared Saturday night for some of the goings on Sunday and she wanted me to go and get her organ out of this room where we store it so she could practice the music for today.

And we went into, and I had to go into this room and the room has got a light switch to the other end. You've got to go through a part of the room which is dark. And I ventured into this room and sure enough, bang, oh, you know, I'm knocked into something.

You know, I've stumbled on something. Blind people, people who can't see, they stumble. They run into things. And they stumble, friends, today, in all the streets around us in Elizabeth.

The blind are walking around our community today. They're foolish. They're blind to their sin. The Bible says that some are blinded that they cannot see.

And the Lord talks about salvation as going from being lost to being found. From going from being blind to having sight. Now, friends, some people are blind to their need of the Saviour.

[19:13] They're blind to salvation and the truth of it. What a tragedy. What a loss to lose that great vision of Christ and His salvation and to be saved.

But there's a wonderful fact that there is recovering of sight to the blind. Friends, there is salvation. There is, those blinded eyes can see again. There's life.

There's light. There's wonderful love. When you become a Christian, it's a whole new dimension. A whole new change of living. And it says in Colossians 1 verse 13 that our Saviour who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Translated, taken from one place to another from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of His dear Son. In 1 Peter 2 verse 9 it says that you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

There's wonderful light. You know, there's a song that goes, there's light for a look at the Saviour. There's a wonderful light. You know, that dazzling, brilliant light of knowing Him, of experiencing, of loving Him, of receiving Him.

[20:28] and how He wants to reach out to this darkened world. And friends, He wants you to be like lights, to shine like lights in this darkened world. And He gives sight.

He shines in the brightness of who He is. And He brings so much love and grace and light. Friends, we urge those around us, if there's any here present, that know the Saviour not.

There's a blindness that's covering your eyes that you cannot see. And you're going to stumble into things. You're going to trip. You're going to make a mess of life. But if you trust Him, He'll open those eyes and He'll give such revelation, such vision.

And so we see, here is our Saviour. What is His mission? What is His mission to us? We've seen so far, He says, He preaches the Gospel to the poor. He heals the brokenhearted.

He preaches deliverance to the captives. Recovering of sight to the blind. And the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me one last group that our Saviour speaks of to set at liberty them that are bruised.

[21:37] Them that are bruised. Them that are crushed. The crushed. Friends, we know about it in our world, in our society. There's many that are bruised. Bruised, abused.

Friends, it's a sad fact that there's many young people, children, and in our world, families with abuse and suffering and great tragedy. Maybe you've experienced it in your own childhood.

Friends, these are the ones our Saviour beckons to you. Come unto me. Come unto me and find rest. That Christ can find deliverance. They can find freedom. Christ, the anointed one, He searches out, He searches the streets of our city and He seeks them out.

These that are set aside by our world. The hurting, the fragile and the lonely. These are the bruised of our society. The ones that are put on the scrap heap of our world.

These are the ones that Christ comes to and He extends His grace to the grieving. He pours out His love on these loveless ones, these unloved ones.

[22:45] He swings wide the prison doors for the guilty to receive grace. This is the one who comes to the bruised of our world. And there's a wonderful liberty available.

I've thought of these three things about what liberty means and what liberty would mean for someone who's bruised. What it would mean for someone who's bruised when Jesus enters in. When the Lord Jesus comes and brings His wonderful life. The Lord Jesus comes to the bruised and He gives refuge. Our God is a refuge and strength.

He brings shelter in the time of storm. He brings repair. He tends our wounds. He's like that good Samaritan who poured in the oil and the wine. The one who come and took the initiative to help that hurting one by the side of the road.

What a picture of our Saviour as He tends the wounded. And it says that He carried our sorrows. He carried our wounds. And He was wounded for our transgressions as it says.

[23:49] He brings that wonderful repair to the hurting. And there's a wonderful revival that He comes and brings to the bruised. He gives them new life. Christ has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

When we think of our world about us. Maybe we should think for a moment think about this one just to recap quickly. His mission He's come to preach the gospel to the poor.

He's come to heal the broken hearted. He's come to preach deliverance to the captives recovering a sight to the blind to set at liberty them that are bruised.

And friends what does it mean for you today? Perhaps you're one of these folk that we talked about and you're feeling a bit vulnerable a bit hurt a bit empty a bit bound and in prison.

Christ has come that you might have life and have it more abundantly. He has come that we might take all those broken pieces and put them in His hand.

[24:56] You know one of those slides was saying God can heal the broken heart if we give Him all the pieces. If we give Him all the pieces. Give Him all the pieces of your broken heart your broken life.

The Lord Jesus mends broken hearts and broken lives. And friends just to close think about this His mission is our mission. His mission the mission that He had when He said the Spirit of the Lord is now upon me and He had anointed me etc.

His mission is our mission your mission your mission is to reach these same ones these same fragile and hurting and broken ones whether it be in the hospital whether it be in the streets about us whether it be in the day by day as you come across them in your travels be the Savior's hand extended continue His mission in your world around you.

Friends be encouraged be challenged be urged today let His mission be your mission in the days ahead. let us pray Heavenly Father we love you and praise you we thank you Lord for the wonderful mission that you had that you chose to come to that out of the way and this reputable place of Nazareth Lord and likewise to you come into our world into our town into our hearts Lord we thank you for your salvation by grace through faith we thank you Savior Lord God our Lord and Savior for your great mercy that you should extend your grace to us that you should open the prison door the bondage of our sin and unlock those chains and set us free Lord help us to be your messengers too and take this wonderful message of the gospel to everybody we can while you give us grace and time too we pray in Jesus name Amen