

Christmas: the Gift of beginning
- Jesus brings Justice, Wisdom and Peace

Today: Its still not about you

Isaiah 61



Its very hard for us
to be Self-Less

We may be training a Narcissistic Generation



Nash Equilibrium

The prisoner's dilemma

		Prisoner B	
		Confess	Keep quiet
Prisoner A	Confess	Both go to jail for ten years	Prisoner B gets life imprisonment, A goes free
	Keep quiet	Prisoner A gets life imprisonment, B goes free	Both go to jail for one year

Isaiah: Through our self-centered lenses
Isaiah 54:1-3, “Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;
break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have
not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one
will be more than the children of her who is married”
says the LORD. “Enlarge the place of your tent, and let
the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do
not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen
your stakes. For you will spread abroad to the right and
to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations
and will people the desolate cities.”

Isaiah 40:31, “but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

Isaiah 61:1-4

It feels like Christmas

Isaiah 61:1-2, “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 proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

Isaiah 61:2b-3 “to comfort all who mourn;
to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a
beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness
instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a
faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.”

- Head crowned
- Heart lifted
- Spirit Strong
- Life Solid

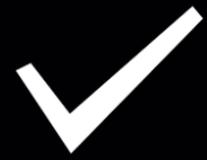
How good is it to be us!



- Blessed



- Protected



- Provided

- God is a great God, He does so much for me!
- (Its hard to tell who serves who.)

The real purpose:

“that He may be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3

The Nazareth Experiment:

How good news from the hometown boy
is heard in His hometown.

OR

How we hear when one of ours brings good news.

The blind test conditions:

Luke 4:16-19, "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Result:

Luke 4:20-22, And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” And *all spoke well of him* and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph's son?”

Change of lab conditions: removal of self-interest:

Luke 4:23-24, And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself.' What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown.”

Luke 4:25-27, “But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”

Result:

Luke 4:28-30, “When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away.”

What was the speech about?

They/we think:

“Things are going to get better for me”

- blind, oppressed, captives, un-favoured

- So why did the people get angry?

What was the speech really about?

“Things are going to get better for the suffering everywhere.”

Jesus was not announcing, He
was recruiting

“Its time- I’m here to help the
suffering, who’s with me!”

What we hear

- Come to Jesus and He will take care of all your problems
 - It makes us weak, dependant, self-indulged
 - Like teenagers who never want to grow up

What He said

- Come to Jesus and He will change your heart and enable you to change the world for others
 - It makes us vital, important, necessary
 - Like adults who want to make a difference

Isaiah 61:4, “They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.”

Self-interest minimizes life:

Mark 10:43-45, “But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

2018- The year of the Lord's favor

- What does that mean for you?
- What does that mean for the people you can help?