

Crave the Gospel

The Messiah of the Gospel

INTRODUCTION

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

And Peter's point is this: **there are some things you never outgrow.** You wanna grow spiritually? You never outgrow the need for pure spiritual milk. In another translation, "the pure milk of the Word". In other words, **Crave the Gospel. Why? Because there are some things you never outgrow.**

To quote Martin Luther again from last week's message, "*The gospel cannot be preached and heard enough, for it cannot be grasped well enough,*"

You know, when we talk about the Gospel, we usually talk about the MESSAGE of the Gospel. But before we get into the MESSAGE of the Gospel, we do well to focus on the MESSIAH of the Gospel.

Messiah (or Christ) means "The Anointed One".

Isaiah 61:1-3 (c.f. Luke 4:14-21)

*The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,^[a]
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.*

And then some 700 years later, Jesus entered a small synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth. As the townspeople had heard that this Jesus, son of Joseph and Mary had become an itinerant preacher/rabbi, they likely invited Jesus to read from the scrolls. Jesus goes up to the front, finds the place in the scroll of Isaiah with these words, reads a portion of them, and then rolls up the scroll. And it says that every eye was fastened to

Him. And then he says these words: *Today, these words that I have just read to you have been fulfilled in your hearing.*

In other words... *I am the Anointed One. I am the Messiah. I am the One whom the Spirit of the Sovereign LORD has come upon to preach good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and to comfort all who mourn.*

When we speak of the Gospel, it all starts with Jesus.

If Jesus was physically standing right here He would...

Preach Good News to Poor

He might say to you, "Come, all you who are weary of your sin. All you who are weary of trying to be good. Who are burned out on religion. Who are tired. Who are discouraged. Who are disillusioned. Who have been hurt by people, by leaders, by spouses, by parents, by churches. Come, all you who are so tired of worrying and wondering if God loves you, or if you have worth. Come, all you are worried about life. About death. Come, all you are you are trying and trying so hard to earn God's favor and keep failing... Come.

You who are thirsty, come to the waters and drink. You who have nothing. Who have no money, come, buy bread and eat. Come and be satisfied. Because you are not simply physical creatures. You have built within you this emotional capacity and spiritual appetite for God.

So, come!

I am the Living Waters, He who drinks from Me will be satisfied. And there will well up within you Living waters unto eternal life.

I am the Bread of Life. Whoever eats from Me will be satisfied.

So, don't turn to the broken wells of this world. Stop eating at the old moldy bread, that's covered in sin and addictions and the lusts of the flesh which tastes good in the moment but cannot satisfy. In fact, it will turn in your stomach and you will be sick. Don't do that anymore. Come to Me.

I am the Door. He who enters through Me will find eternal life.

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through Me. Don't believe the voices that say there are many paths to God. There are not. There is only One. Because there is only One Unique and Begotten Son of God. There is only One who both God and Man. Who alone can pay the sin debt for mankind because I am sinless—for I am God in the flesh. Believe Me when I say to you, that I am the only Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.

If Jesus were physically standing right here He would say...

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

He would tell you that God loves you. He would not sugar-coat anything. He would tell you that you are dying in your sins. That without Him you stand condemned already. But that God loves you so much that He sent His

Son. And that if you would but repent of your sins and believe in Him—that He is the Son of God—trusting in His death alone for the forgiveness of your sins—you will be saved.

If Jesus was physically standing right here He would... He Would Preach Good News to the Poor.

Not only that. He would...

Bind Up the Brokenhearted

He might say, “Come... for I am the Good Shepherd. I care for My sheep. I know My sheep, and My sheep know My voice. I am the Good Shepherd. I know how to make you lie down in green pastures. I know how to restore your soul. You don’t. You don’t know how to do that. You think you do, but you don’t. Let me do it. Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest.

Come away. With Me. To a quiet place. And get some rest.

Cast your cares upon Me, because I care for you.

For I am near to the broken hearted. I am especially close to those who are broken and contrite in spirit.

When I see you in your hurt, My heart is moved with compassion. I will sigh deeply even as I speak a healing word over you.

And I will weep when you weep. Even as I declare to you that there is hope beyond the grave. For I am the Resurrection and the Life.

So do not be overwhelmed by the things of this world, but rather take heart, for I have overcome the world. In this world, you will have trouble. But I will be with you. Never will I leave you. Never will I forsake you.

If Jesus was physically standing right here He would...

He would move up and down these aisles in the same way that He moved up and down the row upon row of people who came to Him at the Sea at Galilee and elsewhere, and He touched and healed ALL who came to Him.

And He would...

Proclaim Freedom for those in Bondage

He might say, Let Me touch you physically that you may be healed. Let me touch your body of its cancer, it aches and pains, its disease, and sicknesses. For I bore in My body, not only the sins of the world, but your sicknesses as well. It is by My stripes that you are healed, not only spiritually, but physically as well.

Come, I am the Great Physician. You of little faith, come, with what little faith you have. Choose to believe. And I will help your unbelief.

Let me heal the emotional bondage you are in. Those erring thoughts and feelings that seem so real. Let My Presence and ministry of My Spirit bring hope and healing to those fragile areas of your soul. I am able. Let the One who spoke the world into existence with just one word. Let the One who drove out a legion of demons with just one word. Let the one who brought back Lazarus from the dead with just one word... speak a word of healing over you. Let me heal you.

Let Me heal you, body, soul, and spirit.

Let Me heal your mind. Helping you take captive those thoughts that are leading you astray and replacing them with the truths of the Gospel.

You who are oppressed by the enemy, learn to speak My name and be set free.

You who are struggling with sin, and its seeming power over you, let Me live My life through you, so that you might finally walk in freedom. Yes, it will require a daily dying. But in dying daily, you will finally live. For this is not about you trying to live your life for Me, but learning to allow Me to live My life through you.

I am come that you may have life, and have it abundantly. For whom the Son sets free, will be free indeed.

If Jesus was physically standing right here He would...

He would proclaim freedom for those in bondage. And finally, He would...

Comfort All Who Mourn

He might say, "First of all know this... I weep with those who weep. My heart breaks over what sin has done to you. And how it has broken you and those whom you love the most.

So come... let me take that spirit of heaviness off of you. That spirit of depression. That overwhelming grief. That attitude of apathy that has clouded your love for Me. That sense of guilt. That eclipses your wonder of the Gospel.

Let Me remove from you.

I see that you have been mourning. That you have been weeping. But let Me by the ministry of My Spirit, wipe off your forehead those ashes. That sign of mourning and give you instead a crown of beauty. Reminding you that you are son, a daughter of God. Therefore, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms is yours. You may ask the Father for anything in My name and I will do it. For it brings the Father great glory to answer your prayers.

Let me take off that spirit of heaviness and let Me give you instead a garment of praise. Let Me robe you with My garment of righteousness. Let Me fill your mouth with praise by the Holy Spirit. Let Me open up the eyes of your heart so that you may know the hope to which you have been called, the indescribable riches that are yours as a son, as a daughter of God, and the incomparably great power that is yours because I am with you, and I have overcome the grave, sin, and death itself.

I am no longer just with you, but I am within you. Therefore, you have every reason to hope. Daughter of God. Son of the King.

Come, for this is the year of the LORD's favor... (2a)

CONCLUSION

Church... I have sought to imagine what Jesus might say to us if He were here physically this morning. And to that end, I have tried to be Scripture-rich this morning. I hope it has been helpful for you to remember that Gospel is a MESSAGE yes, but it's a message about a MESSIAH!

Jesus, the Anointed One is the Only One who can save us, satisfy us, heal us, comfort us, and set us free.