

Sabbath—I want to begin by looking again at Jesus' mission statement in Luke 4:16-21

We've talked several times about how this takes place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry

Jesus tells people what he is doing—that his purpose is to set people free

At the end, Jesus says he was anointed by the Spirit *"to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor"*

He added, *"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing"*

"The year of the Lord's favor" refers to the Year of Jubilee

This was God's radical system of economic freedom—Sabbath, Sabbatical Year, Jubilee

In Jubilee—debts forgiven, slaves set free, land returned to original owners

Jesus goes on to say that the Year of Jubilee has come to pass and is now

Another teaching of Jesus is about the Kingdom of God – Luke 17:20-21

"The kingdom of God is among you"

This is a major teaching of Jesus—found throughout the Gospels

The Kingdom of God is a radical, upside-down kingdom in which we live with God

As Jesus said, the Kingdom of God is now—not reserved for eternity

It's parallel and overlapping to the world's system—yet completely other than the world

The Kingdom of God points not to the place of God, but to the act of God

It is God's ruling activity—present whenever we submit to God's reign

The Kingdom of God is present everywhere that we live as followers of Jesus

But it is not an internal kingdom where God rules in the hearts of people

It is everywhere—and it is most evident in the acts of God's people

The Kingdom of God is evident when we live out Jesus' mission statement of freedom to all

As followers of Jesus, we are called to set the captive free, bring good news to the poor,

Recovery of sight to the blind, set the oppressed free

We are to be about doing the work of Jesus in our world today

Truth is that we are not Jesus and cannot all do everything—we are to follow callings

We cannot do every good thing—but we can radically live into our callings

As we do the thing that God has called us and uniquely gift us to do...

We live out the Kingdom of God in our world

I had a new and radical thought this week—one that I think others figured out long before me

And one that I think I've actually taught, but not grasped the full impact of

Jubilee has come in fullness through the Kingdom of God

It is no longer reserved as the completion of 7 Sabbatical Years—after 49 years or 7 X 7

We are in Jubilee—that means we are to live out God's radical system of economic freedom

Jesus wasn't saying—Jubilee is fulfilled within Jesus' ministry on earth

Nor within the gift of salvation—as in we're set free individually by God

Nor was Jesus saying that the year of Jubilee coincided with his ministry beginning

Jesus said that Jubilee has come in fullness and is here for all time—forever!

The era of Jubilee began with Jesus, but it has no end for all of eternity

Jubilee is the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of God is Jubilee

Truth is that even though the Kingdom of God is everywhere and is available to all people at all times

Many do not live connected to the Kingdom of God—they are unaware of its existence

They benefit from the Kingdom of God only tangentially

That's why it is so important that we live out the Kingdom of God

The world is desperate for peace, freedom, hope, life, and way forward in this broken world

Every time we live out the Kingdom callings and values—we make the Kingdom of God visible

For people caught in conflict and war—and see it as the only option for them and their country
Living into our calling as peacemakers is gift—they do not know how to do this
But we can't do it by sitting on the sidelines and condemning the methods of others
The world desperately needs peacemakers to take their place in society
Leading with a Listening ear—Listening to God while engaging the questions
In so doing we enact Jubilee—we live out the Kingdom of God

For people in jail—whether guilty of innocent—they find themselves trapped in a system
A system that perpetuates more crimes and takes away freedom
They yearn for real freedom—the freedom we know within the Kingdom of God
Living into our calling to set the captive free—we enact Jubilee and the Kingdom of God
This work takes place in a multitude of ways...
Working within the system to bring about change to restorative justice
Teaching non-violent communication
Making others aware of the problem of mass incarceration
Spending time with a prisoner and getting to know them and their situation
Etc...

For people trapped in poverty and see no way out of it—every hope having been crushed
They have learned to settle for a hand out, however meager and inadequate
They yearn for a way out of poverty so that they can be free of the oppression
Living into our calling to bring good news to the poor—we enact Jubilee and Kingdom
Again, it happens many ways...
From working at a food bank or soup kitchen to changing laws
From employing homeless to working to create livable and affordable housing
From micro-loans to providing child care, and the list goes on...

In all of those ways and more, we bring Jubilee and the Kingdom of God into our world in visible ways
It matters and it changes things
We do it with every prayer, every act of kindness, every time we practice goodness
We do it when we work to change our world
We do it by living authentically as followers of Jesus every day

1 Corinthians 12:7 has a powerful message—both in the Message Bible and in NRSV...

Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! 1 Corinthians 12:7 MSG

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7 NRSV

This is how the Spirit works within us to make Jubilee and Kingdom of God evident and helpful
It not only "shows who God is" but it is for the "common good"

It isn't just the world that needs this message—it is personal for us as well
Living Jubilee and Kingdom of God is life transformative
We are no longer alone!! We live 24/7 in the Presence of God
This Jubilee Kingdom means that we don't need to be afraid that we aren't enough
We live Jubilee—we live God's economy—we can know the power of enoughness personally

Hebrews 4:9 NRSV - *So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God...*

I have long thought that this was a wonderful verse

That there is a place we can enter now that is a Sabbath-rest—a place to be with God

I don't think this is just for the future of heaven

But it is a place we can enter now, within the Kingdom of God and Jubilee

It is where we gain strength and power for the doing of God's work

It is where we live and are not alone

It also goes with us in the middle of the chaos and busyness of our world

It is home!