

## SERMON NOTES -- Isaiah: A Great Mission

David Renwick

December 23, 2018

National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC

### Isaiah 61:1-4 (quoted by Jesus in Luke 4) describes not just the Messiah's mission, but ours too.

Jesus said, "Peace be with you! *As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.*"

#### Isaiah 61/Luke 4

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; **he has sent me**

- Do we have strong sense of personal "mission": that God is *sending us* into his world, *just as he sent Jesus* into the world that first Christmas?

#### **HE HAS SENT ME** on a mission. . .

TO bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted,

TO proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;

- Who do I know that needs some kind of release or setting-free this Christmas? Literally? Spiritually?

TO proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God;

- Who needs to hear from you and me that God has the righteous power to sort things out?

TO comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion:

to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

- Who's had a hard time, faced a deep loss, and needs a word of grace . . .  
From me?

TO display God's glory.

- Who needs to see the witness of my life, lived with integrity and faith, or be invited to church, to sense the reality and glory of God?

TO build up the ancient ruins, and raise up the former devastations;  
and repair the ruined cities,

- Who or What's broken . . . that God may want me to fix?

#### **"The Work of Christmas"**

When the song of the angels is stilled,

when the star in the sky is gone,

when the kings and princes are home,

when the shepherds are back with their flocks,

#### **the work of Christmas begins:**

to find the lost, to heal the broken,

to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner,

to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among the people,

to make music in the heart.

*Howard Thurman, The Mood of Christmas and Other Celebrations*