
Arise

Part 5 - Beauty for Ashes

A Picture of Jesus

Isaiah 61:1-3

This is the 'mission statement' of Jesus, the very passage He quotes at the inauguration of His ministry in Luke 4.

Jesus says in Luke 4:21, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing".

It sets the kingdom paradigm of God's work in this world.

Jesus speaks Isaiah's promise of the year of the Lord's favour – this is the great moment of history that we reside in!

Have you tasted, experienced, stepped into the year of God's favour in Jesus? Today is your day for it to be fulfilled...

The Other Side of the Circle

Sometimes we can forget that there is a process and an invitation to the healing and restoring work of God.

God exchanges the old and broken for His blessing, identity and presence.

Purpose

Isaiah 61:4

The broken, the breakers, the rejected and the despised will now become the restorers. No one is without purpose and calling in God's kingdom!

A point for you to consider:

God's redemptive work in your life didn't just break you even. It has opened the door to purpose and fulfilment in life! God's in-breaking kingdom is one where the broken things are restored, where the dead things come to life. Where the pain of life is, God invites us to step into it. When we feel the sting of sorrow, the pain of mourning, He meets us there, pours His redemption into us, and lovingly equips us to bring life.

What do you need from God in this?

The Restoration of God

Isaiah 61:5-6

Remember, this is a nation that had lost everything; lost to exile, lost in disobedience, lost through their own powerlessness.

God inverts the scenario: instead of orphans – beloved children; instead of loss – love and redemption; instead of captivity – a place to belong.

Isaiah 61:7-9

It seems too good to be true!!!

The One Who Works This in Our Lives

Isaiah 61:10-11

The Anointed One of God speaks.

Isaiah 62:1-5

We become the markers and the emblems of the royal family

Our role as priests – marked by the priestly garments of praise, and as the royal heirs in God’s kingdom – here suggested by our royal positioning, reinforce that God’s redemptive work isn’t just to get you free, it’s to establish you and me in an identity that demonstrates to ALL who see us that we are part of God’s royal family.

Isaiah 62:6-9

Jesus’s invitation through Isaiah: give God no rest until he does what He promised!

If we want to see the breakthrough – are we taking up the identity and the invitation we’ve been given? What if our breakthrough is only one more prayer? What if it was simply one more hour, or day, or week, or year? What if it was only one more generation and then all the earth would be saved? Would we contend?

Isaiah 62:10-12

Make the way clear, make the way straight, make the signs clear toward the Lord!

God’s final word on this?

- + We are now His Holy People
- + We are now the Redeemed of the Lord
- + We are the Ones known as those who are Sought Out by God
- + We are not Forsaken any longer

What does your heart say when you hear this? Can you believe it to be true of you?

Discussion Questions and Response

1. Read these two chapters aloud, and let God highlight to you the areas that are significant in your life.
2. Why are these things important? What do you think God is saying to you through this?
3. How does the truth that God is the one who determines your identity impact how you see yourself? And how you see others?
4. What exchanges do you need to make out of Isaiah 61:3? What have you already experienced?
5. What does it mean to you that you have been given purpose and empowerment to rebuild in God's kingdom? How does that look in your life, or what could it look like?
6. God calls us and positions us to be His people in this world, as if we were royal ambassadors or representatives. What does this mean for your daily life, interactions and routines? What is God saying about those things?
7. What does having a place of belonging mean to you?
8. God invites us to give Him no rest until He answers our prayers. Would that knowledge change the way you pray? Has it impacted your prayer life in times past?
9. In Isaiah 62:10-12, God calls His chosen people a number of specific things. Which of these is meaningful to you?
10. Take some time to pray for yourself in this area, or if you are in a Life Group, to pray for one another according to what God is highlighting as important truths and activities that He's inviting you into.