

Sunday Morning Worship at Brentwood – Jan 24, 2016

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Notes for the sermon on ‘What is Jesus All About?’

Luke 4:14-21 – Sermon Text = Luke 4:18-19

**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.
(Luke 4:18-19)**

[Hymns = 118, 374, 717, 634]

**Key focus = Jesus is about is what God and the Spirit are about
- that is the Commonwealth of SHALOM –
relationships that nourish and enhance justice, peace, and beauty
in God’s world**

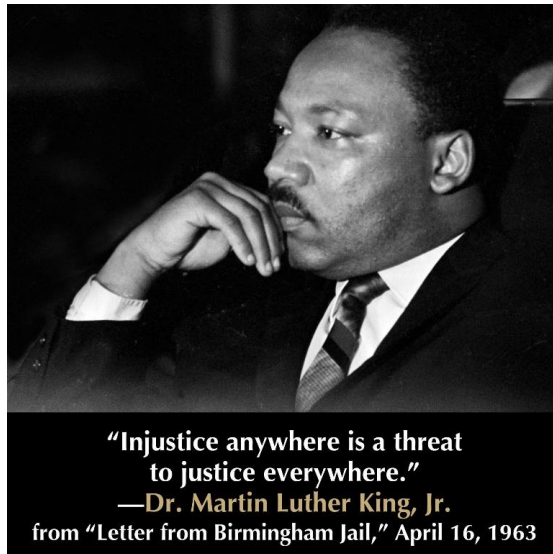
Who are the actors in this story of Jesus first public sermon?

- the leaders of Jesus’ home church – invited ‘the kid’ to preach
- the members of the synagogue – friends and neighbours
- the family – Mary, Joseph, brothers and sisters – 6 by some counts
- Jesus, of course – not sure where he’s been – around town working with his Dad? – away studying? – working somewhere else? – maybe a bit of all of these?
- God is very much at work here – anointing Jesus as his spokesperson, his ambassador in bringing the Good News of the Commonwealth of SHALOM that God has long promised
- the Spirit is actually on and in Jesus to make this all happen
- the legacy of the prophets is at work here as well, especially Isaiah – God has not abandoned or forgotten his promises of redemption for the whole creation and is fulfilling those promises through a Suffering Servant – one who identifies with the suffering of the people and does something about it – there are echoes here of God in the burning bush – I have seen the suffering of my people and am acting to change this – now go and bring them to freedom

What is Jesus' sermon about?

- about Jesus favour in God's eyes – the Anointed One, Messiah, Son of God, the Christ, Emmanuel (God with us), the Beloved
- in and through this Jesus, God is acting to fill the cosmos fully and finally with his grace and truth – that is the enterprise that begins in Jesus Christ
- in Presbyterian thinking – Prophet, Priest, and King – the One who faithfully proclaims the aspirations of God, the One who nourishes the devotion of the faithful, and the One who creates the space for faithful flourishing
- how this power is to be used – good news of relief to the poor (what the 'year of the Lord's favor' is about) – release to captives (the Exodus imagination), sight to the blind (see how things actually are now that God is forming and nourishing a new humanity for a new cosmos) – freedom from oppression so that God's new humanity can flourish

Last Monday was Martin Luther King Jr Day in the US – a prophetic voice in our time – a follower of Jesus who took this text to the streets and to the corridors of the oppressing powers – one who, with an Exodus imagination, identified deeply with the suffering of his people and did something about it – through a disciplined non-violence that spoke truth to power



What happened next?

- The message – SHALOM - and the messenger – Jesus - are rejected – this is too disruptive to those who enjoy comfort and privilege – perhaps even to those who have capitulated to the way things are – outrage and a threat of violence
- More on this next week – where will following Jesus lead us?