

Isaiah 61: Justice-lover's Battle Cry

Adapted from NCR article 'It's always darkest before the dawn'
by Jocelyn A. Sideco, Dec 2017

The reading from Isaiah becomes the Justice lover's "battle" cry:

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor,
to heal the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
to announce a year of favor from the LORD
and a day of vindication by our God.

***The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;***

- Who do you see as the "me?" Do you see yourself as the "me?" This "me" is anointed priest, prophet, and king and is inherently respectable and dignified.
- Does this "me" include social identities that are not mainstream? From the transitional identity of being a young adult or a senior citizen or being unemployed or being rich to inherent identities that racialize our cultural heritage or identities that rest firmly in sexual orientation?
- What if we all received God's anointing and proclaimed God's spirit upon us?

***he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor,
to heal the brokenhearted,***

- What are the glad tidings? What is healing?
- Who are the poor and brokenhearted?
- What is truly liberating and freeing to hear from others? From God?
- What experience of healing would you need to feel whole and holy again?
- Can we be our own agents of restorative justice and care or is this our call to offer true care and compassion to others?

***to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,***

- How is liberty understood? Who are captives?
- What is proper release? Who are the prisoners? What is the course of their imprisonment?
- What restricts us from being a free child of God?
- How must we both proclaim and release? What words or sentiments do we need to make public? What actions must we take to give others an experience of freedom?

***to announce a year of favor from the LORD
and a day of vindication by our God.***

- Have you ever experienced a moment of clarity when God's justice broke-through, coloring your life with love, life, wholeness, unity, and peace? Can you imagine this experience for those one the periphery of our society?
- Can you vow to recognize your own anointing, duty, and ability to respond in this love?