

Luke 4:14-21

The announcement Jesus made at the beginning of His public ministry is an extreme declaration that would affect everyone in this world. It is a message of jubilee, freedom, healing and hope. Jubilee is mentioned in the Old Testament in Leviticus 25:10.

It was 50 year cycle of freedom for slaves, cancellation of debts, and restoration and help for the disadvantaged. He was announcing great news for all! In Jesus' public ministry declaration, Jesus was talking why He came here, and also His main concern and purpose for coming and for His believers to follow. Tomorrow is the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. He followed in the footsteps of Jesus. He did a great work as he followed in Jesus' steps to bring freedom, equality and justice in America. He committed his life to this goal, jubilee, freedom, healing and hope for the people. Two of our hymns today will reflect on his life; one is his favorite song during his hardship, and the marching song of solidarity, "We Shall Overcome." Rev Bob Hughes worked with him for this human right movement and also walked and followed in Jesus' steps to bring freedom and justice for people's life at that time. We really appreciate your effort, burning heart against the unhealthy social structure, inhumanity, injustice.

Main Theme:

**1. In Jesus public declaration we can learn that Jesus came to bring hope and freedom to the hopeless.** The purpose of His coming and public ministry was to allow people the opportunity to experience the freedom and hope. Jesus longs to free people who are trapped in sin and anguish and hopelessness, inhumanity, and injustice.

A long time ago in Korea there was a strong gap between the high class people, and the so-called “low class” . We called as Yang Ban and Sang Nom. There was a lot of social oppression through the social structure to the low class for a long time. But after missionaries came and demonstrated and taught what Jesus taught, things changed slowly. The missionaries contributed much in many areas, such as schools, orphanages, hospitals, but mainly people learned about Jesus and knew they were loved by God and people realized they were equal before God. The social class system began to change because of this Gospel, good news for the people. **When we read Jesus’ statement announcing His public ministry, we feel His heart for those in prison, the blind, the suffering, and the outcast.** We trust that Jesus wants to touch their wounds, wipe their tears and he stay with them. The custom was not to touch lepers, in Jesus’ day, but Jesus touched them. The blind and the lame were considered as second class people, but Jesus touched them and treated them as God’ s beloved.

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; He rescues those whose spirits are crushed." Psalm 34:18. He doesn't avoid us or stand off in the distance when we suffer a broken heart. One of the many great things about God is that He comes running to us when we're in pain and suffering in the power of darkness, oppression, and inhumanity. We have to continue to spread the gospel, the good news for the brokenhearted for healing and freedom. This is the ongoing public ministry of Jesus. In your life you might have felt the heartbreak of not wanting to go on. In fact, there have been times you decided to quit. "It's not worth it," you convinced yourself. Your heartache was too great. Your pain was too deep. It seemed as if no one was there. It seemed as if no one cared. Why go on trying? The truth is there IS ALWAYS Jesus there. He is close to the brokenhearted. **Jesus came to bring hope and freedom to the brokenhearted. and also He continue to call us to lift people out of the chain of bondage, as God called Moses to the people of Israel who were in oppression, inhumanity and injustice.**

2. **As we understand deeply His loving, compassionate heart to the broken hearted, we begin to realize how we can build our community of faith as a healing place to the broken hearted.** Mother Teresa said, "We have drugs for people with diseases like leprosy. But these drugs do not treat the main problem, the disease of being unwanted. That's what my sisters hope to provide."

The sick and poor suffer even more from rejection than material want. Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.”

If we read the declaration of Jesus’ public ministry and just repeat it without this compassionated heart and effort to build this loving environment towards those who Jesus mentions here, then we are missing the important point for the ministry of Jesus. When we get together, it should send a message to the heartbroken people in the community around us - they see our love for one another and Jesus says it proves to them that we’ re His followers. “If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it. Or if one part of our body is honored, all the other parts share its honor.” 1 Corinthians 12:26.

We have a choice. We can suffer alone, or we can suffer together. When we suffer together there is comfort, help and hope in the care of others for us. “As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts to grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing full of love.”

Ephesians 4:16 the power of darkness loves detached people. He loves to isolate us so that when our hearts are broken we’ ll mistakenly conclude that no one cares.

The compassionate and loving heart of Christ for other people and working together are the most important elements for us to do His public ministry in our community and the world.

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out.  
A Pharisee said, "Only bad people fall into pits."  
A mathematician calculated how deep the pit was.  
A news reporter wanted the exclusive story on the pit.  
An IRS agent asked if he was paying taxes on the pit.  
A self-pitying person said, "You haven't seen anything until you've seen my pit."  
A psychologist noted, "Your mother and father are to blame for your being in that pit."  
A self-esteem therapist said, "Believe in yourself and you can get out of that pit." An optimist said, "Things could be better." A pessimist claimed, "Things will get worse." "Jesus, seeing the man, took him by the hand and lifted him out of the pit." We have too many perspectives, opinions, theories and judgments to hold and lift him out of the pit. Let us do the same what Jesus do as we hold our hands each other to lift people out of the pit! If you start, people will also join your hands to lift people out of the pit.

**3. In order to keep working for the Jesus public ministry**  
It is vital to listen with our hearts to people's stories. As our society continues in its path, more and more people are losing their ability to listen with compassion because they lose their own stories. Let's observe our own hearts and find a way how to increase our compassion to connect to the people and reduce any hardness in our hearts and in society.

In order to increase the compassion in our hearts we have to have ears to listen carefully to the hurts of others and then remember what we have gone through also. Everybody has a wounded area and has walked a rocky road. When you hear the broken hearted person's story, don't miss it or pass it up. Think of how your own story connects to their story. Whenever you go and see "Tent City" in a church parking lot, our church did before, look at the people living there, and see how your own story connects with them. Whenever I see their living and especially their portable shower facility, I'm reminded of something in my past a long time ago when I was 8 years old. A military coup had happened around 1960 in Korea and my father's business was gradually changed after that. In my father's business, he made military patches, buttons and supplied other items for the military. The coup made major changes, and we had to temporarily move our location because of the economic and political situation. We moved to a very poor area on the edge of town. There wasn't enough food and hot water, and my hands became calloused and sore due to the cold in winter. My hands skin became cracked and bloody. So whenever I walk by the shower facility that tent city people use, I am reminded of my own story when I was 8, which I can't forget.

To increase the compassion in your heart, see something and someone with your heart and listen carefully to the stories of others, don't pass them up and consider it as God's story and God's revelation to you. In our busyness and our privacy oriented society, we are getting lose the opportunities to express our own stories. In the Bible, Abraham's story, Joseph's Story, Jacob's story, Rehab's story and the story of Moses, They moved from one place to another with anxiety and uncertainty but they overcame all the difficulty with God's promise and many good people around them whom God sent. These are many stories of the immigrants, the poor and the oppressed in our Bible. As we improve our compassionate hearts, do not miss the situations that God puts you in. When you hear someone's story about their difficult life journey, separation, abandonment, a loss of familiar things, struggles from unhealthy social structures; such as class distinction, prejudice, and inhumanity, listen well with a compassionate heart to people's stories. Some of these things have happened to you. You can relate to it with a compassionate heart and loving heart and connect with people and touch their wound as you invite other fellows who had a same story. They can experience healing and the presence of God in their situations through your stories and support.

## Conclusion

We hear today the declaration of Jesus' public ministry: Preach the Gospel to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, set free those who are oppressed, and proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. Let's us continue to celebrate Jubilee and the freedom from captivity as we increase the compassion of Jesus in our hearts in order to touch the wounds of all kinds of people in our community and society. Remember your own wounded areas, and use it to as a channel of God's blessings to touch other people's wounds. You can wipe out their tears, and you can lift them out from bondages and traps, and you will follow in Jesus' steps to bring freedom, and peace to the people.