

MESSAGE NOTES

DECEMBER 21, 2008

“REJOICE IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD’S FAVOR!”

What causes joy and happiness in your life?

READ: Isaiah 61:1-3,10-11

- 61** The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
2 to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.
- 10 I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- 11 For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise
spring up before all nations.

1. _____!

What is freedom? How can we understand freedom?

What helps us appreciate the freedom that Jesus gives us?

How does the picture of a prison help you understand the freedom Jesus has given to you?

2. _____!

What pictures of nature does Jesus use to teach us about our Christian life? What does each teach us?

Why have we been planted? How do I “display his splendor” in my life?

- *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).*

During the week: Celebrate God’s gift to you this Christmas. Rejoice in the miraculous birth of our Savior who declared you free. Live in the joy that this freedom brings.