

**Me For President:  
January 23, 2022**

This reading comes from... **[1 Preamble]**  
The Constitution...  
Of the United States of America.  
The preamble.

*We the people...  
In order to form a more perfect union...  
Establish Justice,  
Insure domestic Tranquility,  
Provide for the common defense,  
Promote the general Welfare,  
And secure the Blessings of Liberty  
To ourselves and our Posterity,  
Do ordain and establish this Constitution  
For the United States of America.*

Today this has been fulfilled in your hearing.

Oh. And in case you're wondering what that means...  
I think I'm the guy...  
Who can do something...  
About getting us on track...  
With this whole constitution thing... THEREFORE...

Tonight it gives me great pleasure to announce... **[2 Vote for Me]**  
My candidacy for the office...  
Of the President of the United States of America...  
And I certainly would appreciate your support...  
And your vote...  
In the 2024 election.

Thank you.  
That is all.

What's the problem?  
Do you NOT think...  
I would make a good president?  
Why not?

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Well... Just so you now...  
I'm totally qualified.  
According to the constitution...  
I currently meet all the requirements.

Natural born citizen.  
I was born at Mercy Hospital...  
In Davenport Iowa...  
Which is part of the Untied States.

I have been a resident...  
For over 14 years.

I am clearly over...  
Over the age of 35.

I meet the requirements.  
So there.

Now...what do you have to say?

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Well one of the problems is...  
That the constitution of the United States...  
Was written about 245 years ago.

And for me to stand in front of you...  
A group of faithful American citizens...  
Who have worked hard.  
Paid your taxes.  
Lived your lives...  
Searched your hearts.  
Voted your conscience.  
For many years...

Well for me...  
To stand in front of you...  
And proclaim to you...  
That today... finally...  
After 245 years...  
Of "not getting it right" ...

Today... I am going to fix the problems.  
I am going to make things right.  
I am the fulfillment of the constitution...

Claiming that I AM the one who can really...  
Do what the founding authors...  
Intended for us to do.

Well... that's just pretty bold.

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The other problem...  
Maybe the bigger problem is...  
You know me.

Have you ever heard the saying...  
Familiarity breeds contempt.

It means if you know someone...  
I mean REALLY KNOW THEM...

Then you know everything about them.  
The good and the bad.

So... if you know who I am...  
Then you think you understand...  
Who I will be...  
In the future.

Right.  
So some of you may think...  
This is JUST one of our wahoo pastors...

He's not qualified...  
To be President.

Others might think...  
He doesn't know enough...  
About national economics...  
International relations...  
Policies and procedures...  
To keep our nation solid...  
And strong...  
And safe.

And I would say...  
You are absolutely right.

But just so you know...  
I wouldn't vote for you either.  
No offense.

But if you knew those things...  
And if you had those kind of skills...  
And knowledge...  
Chances are...  
You wouldn't be hanging out with me.

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So. I humbly withdraw my announcement.  
Hopefully... All this nonsense will help us...  
Get our heads around...  
What is happening....  
In the gospel lesson. **[3 Synagogue]**

When Jesus came to Nazareth...  
He went to worship...  
At his home synagogue.

We all like to go worship...  
In our home congregations...  
Where we were born and raised.

It says very clearly...  
That was Jesus' custom too.  
It's what he did.  
He went to worship.

On this particular day...  
He was attending...  
The same church...  
Where he had been brought up.

These were the same people...  
Who taught him...  
All about God.

Where he studied the Torah.  
Where he came to age...  
Where he became able...  
To be an active part...  
Of this community of faith.

This is where Jesus grew up.

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Now... I don't now about you...  
But in the process of growing up...  
I have changed...  
Quite a bit.

Something you may not know about me.  
I have never liked raw onions...  
Never ever... not as a child...  
Not now.  
I still don't like raw onions.

But other than that...  
Obscure little personal preference...  
I think just about everything else...  
About me... has changed.  
Mentally...  
Physically...  
Socially...  
Religiously...  
I have changed.

I have changed.  
And so have you.

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The other day...  
Lindsey and I were looking...  
Through a bunch of historic documents...  
Including the old photo directories... of our church.

We as a staff are beginning...  
To prepare for our 50th anniversary...

Well... we found a photo of the Stucky family... **[4 Stucky]**  
Back from 1984...  
And do you see... Lori Stucky.

She was that little blonde hair girl...  
And looked just as sweet and innocent...  
As she could possibly be.

Well... if you know Lori at all...  
You know... that's definitely not...  
How she is now.

I mean... she has dark hair.  
That's all I meant...  
She's still sweet and innocent...  
As she can possibly be.  
Right?

Anyway.  
If you think about who you are...  
Compared to who you were...  
And the whole process...  
Of growing up...

You and I and **Jesus**...  
Are completely different people...  
Than who we were as children.

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So. That's the first preconceived notion... **[5 Little Jesus]**  
Of the congregation of that synagogue...  
That was about to be challenged.

They thought they knew.  
Who Jesus was.

He's that nice little boy.  
Mary and Joseph's son.  
Sat with his family.  
Sang all the songs.  
Did all the stuff.

So when he stands up to read.

And their assumption is...  
This is our boy.  
Little Sweet Jesus.  
Getting up to read.  
At worship.

What could be better???

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Now randomly...  
Not randomly...  
But by the power of the Holy Spirit.... **[6 Isaiah 61]**  
They handed him...  
The scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

Not so unusual...  
One of the major prophets...  
Would have been read on a regular basis...

Everyone would have known and loved...  
The words of Isaiah.

Jesus unrolls the scroll...  
To a specific place.  
He intentionally finds...  
Isaiah... chapter 61...

He reads the words...  
Written in the scroll.

*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.*

Then he rolled up the scroll.  
Handed it back to the attendant.  
And sat down.

Everybody was looking at him.  
It wasn't unusual that a Rabbi... a teacher...  
Would take the opportunity...  
To say a few words...  
About the scripture that had just been read.

So. Jesus says a few words. He says 9 words:  
Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

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You thought it was odd...  
Or abrasive...  
Or arrogant...  
Or presumptuous...

That I stood up here...  
And read the preamble...  
To the constitution...

And said...  
I was going to fulfill...  
The demands of that historic document...  
That was created by...  
Human minds...  
And human hands.

Jesus stood up and said...  
That he was going to fulfill...  
The words... of the Prophet Isaiah...  
Which had been spoken... and written...  
By the power of the Holy Spirit...

Right? I mean... we assume...  
That Isaiah... was inspired by God...  
When he wrote those words.

So... Jesus said...  
I'm going to fulfill The Word of God...  
That was written...  
Over 500 years... before Jesus was born.

He said... I'm going to fulfill this Word.

Not by assuming the position...  
Of president or leader or king...  
He wasn't announcing his run...  
For some kind of political office.

He was saying...  
In no uncertain terms...  
I am fulfilling God's Word.

I am... the Messiah.

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So let's look at what he was saying...  
He was going to do.

Please note: first and foremost... **[7 Anointed]**  
This isn't something he is doing on his own.  
The Spirit of the Lord...  
Has anointed him.  
And sent him.

It's really important to know...  
That he is not some kind of self-appointed prophet...  
Or evangelical cowboy...  
Out there on his own...  
Working for his own glory.  
Building his own brand.

That's not what Jesus is about.  
He has been anointed by GOD...  
Which means he was chosen and designated and empowered...  
To do the job.

AND... he was sent out to do the work.

This job was given to Jesus.  
By God through the Holy Spirit.

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In the women's Wednesday morning bible study...  
This year... we have been steadily working our way...  
Through the book of Isaiah.

Just this past week...  
We read chapter 11...  
Which is all about the Messiah...  
The Savior of the people of Judah.  
What the Messiah was going to be like.

And some of the attributes are...  
The Messiah will be filled with the Spirit.  
The Messiah will do justice for the poor.  
And then it says this...  
The Messiah will strike the whole earth... **[8 God's Word]**  
With the rod of his mouth.

Which means... with his words.  
He will change the world.  
Because his words will have power...  
To do things... change things...

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And that's the exact same thing...  
Jesus is saying... by using the Isaiah 61 lesson.

Sure. He has been chosen and empowered and sent...  
By the Spirit of the Lord.

But to do what?

TO PROCLAIM. To use his words.  
To teach and preach.  
Good news to the poor.

And we know... God's Word...  
Never comes back empty...  
But always accomplishes...  
What God has sent it to do.

God's Word has the power to change this world...  
To change our lives.  
To make us whole.

**GOD'S WORD WORKS... WHETHER WE ADMIT OR NOT...  
WE NEED TO BE MADE WHOLE!**

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So please make no mistake...  
The term the poor here...  
Is not limited to financial or material limitations.

The poor refers to the nation of Israel and Judah.  
Who have been defeated by foreign armies.

Who have been taken captive by Assyria and Babylon.

It's about people who have lost.  
People who have suffered.  
People who broken by life.  
People who don't have the strength to try anymore...

People who think...  
There is no hope.

People who think...  
I will never have good a good life...  
Because God has forgotten me.

The Messiah... Jesus...  
Came to proclaim good news...  
To all those... who are broken.

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So getting back to his home congregation...  
In the midst of whom...  
He made this proclamation. **[9 Shocked]**

So maybe you can begin to understand...  
How shocked...  
How surprised...  
They were.

To hear what Jesus had to say.

They had come to synagogue that day...  
Just to hear God's Word...  
Like they did every other week.

They came... just to be edified and strengthened...  
In their faith.

They came... just to see...  
This nice hometown boy.  
Be the guest preacher that day.

And instead.  
They witnessed...  
The beginning...  
Of the ministry...  
Of the Messiah.

Jesus revealed who he was.  
What he was going to do.  
How God was working through him...  
To heal what is broken...  
In the entire world.  
And in you and me.

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So. You know those leading nose questions...  
That people ask on Facebook?

You know those are scams right?  
They are phishing for information...  
About you and your life.

There was one the other day...  
That asked...  
What did you want to be...  
When you were a child?

My buddy Skip... **[10 Merle Haggard]**  
Who lives down in Midland Texas...  
Wrote that he... when he was a child...  
Wanted to be the lead guitarist...  
For Merle Haggard.

And he was and still is...  
Talented enough...  
To do that.

But he didn't.

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When I was a child...  
I was completely obsessed with...

Reading the Encyclopedia.  
Especially the page...  
With the different breeds of dogs...  
Then I would draw those dogs.

I was absolutely convinced...  
That I would be...  
A veterinarian.  
But I am not.

What did you want to be? **[ANSWERS]**

Many of us...  
Did not become...  
What we thought...  
We would become.

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And it's tempting to think...  
That Jesus was not like us...  
That he knew the whole time...  
He was going to be the Messiah...

After all...  
He was born under a holy star.  
And there were wise men came looking for him...  
The baby king of the Jews...

Even before Jesus had the ability...  
To dream about what he might become...

And then... when he was 12...  
He was actually teaching the old men...  
In the Temple...  
All about God...

Now... that might have been an indication...  
Of who he was going to be.

But don't forget...  
The bible also says...  
That Jesus grew and changed.  
Over the years.

Luke 2:52 **[11 Jesus Grew]**  
Jesus grew in wisdom...  
And in stature...  
And in favor...  
With God and all the people.

Isn't there some kind of comfort...  
To know that the Messiah...  
Who was and is...  
The Savior of all of us...

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Isn't it comforting to know...  
That he grew...  
Into what he would be...  
Just like we grow and change.

He's just like us.  
He's one of us.  
God sent someone...  
To be just like us.

He knows...  
What it means to suffer.

He knows...  
What it means to be broken.

He knows...  
Everything... that you and I know.

There is no human height or depth...  
There is no joy or despair...  
There is no love or hate...

That he does not understand.  
That is beyond is comprehension...

Therefore there is nothing...  
That is beyond his scope of redemption.

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That's the good news... that we proclaim...  
That is revealed again today. **[12 The Messiah]**

Jesus is the Messiah.  
He has come...  
To proclaim...  
Life and wholeness and hope.  
To the broken.  
To the poor.  
To us.

This is good news.  
The Messiah has come!

Thanks be to God.  
Amen!