

**Promise**  
**Worth the Wait • Message 3**  
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**December 14, 2025**

**Prayer Points for Prayer Time:**

- **Thank Jesus for coming to save us and forgive our sins.**
- **Ask God to reveal any lies you believe and break the strongholds in your life.**
- **Pray for patience and faith, knowing that Jesus is always worth the wait.**

**Scripture Reading:**

*Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.*

**Luke 4:14-20 (NIV)**

**A. Introduction**

**37 billion** hours each year are spent waiting in line somewhere.

**Human beings** spend approximately **6 months** of their lives waiting in line for things.

- **13 hours** annually spent waiting on hold for customer service.
- **38 hours** each year spent waiting in traffic. (Some of you spent 20-30 minutes waiting to get into church, and you're wondering if this sermon is worth the wait.)
- **21 minutes** spent waiting for a significant other to get ready to go out.  
(and all the men of God said, Amen!)

Think about this: The promise we are looking at today took 700 years... 700 years of waiting... and some people, then and maybe even now, wonder if it was worth the wait.

And today I want you to understand why it's worth waiting.

Jesus doesn't just get you to Heaven; He helps you now.

Right after He starts His public ministry, He goes to the synagogue and reads the scripture. The scripture for that day just happened to be Isaiah 61, which we read in Luke 4. Coincidence? I think not!

What is He doing? He's showing He is worth the wait... and what He's also doing is showing the things He's bringing in His ministry.

## **B. Worth the Wait**

(Luke 4:18)

### **1. Jesus came to bring SALVATION.**

Have you ever noticed how certain things are almost like veiled comments?

Like when people say things like, *You tried your best...* what they are really saying is... *Hey, you tried your best, and it's embarrassing.*

Like when someone makes something... just a little coaching tip for men to save some fights... if your wife gets you something or makes food... don't say, *It's not that bad...* what are you doing, are you trying to die?

Like when you try something on, and a family member goes, *That surprisingly looks good...* which is their way of saying, *I'm now willing to be seen with you in public.*

Or I remember, one of the first times I preached at an adult service years ago... the senior pastor was like, *That went way better than I ever thought it would.* Encouragement wasn't his top gift.

Or let me just say this... because we have a lot of new people here from the Midwest and places like California... Listen, when you get to the South, you'll hear the phrase *Bless your heart*. Some of you think, *Oh, that's so kind...*

Listen, because I love you, I just need you to know they aren't encouraging you. If you hear, *Bless your heart...* You have just been southern cussed. Like it's a kind way of saying, *Oh my*

*goodness, you're an idiot.* See, in the Midwest, people just insult you to your face, but here we use riddles... God bless the South.

But I want you to know this... when the Bible says this little phrase...

*"To preach the gospel to the poor;"*

**Luke 4:18c (NKJV)**

This is a loaded comment... because what Jesus is saying to us is, *Hey, I've come because you are helpless to save yourself.* The religious leaders, you, and I have as much a chance of saving ourselves as my Cowboys have of winning the Super Bowl this year. It's not good.

The gospel is an indictment before a delight. It says you are helpless to rescue or fix yourself.

We all have things we think will save us...

The job, the kids, the money, the purpose, the relationship... but sadly, they always leave us wanting more and empty. Jesus has come to save us... to forgive us our sins and fill us up.

See, happiness comes from happenings... joy comes from Jesus. Jesus really died, really rose again... and He can really change your life... and that's why He came to save us from ourselves and our sins, and set us free.

## **2. Jesus came to bring EMOTIONAL healing.**

(Romans 5:3-4)

*"He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,"*

**Luke 4:18d (NKJV)**

The Greek word for brokenhearted... It's a picture of a person who has been shattered by life. A mirror that was once whole has now been shattered and broken into a million little pieces.

What Jesus is saying here is, *I've come to heal those who have had their hearts shattered and bruised.* All of us have had our hearts broken at some point.

You know, one of the reasons I know the Bible is true is that there are some things that seem like terrible advice, but when you slow down and think about it, you see how true it is.

*Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.*

**Romans 5:3-4 (NIV)**

You've never walked up to someone and said, *How are you doing*, and they go... *Absolutely great; my whole life is falling apart, yet I'm just glorying in my suffering*.

Here's the thing... I know in a room this size, some of you have some emotional pains, some things you are carrying... and you wonder how you will ever get out of it because all you are doing is suffering.

Here's the amazing thing about the Bible... it doesn't see you as you are, but who you will be. So, all you see is suffering... but the Bible sees who you will be because of Jesus' perseverance, character and hope.

But you have to let Jesus heal those things.

Any married people ever had a fight? Does anybody have fights on the way to church where you ask a question and someone just lashes out.... Bumped into a bruise...

You opened a wound they haven't been healed from... it was from something her dad said to her, it was what her first husband said, or her teacher, or one of her co-workers... and it's something that hasn't been healed! BUT THAT IS WHY JESUS CAME!

Pebble Beach in California. (Show picture) The constant roar of the ocean takes these pebbles on the shores, and it tosses them, rolls them, and grinds them. The constant pressure, crushing, and force on them creates something amazing...

Think about it: people from all over come to these shores to collect these stones, which are then put on display in cabinets and shelves. They've been transformed by their circumstances.

What I find so rich is that on the other side of Pebble Beach, you can go to a quiet cove that is sheltered from the chaos and storms, and you will find hundreds of pebbles that are never taken because they haven't been transformed. They are still rough and sharp; they haven't been formed.

I believe some of the people that God puts on display in our church are people who have gone through the most painful storms. They are people who have felt the weight and the crushing of life, the grind of circumstances... these are the people who have been emotionally healed, they've invited God in, and they are on display now.

Because the truth is, as someone famously put it... God can't use you greatly until he wounds you deeply.

### 3. Jesus came to break **STRONGHOLDS**.

(John 8:31-32; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4)

*"To proclaim liberty to the captives  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;"*

**Luke 4:18e (NKJV)**

Do you know those areas in your life that no matter how much you try, you can't seem to get free of?

You know those thoughts where you can't seem to find any hope or victory in?

So, let me just say this: if you've been struggling with something for five years or ten years, it's no longer a struggle; it's a stronghold.

Do you ever wonder why the Bible says to have a childlike faith... here's one of the reasons I think... It's because children are dependent... think about it... the other day I heard my kids struggling to open something, and one of them said, *Get Dad to do it... He's super strong...* and it was in that moment that I thought the wisdom of the Lord is on my child. They must be blessed and highly favored. But they knew they needed a higher power, a higher help. Now, the problem is every once in a while they milk it... *Dad, hand me the TV remote...* I'm like, *You get up and get it, you little gremlin.*

But the point is... they need help from a higher power... they know it... but as you get older, you get more independent, and here's the problem: you try to fix and solve things in your own strength...

And that's why some of us have strongholds...

These are strongholds....

#### **What is a stronghold?**

The word for **stronghold** in the Bible means a strong fortification.

*We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.*

**2 Corinthians 10:3-4 (NLT)**

A stronghold is a lie that forms a thought pattern from demonic forces that keeps us from freedom in the Spirit.

What we are destroying is the lies that keep us from knowing God... lies that form a thought pattern that keep us from full life in God. And guess who is called the father of lies, Satan...

*Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

**John 8:31-32 (NLT)**

Note that this is intended for followers of Jesus. Jesus says this, which means some of these Christians aren't free. They are enslaved, and they have strongholds.

### **Two common strongholds we face:**

- 1.) **False view of God.** A lie you believe about God... (There is some lie that keeps you from trusting God. People who struggle to feel God's love and presence. If you feel that God is distant and cold, or if you question whether God loves you, then it could be a stronghold. People tend to project the characteristics of their earthly father on God.)

So, you hear about love and God, and you believe in God's love, but when you sit down with Him, you constantly feel like He wouldn't want to spend time with you, no matter what you do... for years, you have had this thought... that is a stronghold of a false view of God.

- 2.) **False view of Sin.** A lie you believe about sin... (If you believe the lie, you can never overcome this situation or sin... You are defeated and think God can give others victory, but you will struggle with this area your whole life. This was mine... I fundamentally did not believe God could set me free from pornography, and deep down, I wasn't even sure if I wanted to be. This had been such a huge part of my life.)

This Christmas, you need to be reminded that there is a higher power that can really free you.

### **4. Jesus came to bring PHYSICAL healing.**

(Matthew 9:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:54b-55)

*"And recovery of sight to the blind,"*

**Luke 4:18f (NKJV)**

One thing God does is heal... Jesus is proclaiming that.

**How God heals:**

### **1. Changes your circumstances.**

(Cancer goes away, anxiety is removed, sickness is gone) He heals naturally; think about it - white blood cells. He also heals medically, and He heals miraculously.

### **2. Changes you spiritually.**

(Jonah wasn't delivered from the belly of the whale; rather, he was delivered in the belly of the whale. The point is, some of God's richest work happens in physical pain or suffering... Do you know why the early church exploded? Because Christians were being killed, but they had joy... They had hope... They had been changed in the persecution and suffering, and that change had changed others... The point is that sometimes God doesn't want to change your physical sickness; He wants to change you from the inside... We should always pray for it... always... and what I've noticed is that physical healing, when it does happen, is almost always attached to this inner healing...

We are always looking for God to change our circumstances, but often, what He's looking to change is us.

*Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."*

**Matthew 9:1-2 (NIV)**

Notice, He starts with changing this man before his circumstances...

Notice Jesus heals this man, but He says, *Your sins are forgiven*. Jesus was interested in this man's soul... Why? Because life here is temporary but Heaven is eternal, and He wants to spend eternity with you...

### **3. The Ultimate Healing.**

That's why Paul says this...

*"Death has been swallowed up in victory."*[Isaiah 25:8]

*"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"* [Hosea 13:14]

**1 Corinthians 15:54b-55 (NIV)**

Remember, you aren't made for this Earth... You and I have a better home that awaits us... Physical healing is always temporary, but ultimate healing is available to everyone in Jesus. We can spend an eternity with Him...

When you look at this... healing always happens if you have faith... God will always do one of these for His followers... always...

The point, though, is that this passage was prophesied 700 years before, and Jesus read it to show that He is all these things. This is a good reminder for us during the Christmas season.

Salvation

Emotional healing

Strongholds

Physical healing

Jesus doesn't just come to get you to Heaven; he wants to help you now...