

Jesus' Commission to Preach

Key Verses: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*
—**Luke 4:18,19**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 4:14-22

of the kingdom according to their opportunities and abilities.

Jesus declared of himself, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12) He knew, however, that he would not personally

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Holy Spirit upon Jesus by God took place at the time of his baptism in the River Jordan, which symbolized his consecration to do the Father's will, even unto death. This anointing constituted the power, authority and privilege given to Jesus to preach the message of the Gospel. In our Key Verses, our Lord quotes from the prophecy of Isaiah, in which is detailed various aspects of the ministry which he would undertake during his First Advent. (Isa. 61:1,2) Those who seek to follow in Jesus' footsteps, and who have similarly dedicated their lives fully to God's service, also come under this anointing and, like their Master, have the privilege of preaching the Gospel

remain in the world, and that the work of God entrusted to him would be continued by his representatives and ambassadors. In Revelation 20:4 they are referred to as those who give up earthly hopes and ambitions “for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God.” We are encouraged by the promise given to these: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

At the beginning of the Gospel Age, miracles were performed which demonstrated the power of God during the establishment of the Early Church. Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead, and the apostles did the same. After the apostles died, however, these miraculous works ceased, and the Lord’s people since have been called upon to walk entirely by faith. Nevertheless, they have continued to be witnesses of Jesus by faithfully proclaiming the Gospel, which Paul asserts, is “the power of God unto salvation.”—Rom. 1:16

As Christians, we continue to have the privilege of being witnesses for Jesus. We do so by proclaiming God’s marvelous plan for man’s salvation through the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus. We tell of his birth, life, death, resurrection, and exaltation to God’s “own right hand in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 1:18-23) We speak of the “first resurrection” hope of those who will live and reign with Christ. (Rev. 20:6) Finally, we proclaim the raising of all the dead and the restoration of the willing and obedient to perfect human life on the earth.—John 5:25; I Cor. 15:22

As children of God, and ambassadors of Christ, we rejoice that the anointing of the Holy Spirit has authorized us to be witnesses of Jesus. It is a great privilege to be thus used to explain the plan of God as it relates to those who are invited to be joint-heirs with Jesus in the spiritual phase of his kingdom, as well as to proclaim the glorious hope of the “restitution of all things” for mankind during the thousand years of Christ’s kingdom.—Rom. 8:16,17; Acts 3:20,21 ■