

MESSAGE

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS A NEW BEGINNING

ISAIAH 61:1-11; LUKE 4:16-21 | DECEMBER 13/14, 2014 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news." (Isaiah 61:1)

The Chosen One Bringing New Beginnings (Isaiah 61:1-3)

- Chosen with a message (v 1)
- Sent with power (vv 1-3)

The Shape of New Beginnings (Isaiah 61:4-9)

- New identity (v 3)
- New creation (v 4)
- New purpose (vv 5-6, 9)
- New abundance (vv 7-8)

When Life Begins Again (Isaiah 61:10-11)

- A life of joy from God (v 10)
- A life re-clothed by God (v 10)
- A life made right by God (v 11)

Jesus and New Beginnings (Luke 4:16-21)

The Good News worth Shouting (Isaiah 40:9)

STUDY GUIDE

1. As we continue our series, "All I Want for Christmas," this weekend, we will study Isaiah 61:1-11. Whether on your own or with a small group, take a moment to begin with prayer, asking God to speak through your study of the Scripture. Next, read that Bible passage out loud.
2. *Background:* In the 8th century B.C., the people of Israel and Judah were exiled from their homeland to Babylon. A good portion of the land, as well as the religious and political center of Jerusalem, lay in ruins. Scripture tells us that God exiled the people as punishment for their disobedience to Him as expressed in the covenant at Mount Sinai. The prophet Isaiah addresses these exiled people with a message of hope and new beginnings.
3. Within Isaiah 40-66, there are four major 'servant songs' that speak of how a servant of the Lord, perhaps an individual or the people of Israel together, will suffer while also bringing a revelation of God to the world (see Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-9; 50:4-9; and 52:13-53:12). Isaiah 61:1-3, is often grouped with these as conveying a message from a servant-Messiah sent by God. Describe this servant-Messiah's job and message as outlined in verses 1-3?
4. How do you think Isaiah's promise of such a figure would impact the Israelite people exiled in Babylon?
5. In contrast to the destruction and plundering Israel had experienced, Isaiah speaks a strong message of restoration in verses 4-6. What are the elements of this message? How might this change Israel's view of their losses, as well as their relationship with surrounding nations?
6. In Isaiah 61:3 and 7, as well as 60:17, God promises to exchange a certain set of things for another set of things for His people. What sort of exchange does He promise and to what extent does it go?
7. Where in your own life do you long for God to make such a great exchange? How might you pursue that today?
8. What does verse 8 say about the character of God?
9. Verses 10 & 11 describe a life powerfully transformed by God's touch. What does it look like? Where have you experienced God's touch in this way in your own life?
10. In Luke 4:16-21, Jesus reads Isaiah 61 to launch His public ministry in Galilee. Read that section of Scripture aloud. How would you say that Jesus fulfills what we read in Isaiah 61:1-11?
11. What is one thing you will take away from this study about new beginnings? If you are alone, share that with someone this week. If you are with a small group, take some time to discuss these things with one another. Close in prayer.

[Next week: *We continue the "All I Want for Christmas" series by looking at 2 Samuel 7:1-16. Prepare by reading this passage ahead of time.]*

