

I want to continue this morning with our brief series on Old Testament prophecies of the first advent of the Lord Jesus. And if you observed in our Scripture reading this morning you will notice that when the Lord stood up to read from the Scriptures that He read from Isaiah chapter 61. And in verse 21 of our Scripture reading when He said this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. He gave us all of the authority that we need to say that when Isaiah wrote the 61st chapter speaking of the Lord's servant that He was referring to the first advent of the Lord Jesus in as far as the Lord Jesus Christ read. The Lord came to preach. One of the old Puritans said God had only one Son and He made Him a preacher. The Gospels make it very clear as you read through them that the Lord Jesus was both a teacher and a preacher, He combined both ministries. We have many passages in the four Gospels which not only prove that He preached but they also show us what He preached. Not only did He preach but you remember in Matthew chapter 10 when He sent out the disciples He sent them out to preach. Later on the Lord Jesus sent out 70 and His commission to them was that they also were to preach. Their message was the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. They had a message to proclaim. Among our Lord's last words to His disciples before He went back to the Father were these. Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The book of Acts makes it very clear that preaching and teaching were dominant in the ministry of the Apostles in the early church. When the people of the church were scattered out of Jerusalem because of persecution Luke tells us in writing Acts 8:4 that they went everywhere preaching the Word. When you get into the Epistles the passages that deal with preaching are too numerous for me to take up this morning but let me mention what Paul says in First Corinthians 1. Because with all the problems that the Corinthian Church had there were evidently some problems in connection with the nature of their ministry. And so Paul says in that first chapter of First Corinthians Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel not with the wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made of none

effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness but unto us which are being saved it is the power of God. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. And later on in that same Epistle you remember that Paul says Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel. Now preaching indicates the proclamation of a message. The Bible makes it clear that good preaching includes good teaching. Preaching can be public or preaching can be private. You can preach to thousands or you can preach just to one other person. The Old Testament prophets were primarily preachers. The same could be said of the New Testament Apostles. Their performance of miracles you remember came to an end even before the New Testament was completed but preaching continues to be the vital ministry of the Church down to the present day. It was even said of John the Baptist who announced the coming of Israel's Messiah that he did so by preaching that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. But this morning we are interested in the fact that our Lord came as a preacher. I am sure that we would all agree that He was the preacher. And I have taken that as my subject this morning. He was the Prince of preachers. He was the preacher of all preachers. No one could ever excell the Lord Jesus in anything that He did and so there never has been and there never will be a greater preacher than our Lord Jesus Christ. Now I want to consider this passage with you this morning in Luke 4 and then we will be at least referring to Isaiah 61. But I want you to see as we look at this passage this morning the way in which the Lord Jesus Christ presented Himself to the Jews in Nazareth as a preacher. Now this was at the very beginning of His ministry. Nazareth was the place where the Lord Jesus Christ was brought up. And it was the custom in that day as people came into the synnagogue for those who were recognized by the leaders of the synnagogue to be able to read a passage of Scripture such as the Lord Jesus did and then make comments on whatever he wanted to say about the passage. And you can see from this that when you read from the Scriptures probably this was to show their reverence to the Word of God the reader stood. When he got ready to preach

he sat down. And the Lord Jesus did this so that when the Scriptures were given to Him He opened them to the prophesy of Isaiah and He found the place where these words were written the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath annointed 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. And when He had done this He sat down. And there evidently was something about the very presence of the Lord Jesus that was different and there was an impression made upon the group by the way in which He read the Scripture so when He rolled up the scroll, gave it to the minister who was not the preacher of the synnagogue but the one who was in charge of the copies of the Scripture then He sat down and the eyes of everybody in the synnagogue were fastened upon Him and to His amazement, to their amazement He said, this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. And by this the Lord Jesus was claiming to be their Messiah. Now as for the meaning of the words that the Lord Jesus spoke, I don't think that we can really understand the ministry of preaching unless we look into these words of the Lord Jesus. They were given to Isaiah about the Lord Jesus, they were given to Isaiah especially for the Lord Jesus. He was the only one who could really say these words and yet the ministry of preaching which was carried on by His apostles and by His disciples and which has been such a predominant thing throughout the history of the church takes its pattern from the preaching ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Which as you can see has its roots even in the Old Testament. Now as He began to speak unto them you notice in the first part of verse 21 it means that this was not all that He said. The Lord must have given some kind of explanation and this is what gives us the pattern for saying that if a person is going to preach then this includes two things one the reading of the Word of God, the reading of the passage that he is going to preach from or proclaim and secondly the explanation of it. And verse 22 in our text says that all bear Him witness and wondered at the words of grace, the King James says very accurately the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. But He

begins with this the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath annointed me. Now if you were to read this in Isaiah 61 you would see that there is just one slight change in the way it is stated which does not alter the meaning in any way but instead of having he hath annointed me in Isaiah we read because the Lord hath annointed me to preach the Gospel. Now the reference to His annointing shows us first of all that all three members of the Godhead were involved in the preaching of the Lord Jesus, the Spirit, He is the Spirit of the Lord and this reference to the Lord must have reference to God the Father, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord hath annointed me. When you're reading your Bibles one type of verse that you ought always to mark and perhaps make a list of them because it always indicates something that is very, very important and that is whenever you come to a passage where all three members of the Godhead are mentioned and this is one of those passages. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were all involved in the preaching ministry of Jesus Christ when He was here upon earth. So when the Messiah came with His message on the mission that He had come to fulfill you can see that this was not something that originated with men nor even fulfilled at the request of men but that this work was completely the work of the Father in conjunction with the Son and with the Holy Spirit, this shows what a tremendously important ministry our Lord's preaching ministry was. And it exalts the ministry of preaching as nothing else could possibly do. Now secondly as we look at the words that the Lord Jesus used in His reference to His annointing let's notice the Word annointing, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath annointed me. Now let me give you directly from my Greek Lexicon the meaning of the word annoint. And it was given by the author of this lexicon with reference to this particular passage that we have in Luke 4:18. And he says this this meant consecrating Jesus to the Messianic office and notice and furnishing Him with the powers necessary for its administration. Now the Lord has been set apart as the Messiah, the one anticipated in the Old Testament has come. He is now entering into His public ministry. He was annointed when the Spirit of God descended upon

Him in the form of a dove. And you can read about this in Luke 3:21-22 if you are not familiar with this passage. The Lord was annointed at that time. He was designated to John the Baptist as the Messiah. He saw and bear record that He was the Son of God but as the Spirit of God came upon Jesus Christ as a man He was not only designating that He was the Messiah but He was furnishing Him with the power necessary to do what He had come to do. Now this means one thing. This means that this positively guaranteed the success of our Lord's ministry. The Lord was able to accomplish what He came to accomplish because He was annointed by the Spirit of God for this purpose. Now this is important for us as we come to the latter part of our passage and if you let your eye run down toward the end of our Scripture reading this morning you see that all they, verse 28, all they in the synnagogue when they heard these things were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust him out of the city and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way and came down to Capernaum the city of Galilee and taught them on the Sabbath days and they were astonished at his doctrine for his word was with power. Now I want you to see the significance of this word annointing. At the Christmas season we think of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and unfortunately there are many people who don't know anything else about the coming of Christ except that he was born in Bethleham. They have no idea as to the purpose of His coming. They have no conception of His preaching, they have very little understanding of His life. They may know something about the cross but the cross can really mean to many people that He simply was a martyr for the things that He believed and that if you were to evaluate the ministry of the Lord Jêsus Christ in human terms you could not really say that it was a success. But anybody who comes to the Scripture has to discover sooner or later that God's ways and man's ways are different. And the same prophet who tells us that the Messiah was coming as a preacher is one who seeks to differentiate between the ways of man and the ways of God and the thoughts

of men and the thoughts of God and evidently at the beginning of the ministry the Spirit of God through Luke wanted us to focus upon this word annointed because by this word he wanted us to know that the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ was destined to be successful in the eyes of God and not a failure. Now we need to get that into our hearts. And we have to see that success in God's eyes is accomplishing God's purpose. And therefore as we see the ministry of the Lord Jesus as you read it in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and I think it's especially predominant in the writings of John you find that wherever the Lord Jesus Christ preached there was a division among the people because of Him. And so it is important for us to see that the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ because of His annointing by the Spirit was certain to succeed and this was the only way in which we can adequately view the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus. Now let's look for just a moment at the message that He preached. The word preached is found you will notice if you look at your Bible again in verses 18 and 19 three times. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. Down in the middle of the verse to preach deliverance to the captives and then in verse 19 to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Now two words are used here. The second and third occurrence of the same word, the first is different and the only way that you could possibly translate this first word is by the words that we have here in our Bibles to preach the Gospel. It doesn't mean simply to preach but it means to preach the Gospel. The second and third time that you have this the word means to announce something, to declare something, to proclaim something, this is what preaching is. Preaching the gospel is announcing or proclaiming or declaring these things. But as you see these two words you realize that two things are said about our Lord's message. One obviously is that He came to proclaim good news. That's what the Gospel is. He came to preach the Gospel. And we have the habit of saying you know that some things are good news and some things are bad news and just recently we have got in the habit of saying first the good news and then the bad news but of all the good news that has ever reached the ears of men there is nothing that even

begins to compare with the Gospel. The message that the Lord Jesus Christ is explaining and identifying here. But the second part about this that we need to note is that He came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. You have that in verse 19. By which He did not mean a 12 month period of time but He has reference to this present age. Acceptable in the Greek means the time when men can be saved and when the blessing of God in salvation will flow out with a profuse abundance. Now turn if you will to Isaiah 61 and I want you to notice something if possibly you haven't noticed this before. Because it may be that one thing that aroused the curiosity of the Jews who were listening to the Lord Jesus is the fact that He stopped where He did. Now if you have your Bible opened at Isaiah 61 verse 1 is identical with verse 18 of Luke 4. And the first part of verse 2 is identical with the 19th verse of Luke 4. He came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, He came to proclaim the time of salvation. He came to proclaim the time when the offer of the Gospel was being proclaimed and where people who responded to that offer would be saved. He came to proclaim that. But you will notice that in Isaiah's prophesy the last part of verse 2 which the Lord Jesus did not read is entirely different. Because the Messiah came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God. Now you have the acceptable year. You have the day of vengeance. I am not going to go into the possibility that there may be some suggestion, something for us to lay hold of by the fact that one is a year, the other is a day, one much longer as far as time is concerned. But the solemn indication here in Isaiah's prophesy is that there is going to come a time when it will not longer be possible for people to be saved, Now thank God that time is not come yet. And that time will not come until the day of vengeance when God brings judgement upon those who know not God and obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember that if the Lord Jesus Christ were to come today and catch us up into His presence the acceptable year of the Lord would still not come to an end. People are going to be saved during the tribulation. People are going to be saved during the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ but I just want to mention this this morning because of the message that

the Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed when He indicated that this was a matter of eternal life and eternal death. He came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and I am so thankful this morning that as I stand before you or as you stand before a group of people or as you go to any individual you can assure them that the acceptable year of the Lord is still at hand. This is the privilege that we have of proclaiming. But if a person dies without receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior there is no hope. And we don't know when the Lord is going to take us away. We don't know when the Lord Jesus Christ may see fit to remove this person or that person. We are each one of us only a heartbeat away from eternity. But now is the acceptable time. Now is the acceptable year of the Lord and the Lord Jesus Christ came proclaiming this. And yet in spite of that as I have already mentioned you find people all through the ministry of the Lord Jesus who are saying no, who are turning against Him. Like the Jews in Antioch of Bassidia who were opposing Paul and Barnabus and you remember Paul said to them well you have judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life and so now we're going to turn to the Gentiles. People today are gripped with various kinds of fear but the greatest fear of all should be the possibility that they might be suddenly ushered into eternity without the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The Lord was the One who came preaching the Gospel and proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord that the door of salvation is opened and that sinners who hear the message and respond may come. Now the Lord does identify certain people doesn't He. Looking at the passages He sent me to preach the gospel to the poor, he sent me to heal the brokenhearted, he sent me 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. And you know there are people that will read a passage like this and deal with the Gospel as though the Gospel deals with material provision. That the Gospel deals with physical provision only, that the Gospel is concerned primarily about social problems. And somehow there are people who never see that the poor that He is speaking about are those who have come to realize their spiritual poverty, that those who



are brokenhearted are those who are experiencing the affect of sin, that the captives that He is talking about are those who are held in bondage to sin. And oh you just have to look around a little bit these days and open your eyes and see some of the things that are going on to realize how hopelessly from a human standpoint held in bondage millions of people are and they still think that they have the ability to set themselves free at any time. Your Sunday newspaper carries a list of some youthful entertainers. Over just the past few years who have died tragic deaths as a result of their involvement in sin of various kinds. We see this thing going on every day. The Lord came to set captives free. The Lord came to open the eyes of the blind. It is true that those who are physically blind received their sight, many of them received their sight when the Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth. But what the Lord is primarily concerned about those who are blinded by the god of this world and they don't why their here and they don't know what their need is and they are ignorant of the fact that eternity is ahead and many of them have never seen the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ that He came to provide salvation so that instead of putting a physical or a material or a social interpretation upon this you can see that the Lord Jesus as He read this passage of Scripture from the prophesy of Isaiah was saying that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have combined and the Son is the annointed One to preach this Gospel that those who are spiritually in poverty can be made rich. That those who are brokenhearted because of sin can be healed, that those who are held in bondage by sin can be set free. That those who are blinded can have spiritual eyesight given to them. That those who are bruised and crushed under the load of sin and how picturesque these expressions are of the very thing that sin does. All of this can be changed, can be remedied by Jesus Christ and by Jesus Christ alone and this is the acceptable year of the Lord. What kind of results did the Lord Jesus have? Isn't it amazing that after the Lord had said this that the people said in affect to Him, and this is the meaning of verse 23. You performed miracles in Capernaum, why don't you let us see a miracle here. The face of eternal issues when the Lord gave them the best news that would

ever be heard and news which obviously these Jews in the synnagogue knew nothing about the significance of spiritual salvation, they were more interested in seeing the Lord perform a physical miracle then they were in realizing the importance of the message that the Lord Jēsus Christ had just proclaimed to them. And obviously there was more explanation give than Luke has recorded for us in this passage. And then the Lord simply tells them something that is in evidence of the sovereign way in which God works in the preaching of the Gospel. You know to those of us who are saved it is amazing isn't it to us that anybody facing life like it is today could heal the Gospel and not want to be saved. It's just amazing. And yet they don't. The world is not waiting for the Gospel. They are not crying for people to come to them. The need is there and we must go and proclaim the Gospel to every creature but if you have the idea that anybody is out there just hoping that you will come remember the only way that they're ever going to be receptive to the message is when God moves upon their hearts. I have had a delightful time the last couple of weeks on two different occasions talking to two of our missionaries who have been home, Donna Dunlap and Joan Smith. They were speaking at our Missionary Committee Meeting the other night and you know both of them, one in Korea and the other who has been down in Mexido minister in the face of great difficulties and problems and you know you can never listen to young ladies like this or missionaries without saying you know feeling in our heart why don't you stay home. Why don't you get a good job here. You are both very capable. I didn't say this but the thought just flashed through my mind what is it that makes people go to other lands with a message that people don't really want. Joan told me that out of a village of about 1500 people there are only really two that know the Lord and they are the only two that actually care if she is there. Why do we go, why do we continue to preach the Gospel because God is the one who moves upon our hearts and Joan said to me, she said you know the Lord has given me greater peace, greater joy being there in the village with those people than anyplace else I have ever been. And as she said that to me I felt like I needed to take my shoes off because I felt

that I was standing on holy ground. This is something that God is doing. The Gospel is still being proclaimed and God is moving upon the hearts of people. The preaching of the Gospel cannot fail. Is everybody going to be saved? No. Everybody is not going to be saved. But God's purposes are going to be accomplished and to illustrate that fact you notice that He concludes before they ran Him out of town by telling them about two great miracle workers in the Old Testament and how God in His sovereign grace during a time of a famine led Elijah to a Gentile widow and how God in His providential dealing to that Jewish maiden brought Elisha into contact with a Gentile army captain. And God moved marvelously in their behalf. And why did these Jews hate that? Well they hated it because it displayed the sovereignty and the grace of God in accomplishing His own purposes but they hated it also because they as Jews did not want to believe that the acceptable year of the Lord included Gentiles just as much as it included Jews. And they ran Him out of town. Did He fail? The Lord Jesus can't fail. Did He give people what He wanted them to hear? You know I can almost sense somebody saying well Lord You got the people coming, they're listening, they're wanting to see a miracle why don't you do what they want you to do. Here is a pattern that the Lord has given for us. We have a message that we are to proclaim to every creature. Every person on the face of the earth should hear this message. The offer of salvation is to go out. But the world will come back to us and say show us a sign, let's see the spectacular. Give us something that is entertaining, something that is interesting. What are we going to do. The only thing that we can do is what the Lord Jesus did. And that is remember that the Spirit of God has come into our hearts. First John 2 makes it clear that we are anointed which means that we are commissioned to fulfill a task and the success of that task is not measured in terms of the numbers who receive it. The success of that task is measured on whether or not you and I are faithful in proclaiming that message. I may plant, somebody else may water but as God's Word goes out it accomplishes in every instance that which pleases Him and prospers in the thing whereto He has sent it. The only hope that you and I can expect to see anybody

saved is that God is at work, God blesses His Word. He's commissioned us to carry this message to men and He has annointed us, empowering us so that you and I by His grace are able to accomplish for His glory the work that He has given us to do. May God keep us faithful here at Central Bible Church in proclaiming this wonderful message of His grace and the confidence that as the message is proclaimed during this acceptable year of the Lord God is going to use His Word and God is going to move upon the hearts of the people and the poor will be made rich. The blind will see, the captives will be set free and men will be brought into a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ where they experience the blessed reality which can only be found in Him. There is salvation in none other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. And as I close this morning should there be any here who do not know the Lord Jesus I trust that the Lord has touched your heart with what I have had to say this morning and that before you leave this place you too will come to know the life and the forgiveness and the blessing that can only be found in Him.