**Enjoy the Freedom that Christ Gives (Isaiah 61:1-3) 2/9/2025**

One of the greatest blessings a person can enjoy is freedom. Even unbelievers consider it a fundamental blessing. This freedom was originally a blessing given by God. The meaning of being "created in the image of God" includes several aspects (Genesis 1:27).

**First, humans were created as spiritual beings, like God (blessing of Genesis 2:7).** Therefore, humans must be spiritually reborn through Christ, and without enjoying spiritual blessings, people remain empty and anxious, no matter what they possess (Pascal’s “God-shaped vacuum”).

**Second, humans were created with God’s nature.** This is the blessing that comes when believers are filled by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:4-7).

**Third, humans were created with God’s creative ability.** Therefore, people develop and renew the world with their creative power.The problem after the mankind’s fall is that unbelievers often use this ability for the wrong purposes.We must restore this.

**Fourth, humans were created as free beings, (theologically with “free will”) like God.** We are not just passive possessions that are controlled by God but beings who can make judgments and act independently. After the Fall in Genesis 3, judgment and curses came upon humanity, causing us to lose our freedom (Genesis 3:16-17). Women became subject to men (hence the existence of discrimination and oppression), and men had to toil hard just to survive. Even the ground was cursed. This is why no matter how much we struggle to live, we end up producing thorns and thistles, and we don’t even reap all that we sow. Moreover, humans now live bound by everything. We are bound by sin (Romans 6:17-18), by work (Matthew 11:28), by scars (Isaiah 61:1), by money (1Timothy 6:10), and finally, by destiny and authorities of hell (Hebrews 9:27, Exodus 20:4-5).

**1. If a person does not enjoy true freedom, serious problems follow.**

**1) Severe mental illnesses arise** **(“brokenhearted” in verse 1).** These issues begin with past wounds (especially childhood trauma, loss, comparison, or violence), which remain in the subconscious and becomes exposed. These develop into anxiety, loneliness, inferiority, anger, and guilt, eventually leading to anxiety disorders, depression, and violent behavior.Life is without peace, rest, or a vision for the future, and living becomes suffering.

**2) Mental health issues can escalate into personality disorders and even affect brain function** **(“captives” and “prisoners”).** This can result in obsessive behaviors, delusions, bipolar disorder, paranoia, and schizophrenia.

**3) People often resort to unhealthy solutions, leading to various addictions**. Alcohol, drugs, and gambling are not the only addictions. Work addiction, success addiction, and obsessive collecting can also destroy lives.

**2. How can we solve these problems?**

**1) The world mainly offers three types of solutions**.

**①** **Freud** **claimed that excessive moral standards imposed by parents and society cause people to develop a sense of guilt over small failures, leading them to hide their true selves.** This concept contributed to the idea of the "persona," where people constantly try to conceal their true selves. The suggested solution is to normalize past wounds by saying, “It’s okay,” or “You’re not the only one,” while lowering moral standards.

**② To express suppressed emotions, people suggest catharsis therapy (through conversations and role-playing), which we call counseling.** Counseling teaches that confronting their issues directly helps them overcome those problems on their own.

**③** **Psychiatrists claim that since brain function is already affected, they need to be treated with medication.** While this cannot be ignored, it is not a complete solution.

**2) The perfect solution is the Gospel that God gave. God sent His Son as Christ, anointed by the Holy Spirit (verse 1).** Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted, free the captives, and release the prisoners.

**① Why does it say He was anointed with oil of the Holy Spirit?** **Because every problem has a spiritual root.** All problems began in Genesis 3, when Adam and Eve were deceived by Satan (spiritual problem, fundamental problem). After sinning, they lost their relationship with God and felt shame and fear (Genesis 3:7-10). At that moment, God called them (Genesis 3:9) and covered their shame and fear with garments of leather (Genesis 3:21).

**② All of these events pointed to the promise of Christ.** **By the authority of the true Priest, Prophet, and King, Christ did three things.** As the true Priest, He atoned for us (Hebrews 9:12). As the trueProphet, He became the way to meet God (John 14:6, 10:9). As the trueKing, He destroyed Satan’s power (1 John 3:8) and transferred us into the Kingdom of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13-14).

**③ When we accept Christ, the Holy Spirit, who anointed Him, works in us.** We may not even be aware of our hidden wounds and pain, but the Holy Spirit knows and works on our behalf (Romans 8:26, John 14:16-18). As we listen to and meditate on God’s Word, we experience deeper dimensions of His grace (1 Corinthians 2:10-12).

**3) What then follows is true freedom**.

**① Freedom from authority of sin and death** (Romans 6:17-18, Romans 8:1-2). Seek and desire the heavenly and spiritual things (Colossians 3:1-2).

**② Freedom from the Law’s condemnation** (Galatians 3:13). Even if we fail, we can rely on His grace (1 John 1:9).

**③ Freedom from fate, Satan, and hell**. We became children of God who will enjoy the heavenly blessings (Ephesians 1:3-5), and heirs (Romans 8:17). So be free from everything in this world. Do not hide, escape, fall into the wrong things, or live in oppression. Christ has set us free, He is responsible for us, and He will transform everything into blessings.

### 3. God has promised final blessings along with this blessing of freedom (verse 3).

**1) He gives a crown of beauty instead of ashes and an oil of joy instead of mourning. Zion** symbolizes the redeemed (Revelation 21:1-2). It represents the blessing continually worshipping God. Every time we worship, God places a beautiful crown on us, comforts us, and fills us with joy to overcome sorrow, injustice, and suffering.

**2) He gives a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.** As this happens, our relationship with God deepens and is fully restored. Praise is an expression of faith and gratitude toward God. Then, spirituality and the blessing of spiritual summit is restored. (2 Corinthians 6:9-10). We then possess everything, even if we do not have anything else.

**3) We will become oaks of righteousness and a display of God’s glory.** God promises to use us for His delightful purpose. Even those who have suffered, failed, and wept will rise again to help others like them and save all nations. Israel, who was once taken into captivity, recovered this blessing, and today, we too have inherited it.

### Conclusion- **God has given us eternal freedom in Christ (John 8:32).** Hold onto Him at every moment. Enjoy this freedom with deep gratitude, and may you be used to bring freedom to those who are wounded and suffering.