

# The Heart of Jesus

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**Text: Luke 4:18-19**

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to release the oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." NIV

## **Introduction:**

Survivor Eva Hart remembers the night, April 15, 1912, on which the Titanic plunged 12,000 feet to the Atlantic floor, some two hours and forty minutes after an iceberg tore a 300-foot gash in the starboard side:

"I saw all the horror of its sinking, and I heard, even more dreadful, the cries of drowning people." Although twenty life-boats and rafts were launched—too few and only partly filled—most of the passengers ended up struggling in the icy seas while those in the boats waited a safe distance away. Lifeboat no. 14 did row back to the scene after the unsinkable ship slipped from sight at 2:20 a.m. Alone, it chased cries in the darkness, seeking and saving a precious few. Incredibly, no other boat joined it. Some were already overloaded, but in virtually every other boat, those already saved rowed their half-filled boats aimlessly in the night, listening to the cries of the lost. Each feared a crush of unknown swimmers would cling to their craft, eventually swamping it. "I came to seek and to save the lost," our Savior said. And he commissioned us to do the same. But we face a large obstacle: fear. **While people drown in the treacherous waters around us, we are tempted to stay dry and make certain no one rocks the boat.**

--Larson, 67

**On this day when Jesus came to the temple, He came to "rock the religious leader's boat."**

Religion had taken over.

Rules had replaced compassion.

Protecting their status in life was all that mattered.

It was time for change. It was time for God's will to be done. In Luke 4:18-19, we have here the "Lord's statement of his call to his saving ministry." Bringing salvation to humanity is the Heart of Jesus – it is His purpose, His desire, and His focus.

Note two important *aspects* of the Heart of Jesus as it pertains to His mission to save humanity.

## **I. THE HEART OF JESUS IS MOVED WITH PURPOSE (v.18).**

### **A. Jesus moved in unity with the Holy Spirit.**

He was moved by the anointing and He moved with the anointing. *This should be our desire as well.*

**Paul said in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22** "Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He **anointed** us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

**In 1 John 2:20 John writes,** "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth."

### **B. Jesus' message possessed great power through the Spirit.**

**In Acts 10:34-38 we read that,** "Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. --NIV

**Paul writes in Romans 1:16**, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” NIV

## **II. THE HEART OF JESUS IS FOCUSED ON THE NEED OF PEOPLE (v.18).**

The "good news" (v. 18) Jesus was to proclaim recalls both the joyful announcement in [1:19](#) and the frequent use of the term elsewhere in Luke. It also builds on [Isaiah 40:9](#); [41:27](#); and especially [52:7](#). **The "poor," like the "prisoners," the "blind," and the "oppressed," are not only the unfortunate of this world but those who have special need of dependence on God** (cf. comment on [1:53](#); [6:20](#)). The words "to release the oppressed" fill out the meaning of the previous words. [Luke 7:22](#) cites some ways Jesus fulfilled this mission.

### **A. The need of people touches the heart of Jesus.**

**1. His heart reaches out to the poor.**

**2. His heart cares for the broken.**

### **B. Jesus seeks to restore all that has been lost.**

**1. Freedom for the captives**

“He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners...”

**2. Recovery and healing**

“And recovery of sight for the blind...”

**3. Liberty or “rights” for those who are oppressed.**

“To release the oppressed...”

## **Conclusion**

One Mercedes Benz TV commercial shows their car colliding with a cement wall during a safety test. Someone then asks the company spokesman why they do not enforce their patent on the Mercedes Benz energy-absorbing car body, a design evidently copied by other companies because of its success. **He replies matter-of-factly, "Because some things in life are too important not to share."** How true. **In that category also falls the gospel of salvation, which saves people from far more than auto collisions.**

--Larson 71

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the announcement of the acceptable year of the Lord!

**The "year of the Lord's favor" (v. 19) is reminiscent of the Jubilee (one year in every fifty) when debts were forgiven and slaves set free (Lev 25:8-17).** It means not so much a time that is "acceptable" to people but the time in history when God in sovereign grace brings freedom from the guilt and effects of sin.

**If you do not know Jesus Christ as Savior—now is your time!**

As prophet and Messiah, he (Jesus) ministered to the social outcasts and needy, including all people, **in the power of the Spirit and now He call on you and me to do the same in the power of the Spirit.**

**Now is the time for us to follow Jesus Christ in reaching our world!**

- **If your world is your workplace—win your world!**
- **If your world is your family—win your family!**
- **If your world includes your neighborhood—win your world!**
- **If you see Huntsville as your world—determine that you will win your world!**
- **If you can travel the earth on mission trips—then get to work winning your world!**

**Now is the time!**

#### References

Larson, Craig. (1993). *Illustrations for preaching and teaching*. Baker Books. Grand Rapids, MI