

“WELL OILED MACHINE”**Pastor Mike Corwin****TEXT:** LUKE 4:14-21**GOD’S WORD:** 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31(a)**I – MARCUS:**

God has gifted me in so many ways and I am thankful to him for all of those gifts. In leadership, compassion, understanding, and discernment I have been blessed and able to use those gifts in life and both of my professions. I’m not close to an Albert Einstein, but I have been blessed by a little intelligence. I’m one of those kids you hated in school because if I was in class and heard the lesson I never had to crack a book to study for a test and usually carried A’s because I had the gift of retention.

There are others who have been gifted in different ways and I am sometimes envious of the gifts they have. One of those is my grandson Marcus. From the time he was little he was able to figure out what was wrong with something and fix it. I encouraged him in this area because his gifts were obvious and for Christmas I bought erector sets and watched him figure out that a second motor would make it go so much faster or lift more weight. If we had a VCR quit working we gave it to him to tear apart. That grew into taking NERF guns apart and rigging them to shoot farther and harder. Or making a moped or dirt bike go faster than it was designed to do. When he started his classes for performance engines at Pioneer the first day the instructor offered \$50.00 to anyone who could fix the engine he had sabotaged. Marcus said “I’ll take your money” and in short order diagnosed and fixed it and made it run. He did the same the 2nd day when the instructor tried to trick him again. He can usually just listen to an engine or piece of machinery and tell you what the problem is.

I don’t have this gift so I’m glad God gave it to others so I have someone to fix what I break and can’t figure out how to do it myself. Marcus certainly shows me that it takes all the parts to make it whole and when the parts are all in place and running correctly it runs like a well-oiled machine and does what it’s made to do.

II – BROKEN:

I see this same principle at play in our faith and in the Church of Jesus Christ. Let me walk you through it.

God had created the perfect world. He had the water under control so it served the creation. He had the sun, moon, and stars in the right places at the right time. The plants were growing and beautiful and provided for all the animals that God had created to roam the creation and keep the vegetation under control. Then he created children that he could love and that would take care of what he had made for them to enjoy and the plants were there to feed them too. The creation was perfect and was

humming along like a well-oiled machine. There was no friction between the parts, they didn't wear out, and they all worked together to enhance each other's existence just as they had been designed to do.

But then one of the pieces fell out of place. God's children moved one of the parts they weren't supposed to touch and the creation quit operating the way it was intended to. The human's minds worked in ways they weren't meant to. Instead of eating figs they tore the leaves off the tree to make clothes. Instead of walking with God in the garden they hid from him. Instead of watching over and protecting the animals, they were slain to make clothes for the broken parts. Then those parts were moved to another part of creation. And we know it didn't get any better. They and their offspring soon threw a cog in the operation of creation as they continued to sin in new ways such as murder. It was a downhill slide from there as each generation devised new and imaginative ways to go against God and continue to keep the creation from running smoothly as intended. The creation was broken and humans weren't gifted the way they needed to be to fix it.

But God knew how to fix it, and sent the right part to do it.

III – TEXT:

He sent his Son, Jesus to put it back together as we see in this passage from the Gospel of Luke as we dig father into the life of Jesus.

Luke 4:14-21 (CEB)

¹⁴ Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news about him spread throughout the whole countryside. ¹⁵ He taught in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been raised. On the Sabbath he went to the synagogue as he normally did and stood up to read. ¹⁷ The synagogue assistant gave him the scroll from the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me.*

*He has sent me to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the prisoners
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to liberate the oppressed,*

¹⁹ *and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

²⁰ He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the synagogue assistant, and sat down. Every eye in the synagogue was fixed on him. ²¹ He began to explain to them, "Today, this scripture has been fulfilled just as you heard it."

Jesus had been baptized and was then taken to the desert for 40 days where he was tempted by the enemy, whom he defeated by quoting scriptures against his temptations. This story immediately follows that temptation story. It is Luke's record of the beginning of Jesus' ministry here on earth.

Just as he did in the conception story, baptism story, and the temptation story Luke makes sure we know that God's Holy Spirit is at work and empowering Jesus to do what God had sent him here to do in this phase of his life. This is all a divine thing, not a man thing. Because of that power we are told that everyone praised him and his teachings.

We see that Jesus was a good Jewish man. He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath as was his tradition. He stood up to read the day's lessons and was handed the sacred scroll by the synagogue assistant and he read aloud the passage from Isaiah. That you heard in verses 18 and 19 a minute ago.

In those 2 short verses Jesus:

- Gives us the statement of his call to ministry.
- Identifies himself as the subject of Isaiah's prophecy.
- Proclaims that he has come to bring social and economic liberation to the people
- That release of the oppressed, in whatever form that oppression takes, is the ministry of the Messiah.
- That he has come for all those who have a special need and dependence upon God.
- That the year of Jubilee has come – the time when God said people had to forgive one another for their sins and release their slaves.
- That a new age of Salvation has just arrived.

He then rolls up the scroll and hands it back to the assistant to be replaced where it belonged and he sat down. All the eyes in the place turned to him to see what teaching he had concerning this passage of scripture he had just read to them. What insight would he give them? But he only makes one short statement, but one of the highest importance. He said the prophecy had been fulfilled that day. In other words he was the one who they had been waiting for!

What he's saying is that the creation, especially humankind, was broken. That God knew it was broken. That God had sent the part – the Messiah – to fix it. And he was that part.

IV – WHAT PART ARE YOU?:

Jesus knew he was the main part of the fix. That through his sacrifice the needed fix for creation would be set in place. But he also knew there were supporting parts to this fix. That he would leave again for

a time while the story was told and retold so others could be a part of the story. Others would come to know him and their Salvation through these other parts that he commanded to go into all the world and keep working on putting it all back together and making it run right again. He started with his disciples then, and has passed the same command and job down through the ages to us today.

In the passage you heard read from 1 Corinthians this morning you heard the Apostle Paul compare the Church to a human body. We have all been preached to, taught, and baptized so we can take our place in this moving and living body. Jesus is the head, but everyone else has been given a gift to use for him that makes the body work and function as it should. We have been given gifts so the body has arms, has legs, feet, hands. The body has ears so it can hear, eyes so it can see, and a nose so it can smell, as well as lips so it can proclaim the good news. He even says there are parts we don't like to talk about...parts we sometimes keep under wraps and hidden from view, but those parts are no less important. They need to be in the body just like to theirs so the body functions properly. That the body suffers together, and rejoices together.

And he makes sure you understand that he's speaking of the church. That if people aren't using their gifts as they have been given by God, then the body suffers. The church limps along because one of the legs has a cramp, or we can't grasp things because the hands have arthritis. We can't see well because one of the eyes won't open and look. Maybe we don't hear what we want to hear because our ears are full of wax. Or our nose is stuffed up so we can't smell the stink that sometimes permeates the church. It's been my experience the church usually has no shortage of lips to tell everyone else how to do things, but are they helping the body or hurting it? How about the heart that gifts us with compassion for others?

V – WHAT PART ARE YOU?

I know that all the parts are here. I've seen them in action. But they aren't always acting together as a whole body and sometimes pulling in different directions. I also know that some of our parts are getting tired because others aren't using their gifts to help the body function.

It's when we all recognize and exercise our gifts that the body of Jesus truly has its hands and feet and is moving in society to bring others into the body. So the question is what part are you and how can you support the body.

This is important because ALL THE PARTS (US) MAKE THE WHOLE (THE CHURCH) AND WE ARE RUN BY THE POWER OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT (THE OIL). When all of that comes together as it should we run like the well-oiled machine God calls us to be. Just like Marcus can fix a motor if we take it to him, God will fix the church when we give it to him.

AMEN