The Messiah – Part One

**(Lamentations 3:19-26)**

Welcome to Christ’s Community Church. We’re so glad to have you with us as we enter into this season of Advent, these four Sundays preceding Christmas, and this opening week of our series entitled “The Messiah”. Over the next few weeks we’re going to look at who the Messiah is and the hope, the joy, the love, and the peace that he brings into our lives.

This is so important, because as you look around the world today there’s just so much anxiety it’s overwhelming. Everywhere you look there’s fear because of the economy, families that are hurting, relationships are messed up, and loved ones that are struggling with some kind of serious disease. And so, there are just so many people that are fighting to keep their heads above water.

In fact, it’s much like it was 600 years before the first Christmas, when Jeremiah who was known as the “weeping prophet” wrote the book of Lamentations. The title of the book actually comes from the first word of the text which is “how”, but was translated in the ancient Latin Vulgate as “lamentia”. In verse one, we find Jeremiah questioning, lamenting,

*“How deserted lies the city, once so full of people!” (Lamentations 1:1)*

In other words, he is questioning, how after decades of warning the people of God, how this could be; that the Babylonian army had in fact come and overtaken the city, destroying it and the temple?

Now, jumping ahead to chapter 3, as he’s looking at the ruins of Jerusalem, he’s pouring out his heart to God, and he says this in verse 19,

*“I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me” (Lamentations 3:19-20).*

And so, in many ways, much like Jesus, Jeremiah had been rejected by the people, they’d scoffed him and mocked him. And he compares his affliction to tasting the bitter herbs at the Passover feast or of drinking bitter gall, but suddenly he stops whining as the Spirit of God rises up in him and he begins to preach to himself. With renewed faith he says in verse 21,

*“Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore, I will wait for him" (Lamentations 3:21-24).*

He recalls the Lord’s great love and his compassion and therefore he had hope. The New Living Translation says it this way, “His mercies begin afresh each morning” and it’s almost as if Jeremiah were talking about his cell phone minutes. You know, he gives us the impression that God’s mercies don’t roll over, those extra graces, the mercies you had last month, when God was moving so powerfully as you were praying. The presence of God was manifested and you could sure use that right now, but I guess you’re going to have to wait until morning; but that’s not what he’s saying, that’s not what he means.

Jeremiah says, “Great is your faithfulness” because he knows that there are new mercies every morning, every hour, every minute, and even every second. And so, he says, “Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope.” And I love that about this season of the year, because there’s an anticipation that one day everything would be different. Jeremiah had hope, and in his day, many were putting their faith in God, they were looking forward to the promise of a day when one who was called the Messiah would be born.

That’s the kind of hope that the prophets brought to the people of God as the Messiah was mentioned either directly or indirectly in over 3,000 Old Testament texts. They had hope that this promised Messiah would deliver his people and establish God’s kingdom on earth because they had large amounts of specific information about the Messiah’s life and ministry. The prophet Micah identified his birthplace as Bethlehem saying, *“Out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel” (Micah 5:2).* The prophet Isaiah gave a rather unique sign saying, *“The Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son…” (Isaiah 7:14).*

And there were countless other predictions and yet, his coming wouldn’t be without difficulty, because in Psalm chapter 2, the psalmist said,

*“The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One” (Psalms 2:2).*

And for many centuries Israel’s hope had been in the Anointed One because they knew that it was the anointing that really makes the difference. And so, throughout time we find that prophets were anointed, kings were anointed, priests were anointed, and even different objects were anointed. And here in Psalm chapter 2, we read that the Messiah is specifically identified as God’s “Anointed One”.

Interestingly, this Hebrew word translated “Anointed One” actually means Messiah and its Greek equivalent is “Christos” from which we get the word Christ. And so, Christ was not Jesus last name, it was a title describing who Jesus was. And this title of the Messiah or Christ is repeated 514 times in the New Testament both designating and confirming the fact that he was the “Anointed One” for his great redemptive work as prophet, priest, and king of his people. This is what the apostle Peter testified to when he said to Jesus,

*“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).*

And so, to believe that Jesus is the Christ is to believe that he is the “Anointed One”, the Messiah, the Savior sent from God, and that he’s exactly who he claimed to be.

**1. The Hope You Are Needing**

Therefore, number one, Jesus Christ is the hope you’re needing no matter what you’re facing today in the uncertainty and turmoil of our culture. He is the Messiah, the Anointed One, and the hope that you are needing. You see, Jesus Christ is the promised seed of the woman, he is the seed of Abraham, the prophet like Moses, a priest in the order of Melchizedek, the root out of the stump of Jesse. He is Immanuel, the virgin’s son, the Branch of the Lord, the messenger of the covenant, and the one written of in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. Jesus the Messiah is the Anointed One and he will impart the anointing to us as we seek him professing faith like Peter saying, “You are the Christ!”

In fact, if Jesus Christ thought it necessary for him to be baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit, how much more important is it for you and I to be baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit? You see, this promised anointing is the power that you and I are needing to overcome today and every day to come. You see, without the anointing I’m only a motivational speaker, but with the anointing I’m a preacher who is changing lives. In the same way, without the anointing you’re a singer with great talent, but with the anointing you’re a worshiper who’s leading people into the presence of God. Others of you, without the anointing you may be a parent, an employee, or a student, but with the anointing you’re a father or mother, a servant, or apprentice that is making an eternal difference in the lives of those you influence. And so, without the anointing we have knowledge, but with the anointing we’re empowered to release the impartation of the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist testified to this when he said in Matthew chapter 3,

*“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matthew 3:11).*

It’s the anointing of the Holy Spirit that makes a difference in our lives because it’s the power of Christ that moves a person. Jesus went out of his way to be baptized and to receive this anointing through the prophet John. In the next chapter he testified,

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor” (Luke 4:18).*

That anointing of the Holy Spirit is the overflow of the life of Christ flowing through you as a consecrated servant of the Lord. And the good news is that Christ is everything you need.

You see, the anointing is Christ’s life coming through you in every area of your life and giving you the hope that you need. And so, if you’re feeling weak today, if you’re down and depressed, if your relationship or your marriage is struggling, Christ is the anointing that you need. And he’s already in your tomorrow, he’s waiting for you, and he’s your righteousness, your joy, and his strength is made perfect in your weakness.

This is what Jeremiah discovered, God’s mercies are new every day, each new day will bring exactly what you need, and he said, “The Lord is my portion; therefore, I will wait for him.” The Messiah, the Anointed One, is our hope, he’s exactly what we need, and that’s why we’re going to seek to be an anointed Christians, because everything we touch will be anointed when we’re full of the Holy Spirit.

**2. The Faith to Keep Walking**

And then, number two, the Messiah gives us the faith to keep walking. This is what Jeremiah discovered when he’d lost hope and the enemy used his circumstances to cloud his vision. And it’s exactly the same thing that happens to us today when we find ourselves whining, grumbling, and complaining about our circumstances. Our spiritual enemy will steal that dream, that vision, or calling that God has placed in our hearts. Satan will detour you and distract you until you’re struggling just to keep a roof over your head. Even though you know deep on the inside that you were born with a destiny that’s bigger than anything you could ever imagine he wants to overwhelm you and snuff out that dream.

Today, you need the anointing to fill you with hope to keep going, to keep walking, and to give you the courage to believe that that dream is from God. In fact, the very thought of doing something amazing for God seems to be so far from your present reality, but you need to believe that what you’re seeing is not a reflection of your destiny. You may be sitting here today, and you’ve been distracted, but in your heart there’s a dream and it’s the anointing that will give you hope to keep walking when all you see is ruins and darkness. It’s the anointing that will keep you on fire, that will keep you seeking him, as Jeremiah said in verse 25,

*“The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him” (Lamentations 3:25).*

The problem is that too many of us are just trying to survive and instead of seeking Christ we’re putting our hope in the wrong places. Some of you know that the stock market is a risky place to put your hope, or your employer, or that other person who just may not come through for you, but the Word of God tells us that the Lord is good to those whose hope is in him.

You see, God created you for a purpose, not just that you would serve him and worship him, not just that you would glorify him, but that you would reign with him. You were destined to be anointed, not to just get through life, not to just survive, but to thrive, to rise above, and to fulfill the destiny that God has placed in your spirit. And it’s the anointing of the Messiah that gives you the hope to keep pursuing that dream. Today, there are some of you who need to be encouraged not to let go of that dream, not to let go of hope, but as the Bible says,

*“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful (Hebrews 10:23).*

And God is faithful, and so, it may be dark for a while, but there’s a new morning coming.

Hang on to Christ, because he’s got everything you need to fulfill the dream that he has placed in your heart. But that dream or vision requires his enablement, it requires his anointing, and that’s why you see Jesus seeking to be baptized, seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit, before he began to cast out demons. You see, we need to understand that education is important, but God requires the anointing. Your background is important, your character is important, but if you want to fulfill God’s calling, you need the power that comes from above and that power is the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

**3. The Help You Are Seeking**

And so, number three, the help that you’re seeking is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It’s the anointing that empowers you to live your life on fire for Jesus, living each day for the glory of God, and having a new sense of purpose. Some of you, you’re looking for help, you’ve already been born into the family of God, you’ve been saved and forgiven by Jesus, and the Bible says therefore,

*“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).*

But today, you haven’t been walking in your priestly role, you haven’t been declaring the praises of our Savior, because you’ve been distracted, you’ve been detoured, and you need to be saved out of a difficult situation. And so, I want to encourage you to hold on, to reach out, and to seek Christ, because you can’t fathom what a difference the anointing will make. Don’t lose sight of him, draw near to him, following the example of so many others and receive the anointing.

In John chapter 11, everyone had given up hope because Lazarus had been dead for days, but a new day was coming. The Messiah shows up, looks into the grave and says, “Lazarus, come out.” And because of the presence of the Anointed One the dead man walks out completely healed.

In Mark chapter 5, there was a woman who for 12 years had been dealing with the embarrassment and humiliation of constant bleeding. She was suffering greatly until one day she sees the Messiah and reaching through the crowd she touched him. Immediately she felt the anointing transfer into her body and she was completely healed.

In John chapter 5, we’re told about a man who’d been lame for 38 years. One day the Messiah, walked up to him and said, “Pick up your mat and walk”. Six words from the lips of the anointed one and this man is healed and freed from 38 years of bondage.

Today, there are some of you, you’re tired and weary, you’re burdened by the darkness of your situation. You may look at your health or that relationship and think that it’s beyond restoration, but I want to assure you that God’s mercies are new every morning. You see, because of the Messiah you can have hope in the middle of the night; just one touch, one encounter with Christ makes all the difference in the world.

The presence of the living God brings the hope that you need, because the anointing gives you the faith to keep walking, and that anointing is the help that we’re seeking today. The Bible promises in Mark chapter 16 that when you walk in the anointing,

*“These signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well" (Mark 16:17-18).*

For some of you, the power of the anointing is about to rise out of your darkness. Jesus said it this way in Acts chapter 1, verse eight,

*“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you…” (Acts 1:8).*

You’ll receive power, but it’s important that when God begins to raise you up that you step into it, that you don’t lose your love for Jesus, that you don’t get distracted, that you don’t lose your passion for the anointing, because that’s the one thing that will keep you on track. And so, we want to pray for a hunger for the anointing, a desperation for the anointing, that would inflame your soul for the Messiah. For the Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him. And so, let’s pray together.

Pastor John Talcott

Christ’s Community Church

303 West Lincoln Avenue

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

(301) 447-4224

[www.cccaog.org](http://www.cccaog.org)

*Graphics, notes, and commentary from LifeChurch, Ministry Pass, PC Study Bible, Preaching Library, and Sermon Central. Scripture from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.*