

Jesus preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, about the coming of God's reign on earth, in mainly spiritual ways. He intended to reverse the effects of sin by lifting that curse and removing its penalty. This understanding was implicit in the mission statement he made in his local synagogue in Nazareth. He said that he had been anointed 'to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,' i.e., the jubilee year of grace when the debt of sin and its effects would be cancelled.

Jesus conveyed this Good News of the coming of the Kingdom in many of his parables, e.g., that of the prodigal son in Luke 15:3-31. The younger boy represented the poor and the Gentiles who failed to keep the law, and the elder son represented the Pharisees and Orthodox Jews who tried to abide by it. The younger son felt he was under a curse because he had failed to observe the rules. The elder son believed that he had earned his father's favour by being dutiful and observing them. However, Jesus said that both sons were mistaken. They presumed that their father's love was conditional and had to be earned or lost by either good or bad behaviour, whereas in actual fact, it was a free and unmerited gift.

Sanctus

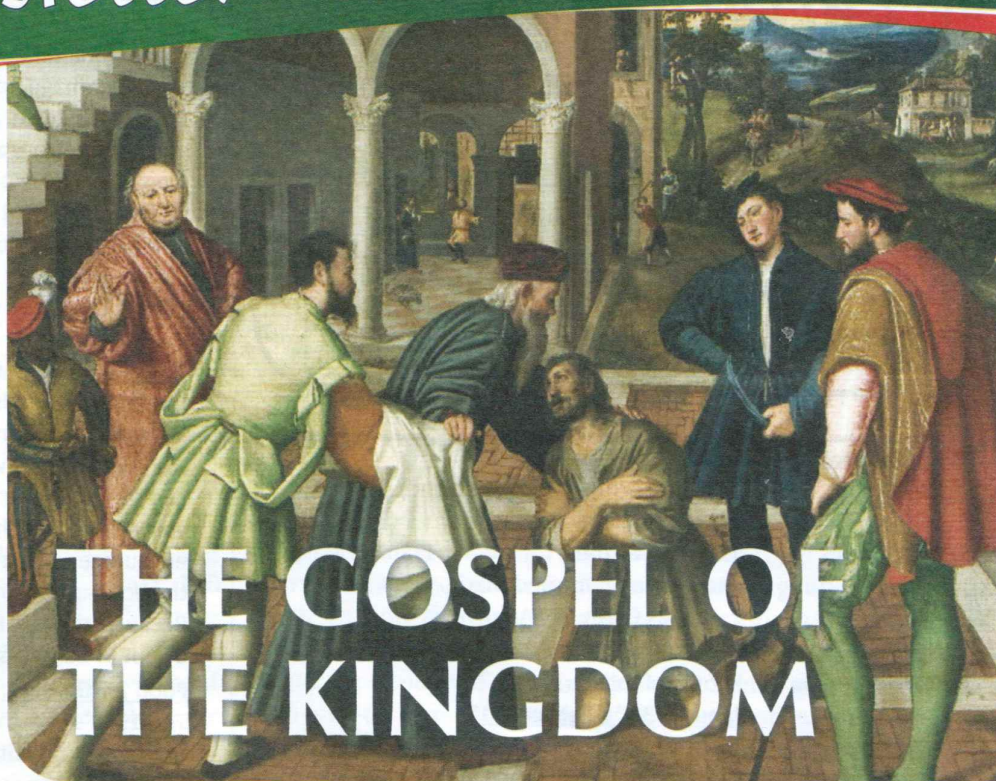
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

After the Consecration
The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess
your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins
of the world.



When Jesus proclaimed his wonderful message of mercy, presumably many sinners thought that it was too good to be true. But their doubts were dispelled when Jesus went on to remove the penalty of their sin by healing and exorcising those who were brought to him. In Luke 11:20 Jesus said, 'if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.' In Matthew 12:15 we read, 'Many followed him, and he healed all their sick.'

There is a good example of this in the account of the lowering of a crippled man into the presence of

Jesus. We are told that, when Jesus saw his faith, he said to the man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven' (Mark 2:5). In other words, I'm lifting the curse. When the Pharisees questioned Jesus' ability to do this, he replied by saying, 'But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins [lift the curse] ...' he said to the man who was crippled, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home [i.e., removal of the penalty]' (Mk 2:9-12).

— Pat Collins

Blessed are those called to the supper
of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon (Cf. Ps 33:6)
Look toward the Lord and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.

Prayer after Communion
Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, receiving the grace
by which you bring us to new life,
we may always glory in your gift.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reflection

In what ways has Jesus been a
great light for you?

Lesson

Jesus is the great light, who dawns
on all people – Jew and Gentile
alike.

Prayer

Lord, when we are in the darkness,
you shine the light of the hope of
Jesus on us.