

Saint Timothy Lutheran – Edmonds, WA

December 13, 2009 – Rev. Craig A. Patterson

“Blessed Is He Who Keeps From Stumbling Over Me.”

(Text: Luke 7:18-23)

Context: John the Baptist, by inspiration, knew that Jesus was the Messiah. Upon seeing Jesus approaching him as he baptized sinners in the Jordan River, John had called out, “Behold, the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world!” (John 1:29). Yet, John had his honest questions, especially as he faced his imminent death in prison. So, he sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask if He was the “Coming One,” or if they should be waiting for Someone else. Jesus replied by instructing the two disciples of John to return to John and inform him of what they had seen and heard, namely, “the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the Gospel preached to them” (Jn. 7:22).

I. The Devil Leads Sinners To Stumble Over And Be Offended By The Christ.

- A. The devil loves it when doubts lead to disbelief in Jesus as the Christ.
- B. The devil instigates and enjoys when people, without knowledge of God’s Word, debate the validity of Christ’s claims and His life.
- C. Not believing in Jesus as the Messiah is costly:
 - 1. Sinners who stumble over Jesus and discount Him, forfeit forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and life eternal.
 - 2. They continue on living life without the light of truth, for alone in Christ is the truth and the light that was sent to enlighten every man (John 1: 4,5, 9).
 - a. Thus, they continue living life in the darkness (their minds confused, going with the trends of the day, and enslaved in their sins).
- D. Stumbling over Jesus as the Messiah, leaves people without hope.
 - 1. Jesus, alone is the hope of the world.
- E. How are people stumbling over Jesus today? When they push Him aside with their unbelief, what are they left with?

II. Jesus Is The Fulfillment Of All Of The Old Testament Prophecies.

- A. In giving His response to John’s inquiring disciples, Jesus, also, quotes from Isaiah 61:1 which states, “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me, to bring good news (Gospel) to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners;...”
- B. In His actions, Jesus was fulfilling the prophetic promises of what the Messiah would do and how He would be.
 - 1. Jesus had just raised the widow’s son in the town of Nain (Luke 7:11-17).
 - 2. Witnesses had seen Jesus give sight to a blind man, the ability to hear to the deaf, the cleansing of those who suffered from leprosy, and they had witnessed Jesus speaking the Good News (Gospel) to the “afflicted,” to the “poor.”
 - a. Not only to the rich, famous, and the prestigious persons of society, but to the down and out people of His day, Jesus proclaimed this Good News of a Savior from sin, death, and the devil. (God’s love is for all people, yes, all!)
- C. John’s soul must have soared with joy, contentment, and thanksgiving as he heard the response of his two disciples. (The Messiah has come! God has kept His Word!) ---Salvation, O sweet Salvation, is here! Thanks be to God!