

THE JUBILEE PRINCIPLE
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Jesus came to the Earth for a number of reasons, but one of the main ones is found in His name. The angel said in **Matthew 1:21** to call Him Jesus, for He would “save His people from their sins. “ His disciple reiterated this in **Luke 19:10**, telling us, “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Even the way Jesus died, according to **John 12:28-33** was designed to cause us to look up to Him and toward Him for our redemption.

We often think we are powerless to change our lives and are victims of the world, circumstances, or Satan, but that is simply not true. Jesus made a powerful statement in **John 16:11** about judgment. From the time of creation and the fall of Satan until that point in scripture, heaven had been waiting to see judgment leveled on Satan because of the chaos he wrought on earth and in heaven. Jesus said when He would be lifted up, then judgment would come and the prince of the world would be cast out. **Jude 1:6** tells us Satan has been bound in chains until the time of judgment. Satan may be alive today, but he is not well. He clearly can not hinder us if we choose to change.

We are neither powerless nor victims of circumstances either. That concept is a sales pitch from a capitalistic society. Unless someone can convince us we are broken, we will not buy the cure they are selling. No one sells insurance till they first convince us we might get sick or die. Till they make us paranoid, we see no need for their product. Money changes hands when a society or person becomes convinced they are victims. But God created a place, called His church, where we can come and freely have our lives changed. We do not have to be victims of yesterday, or the current junk and tragedy in our lives. We do not have to repeat cycles of abuse or failure. We can change it if we choose. Change is neither hard nor difficult, it just requires our participation. God doesn't necessarily change us, fix our world, make us better, or fix our problems. He gives power to do all of those things ourselves, if we so choose. Where is this promise of redemption found?

After Jesus experienced temptation was baptized, and called His disciples, He headed for home. Before He made it home, He spent time in Capernaum. Many miracles and powerful healings took place at Capernaum. The fame of His teaching and miracles began to spread. Six months after leaving, **Luke 4:14** tells us He returned home in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. It was the last time He would do so. Principally because of their unbelief, this would be their only opportunity to experience Jesus' ministry. As was the custom, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath.

This is a good place to mention that church ought to just be a habit for us as well. Many of us go only when we are in trouble, hoping God will help us. And He often does. But it would be so much simpler if we just stayed in church and didn't get into trouble to begin with. Preventive maintenance might prevent our running into brick walls. Church is a good place to be to enable God to prick our conscience and warn us away from destructive behaviors before we get bloodied. The reason we do not make church attendance a priority is our failure to realize its value. If it were important to us, we would choose to make time for it. Too bad it takes so long to realize there is no effective help for our lives outside of God. Sooner or later, we run into a God sized problem we cannot handle on our own.

Back to Jesus in the synagogue! He stood to speak and read from the scroll of Isaiah. He awed His audience in **Luke 4:14-21**. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He said, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” The last thing Jesus read was that the Messiah would preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

That year of the Lord was the year of jubilee. Every fifty years, Israel was to observe this command given in the Law. When jubilee came, you got back everything you had lost by bad decisions. If you lost your property by bad management, by debt, or catastrophe, you got it back. Whatever had taken place, there would come a time in your life when you could get everything back. That was the principle of redemption the Messiah had come to make possible. If we will follow God's laws and principles, regardless of what the world has stolen, it will all be given back. Whether it is lost self image, stolen virtue, whatever, God will restore it. We don't even have to wait fifty years for jubilee. We can have it at any time we choose. Jesus came to make that restoration possible.

We are told in **2 Corinthians 6:2** that today is the day of salvation. When jubilee is available, there is no reason to live in misery, chaos, confusion, or pain. There is no reason to let them rule our thoughts and lives. One reason children of God create a church is to create an atmosphere where we feel safe enough to take down our walls. They are places where we can let Jesus fulfill a purpose for which He came. They are intended to be places where we can feel safe enough to; admit we have a problem, let healing begin., allow God to take us on a journey of forgiveness, get past the denial stage and face our role in our problems, and give up any hope or need of revenge and settling the score. Once we get past all of those things, God promises he will give us back whatever life has stolen from us.

God has a principle that may be the primary reason the book of Job is included in the Bible. It is simply this. When God restores, He gives you back much more than what you lost. Read the **last chapter of Job**. Life may have stolen things from us through abuse or tragedy, but it doesn't matter. When God returns it, He will give back more. **Joel 2:25** indicates His willingness to do so. The jubilee principle assures us God's business is the business of restoration. That includes our restoration. But that will only happen with our participation, never against our will.

When we read about jubilee, we never read that what was lost was returned against the will of the recipient.

They, like us, had to be willing to accept the gift of grace.