

Isaiah 61; John 1

This morning's verses really resonate with me. I can read Isaiah's words and hope that I can apply them to me.

***'The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;'***

This is how I want to be responding to God. This is how I'm trying to respond to God.

And then we hear God's voice :

'For I the Lord love justice'

This is the God I want to follow.

And then in the gospel of John, John the Baptist says he is the one making straight the way of the Lord. I love that this is a continuing story, that he uses other words from Isaiah to describe his own role. We now pick up this baton, take on this role, in anticipation of Jesus' return. And for me this phrase really describes well how I see my job as a believer ... trying to smooth the ground so that the Good News can be heard.

And it isn't always easy. It can be frustrating and dispiriting when people, especially those you know well, seem deaf to the message of love and hope that you try to share with them.

Fortunately it is not all down to us. Returning to Isaiah and the end of the passage we heard:

***'For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.'***

A gardener, even an unskilled one, can sow some seeds, hopefully into some well prepared soil, hopefully remembering to water them if the rain doesn't do it, and God does the rest.

So may your herald voice be heard this Advent and this Christmas and may God's blessings be known by those that you favour in this way.

Amen