

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE  
*Reflections*  
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## The Year of the Lord's Favor

*By Tom Rehling*

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because he has anointed me to bring  
Good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim release  
Of the captive and recovery of sight to the blind,*

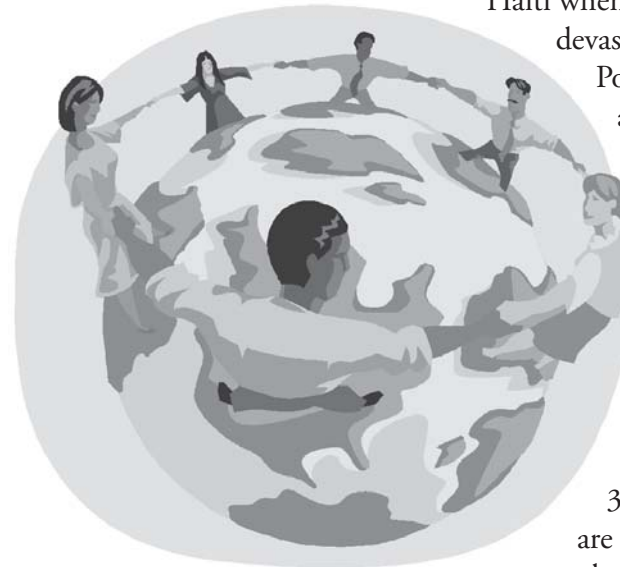
*To let the oppressed go free,  
To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4:18-19*

Near the beginning of his ministry, Jesus entered the synagogue and read this passage from the scrolls. His proclamation dazzled and confused the listeners. The "year of the Lord's favor" most likely is the declaration of a "Jubilee Year." The effect of a Jubilee Year was twofold. First was the automatic release or emancipation of a Jew who had become enslaved or imprisoned. The second was the forgiveness of debt and the automatic return of property to the original owner. It was like a "do over" that returned everyone to an even playing field and gave them a fresh start on life.

It is difficult to imagine a Jubilee Year in current times. Our world economy seems to function on credit and debt. How could that ever be wiped clean and zeroed out? Can you even imagine an equal redistribution of world resources and wealth?

Yet we do seem to dream of the "year of the Lord's favor" on a smaller and more tangible scale. The world rushes to the aid of Haiti when the country was devastated by earthquakes.

Political arenas cease and the world unites to provide resources to relieve human suffering. Aid is offered on the basis of need, not merit. And in our own country we wait to see if this will be a year of Jubilee that provides health care for 35 million Americans who are currently without access to adequate health care.



We pray for a time of Jubilee every time we say the Lord's Prayer. "Thy Kingdom come...forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors..." May we all keep praying for and working toward the realization of God's Kingdom on earth.

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