

Symbols of the Spirit – OIL

In our society the availability of oil is of the greatest importance, and spiritually the anointing of the Spirit is no less vital.

In Old Testament times God's chosen individuals (kings, priests, prophets) and things (temple furnishings) were anointed. Kings became known as God's Anointed ones (*Christ* in Greek). Jesus, *the* Anointed one of God, is therefore *the* Christ.

In a.d. 180 a Christian leader wrote, 'We are called Christ-ians on this account because we are anointed with the oil of God'.

Some outward expressions are to indicate an inner unity with Christ himself. Those who are united with Christ are God's anointed people – the Christians. The name must reflect the reality, not merely of a unity once experienced, but of a fresh anointing day by day.

The question raised at many garages, 'Have you checked your oil?' is an important one.

For it is *today* that God is wanting us to be dedicated to him; it is today that he wants to refresh us and cleanse us; it is today that he wants to pour upon us his joy and his life.

Peter told the Gentiles how God had anointed Jesus of Nazareth 'with the Holy Spirit and with power', and how that, as a result, ***he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him*** (Acts 10:38).

However much our daily anointing is a blessing to us, it is given so that we might be a blessing to others. Let us 'check our oil' for *their* sakes, so that, reunited with God's Anointed One, we can say with him:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour (Luke 4:18-19).

By and large the Church and the world have yet to see these things resulting from the Spirit's world-wide anointing to which we bear witness.