**To Proclaim Good News to the Poor**

Luke 4:14-30

Key verse 4:18, 19

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

**Introduction:**

The Holy Spirit led Jesus into wilderness and he was tested by the Satan. Jesus overcame Satan’s temptation and won the spiritual battle. Now Jesus is ready to start his earthly ministry as the messiah. He starts his ministry from his hometown, Nazareth. He proclaimed his mission based on prophet Isaiah’s prophecy; to proclaim good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. The people of his home town are amazed by his message, but they could not overcome their human thinking and tried to kill Jesus when he offended them.

**1. Read 4:14-17. What happens as Jesus returns to Galilee? (14) How do people in the synagogues respond to his teaching? (15) What does Jesus do in Nazareth on the Sabbath? (16) What passage does he read from the scriptures? (17, Isaiah 61:1-2)**

1-1, Read 4:14-17.

14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

1-2, What happens as Jesus returns to Galilee? (14)

News about him spread through the whole countryside.

When Jesus was introduced and baptized by John the baptist, the Holy Spirit descended on him and a voice came from the heaven, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (Luke 2:22)

People who witnessed this event might spread the news through the whole countryside.

Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of Spirit.

Jesus served two areas mainly during his earthly ministy; Galilee and Judea

Jesus could have visited Jerusalem first with the power of Spirit after winning victories.

However he chose to go to Galilee.

Galilee is known for a despised land.

Isaiah 9:1-7 read,

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan— **2** The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. **3** You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. **4** For as in the day of Midian’s defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. **5** Every warrior’s boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. **6** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **7** Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

From here to chapter 9:50, Jesus served Galilean people.

They were poor in spirit. They were prisoners, blind, or oppressed spiritually.

Jesus served ordinary people who are filled with problems.

Praise Jesus, the good shepherd who is full of compassion for each of us.

1-3, How do people in the synagogues respond to his teaching? (15)

15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

Everyone was amazed at his teaching and praised him.

In the previous passage Jesus fought the good fight against the devil with the words of God by saying, “it is written…, it is written…, it is written…”

 Now Jesus is teaching in their synagogue. Jesus relied on the living words of God in serving the

 people.

 Jesus lived by the word of God and put into practice what he said.

1-4, What does Jesus do in Nazareth on the Sabbath? (16)

16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read,

\*Nazareth, where he had been brought up

Jesus visited his hometown in order to bless his own people. The people of Nazareth were ordinary people, working hard to make a living and to survive.

Nazareth had little reputation for being anything but ordinary and it was even despised by some people.

**45** Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” **46** “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip. - John1:45-46

Jesus’ going to Nazareth shows that he not only wanted to bless his own people, it also shows his true color that he was humble because he did not ignore the common people, even from the start.

\*\*on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.

Jesus did not use different method to help the people in his hometown.

He continues to teach them with the living words of God for it is the blessed way for them.

So it was his sole purpose to visit there. Instead of doing miracles, Jesus taught them the word of God.

\*\*\*To appreciate the account further, it helps to understand the order of an ancient synagogue service.

To have a synagogue service required the presence of ten adult males. At the service, the Shema was recited (Deut 6:4-9), followed by prayers, including some set prayers like the Tephillah and the Eighteen Benedictions (*m. Berakot* 2:2). After this the Scripture was read, beginning with a portion from the Torah (Gen to Deut) and moving next to a section from the Prophets. Instruction then followed. Often the speaker linked the texts together through appeal to other passages. The service then closed with a benediction.

Jesus appears to speak during the reading of the Prophets.

1-5, What passage does he read from the scriptures? (17, Isaiah 61:1-2)

17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

He reads from Isaiah 61:1-2, a passage that reveals the promise of the coming of God's salvation.

Why does Jesus choose Isaiah among many books? Why does he pick up chapter 61?

It is because Isaiah did prophesy/foretell about Jesus the most and especially depicts what his mission is.

Jesus was ready to pinpoint Bible verses about who He is and what He is supposed to do for God.

May the Lord help us to be like Jesus our Lord in finding Bible verses correctly anytime anyplace.

**2. Read 4:18-19. What is said in the passage that Jesus reads? (18, 19) What does each of the following phrases mean to you: “a good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor”?**

2-1, Read 4:18-19.

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,

19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

2-2, What is said in the passage that Jesus reads? (18, 19)

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He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

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19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

It is from the prophet Isaiah’s prophecy (Isaiah 61:1-2), regarding the mission of the Messiah.

2-3, What does each of the following phrases mean to you: “a good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor”?

\*A good news to the poor: Here the poor refers not only to the poor who lack the material resources but also to the spiritually poor who are humble with repentant heart such as tax collectors, sick women, twelves disciples in the following chapters.

The coming Messiah is a good news of great joy to them because they can have a great hope.

In contrast, religious leaders were not poor for they were proud before Jesus.

Proclaiming the good news to the poor is mentioned **first**. It reminds us of what Jesus said. Our freedom in Christ is truly experienced when we hold to the teachings of Jesus as evidenced by our lifestyle.

Jesus said in John 8:32, “If you hold to my teachings you are truly my disciples, then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”

\*Freedom for the prisoners: It also refers to the prisoners who lost their freedom due to their sins. They are trapped by their sins and became slaves to the Satan. Jesus will break their snares and let them free.

\*Recovery of sight for the blind: This is a sign of messianic ministry. It refers to not only those who are physically blind, but those who are spiritually blind, i.e., Pharisees such as Saul (Apostle Paul).

\*To set the oppressed free: the oppressed do not have any hope to be free because the

oppressors seem to be too strong and they never voluntarily let the oppressed free as we see the case of the Pharaoh and the Israelites in Exodus.

However, the Messiah will set the oppressed free.

\*To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor:

According to Lev 25:17, the year of the Jubilee is as follow:

8 “‘Count off seven Sabbath years—seven times seven years—so that the seven Sabbath years amount to a period of forty-nine years. 9 Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. 10 Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan. 11 The fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; do not sow and do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the untended vines. 12 For it is a jubilee and is to be holy for you; eat only what is taken directly from the fields.

13 “‘In this Year of Jubilee everyone is to return to their own property.

14 “‘If you sell land to any of your own people or buy land from them, do not take advantage of each other. 15 You are to buy from your own people on the basis of the number of years since the Jubilee. And they are to sell to you on the basis of the number of years left for harvesting crops. 16 When the years are many, you are to increase the price, and when the years are few, you are to decrease the price, because what is really being sold to you is the number of crops. 17 Do not take advantage of each other, but fear your God. I am the Lord your God.”

Here the allusion is to the jubilee, the year of cancellation of debts.

What happened in that(50th) year, when debts were canceled and slaves were freed, pictures what Jesus brings for those who respond to his message of hope.

Jesus builds on the picture of Isaiah's ministry, which also proclaimed such hope, and notes that what the prophet had proclaimed Jesus is fulfilling.

In short, the year of the Lord’s favor means salvation!

This looks forward to Jesus who came to redeem us, free us, forgive us and reconcile us back to God.

**3. Read 4:20-22. What happens when Jesus finishes and sits down? (20) What does Jesus proclaim to the people? (21) What response does Jesus receive from the people? (22) What do you think their response shows about these people in Nazareth?**

3-1, Read 4:20-22.

20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

3-2, What happens when Jesus finishes and sits down? (20)

20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.

3-3, What does Jesus proclaim to the people? (21)

21 He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Jesus who is the Messiah fulfilled all the promises and prophecies regarding him.

3-4, What response does Jesus receive from the people? (22)

22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

3-5, What do you think their response shows about these people in Nazareth?

They could not believe Jesus, the son of the carpenter, Joseph, to be the Messiah who fulfilled all the promises and prophecies.

**4. Read 4:23-30. What does Jesus say to the people of Nazareth? (23) What does Jesus say happens to a prophet in his hometown? (24) What examples does Jesus give to the people? (25-27) How do the people respond to Jesus’ statements? (28, 29) What does Jesus do? (30)**

4-1, Read 4:23-30.

Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”24 “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke%204:14-30&version=NIV)] in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.” 28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. 30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

4-2, What does Jesus say to the people of Nazareth? (23)

Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”

4-3, What does Jesus say happens to a prophet in his hometown? (24)

24 “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.

4-4, What examples does Jesus give to the people? (25-27)

Rather than giving up on them, Jesus helped them with the hope that they may accept him.

Jesus recalls the history of Israel in the period of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17--18; 2 Kings 5:1-14).

The history lesson is a warning. That period was a low point in the nation's life, when rejection of God was at an all-time high and idolatry and unfaithfulness ran rampant.

So God moved his works of mercy outside the nation into Gentile regions, as only a widow in Sidon and Naaman the Syrian experienced God's healing. The price of rejecting God's message is severe: mercy moves on to other locales.

It is quite risky to walk away from God's offer of deliverance. This exchange reveals the basic challenge of Jesus' ministry: the choice he presents carries high stakes.

4-5, How do the people respond to Jesus’ statements? (28, 29)

28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.

The crowd does not seize the opportunity. Rather, Jesus' warning angers them. The suggestion that Gentiles might be blessed while Israel reaps nothing leaves them fuming.

They were so angry that they tried to kill Jesus.

4-6, What does Jesus do? (30)

30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

**Conclusion:**

After Jesus defeated Satan’s temptation, he was ready to proclaim his mission as the Messiah. He chose his hometown, Nazareth. The Messiah proclaims the good news to the poor, proclaims freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, set the oppressed free, and proclaims the year of the Lord’s favor. However, his hometown people did not take this great opportunity and privilege, rejecting him because of human thinking. They were offended by his message and tried to kill him. However unfortunately this is common response of sinful men to the good news. We should not be disappointed by such negative response, rather like our Lord Jesus we better be bold to proclaim the good news by faith.

**One word: Proclaim the good news to the poor.**