

FPFWC Christian Development



Jesus and Calls in His Ministry

January 2021

Winter Quarter

January 2, 2021

Lesson #1 –Called to Proclaim

Scripture Focus – Luke 4:14 – 22a

ICE BREAKER –

1. *How should we respond when we are rejected?*
2. *Why do we sometimes try to avoid facing the truth about ourselves?*

Key Verse: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.—Luke 4:18–19

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Gospel of Luke, source of today's study, is one of the three so-called synoptic Gospels, the other two being Matthew and Mark. The word *synoptic* means "presenting or taking the same or common view," and that's what these three Gospels generally do. The operative word here is *generally* since there are exceptions.

Today's text is one of those exceptions. All three synoptic Gospels document Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; and Luke 3:21–22) and His testing in the wilderness, where the tempter's proposed solutions to hunger, greed, and insecurity failed (Matthew 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13). And all three make note of Jesus' subsequent beginning of ministry in Galilee (Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 4:14). But we should note a gap of time between Luke 4:13 and our text for today, which begins at 4:14. That gap of several months includes the events recorded in John 1:19–4:42.

LESSON COMMENTARY

1. Jesus in Galilee (4:14–15)

4:14–15. Luke introduced the great Galilean ministry of Jesus by identifying five general features of this period: (1) the location of this ministry was **Galilee** (4:14a); (2) the power for this ministry was **the Spirit** (4:14b); (3) the impact of this ministry was extensive—**news about Him spread** (4:14c); (4) the practice of this ministry was **teaching in their synagogues** (4:15a); (5) the reception of this ministry was generally popular—**He was praised by all** (4:15b).

2. Jesus in the Synagogue in Nazareth (4:16–30)

4:16–19. Jesus' experience in His hometown of **Nazareth** (4:16) was in stark contrast to the last of the general features of His ministry just mentioned (4:15b). As was His pattern He took the opportunity to teach in the synagogue. His reading was from the scroll of Isaiah and the text was Is 61:1. This was a recognized messianic text and spoke of the Spirit-empowered Servant of the Lord (cf. Is 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12); His power was from the Spirit of the Lord, His ministry was preaching the gospel, His audience was the poor, the captive, the blind and the oppressed. His message was good news, release, recovery of sight, and freedom. In His reading of the text Jesus stopped after reading the first line of Is 61:2—**TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD** (Lk 4:19).

4:20–21. Luke's description masterfully conveyed the tension of the scene: Jesus closed the book, sat down, and calmly but firmly informed the group, **Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing** (4:21b). Note two key points: the place where Jesus stopped reading is significant—the rest of the verse in Is 61:2 describes the events that will take place at Jesus' second coming, namely judgment and full-orbed restoration of Israel (thus, had He read the whole verse He could not have said that text was fulfilled!) Also, by stopping and applying the first part of the text to Himself (in His first coming) He is, in effect, claiming that He Himself will fulfill the rest of the verse (in His second coming). Here Jesus was making an unmistakable claim to be the Messiah. At the outset of His public ministry He answered the question "Who is Jesus?"—He is the Messiah!

4:22–30. Jesus might have legitimately expected that the application of this verse to Himself would be a cause for praise and rejoicing (as His impending birth had been for Mary and Zacharias). But He was well aware that His present ministry would not be universally well received even by the citizens of His hometown (4:22b). He quoted a proverb, **Physician heal yourself**. The proverb means, "Do yourself a favor—perform a miracle right here, right now, like the one you performed in Capernaum, so we can see clear proof that you are the One who fulfills this verse!" He also cited two OT examples of "prophetic rejection" that exposed their resistance and precipitated their rejection of Him (4:23–27). Even though the people of Nazareth wanted to kill Him, Jesus escaped and relocated the base of His ministry to Capernaum (4:29–30, 31) with occasional visits to synagogues in Judea (4:44).

LESSON NUGGET – The Spirit not only gives us victory, but He leads us (v.14) and empowers us for service (v.18). The text for our Lord's message was Isaiah 61:1-2. It describes what Jesus came to do and what He is still doing in lives today.

Sources: *Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary*