

Jesus Came Preaching

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 March 2013

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] Take your Bibles this morning and open them to the fourth chapter of Luke.

And I'm going to be reading here in just a moment verses 14 through 30. So Luke chapter 4, 14 through 30 is my text for this morning. Before I begin to read it, you know, this is really an incredible story.

It's exciting when you begin to read it. And when I start reading it, I think you'll agree with me. It's full of drama, suspense.

And it kind of ends in an unusual way, kind of an exciting way. So let me read it to you, starting with verse 14.

Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee. News of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

[1:17] So He's traveling around Galilee. This is His kind of home province, preaching in the synagogues. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.

And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Then He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

[2:25] And He began to say to them, Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. So all bore witness of Him, marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.

And they said, Is this not Joseph's son? He said to them, I know what you're thinking. I added those words.

He said to them, You will surely say this proverb to me, Physician, heal yourself. Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in our country. Then He said, Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.

For example, let me give you a couple. Those were my words too. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months.

And there was a great famine throughout all the land. But to none of them was Elijah sent, except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

[3:37] And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha, the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, except Naaman the Syrian. So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and they led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down over the cliff.

Then passing through the midst of them, he went his way. Interesting story. Just incredible story. Again, full of drama.

It's captivating. It's visual, suspenseful. Incredible story. Now, let me introduce this text this way.

Last Sunday was, I believe, a landmark day in the life of Highland Park Baptist Church. Landmark day. The burning of the note on our building debt.

And by doing that, we, of course, are celebrating, praising God's provision so that we might be a debt-free church. Praise the Lord.

[4:57] Great experience. But that was not all of it, was it? We also came together, one heart, one mind, one voice, declaring to God that we continue to be debtors.

And gladly so. Debtors to the gospel. We, in effect, welcome. We're saying we welcome that debt and responsibility for that debt.

As Paul declared in Romans 1.14, we also declared, last Sunday, that we're debtors to everyone and ready to proclaim the gospel everywhere because we're not ashamed of the gospel.

Not ashamed of it. Because it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes. That's what we said. And here's what God did last Sunday. He moved in the hearts of His people, you.

Moved in your hearts to commit to a gospel debt to the World Missions Fund to the tune of \$50,700. Praise the Lord.

[6:19] That's what we committed to for this year up through March. By the way, over \$9,000 of it has already been given. Praise the Lord. I believe God's going to give even more than we committed to.

I'm just trusting Him for that. And so we have a mission strategy. One that is kind of the beginning point. One that I truly believe will grow in coming years.

And now we have a commitment to fund it. Your commitment. Our commitment to gather. The question is, will it be successful? Will it be successful?

For the glory of God. Not for the name Highland Park. Alright, it's never about that. But for the glory of God. Will it be successful for the glory of His kingdom and the advancement of His kingdom in this world?

It's interesting, I think, the timing for me to preach this text in Luke. The timing, I think, is very appropriate. It's just perfect perfect in its timing. And God always works that way.

[7:29] Because, here's what we ought to notice. We've made a fresh commitment to a divine mission. It's a divine mission. We've made a fresh, new commitment to a divine mission.

One that Jesus started over 2,000 years ago. And Luke records how Jesus started it in this text that I just read.

Here's how He began. The mission. The great commission that He has passed on to us. And we have made a fresh commitment to it here in our church in these days.

And so it's real simple. What I believe this text ought to say to us is very simple. If our mission today is the same, absolutely the same as Jesus' mission that Luke records for us here and we have all of the Gospel to tell us about.

If it's the same. If our mission today is the same as Jesus' mission, then we can learn a few things about our mission from what Luke records about Jesus' mission.

[8:43] That's just as simple as it can be. What I think we ought to see in this text. How we ought to be instructed by this text. Let me say it again.

This is what I propose to you through this passage. If our mission today is the same as Jesus' mission, then we can learn a great deal about our mission from what Luke records here about Jesus' mission.

So let me point out four instructive features of Jesus' earthly ministry. His early earthly ministry.

Three, or excuse me, four instructive features of it. Instructive for us. They inform us in our mission. The first, first one is this.

We can learn from Jesus the strength of our mission. the strength of it. That is, the power that we need for it.

[9:47] The spiritual strength that we need to accomplish it. We can learn from Jesus' ministry the strength of our mission. The, if you will, the divine empowerment for it.

We can learn from Jesus. I want to show you a stream of truth that has been flowing through Luke's gospel since he first introduced Jesus as a grown man.

Alright? Back there in chapter 3, verse 22. Look at chapter 3, verse 22. Here's where this kind of stream of truth begins to flow for us.

It's after Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and the Bible says in chapter 3, verse 22, and the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon him.

Remember that? We can picture that. The Holy Spirit descended out of heaven in bodily form, but it was like a dove.

[10:48] It looked like a dove. We don't really know what it was exactly, but the Holy Spirit, and this is what we ought to understand, the most important part of it, the Holy Spirit descended and rested

upon Jesus.

Alright? That's chapter 3, verse 22. Then chapter 4, verse 1, and this is immediately after the baptism, the Bible says, then Jesus being filled with, being filled with what?

The Holy Spirit. So Jesus being filled with the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan, that's where He was baptized, and was then what? Led by the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, into the wilderness, and there He was tempted.

This is a stream of truth that is unfolding for us or flowing for us. And then here in our text for this morning in chapter 4, verse 14, and this is after His victory over Satan, when He'd been led out by the Holy Spirit to be tempted, He was tempted, and He came out victoriously over Satan.

The Bible says, then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, to Galilee. And then in chapter 4, verse 18, as He quoted a prophecy concerning Himself, He quoted from, or read actually, from Isaiah, a prophecy, a Messianic prophecy about Himself.

[12 : 18] Jesus Himself said, the Spirit of the Lord, that's the Holy Spirit, is upon Me because He has anointed Me to do what?

Preach. Preach the Gospel. And then He goes on with the prophecy. See the stream of truth that is flowing through there.

Now here's the point I want to make. And it may not sound right at first, but I guarantee it is right. Jesus is God.

Okay? Now that sounds right, doesn't it? He's God. He is God. Jesus was God when He walked this earth. He didn't become God at some point along the way.

It wasn't God that came down at some point and indwelt Him, inhabited Him. He was God, eternally God. God the Son. The second person of the Trinity. When Jesus walked this earth, He was God.

[13 : 20] And so Jesus was fully God, fully God, when He taught and preached in the synagogue and everywhere else. Now that sounds right to us, doesn't it? It's true.

Jesus was fully God when He taught, preached, ministered the Gospel, the Gospel of the Kingdom. But now listen to me. He did not do any of that as God.

He did it as man. He did it as a man. Or, more importantly, for our instruction, He did it as a Spirit-filled man.

Not that He ceased to be God. I'm not saying that. Certainly, don't hear me saying that Jesus ceased to be God or He wasn't God or somehow He set that aside and He's man and then He's God.

Some form of the heresy called modalism. He's God and man at the same time. Fully God, fully man. But He did not preach the Gospel as a God.

[14 : 26] He preached it as a man. As a Spirit-filled man. And that's instructive for us. Because what about us? If it's true that we are committed to, have been called to the same mission Jesus started over 2,000 years ago, then we too preach, of course, as men and women.

But what kind of men and women? Spirit-filled. This is very instructive for us.

From where does the strength for our mission work come? Well, to answer that fully, let me just quote a few passages from the Bible.

One of the most famous ones, Acts 1.8. Jesus is speaking. Jesus is about to be caught up into heaven. You know the setting. It's after His resurrection.

He's meeting with His disciples. He will soon be ascending up to the Father, to the right hand of the throne of God. And He gives this commission to them. He says to His disciples, and by the way, by extension, He's saying this to all of His church, to us here today.

[15 : 50] He says, you will receive power, power, divine enablement, you will receive power when? When the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

Just like He did at Jesus' baptism. He came upon Him and indwelt Him and led Him and guided Him. And so Jesus is saying, this too will happen to you.

Now for the disciples, it was yet future. It hadn't happened to them yet. That wouldn't happen until the Pentecost. But from the Pentecost on, it is true, it's a true reality of every born-again believer.

The Holy Spirit comes upon us and indwells us. And so Jesus says, you will receive power. That's what the Holy Spirit will give you when He comes upon you. And you shall be witnesses of Me.

Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the end of the world, the end of the earth. You will preach for Me. You will witness for Me. You will teach the Kingdom of God.

[16:54] And the strength, the power for all that comes by way of the Holy Spirit. John 14, 12, most assuredly, again Jesus is speaking, most assuredly, absolutely, I say to you, He who believes in Me, the works that I do, He will do also.

And greater works. You remember this? And greater works than these He will do.

And He's not talking about miracles here. Don't get sidetracked with that as many have. Talking about His ministry of reconciliation. His ministry of preaching and teaching the gospel of the kingdom.

He said, you'll do greater works than the works I've done because I'm just one man and you will be millions ultimately. The multiplication of the work of redemption, the proclamation of the gospel will grow exponentially.

This is what's going to happen. But He says this, He says this because I go to the Father. How do those two things come together? How do you equate doing greater works than even Jesus was able to accomplish while He was here on this earth?

[18:14] How do you equate that with because He goes to the Father? Well, He's talking about the gift of the Holy Spirit. And we know that from John 16, 7.

Jesus said, I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away. See, He's been sharing with the disciples that He's leaving, that He's going to die.

They didn't quite get it exactly, but they knew He was leaving. He's talking about leaving and they were distraught about that and didn't understand that. And He said, I tell you the truth, it's to your advantage that I go.

Why? For if I do not go away, the Helper, the Holy Spirit, that is, will not come to you. But if I depart, I will send Him to you.

See how crucial it is. that we be indwelt by and have lives yielded to the Holy Spirit of God.

[19:18] The strength of our mission is a Holy Spirit anointed church with Holy Spirit filled believers. I might just quickly put all that together.

And Ephesians 5.18 says, be filled with the Spirit. Be filled full with the Spirit. Be always being filled with the Spirit. So full of the Holy Spirit of God that there's not room for you for anything else, basically, but literally saying, be absolutely yielded to the sovereign control of God upon your life is what that means.

Just like Jesus was. Just like Jesus was. Yielded to the Holy Spirit. Led by the Holy Spirit.

Controlled by the Holy Spirit in His ministry.

He submitted to the Holy Spirit upon His life. He was anointed with power by the Holy Spirit. The strength for our mission is the Holy Spirit.

We can't be off doing our own thing and operating according to our own strength and wisdom and expect our mission to be successful. We'll not be.

[20:39] Not on the individual basis because every one of us individually have been called to this mission and not collectively as a church. If we are not as a church yielding to the absolute control of the Holy Spirit upon all that we do, then we will not be successful.

Jesus was successful in His ministry. Not just because He was God the Son, but because He was a man filled with the Holy Spirit. Not only can we learn from Jesus just what the strength of our mission is, but second, the substance of our message is also revealed in this text.

The substance of our message, the message of the Gospel. Verses 14 and 15 tell us that Jesus began His earthly ministry in the region of Galilee.

That's very clear from the text. That's His home region. And it says that He taught in their synagogues. That's all Luke kind of tells us about it.

Now Matthew gives us a lot more information about that. In Matthew's Gospel, in Matthew 4.23, the Bible says, and Jesus went about all Galilee, traveled around Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and He also performed many miracles.

[22:09] That's kind of cutting it short. That's what Matthew tells us. But the key is that He went to the synagogues and everywhere else preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. And so we could identify our message as a church with the words Gospel of the Kingdom.

Not some earthly kingdom, but God's kingdom. His eternal kingdom. That right now resides in the heart and life of the individual believer.

That's where His rule is and reigns today. One day, of course, it will be a very visible kingdom. kingdom. And in the eternal state, eternally, it will be a kingdom that will never end.

All right, so it's the Gospel of the Kingdom. That, in a sense, identifies, it doesn't give us all the particulars, but it identifies the Gospel of the Kingdom. And so Jesus taught, He preached the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Now, what is the substance of that message? Well, the substance of the Gospel represents something that is very good.

[23 : 27] Very good. Now, it's not thought of in that way by many in our world. Unbelievers, they think of it only in judgment to another thing.

But it's something that's very good. The Gospel. The substance of the Gospel is good news. That's what the word Gospel means. It means good news. And it's the best news anyone would ever hope to hear.

Though they don't know it. But it's the very best news they could hope to hear because it is the news of hope. It's the news of hope. The Gospel is a message of hope.

Hope. Real hope. Sure hope. Not hope so, but real hope. Substantive hope. That's what the Gospel is. It's a message of hope.

It's interesting. This past week, Chris and I attended a preaching conference in Oklahoma City. And it was a very good conference.

[24 : 26] But one of the speakers quoted a well-known preacher. He didn't identify the name of the preacher because he couldn't remember. But he quoted him.

And so, because I trust Brian Chappell, I think it's probably true. So anyway, this is what he said.

This is what this famous preacher said. He said, Since the beginning of Christianity, all Christian preachers have had one thing in common in their preaching.

He said, It is the message of hope. It's hope in their preaching. Think about that. Over the last 2,000 years, how many preachers have they been?

Different kinds of preachers. Different approaches to preaching. Different ways to communicate the gospel. Different ways to structure sermons. And from storytelling to very regimented, structured sermons.

And everything in between. All the different kinds of preachers. And preaching from all the various texts of the Bible. But there he said, and I think he's right, there's one thing they all had in common.

[25 : 37] Hope. Hope. Hope. The gospel is a message of hope to hopeless, lost sinners.

Luke provides for us, I think, a clear, well, actually provides for us in the account of Jesus and his reading of Scripture. He provides for us the substance of this message of hope.

Look at verse 17. So he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up. Nazareth was his hometown. We know that.

And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Every Sabbath, Jesus worshipped in the synagogue. And in this particular case here in Nazareth, since he was brought up there, no doubt he had attended this particular synagogue hundreds of times.

Hundreds of times. All the people knew who he was, knew his family. He had been in this synagogue many, many times for worship, but this time was different. It wasn't. Verse 16, and he stood up to read.

[26 : 47] Alright, so he's the preacher or at least one of the preachers of the day, for the day. He stood up to read, read the Scripture. And he was handed the book. They didn't have books in those days.

The scroll. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had rolled it open, I don't know how long, I've often wondered how long did it take him to find the particular passage.

You know, he said, well, let's see, it's chapter. They didn't have any chapters. They didn't have any punctuation. Anyway, so he unrolls the scroll to the passage he's looking for.

Alright? That's going to be his specific text for his message, his sermon for the day. And then he stood up, because that was the way they did it, to read it. Alright?

And, by the way, the passage we know, because we have the passage right here in the account, it was a very familiar passage for those who were there in the synagogue that day.

[27 : 49] It would be a familiar passage for every Jew, every committed Orthodox Jew. They would have known it as one of those very significant Messianic prophecies. And Jesus picked it, selected it for that very purpose, of course.

And then he began to read it. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the

captives, to recover the sight, or recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Alright? Now, here's what we need to get from this. Not only is Jesus, of course, identifying Himself as the Messiah.

Now, that's key, of course, and that's the wow part of this text, because then He sat down and said, well, this has been fulfilled today in your hearing. Not only is there that, but if we look in much more broad kind of perspective, we have here a summary of Jesus' ministry.

That's what He had come to do. These very things. Now, they're all metaphors. They have spiritual, very significant spiritual implications, but this is a description of Jesus' ministry.

[29 : 12] And if it is that, then I would say at the same time, it is a description of the substance of our message. This is why Jesus came.

To preach the gospel to the poor. To heal the brokenhearted. I know that only appears in the King James, the New King James Version, and I'm not going to take the time to explain why it's not in some of your versions.

Alright? I'm going for purposes of preaching and assume that it's supposed to be there. To proclaim liberty to the captives. This is why Jesus came. To proclaim liberty to the captives.

To recover sight for the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Now, folks, here's the point. At one point, we ought to get.

That none of those things are found anywhere but in Christ. Though there have been many over the eons of time that have claimed to be able to provide these things.

[30 : 16] None of these things are found anywhere but in Christ. This is what Jesus has come to do and did do and will continue, does continue to do for those who believe.

Those who trust Him. But this is His ministry. This is a description of His ministry. The ministry of the Messiah who is Jesus. And therefore, it is our message.

Our message we're to proclaim. It is a message of hope. Clearly it is that. A message of hope. Not a message of condemnation. Though we must present the truth about sin.

And I guarantee you it is here in this description of the ministry of the Messiah. it is a message of hope.

Let's just take them very quickly one by one. In the first place, here's the substance of our ministry. It's the gospel. The good news of salvation for the poor.

[31 : 18] He's not talking about the economic poor. in the sense that somehow the message is only for the economic poor and not for anyone else.

This is the same message. The good news is for the economic poor and the filthy rich as well. For everyone. When He said poor, by the way, He didn't use a word that would specifically identify just kind of in a generic, kind of a general sense impoverished people.

There are a lot of impoverished people who are not poor in this sense of the word. The word He chose here is the word that means desperately poor.

Destitute. No clothes. No food. On the very brink of death because of poverty. But this is a metaphor.

This has a spiritual connotation. What He's talking about here, what He's literally saying is that He's come to proclaim good news. He has good news for those who will acknowledge that they are spiritually destitute.

[32 : 31] Morally bankrupt. That's the kind of poor people the gospel is for and the kind of poor people God will save. To acknowledge this. It's like the publican.

Remember? The tax collector Jesus tells us about in Luke chapter 18 and verse 13 and following. Remember the story Jesus told? Let's begin with the Pharisee.

He said, The Pharisee, that's the self-righteous one, stood and prayed thus with himself. He's not praying to God. He's praying to himself. Well, He's praying to a God.

He's God. Self-righteous. So He's praying with Himself. God, I thank You that I'm not like other men. Extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and even as this tax collector over here.

And then the tax collector, he says, standing afar off would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast, his chest, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

[33 : 41] That's the kind of poverty He's talking about. What does God do for the person who acknowledges that kind of spiritual poverty? Well, Jesus tells us.

He said, I tell you, this man, this tax collector, went down to his house justified. He was saved rather than the other. The other was not saved.

God will not save the self-righteous. He saves. The good news is for those who will acknowledge their utter poverty of spirit.

That's the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the substance of our message. Good news of salvation for those who acknowledge their utter poverty of spirit.

And then second, healing for the brokenhearted. Healing for the brokenhearted. Who are they?

Again, it's a metaphor. Not brokenhearted over, you know, a lost girlfriend or boyfriend or your poor pet dog that got run over in the highway.

[34 : 48] We can be brokenhearted over a lot of things, but He's talking about being brokenhearted over sin, over alienation from God, our Creator, our Maker.

Jesus, you see, has come to heal those who are heartbroken over their sin. Liberty, thirdly, liberty, true liberty, freedom to the captives.

That's what, that's the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is, those who are held captive by their sin. Their bondage to sin. Their bondage to Satan.

Which describes, by the way, everyone who has not come to Christ. It is to acknowledge, I'm captive in bondage to my sin.

I cannot break free of it. I am in bondage to Satan himself. Ephesians chapter 2, verses 1 and 2, listen to it, and you he made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked.

[36 : 02] You once walked. You once lived your life according to trespasses and sin. Dead in trespasses and sin. You walked according, he says, to the course of the world. That's the course of the world.

And according to the prince of the power of the air. Who's that? That's Satan. The spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.

You see, sinners are held captive to do Satan's will. 2 Timothy 2.26 Sinners are enslaved by a fear of death.

Hebrews chapter 2, verses 14 and 15. Sinners are in bondage to sin. Romans 6.6 Jesus said, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

John 8.34 We could go on and on. You see, this is good news. This is the good news. A good news of hope that God has sent His Son into the world to set His captives free.

[37 : 06] Free from sin and free from Satan. That's good news. This is the substance of our message. Good news of salvation in Christ for those who acknowledge their spiritual poverty.

Spiritual healing for those who are truly broken over their sinfulness and unbelief. Liberty for those who cry out to the Lord from their spiritual captivity to Satan and sin.

And then also recovery of spiritual sight for those who are blinded by Satan and unbelief. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4 and verse 4 our gospel, he said, is veiled.

It's veiled. Hidden. Veiled to whom? To those who are perishing. Those whose minds the God of this age, that's Satan, has blinded.

Who do not believe. The gospel is veiled to those who do not believe lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God should shine on them.

[38 : 12] And for this reason, Paul went on to say, we do not preach ourselves. We're not going to preach philosophies and man-made principles and preach our own druthers and rationalism.

Rather, we preach Jesus Christ the Lord. You see, listen, only He can heal spiritual blindness. Next, we preach freedom for those who are under the oppression of a life apart from Christ.

That's to set at liberty those who are oppressed. It's a metaphor. It's talking about a spiritual condition.

Freedom. See, in Christ, in the gospel, there's freedom from this shadowy specter of death that's always there.

This fear of death and guilt and judgment and eternity and the unknown about eternity. He sets us free.

[39 : 18] He sets us liberty from this oppression that is upon the unbeliever. Freedom, I would say, also from the oppression of emptiness. An empty, worthless, meaningless life.

I tell you, people come to that place, unbelievers do, what's it all for anyway? What is the good of any of this life?

And Jesus sets that, those who are under that oppression, sets them free. That's the substance of our message.

And to wrap it all up, we have this last statement, proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. That's part of it too. What did the angel, by the way, say to the shepherds the very night that Jesus was born?

What did he say to the shepherds that really got them so excited? This is what he said. In Luke 2, 11, he said, for there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior.

[40:28] What got them excited was, it's today. We've been looking for it, longing for it. Our prophets have been telling us about it and we've been yearning for the Messiah to come and the angel said, He's come.

It's today. The Savior has come who is Christ the Lord. The day has come. This is the good news. And we don't have to apologize for it.

We don't have to kind of package it in some way. It's good news. It may not be received always as good news, but it's good news that today is the day. In fact, Hebrews 3.15 ought to be a part of our gospel presentation.

He said, the Bible says, today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart. He's here for you today. 2 Corinthians 6, 2, for God says, in an acceptable time I have heard you.

And in the day of salvation I have helped you. And some are saying, well, when's that going to be? When is that day when you will hear me and when you will help me?

[41:36] And He goes on to say, behold, now is the accepted time. It's today. Behold, now is the day of salvation. We can say that. Proclaim that with all confidence.

Today. The day. The Savior has come. Trust Him. It's the acceptable day of the Lord.

Alright, so then, four instructive features of Jesus' ministry. I need to wrap this up. First, we can learn from Jesus the strength of our mission and that's the Holy Spirit.

we're yielded to Him and guided by Him and led by Him and empowered by Him. Second, we learn from Jesus the substance of our message.

It's the Lord's ministry. That's the substance of our message. And everything Jesus came to do and promised He would do is good news.

[42:34] It's hope and it's only available in Him. And third, we can learn from Jesus the sovereignty of our Messiah. the sovereignty of our Savior.

It's interesting that when Jesus preached, after He preached there in the synagogue, the people there who heard Him, they went very quickly, very quickly, they went from wow to whoa to away with this guy.

I mean very quickly. I mean they went, Jesus went from the pulpit to the precipice. They're going to throw Him over the cliff.

They're going to kill the messenger. They didn't like the message, they're going to kill the messenger. Why? For us, you know, in our kind of mindset, in our contemporary day and way of thinking, we look at that, we say, I just don't see why they wanted to do that, you know.

Alright, so, they didn't like what he had to say, but you don't throw the preacher over a cliff. At least I hope you don't. So why?

[43:51] It's because of the sovereignty of God in salvation. The sovereignty of God.

Jesus revealed Himself there as the supreme. sovereign Messiah to whom they were unwilling to submit themselves for salvation.

They thought they were the arbitrators of salvation. In fact, they thought they were saved. God would be Messiah putting himself in the place of sovereignty as a sovereign Messiah.

They were confronted with a sovereign Messiah that exposed their self-righteousness. Messiah and they didn't like that. A sovereign Messiah that made a demand upon them to which they were unwilling to obey.

And it's the same with everyone who's confronted with the gospel. In effect, what Jesus said next, and we'll read that again here in just a minute, what He said next challenged their belief that, their personal belief that they didn't need a Savior.

[45:27] They didn't need a Savior in their judgment because they were already saved. And what Jesus said next revealed, exposed that, you know, their belief, their false belief that they needed no spiritual healing and for anybody to suggest such a thing.

Well, they just couldn't accept it. That they felt they needed no freedom from any spiritual bondage. Well, we're free. We're God's people.

In their own estimation, they were not spiritually poor, not prisoners of Satan, not blind to salvation, not oppressed by sin.

The very things that Jesus said He had come to do, they didn't believe they needed. And look at how Jesus masterfully uncovered the wickedness and unbelief of their hearts.

Verse 20. Then He closed the book and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. Customary way of doing it. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

[46 : 44] So the drama is unfolding here. And He began to say to them, Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. I'm the Messiah.

And there was somewhat of a positive reaction at first, wasn't there? They bore witness to Him, the Bible says, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.

translation, they were impressed by His delivery. They said, well, this is the guy that grew up right here, this kid.

He's become a pretty good speaker. That was their first impression. And then they got to thinking about it. They said, but is this not Josephson?

And then notice the genius of Jesus. He said to them, you surely say this proverb to me, physician, heal yourself.

[47 : 52] That is, he's reading their minds and this is what they're thinking, you'd better give us some proof, some proof of this bold claim because we don't believe you.

And then Jesus put words to their thoughts. He said, whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in your country.

He's saying, this is what you're thinking. We heard about those miracles down there in Capernaum. Not sure we believe that, but if you claim to be the Messiah, then do some of that here.

Then maybe we'll believe you. Of course, Jesus could have performed a million miracles and they still would not have believed. Never about believing miracles.

But this is what they were thinking in their heart. And so Jesus said, assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. And let me remind you of a couple.

[48 : 54] Elijah and Elisha. They both prophesied, by the way, in this very region. In the region of Galilee, they prophesied in the northern kingdom when there was the divided kingdom.

And so in their very area, this is where Elijah and Elisha had their ministries, their prophetic ministries. And so Jesus is connecting them with a couple of people they know very well.

Verse 25, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah when the heaven was shut up three years and six months and there was a great famine throughout all the land, but to none of them was Elijah's sin, except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon to a woman who was a widow.

And then verse 27, and many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha, the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman, the Syrian. And then after he reminds them about these two prophets and the two incidents, they're ready to throw him off of a cliff.

Why? What was the message here to them? The message was that God is sovereign in salvation.

[50 : 04] He'll save whoever it pleases him to save. And he will never, ever save the self-righteous. You cannot be saved if you're self-righteous.

And God, he says, God saved Seraphath, a woman, a widow, an outcast, a Gentile, but one who acknowledged her spiritual poverty, her bondage, her blindness, her oppression, she admitted that openly, and God saved her, but he did not save any of the Jews who were self-righteous and would not admit, openly acknowledge, humbly acknowledge any of these spiritual realities.

Translation, he'll save some woman who's a Gentile, but he won't save you. You're not saved.

How would you like a preacher to come say, hey, you're all lost. You're not saved, you're going to hell. Well, maybe some preachers do that.

But this was even more paramount for them. They just couldn't stomach that. God would save a Gentile, a woman, a widow. And Jesus is saying, he's not going to save you, save us.

[51 : 27] And then even worse than that, God saved Naaman, a Syrian, a Gentile, a commander of an army that was their enemy, and worse, a leper.

The epitome of an outcast person, a leper. But he's one who humbled himself, obeyed God's prophet, and trusted the one true God.

Now, Jesus didn't have to add that part. They knew the story. He trusted the one true God, and God saved this Gentile, but God did not heal any of the other lepers of the day, the Jewish lepers, and save them.

Translation, he'll save a Gentile, but he won't save you, you self-righteous Jews. So here's the bottom line.

A sovereign God makes salvation available to only those who will acknowledge their utter poverty of spirit, their desperate captivity to sin, their absolute blindness to the gospel, and the self-righteous hate that.

[52 : 44] They hate that. The strength of our mission, the substance of our message, the sovereignty of our Messiah, our Savior, and one more, the success of our ministry.

The success of our ministry. Look at verse 28. So all those in the synagogue when they heard these things were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust him out of the city and they led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built that they might throw him down over the cliff.

You can just visualize this, this mob. And they've grabbed him and they're carrying him out of the synagogue and they're headed to the cliff there that the city was built on top of.

And they're going to throw this heretic out and down the hill to plunge to his death. You can just see this mob and kind of even hear it, you know. The grunts and groans and the cries and the hateful words and they're going to kill him.

But then notice verse 30. Then passing through the midst of them he went his way. and I see here a kind of cryptic testimony to the success of the gospel.

[54 : 03] And therefore I would say to the assured success that our ministry of the gospel as a church will not fail. It will not fail.

The gospel is unstoppable. the Bible says here he passed through the midst of them. How did he do that by the way? And what are we to make of it?

Maybe in their rage and their excitement they simply lost track of Jesus you know and in the confusion of it all he was able to kind of slip away you know kind of maybe.

I don't really like that. Or maybe Luke just leaves some information out. You know maybe Jesus was able to talk them out of it. Or maybe some other person there with a cool head was able to kind of talk them out of their plan to kill this preacher.

Or maybe it was supernatural. Well I don't know. The important thing is this last phrase.

[55 : 23] He went his way. What way was that? What way was Jesus' way?

It was the way of the cross. not the way of death at the bottom of some cliff. He was not going to die that day.

They weren't going to kill him that day. Jesus was going to die one way and that was by crucifixion on his cross at the time he chose.

And here's the point. nothing could stop Jesus from going to the cross. Though many tried to stop him. He was not going to be stopped by these self-righteous Jews here at the synagogue in Nazareth.

He's not going to be stopped by any pagan Romans who would ultimately beat him to the very edge of death. He was not going to be stopped even by Satan.

[56 : 37] Satan, though he tried many times to kill Jesus even before Jesus was born. We can go all the way back to the book of Genesis and find Satan at work trying to snuff out the Messiah.

And he couldn't do it. And by the way, when Jesus did get on the cross, tried to get him to come down. almost as if he's saying any way but this way.

Nothing could stop Jesus from the cross. And therefore, nothing can stop the success of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Both the Old and New Testament testify to that. Nothing can stop it. it will be successful everywhere it is proclaimed.

We may not always see it. In fact, like an iceberg, we only see the tip of it usually. Sometimes we think we don't see it at all, but it is always successful everywhere it is proclaimed.

[57 : 54] and to make it more personal, if you will believe the gospel, it will not fail to transform your life.

It will not fail. Amen. Amen.