

Luke 4:14-44

Verses 14-15:

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

--Between verses **13 + 14** there is a period of about 14 months, which is primarily captured by the apostle John in **John 1:29-5:47**. Luke acknowledges some of this ministry, summarizing it in a few brief sentences.

--Jesus' ministry was **in the power of the Spirit**. Clearly, something supernatural was taking place.

--**News of Him went out through all the surrounding region**. The Greek word for **news** (*pheme*) gives us the idea of *a rumor*. There were sayings, rumors, whispers about this man Jesus of Nazareth.

--Finally, Luke tells us He was in the synagogues teaching. People often make much of the merciful and miraculous ministry of Jesus, but willingly ignore the priority of His teaching and preaching ministry. Luke places that directly before us.

--**Being glorified by all**. . . means Jesus was praised. He was looked at favorably.

Verses 16-30:

--(16) 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.

--Jesus went to Nazareth, His hometown, twice during the course of His public ministry. This, being the first, and the second is recorded in **Mt. 13:53-58 & Mk. 6:1-6**.

--Some think they are the same account, as there are similarities in responses from the Nazarenes, but they differ in important details.

1) Matthew and Mark have no death threat.

2) Matthew and Mark have a few healings mentioned, where there is clearly none in Luke.

3) Matthew and Mark have the visit at the end of Jesus' Galilean ministry, Luke at the start. A second trip as a final plea to His hometown would make sense.

--**And as His custom was**. . . The perfect Son of God, went to worship God regularly in the synagogue. If so, we have no excuse to refuse gathering together regularly in worship!

--(17-20) 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, to set a liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

--There is some debate as to whether the readings were appointed or not. It really doesn't matter, Jesus goes to **the place** He wants to read. Jesus finds **Isaiah 61:1-2** and reads it.

--It has been well noted that Jesus stops reading before the statement: ***And the day of vengeance of our God.*** . . because He has no intention to exact vengeance yet. That day has not come.

--Jesus knows the Messianic hopes of the people are largely political. They are looking for an immediate King and kingdom. Jesus wants to declare to them His true Messianic character, which is also scriptural, but overlooked by the common Israelite.

- The poor have the gospel preached to them.
- The hopeless find comfort.
- Those bound in sinful chains are set free—Pharisee, tax-collector, and demoniac alike.
- The physically and spiritually blind receive sight.
- The beaten down and afflicted of the world are set free.
- The Messiah has come! Which is still our message! ***Acts 26:16-18***

--Jesus finishes the passage. Sits down. And a fixed tension fills the synagogue.

Verses 21-22:

--And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

--Jesus declares that He is the prophetic fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. The day had come! The people of His hometown are all astonished at His gracious words. They love what Jesus is saying about the kingdom of God.

--What is their problem? His words about the kingdom also include the fact that *He* is King. ***The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me.*** . . grace is curbed by pride. As lovely as the truths presented were, all they could think was, ***Is this not Joseph's son?***

Verse 23:

--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 Your country.'"

--No doubt those in Nazareth had heard about the wedding in Cana of Galilee. It was not far away. Prior to this moment, Jesus had performed miracles while in Capernaum (**Jn. 2:12**), and there were other miraculous deeds not directly recorded (**Jn. 2:23**).

--Jesus knows they are thinking it is His fault they don't believe. Show them something! Do something miraculous if you are claiming to be the Spirit-anointed Messiah.

Verses 24-27:

--Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. 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. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

--Jesus makes it clear that their real problem was not a lack of miracles, but the familiarity and contempt Israel showed to many of its own heroes and prophets. *Joseph, David, Jeremiah, etc.*

--What is Jesus' application with these stories? Some say they don't connect. Others that they revealed Christ's heart for even the Gentiles. I think the answer is much simpler.

--The power of God was present to deliver and heal in Israel, but faith was not! There were widows and lepers in Israel, but none of them came to Elijah or Elisha, and the fault was not with the prophets.

--The widow of Zarephath trusted Elijah without even knowing him. Naaman the Syrian trusted (even reluctantly) the word of a slave girl. God graciously responded to faith where it was found without familiarity and contempt. *It is often those who do not have what we have that see its value best—the Bible, church, our freedom of worship, etc.*

Verses 28-30:

--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.

--What is their response? Not to treat Him like good old Joseph's boy, but like a false prophet (**Deut. 13:1-5**)!

--Jesus allows them to bring Him to the very brink, but then walks through the midst of them. This is the miracle He leaves them with. What a mercy! He delivers them from killing the Son of God.

--***He went His way.*** . . . Jesus does not remain where He is not wanted. And yet, Jesus still identifies Himself with them to their ultimate shame or glory.

****Acts 22:8: "So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'"****

--Remember Luke's purpose. Who in the world would start with this story to build assurance in Jesus Christ?! His own townsfolk, who knew Him best, rejected Him. It is a solemn warning. Calloused familiarity with Jesus Christ is a serious evil.

Verses 31-37:

--(31-32) ***Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.***

--Having been summarily rejected at Nazareth, Matthew tells us Jesus, who previously lived in Nazareth (Mt. 2:23), now ***leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum (Mt. 4:13)***, even later calling Capernaum ***His own city (Mt. 9:1)***. Jesus' central place of residence has changed.

--Jesus is again teaching in the synagogue, and the ***authority*** of His teaching becomes the focus. No one could deny that the truths He spoke were authoritative. He was the Word and the Truth.

Scribal authority came from Moses (Mt. 23:2), but Jesus' authority was His own.

--(33-34) ***Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did you come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"***

--We must be careful never to make our curiosity with the demonic the focus. Jesus' authority over the demons is the focus.

1 John 3:8: For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

--We should not be surprised that demonic activity was heightened around Jesus Christ.

--Demon possession is a reality. It is clear when someone is demon-possessed. If you have to wonder if someone is demon-possessed, you don't need to wonder.

--The worship of pagan gods and spirits added to the prevalence of demonic activity, as it does in many other places in the world today.

--The demon cries out, ***Let us alone!*** It is an exclamation of terror. Like a criminal caught by police screaming, *Let me go!*

--Even the demons witnessed to the reality of Jesus' deity. They knew who He was.

James 2:19: You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

--Intellectual understanding of the Christian message is not enough to save. True belief in the heart, faith, is necessary.

--(35-37) ***But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word is this! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.***

--Jesus commands the demon to *be muzzled!* The same Greek word He uses to calm the storm (Mk. 4:39) and in reference to not muzzling the working ox (1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:18).

--The fact that the demon tosses the man on the ground proves this situation is no mental illness. Jesus also protects the man physically. The deliverance is full.

--Now, the people go from astonishment to amazement. The Word that echoed in their hearts (out of the heart the mouth speaks, and they confessed the authority of His Word) has also now subdued the supernatural threats among them. What Word was it? The Word that created the worlds!

--The Greek word for **report** is different from that in **4:14**. This word means an *echo* or an *uproar*. At this point, Jesus is going viral.

Verses 38-39:

--Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

--Jesus enters Peter's house. Peter is clearly married (**1 Cor. 9:5**). His mother-in-law is sick with a serious fever.

--In stark, yet simple contrast with Nazareth, ***they made request of Him concerning her***. Jesus answers their faith and heals her.

--I love these two simple verses. Jesus Christ is willing to extend His miraculous authority to the home circle in which He is welcome. He still does miracles hidden from the public eye.

--I give my personal witness that Jesus is willing to do private family miracles. He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

Verses 40-41:

--When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew He was the Christ.

--Luke notes the time of day because the setting sun marked the end of the Sabbath. Many who heard about Jesus were waiting to carry their friends to Him (**Jn. 5:10**).

--We had a private contrast with Nazareth. Now we have a public contrast. In Nazareth, no one was healed. In Capernaum, everyone is healed!

*Godet (Gospel of Luke, pg. 271): *"Laying His hands on each of them, He healed, and kept on healing, as many as came for it."**

--What a beautiful and wild scene! We see the authority of Jesus Christ exercised in the teaching of God's Word, in the deliverance and binding of evil spiritual powers, and in the healing of physical bodies. His power is for our good.

--Jesus refuses the demonic witness. I believe that was because He did not want people turning to evil spirits as a "source" of any type of communication.

****Isaiah 8:19-20: And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.****

Verses 42-44:

--(42a) Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. Mark (1:35) tells us Jesus rose ***a long while before daylight.***

--Jesus' previous day had been extremely busy, and no doubt, His healings lasted late into the night. Yet where do we find Him? Rising early, before daylight, and getting alone in a deserted place.

--Jesus Christ wasn't excused from prayer because of His nearness to God. If Jesus needed to step away from others and get alone with His Father, how much more do you and I?! We say we are too busy to pray, but we are not busier than our Lord. Sometimes He didn't have time to eat (**Mk. 3:20**), or sleep (**Lk. 6:12**), or rest (**Mk. 6:31**), but He always took time to pray.

--The secret sustaining force in a life of shocking self-giving was the personal flow of life between the Son of Man and God the Father.

--(42b-44) And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.” And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

--The crowds, understandably, want Jesus to stay with them. His words and works were full of wonder, grace, and truth.

--Still, Jesus is not swayed by favorable public sentiment. He lives to please His Father, and He states that He was sent by God to preach. The declaration of truth was part of His very purpose on earth.