



## Sermon Discussion Questions

January 7, 2024

*Jesus in Galilee*

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Luke 4:16-30

## 1. Opening Discussion Questions

- a. "I don't get anything out of it." "The sermon's too long." "The music's too old fashioned (or contemporary, loud, etc.)." "The building is too cold (or too hot)." "The chairs are too hard (or soft, not pews, etc.)." How many of these criticisms of church services have you heard? What are some other complaints? What is the most unique or interesting complaint you have heard? How many have you said? Besides expressing it verbally what are you inclined to do when you have a complaint about the service?
- b. We live in an extremely affluent society but there are still many in our community that are poor, homeless, or lacking basic necessities of life. What are some of the excuses you have heard, and perhaps used yourself, for not helping those in need? What would you say is the greatest need the poor have? Is it adequate to just provide for that one need and ignore the others?
- c. Have you ever heard someone use the expression "I knew him/her when he/she was still in diapers"? What is usually meant when it, or a similar comment, is made? Is it usually a positive or a negative statement?

## 2. Sermon Outline/Key Points

- a. Jesus Had a Unique Day at His Hometown Synagogue
  - i. Things go well for a while.
  - ii. Then things get rough.
- b. Jesus Announced God's Kingdom Had Come (and it Wasn't What People Expected)
  - i. What just happened here?
  - ii. God's Kingdom is about restoring how things were designed to be before our sin ruined everything.
- c. When You're Serious About God's Kingdom, Expect Trouble from Those Who "Knew You When"
  - i. Are you serious about God's Kingdom?
  - ii. If you're serious, those who've known you best and longest may not appreciate your focus.

## 3. Study/Discussion Points:

- a. *Sunday Afternoon* – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to prayerfully ponder these questions:
  - i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?

- ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
  - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
  - iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
  - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
- b. **Monday** – *Jesus had a unique day at his hometown synagogue – things went well (for a while)*
- i. Read Luke 4:14-30 and note what events took place in chapter 4 before verse 14.
    - 1. Compare the focal passage with Matthew 13:53-58 and Mark 6:1-6 which may or may not be describing the same events.
    - 2. What indicators are there in Luke's passage that this may have occurred not at the very beginning but somewhat later in Jesus' ministry?
  - ii. What does verse 16 tell us about how Jesus lived and what His priorities were?
    - 1. Since it was Jesus' "custom" to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath what conclusion could we draw about how He wants us to behave?
    - 2. It is not unusual to hear people say they can worship God best when they are in a nature setting. What do you think Jesus' custom suggests about such an attitude? Where do you think Jesus worshipped best?
  - iii. Read and meditate on Isaiah 61:1-3.
- c. **Tuesday** – *Jesus had a unique day at his hometown synagogue – things went well (for a while)*
- i. Reread Luke 4:16-19 and Isaiah 61:1-3.
  - ii. This passage in Luke is often considered one of the earliest descriptions of a synagogue service. From other, later, records we know such services usually included recitation of the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), benedictions, a psalm, blessings, prayers, readings from the Law (Torah) and the Prophets before a sermon. The reading of the Law followed a set pattern but the reading from the Prophets was selected by the synagogue leader or the reader himself.
    - 1. What would it say to you if the synagogue leader was the one who selected the passage? If Jesus made the selection?
    - 2. Remembering that verse divisions were added much later, what is the significance of the point at which Jesus stopped reading Isaiah?
  - iii. The passage Jesus read from Isaiah can be interpreted literally where the poor, prisoners, blind and oppressed are referring to actual physical conditions. Or it can be interpreted spiritually where they are symptoms of

our sinfulness. Which do you believe? When you select one interpretation what can you say about the other?

- d. **Wednesday** – *Jesus had a unique day at his hometown synagogue – things went well (for a while).*
- i. Read Luke 4:20-22.
    1. How would you describe the mood in the synagogue when Jesus had finished reading? When was the last time you saw such a reaction to the reading of scripture?
    2. Verse 21 contains the core element of what Jesus said but how do verses 21 and 22 suggest that there was much more than a single sentence in His sermon? What hint is there about His message in the fact that the people considered His words to be “gracious”?
      - a. Break down the one sentence Jesus speaks in verse 21 into its component parts and discuss what each means to you (for the ESV wording that would be: “Today”, “this scripture”, “has been fulfilled”, and “in your hearing”).
    3. In your own words what is Jesus saying to the people in the synagogue with this one statement?
  - ii. How might the people’s question about Jesus in verse 22 be understood? Remember this is a small town where He grew up. Think about cases you’ve seen or heard of where the “hometown boy (girl) makes good”.
  - iii. Compare the people’s question in verse 21 with the statement of the rulers in Luke 23:35. What similarities do you see? What significance might there be in the fact that one is at the beginning and one at the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry?
- e. **Thursday** – *Jesus had a unique day at his hometown synagogue – things went well (for a while) – then things get rough.*
- i. Read Luke 4:23-27.
    1. Does Jesus’ words at this point seem strange or unexpected given that the people “spoke well of Him and marveled”?
    2. What does His response suggest about what Jesus was responding to (see Mark 2:8 and Matthew 22:18)?
  - ii. In your own words, what was Jesus saying – what is the deeper meaning – in verse 24?
    1. What did Jesus expect the people to do/feel/think/believe that they were not?
    2. How are people today guilty of the same error (think about how Muslims, Hindus and many Americans think of Jesus)?
  - iii. The Old Testament accounts Jesus refers to in verses 25-27 are found in 1 Kings 17:8-16 and 2 Kings 5:1-15.
    1. What point is Jesus making as He refers to these two stories?
    2. Why is this particularly important to us?

- f. **Friday** – *Jesus had a unique day at his hometown synagogue – things went well (for a while) – then things get rough.*
- i. Conclude your study of the focal passage with Luke 4:28-30.
    1. After Jesus' comments in verses 24-27 how did the people's attitude about Jesus change?
    2. What was the cause for the change in the attitude?
    3. The ESV says the people were "filled with wrath" at Jesus.
      - a. What do you think of when you hear the word "wrath"?
      - b. Do people ever respond to Jesus with wrath today? Have you ever experienced such a response?
  - ii. Compare verse 30 with John 8:59 and 10:39. Also consider John 7:6-7, 30, & 44 and Matthew 26:18. Collectively what do these verses tell us about Jesus? About who was controlling events?
  - iii. Finish by going back and reading the entire passage, Luke 4:16-30, and consider what role familiarity and personal expectations play in the way people respond to Jesus' declaration.
- g. **Saturday** – *God's Kingdom isn't what man expected and when you get serious about the Kingdom expect trouble.*
- i. Reread Isaiah 61:1-2. Read Matthew 3:2, Mark 1:14-15 and John 18:36
  - ii. Jesus announced the fulfillment of the prophecy and the arrival of the Kingdom in the synagogue after reading the passage in Isaiah. What does that mean to you?
  - iii. The way the people treated Jesus shows us what we should expect. Read and contemplate on the implications of: Matthew 5:10-11, John 15:18-20, 2 Timothy 3:12, and 1 Peter 4:13-14. What kind of a commitment is required of a Christian?
4. **Application:** St. Augustine wrote, "They love truth when it enlightens them, but hate truth when it accuses them." Does this apply to many "Christians" today? To our congregation? To us individually? We love to hear the "gracious words" of Christ (The Good News) but do we as willingly expect the harder parts: "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27-28), giving sacrificially (James 2:15-17, 1 John 3:17-18, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 9:7), sharing the Good News and making disciples (Matthew 28:19-20), and willingly suffering for Him (Matthew 10:38 & 16:24). If we only accept the parts we like and enjoy, are we any different from those who drove Jesus from the synagogue?

## 5. Prayer Points:

- a. **A**doration – 1 Peter 4:16
- b. **C**onfession – James 5:16
- c. **T**hanksgiving – 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- d. **S**upplications – James 4:2-3