

An Unexpected Messiah: Honor Him
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Luke 4:14-15

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

Hometown boy makes good! Everyone is “singing his praises” back in His “stomping grounds.” But, there’s an old saying: YOU CAN’T GO HOME AGAIN. What do you think that famous saying means?

You Can't Go Home Again is a novel by [Thomas Wolfe](#). Hometown author writes a popular book and the material on his hometown is so OUTRAGEOUS he starts getting death threats.

In the last year, one of the most popular novels made into a movie is *The Help* is a 2009 novel by Kathryn Stockett. Hometown college graduate comes home and instead of acting in the APPROVED, ACCEPTED way, she wrote a book that exposed their dirty secrets.

Have YOU ever had a “YOU CAN’T GO HOME AGAIN” experience? Ever go back to your old hometown or old school or for a reunion and things just weren’t the same? Or worse yet, you were rejected?

Jesus had a YOU CAN’T GO HOME EXPERIENCE early in his ministry when he returned to His hometown of NAZARETH. Let’s keep reading in Chapter 4.

Luke 4:16-30

New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

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.

- Pause for a second, “he went into the synagogue...(WHY)...as was his custom.
- Even though He was the Son of God...Jesus went to CHURCH every week ---it was His custom
- Now the Synagogue was not the fabulous TEMPLE in Jerusalem... A synagogue could be as few as ten men and their families assembled together. Whatever the size, this is was Jesus’ HOMETOWN congregation.
- As we continue, verse 17, Jesus had either been invited or volunteered to read the scripture

And he stood up to read. 17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." [a]
20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down.

- After he reads...he SITS DOWN. Why do you think he stood to read and sat down to speak?
- He stood (they stood) just like FBCW...in HONOR OF THE READING OF SCRIPTURE
- He sat down, because that's how a Rabbi taught...sitting down
- Back to verse 20:

The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

- He HAD THEIR ATTENTION! Every eye in the place was FASTENED on Him.
- They had been hearing about the things He had been doing in Capernaum.
- They were EAGER to hear what this HOMETOWN RABBI would say.
- He DID NOT DISAPPOINT THEM. Verse 21

21 and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

- What was he REALLY SAYING when he said "Today this scripture is fulfilled RIGHT HERE?"
- HE was the fulfillment of the prophecy....HE was the PROMISED MESSIAH, THE CHRIST!
- Can you imagine the reaction? Verse 22:

22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips.

- At first, they were AMAZED. This boy does a nice SERMON for a "hometown boy".
- But then the mood starts to change. Wait a minute! What did he say? Did he just say that HE IS THE MESSIAH? Back to verse 22:

"Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

- I know this guy! He used to play with my kids. He's that carpenter's son who was born under QUESTIONABLE circumstances. Now, NOT only is he the guest preacher here at FIRST JEWISH SYNAGOGUE OF NAZARETH, HE'S SAYING HE'S THE MESSIAH?
- Of course, HE WAS THE MESSIAH, both GOD and MAN so he could read their thoughts.
- Verse 23:

23 Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'"

- Jesus is saying, "I know what you're thinking...if you're the MESSIAH, GIVE US A SIGN!"
- "Do some of those MIRACLES we've been hearing about from Capernaum, RIGHT HERE!"
- Jesus essentially says: "If you're looking for a SIGN...YOU DON'T GET IT."
- Then he cites TWO OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS who were REJECTED by THEIR PEOPLE. Verse 24:

24 “I tell you the truth,” 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] in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

- “Did he just say what I thought he said?” “Not only is he not going to do some miracles for us this morning...he’s talking about GENTILES?”

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

Footnotes:

1. [Luke 4:19](#) Isaiah 61:1,2

- Pastor Johnny may occasionally rub people the wrong way in a sermon...but he’s never been driven to a cliff!
- By the way, isn’t it interesting how quickly they shifted from CELEBRATION to CYNICISM?
- Look back up at verse 15. When he came to town it says: “He taught in their synagogues and everyone praised him.” That Greek word is the same one we get DOXOLOGY from.

J. Vernon McGee said:

“The same people will sing the doxology then reject Christ’s claims.” He points out: “They cried Hosanna” as Jesus rode into Jerusalem the last time, then the same people cried “crucify Him!” the NEXT DAY.

- Jesus, we’re okay to come to church and sing praises as long as you make us feel good, but if the message of your role of Messiah doesn’t suit our tastes...that’s another story!
- Now to GIVE YOU THE CONTEXT of this ACCOUNT we moved quickly.
- We need to go back and deal with the real HEART of this portion of scripture.
- Look back to verses 18 and 19.
- Jesus reads from Isaiah (what would be chapter 61 for you and me) a passage that was PROPHETIC about HIS MISSION:

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”[a]
We’ll dig deeper into those verses in a minute

- As Jesus quotes from Isaiah, He states FIVE AREAS that applied to His mission as MESSIAH. Jesus came to bring...

1. GOOD NEWS for the POOR
2. FREEDOM for PRISONERS
3. RECOVERY of SIGHT for the BLIND
4. RELEASE for the OPPRESSED
5. Proclaiming the YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR (God's grace to those in DEBT) THE YEAR OF JUBILEE (Leviticus 25)

- Let's look specifically at the first FOUR for a minute.
- Question: Do you think the FIVE AREAS of Jesus' mission were addressing PHYSICAL NEEDS; SPIRITUAL NEEDS; or both? (Take a poll)
- How could "GOOD NEWS for the POOR" be SPIRITUAL and not ECONOMIC?
- Turn to Luke 6:20 (This is Luke's version of the SERMON ON THE MOUNT -- THE BEATITUDES).
- Someone read Luke 6:20. In Matthew the wording is POOR IN SPIRIT, SPIRITUALLY BANKRUPT
- Jesus is saying He brought the GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL for those POOR ENOUGH IN SPIRIT to KNOW THEY NEED IT!
- Each of these AREAS of MISSION Jesus talked about COULD BE PHYSICAL but MORE IMPORTANTLY they were SPIRITUAL.
- FREEDOM from the PRISON of SIN; HEALING from the BLINDNESS of SIN; RELEASE from the OPPRESSION of OUR OWN SIN.
- Then there's the YEAR OF JUBILEE...THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR.

Warren Wiersbe writes:

"After seven sabbaticals, or forty-nine years, they were to celebrate the fiftieth year as the "Year of Jubilee." During that year, all debts were canceled, all land was returned to the original owners, the slaves were freed, and everybody was given a fresh new beginning. This was the Lord's way of balancing the economy and keeping the rich from exploiting the poor."

When you and I ACCEPT CHRIST as SAVIOR and LORD...EVERY YEAR is the YEAR OF JUBILEE! Every year is a year our DEBTS HAVE BEEN PAID and WE'VE BEEN SET FREE!

- Back to the people in Jesus' synagogue. What do you think the Jewish people of that day were looking for...PHYSICAL or SPIRITUAL solutions?
- They thought the MESSIAH would come to earth and FIX the POLITICAL SITUATION.
- Why? "Because up here at FIRST SYNAGOGUE OF NAZARETH we already have the SPIRITUAL PART DOWN. And we CERTAINLY don't want to hear about GENTILES!"

Alistair Begg:

"These people didn't have a problem with the Kingdom coming...they didn't like the WAY it was coming. They wanted all the things he promised. SIGHT, FREEDOM, LIBERTY, and they wanted to do what they liked. But they didn't want all this through Jesus. He didn't fit their bill."

So, What's The Takeaway?

Jesus cares about the POOR; about HEALING; about the OPPRESSED. But HIS GOOD NEWS was MORE than a SOCIAL PROGRAM.

John MacArthur

“Everybody who rejects Jesus Christ as Messiah and Savior rejects Him for the very same reason...There's only one reason why people who know the truth of Jesus don't believe, it is because they do not see themselves as the poor, prisoners, blind and oppressed. Because you can't be saved if you don't. God offers nothing to people who are content with their own condition, except judgment.”

- So the FIRST TAKEAWAY is the question: Have each of us ACCEPTED HIS CLAIMS as Messiah and HIS GIFT of SALVATION.
- These FIVE AREAS of Jesus' mission as Messiah did not apply only to Him?
- They apply to ME and YOU as well.
- That means, YES, we are to do all we can for thos who are POOR; HURT; OPPRESSED.
- But the MOST IMPORTANT THING THEY NEED is THE GOOD NEWS; HEALING; and FREEDOM that only comes from SALVATION in Jesus Christ.
- Our challenge? HOW can we as FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST put this into action THIS WEEK