

**Good News**  
**April 18, 2021**  
**Luke 4:16-30, 42-45**

"It was our Lord's custom to attend public worship, a custom His followers should imitate today (Heb. 10:24–25). He might have argued that the 'religious system' was corrupt, or that He didn't need the instruction; but instead, He made His way on the Sabbath to the place of prayer.

A typical synagogue service opened with an invocation for God's blessing and then the recitation of the traditional Hebrew confession of faith (Deut 6:4–9; 11:13–21). This was followed by prayer and the prescribed readings from the Law and from the Prophets, with the reader paraphrasing the Hebrew Scriptures in Aramaic.

This was followed by a brief sermon given by one of the men of the congregation or perhaps by a visiting rabbi (see Acts 13:14–16). If a priest was present, the service closed with a benediction. Otherwise, one of the laymen prayed and the meeting was dismissed.

Jesus was asked to read the Scripture text and to give the sermon. The passage He read included Isaiah 61:1–2, and He selected it for His "text." The Jewish rabbis interpreted this passage to refer to the Messiah, and the people in the synagogue knew it. You can imagine how shocked they were when Jesus boldly said that it was written about Him and that He had come to usher in the 'acceptable year of the Lord.'

The reference here is the 'Year of Jubilee' described in Leviticus 25. Every seventh year was a 'Sabbatical year' for the nation, when the land was allowed to rest; and every fiftieth year (after seven Sabbaticals) was set apart as the 'Year of Jubilee.' The main purpose of this special year was the balancing of the economic system: slaves were set free and returned to their families, property that was sold reverted to the original owners, and all debts were canceled. The land lay fallow as man and beast rested and rejoiced in the Lord.

Jesus applied all of this to His own ministry, not in a political or economic sense, but in a physical and spiritual sense. He had certainly brought Good News of salvation to bankrupt sinners and healing to brokenhearted and rejected people. He had delivered many from blindness and from bondage to demons and disease. Indeed, it was a spiritual 'Year of Jubilee' for the nation of Israel!

The problem was that His listeners would not believe in Him. They saw Him only as the son of Mary and Joseph, the Boy they had watched grow up in their own city. Furthermore, they wanted Him to perform in Nazareth the same miracles He had done in Capernaum, but He refused. That's the meaning of the phrase, 'Physician, heal thyself.' Do a miracle!

At first, they admired the way He taught, but it didn't take long for their admiration to turn into antagonism. Why? *Because Jesus began to remind them of God's goodness to the Gentiles!* The Prophet Elijah bypassed all the Jewish widows and helped a Gentile widow in Sidon (1 Kings 17:8–16), and his successor Elisha healed a Gentile leper from Syria (2 Kings 5:1–15). Our Lord's message of grace was a blow to the proud Jewish exclusivism of the congregation, and they would not repent. Imagine this hometown Boy saying that Jews had to be saved by grace just like the pagan Gentiles!

The congregation was so angry, they took action to kill Jesus! St. Augustine said, 'They love truth when it enlightens them, but hate truth when it accuses them.' That applies well to many congregations today, people who want 'gracious words' (Luke 4:22) but who don't want to face the truth (see John 1:17). ~ **Warren Wiersbe**

*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 at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.*

**Luke 4:18-19**

*Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

**2 Corinthians 5:20**

*How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

**Romans 10:14-15**

The greatest responsibility God has given us (outside of loving Him with all we have) is to go into all the world and make disciples (of all people).

Our responsibility is to shine (make disciples) not curse the darkness.

**Who needs the Good News (Gospel)? Everyone!**

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

**2 Peter 3:9**

1) **I need the Good News.**

*There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God.* **Romans 3:10-11**

*This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* **1 Timothy 1:15**

As a Believer, I need Jesus for salvation (past, present and future tense).

Am I taking in God's Word and communication through prayer? I MUST preach to myself the good news daily, multiple times a day.

2) **My family needs the Good News.**

*So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."*

**Acts 16:31**

The light that shines the farthest shines the brightest at home

How am I telling/sharing the Good News with my family? For salvation and for sanctification.

3) **My "sphere of influence" needs the Good News.**

This is my co-workers, classmates and friends.

We all have a different "sphere of influence" and if we share the Good News with them imagine the number of people hearing the Good News. The best (and Biblical) way to grow a church is not transfer growth but thru salvation/discipleship.

4) **My community needs the Good News.**

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.* **Acts 1:8**

The Quadrennium Project Report provides a projection of likely religious beliefs, preferences and practices for a defined study area. It is based upon the Quadrennium Project national survey conducted by MissionInsite. While general religious data is available through various organizations, only MissionInsite can provide local geography projections that are current. The study area is a 15-minute drive from HCBCH! Email me and I will send you the whole study. Here are just a few of the findings:

- 12.9% believe there is another way to heaven other than Jesus (25.5% no opinion).
- 45% believe abortion should remain legal.
- 28% believe marriage is not just between a man and a woman.
- 38% believe same sex marriage should be legal.
- 11% believe Jesus is not currently reigning as Lord of Heaven and earth, 4.5 somewhat agree and 25.5 % have no opinion.

The issue you see is not the above issues. The issue is does our community know the Gospel and do they know that God desires them to be followers of Jesus and follow His ways?

5) **My world needs the Good News.**

**If we as Believers ignore the fact that our families, our sphere of influence, our community and our world needs the Gospel we are being a disobedient believer!**

**In essence we are saying I am saved and I am good, but literally to hell with everyone else.**

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

**Matthew 24:14**

"He (God) will come when every people group has heard the Gospel. For this reason, he has charged the church, not just generally with getting the Gospel to as many people as we can, but specifically with getting the Gospel to every people group on this planet. Indeed, he is not coming back until this assignment has been accomplished." ~ **David Platt in Radical Together.**

I am done cursing the darkness and just talking about the Gospel I will share it, will you?

Ask God to help you see the opportunities every day, He gives them to you, the fact is we are so busy (me included) with our responsibilities and day to day activities we don't even see the opportunity.

**Prayer Focus:**

- Today, as you're Pastor, I am asking you to pray and to commit to share your faith this week with one person. Don't be selfish and keep Jesus to yourself. Seek to engage others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Secondly, will you commit to not curse the darkness and yet shine the light? We have plenty of darkness observers; we need more light sharers.
- Thirdly, be reminded that there is no "retirement" in sharing the Gospel. While we may retire from our profession we never retire from our possession, Jesus Christ!