

Fulfilled and Rejected; Luke 4:18-21

I. Going Home

- A. Being in the military, I was always in some far off place
 - 1. My parents were in California
 - 2. I was in Alaska, Montana, Wyoming, Iceland, Germany, Japan, Kuwait, Iraq, Spain, England, and I'm sure there are a few other countries I'm missing
 - 3. When I would go home to visit my family, they always remembered me as a younger child, not the man I had grown into
 - 4. We do the same thing with our children
 - 5. I have 6 children who are grown and out on their own, 3 of which are married
 - 6. But I still remember them as a child
 - 7. Debi will always be my two year old with her bangs hanging down in her eyes
 - 8. Maybe you have that aunt or uncle that wants to pinch your cheek and give you a big hug
 - 9. We always look forward to going home — until we get there
- B. I imagine that is what it must have been like for Jesus — who is, at this time, around 30
- C. Bill Bryson, an American writer, once said, "There are three things you just can't do in life. You can't beat the phone company, you can't make a waiter see you until he is ready to see you, and you can't go home again."

II. Fulfilled

- A. Jesus gives us the Gospel in the Synagogue
- B. Luke 4:16 (ESV); And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.
- C. "As was his custom"
 - 1. As parents that is what we want for our children
 - 2. When they grow up and leave the house we want them to be faithful to God in all things, including meeting with the saints
 - 3. I want my children to be involved, not just show up and sit in a pew
 - 4. Jesus parents must have been really proud of Him — chosen to read the scroll at church!
 - 5. I'm sure His family and friends were beaming with pride!
 - 6. Verse 22 says (in part), "and all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from His mouth."
- D. Luke 4:17–19 (ESV); ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
- E. He was given the scroll of Isaiah, but he searched for and "found the place" where he read
- F. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
 - 1. There is no doubt in my mind that Jesus is referencing his baptism
 - 2. Luke 3:21–22 (ESV); ²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
 - 3. Jesus uses this statement from Isaiah to make His claim as the Messiah
- G. Proclaim good news to the poor
 - 1. We have to differentiate poor economically from poor spiritually
 - 2. The good news is the Gospel
 - 3. Those who are poor spiritually have good news, Jesus has come to reconcile us back to God
- H. Liberty to the captives — absolution

1. "The act of freeing and liberating from something that confines, release" ¹
 2. The Law of Moses made it plain that they were held captive by sin
 3. Every time an Israelite had to bring an offering to the temple they were faced with their sin
 4. "The image is not that of prisoners in jail but of prisoners of war who are dragged away into exile by the conqueror. So the devil holds men as captives with no hope of escape by any means of their own." ²
 5. The good news is that we are no longer in that predicament — we have been freed!
- I. Recovering sight to the blind — faith
1. If you read Isaiah 61:1-2 you will not find this statement
 2. The Septuagint is the earliest translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek — it was translated around 300-200 BC
 3. "To blind people return of sight" is the LXX's (*septuagint*) rendering of the Hebrew "the opening of the prison to bound people... so that we must understand "blind (ones)" to refer to "bound" captives in dark dungeons" ³
 4. Ephesians 4:18 (KJV 1900); Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:
 5. We were caught up in sin, bound up in the deep darkness of a dungeon — but the Good News, faith in Jesus, has set us free
- J. Liberty for the oppressed — release (from misery)
1. To send away in release — used in regards to captives in this same verse
 2. Jesus has released us from our broken condition (sin)
 3. "The inner connection of the terms has not always been seen. "Poor" is a general term for the entire beggarly condition. This is then specified in three directions: as needing absolution, the sight of faith, the release from misery. What a glorious task is assigned to Jesus to bring the effective bestowal of these priceless blessings to these "poor"!" ⁴
- K. Year of the Lord's favor
1. Everything is done in God's time
 2. Jesus proclaims that this is the year that God chose to announce the Messiah
 3. Again, that goes right back to God saying, "You are My beloved Son; with you I AM well pleased."
 4. Isaiah sums up the Gospel in two verses
- L. Jesus tells them that the time they have been waiting for — since Moses — had arrived
- III. Rejected
- A. The people reacted favorably at first
1. I can see them smiling and patting each other on the back
 2. "Spoke will of Him," "marveled at the gracious words"
 3. And then someone says, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"
 4. They switched gears back to the family and friends that remember him as a child — how can Joseph's son, the one we all remember as a kid, be the Messiah?
- B. Jesus next words are a serious rebuke to his family and friends

¹ William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 155.

² R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 250–251.

³ *Ibid*, 251.

⁴ *Ibid*, 252.

- C. Luke 4:23 (ESV); And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Physician, heal yourself.’ What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.’”
 - 1. We hear those words in Luke 23:39 and Matthew 27:42
 - 2. Jesus is on the cross and one of the criminals with him says, “save yourself and us”
 - D. Luke 4:24–27 (ESV); ²⁴ And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”
 - E. The Widow of Zarephath — 1 Kings 17:9ff
 - 1. The never-ending oil and flour
 - 2. With the famine encompassing all the land — including Israel — Elijah was sent to help a Gentile
 - 3. There were many widows who needed help in Israel, but Elijah was sent to only this one — a Gentile
 - 4. The unasked and unanswered question is why — because Israel had rejected God
 - 5. They knew the answer
 - F. Naaman — 2 Kings 5:1-14
 - 1. Of all the lepers to be cleansed — a Syrian general
 - 2. Syria and Assyria were different nations
 - 3. Their founders were the sons of Shem (Genesis 10:22)
 - 4. Aram founded Syria and Ashur founded Assyria
 - 5. The capital of Assyria was Nineveh and the capital of Syria was Damascus
 - 6. The Old Testament records that Damascus fought against Israel in many battles
 - 7. 2 Samuel 8:5–6 (ESV); ⁵ And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians. ⁶ Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.
 - 8. Assyria conquered Syria and then went on to take Israel into captivity in 722 BC
 - 9. If there is only to be one leper cleansed during that time why would it be a Gentile — because Israel had rejected God
 - G. The Gospel is fulfilled — and rejected — at Nazareth
 - H. The people there let their own preconceived ideas of who the Messiah was supposed to be get in the way of the Gospel
- IV. The Gospel
- A. We have had the Gospel preached to us for many years, yet we still have some of our own preconceived ideas that get in the way
 - 1. This is why we have denominations
 - 2. We all want our preconceived ideas to be the right ones
 - 3. People reject the parts of the Bible they don’t like or want to obey (Naaman)
 - 4. Just like Naaman, they want a show
 - 5. But God has given us the Gospel
 - B. It is right here — don’t reject it!