



One Messiah for all the World

Sermon for October 17, 2021

Luke 4:17-30

Sermon Introduction

This week we are doing part two of a two-week series on the mission and ministry of Jesus.

I am going to read our scripture passage now.

Please listen and open your hearts to God speaking to us in His Word.

Luke 4:17-30

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."

20 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

21 And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

22 And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

23 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.' "

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."

28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.

29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

30 But passing through their midst, he went away.

Together we read Isaiah 40:8:

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Please pray with me.

Father in heaven, thank you for sending Jesus the Messiah.

When we pray in His name, we know you receive our prayers.

So we ask you, Father, in the name of Jesus, to send the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds.

Help us see Jesus clearly.

Help us receive him and not reject him.

We pray in his name.

Amen.

Last week we looked closely at verses 17-21.

But I read them to you today so you would understand the context.

Today we will start by looking at verse 22.

Here is our outline for today's sermon.

Point 1: Jesus the son of Joseph (Luke 4:22-24)

Point 2: Jesus is the Messiah for the Whole World (Luke 4:25-27)

Point 3: Jesus Died According to the Father's Plan (Luke 4:28-30)

Point 1: Jesus the son of Joseph (Luke 4:22-24)

Verse 22: And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

The people who heard Jesus speak said positive things about him.

But if you look closely at what they said, they complimented how he talked.

To me, it doesn't sound like they believed what he said.

Jesus was claiming to be more than an eloquent rabbi.

He said that he was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah who made God's promises come true.

That was hard for them to believe because they knew him.

Jesus was about 30 years old when this event happened.

The people there remembered when he was a child.

That's why they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Now let's look together at what Jesus said in response to them.

Verse 23-24:

23 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.' "

24 And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown."

The people had heard stories about the miracles Jesus had done in Capernaum, a city near Nazareth. You can see it on the map [here](#).

The people who remember Jesus as a boy wanted some evidence that he was more than a man.

They were thinking in their hearts, "If he will show us some miracles, then maybe we will believe."

Maybe you have thought the same thing?

Maybe when you find faith difficult, you have wanted God to do a miracle to help you believe?

We all do that.

I think that's one reason Jesus came 2000 years ago and not 20 years ago.

20 years ago we had video cameras, and people would demand to see video evidence of Jesus' miracles.

But even video evidence would not be enough to have true faith in Jesus.

People who personally saw Jesus perform miracles are the people who rejected him and had him killed.

Only God can give true faith because our hearts are dead in sin.

Only God can give us new life and eyes of faith.

In Matthew chapter 12 Jesus was talking to some skeptical people.

People like those in Nazareth who struggled to believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

Scribes and Pharisees were religious leaders who should have recognized that Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies about the Messiah.

But their hearts were dark with pride and unbelief.

Let's see what Jesus says to them about their request for miracles.

Matthew 12:38–40 —

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Jesus, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you."

39 But Jesus answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Maybe you remember the story of the prophet Jonah? He was a Jewish prophet.

God told him to go to Nineveh.

You can see it here on the map, where Mosul is today in Iraq.
Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire, and many evil things were done there.
But God wanted Jonah to tell the people of Nineveh that God could forgive them.
If they would repent of their sin, God would forgive them and save them.
Jonah didn't like the idea of the Assyrian people being God's people.
Jonah disobeyed God.
He went the opposite direction in a boat and almost drowned.
But God is merciful.
God sent a big fish or whale to rescue Jonah.
Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days.
After that, Jonah went to Nineveh and gave them God's message.

Why does Jesus tell this story in Matthew 12?
Because the Jewish leaders asked for a miracle.
Instead of the kind of miracle they wanted, Jesus predicted the most-important miracle ever.
Jesus told the religious leaders that very soon they would execute him.
Jesus told them he would die and be buried in the ground for three days.
But that was not the end of the story.
Because the grave cannot hold an innocent man who is also the Son of God.

Why did an innocent man have to die by crucifixion?
That is the punishment of criminals.
But Jesus was willing to experience that shameful execution, because his heart is so big.
God's heart wants people all over the world to trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins.
But even prophets like Jonah have trouble understanding the heart of God.
Let's look at what happened after Jonah shared God's message of salvation in Nineveh.

Jonah 3:1-5, 3:10, 4:1

1 Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying,
2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you."
3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth.
4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"
5 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them...
10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.
Jonah 4:1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry.

I am amazed and disappointed by Jonah.

Jonah was a prophet of God who was rescued from death by the mercy of God alone.

He disobeyed God's direct command but God gave him a second chance to obey.

Then Jonah delivered the message of mercy to Nineveh and the people were saved.

They repented of their sin and put their faith in the one true God.

But Jonah was angry about it!

Why?

Because he was being a racist.

His heart was closed to people of a different culture and language.

This is one reason I believe the Bible is true.

Because the heroes in God's Word are not perfect.

We see sin and failure even in the prophets and kings and heroes of the Bible.

Jonah wanted God's mercy and blessings to be for him and his people alone.

He was angry that God was merciful to the Assyrian people.

Now let's return to our text in Luke 4 to see what Jesus said about God's mercy.

Point 2: Jesus is the Messiah for the Whole World (Luke 4:25-27)

Verse 25-26:

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.

Like Jonah, Elijah was a prophet sent by God to a foreign country.

There was a drought in Israel, and people were hungry.

But Elijah didn't help the widows in Israel.

God sent him to a poor widow outside of Israel.

After Elijah helped the widow, she said this in 1 Kings 17:24 —

"Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth."

This foreign widow responded with faith in the one true God.

After reminding the crowd about her, Jesus next reminded the crowd about another story of God's mercy.

Verse 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."

Elisha was another prophet who God used to show mercy to foreigners.
Naaman was a Syrian General.
He was an enemy of Israel.
Because Naaman was a leper, he went searching for help from God.
After he received help and healing, Naaman responded with faith in the one true God.
He learned that God's hand and heart can reach anyone in the world.

From the very beginning of time, God intended to create one community of people who worship God in spirit and truth.
But we all desire safety and comfort very much.
People who are different can make us feel unsafe and uncomfortable.
That's why we draw circles to include people who are like us in our communities.
And we exclude people who are different.

We forget that God made people different because he is creative and wants to bless us.
He could have made one flower, right?
He could have made just one kind of vegetable.
But look at all the beauty God created with these different kinds of flowers.
Look at all the different foods we can enjoy because of the variety in God's creation.

In the same way, our God made people in many colors.
We have many different cultures, languages, and customs.
This variety adds to the beauty and glory of God's family.
But in Nazareth, the people were not excited when Jesus reminded them about God's heart for foreigners from Zarephath and Syria.
The crowd in the synagogue should have remembered what their Bibles said.

Let's look together at what God promised Abraham in Genesis 17:3-5.
3 Abram fell facedown, and God said to him,
4 "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations.
5 No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations."

God gave Abraham that name because it means "father of many nations."
God's global rescue plan started back in the beginning of our bibles.
Jesus told these stories in Nazareth to reveal that he was a part of God's promise to Abraham.
Jesus the Savior came to earth as the most-important part of God's global rescue plan.
But a lot of people do not like God's plan.
Let's look at how the crowd responded after Jesus reminded them of God's mercy to foreigners.

Point 3: Jesus Died According to the Father's Plan (Luke 4:28-30)

28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.

29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

30 But passing through their midst, he went away.

It is very important that you see here what made everyone so angry.

They weren't angry when Jesus said in verse 21: "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah.

But the people weren't angry about that.

They wanted the Messiah to come and help Israel.

However, when Jesus reminded them about God's grace to foreigners, the people were filled with wrath.

They wanted to kill him immediately.

They were okay with God sending help to Israel.

But they were not okay with God sending help to foreigners.

Jesus is a controversial person.

When we understand him correctly, Jesus should cause us to respond strongly.

Seeing Jesus accurately should make people run to him in faith, or be angry with him because you don't like his message.

Many people today are angry with Jesus because he said in John 14:6 —

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Other people are angry with Jesus because he calls everyone sinners.

He said in Luke 5:31–32 —

31 "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

32 I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Just like the people of Nineveh, we can only be saved if we take our sins seriously and repent.

Our sin problem is so serious that the perfect and sinless son of God had to shed his holy blood to wash you clean.

However, his death did not happen in Nazareth that day when the crowd tried to kill him.

He just walked away from them.

The sacrifice of Jesus could only happen when the Father said the time was right.

Jesus the Lamb of God was sent to earth with a mission.

The Father sent Jesus to die for anyone who will repent of their sin.
That message is not popular with many people.
But if you look in your heart with honesty, you know you need forgiveness.
When you ask Jesus to forgive you and wash you clean, he is very happy to do it!
Please don't wait any longer to invite Jesus to be your Savior.

After God saves us, we are sometimes surprised to learn that our sin problem is deeper than we thought.

All of us can be like Jonah.

Jonah was not happy to see God's mercy extended to the Assyrian people.

Sometimes we are tempted to look at other people and question God's wisdom for saving them.

We need to repent of that because God is wiser and more welcoming than we are.

We are building a welcoming church family here.

We are building a community that reflects the promise God made through the prophet Isaiah.

In Isaiah 49:6 God says:

"It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."

God planned from the very beginning to save people from every culture and ethnicity and language.

I love One Voice Fellowship because we get to see a little part of God's plan in motion.

But building a church like this will not be easy, my friends.

Our hearts can easily be like the heart of Jonah.

Therefore, we continue to need the mercy of Jesus after he gives us eyes of faith and eternal life in our hearts.

We need God's grace to live a life of grace.

Let's pray together now.

Father, thank you sending your Son Jesus, the Messiah, to save us from eternal death.

As your children, we have eternal life as a free gift.

Help us remember that this gift is offered freely to anyone, from any culture or nation.

Anyone who repents of sin and trusts in Jesus for salvation becomes your child.

We are amazed by your mercy and grace.

Use us for your glory in all we do, we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.