

**Called to Ministry Class 7**  
**Jesus' Sermon in Nazareth**  
**Luke 4:16ff**

Here we see Jesus' understanding of the Gospel message on display. In the Synagogue there was a lectionary, or set of assigned texts used liturgically. The 'ruler' of the Synagogue was assigned to find a preacher for each Sabbath and would give them the text assigned for the day. Jesus' text was Is 61:1ff. In perhaps the shortest sermon ever preached, Jesus' message, "This scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing..."

Our four part formula of calling is evident in this passage as well

Jesus reveals His calling in Public. The entrance or intervention by God to deliver has begun, since the Year of Jubilee has arrived. 4:19 (Lev 25 as background)

The Spirit of Yahweh is upon Jesus in power, 4:18a.

Jesus recognizes his identity as the Christ or Anointed One, 4:18b.

His mission is explained as proclaiming or announcing or preaching that the Year of Jubilee has begun, Good News to the Poor, Blind, and Oppressed to inaugurate the Year of the Lord's Favor, the end of the exile and the rolling back of the curses that have come upon Israel. 4:18c.

This sermon follows in Luke's Gospel the Divine announcement and commissioning of Jesus at His baptism, as we saw last week. It also follows Luke's review of Jesus' qualification in terms of His genealogy, and Triumph over the Enemy at the Temptation in the wilderness. Now Luke seeks to set Jesus and His ministry in the context of larger salvation history by grounding His public ministry in Isaiah's prophecy of God's deliverance.

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**Some have pointed out a chiastic or X structure...notice the A)Synagogue setting, B)Jesus' standing and sitting down, A')Jesus being given the Scroll, B')Jesus' opening and closing the Scroll, C) At the center the reading of Is 61:1,2; and its tie to 58:6.**

**The background in Isaiah's prophecy anticipates the Good News of ch 61 in chapters 58-60, where the call to repentance comes with the promise of God's salvation and deliverance. Lev 26:40f as background. Chapter 61 is special because it identifies an individual as the Proclaimer who receives special anointing by the Spirit. The individual has parallels to the servant figure of ch 40-55. Anointing by the Spirit recalls Is 42:1 that we looked at last week in the Baptism, and 'being sent recalls Is 48:16. Similarly, 'opening the eyes of the blind and bringing out prisoners' recalls 42:7. 'The Year of the Lord's favor recalls the 'time of favor' in 49:8. All of this is preparation for the reversal of Israel's fortunes...they have come under of the oppression of their enemies through their consistent covenant unfaithfulness but God promised that he would not abandon them to their foes forever...one day he would intervene to deliver them...and Jesus is announcing that that day had dawned. Is 61:1, 2 serves as the job description for Jesus' earthly ministry. This is evident in Lk 7:22; in Acts 10:35-38. Further, it should shape our understanding of our mission...it is the program of God.**

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**It also gives us insight as to what salvation looks like on a cosmic scale...it is more than the forgiveness of our sins individually, though that is essential, and the beginning, for us. But reconciled and pardoned sinners become cross bearing soldiers, members of the royal family, ambassadors of the reigning King, ordained ministers of God, the Maker and Ruler of Heaven and Earth. God envisions a world in which people treat each other with respect and kindness not oppression and cruelty, a world in which the weak are cared for by the strong, where sin is not known or desired, where the creation is respected as stewarded as belonging to someone else and on loan to us, a world in which God would be seen as Lord of all and worshipped and served joyfully and generously by those to whom God has been merciful, kind and generous.**

**The themes introduced in this passage form trajectories that go far beyond this passage both forwards and backwards.**

**The rejection by Jews of God's rescue See Deut 32:15-21; Rom 10:19**

**The ministry and inclusion of the Gentiles, same passages...Judgment/Salvation always two sides of the same event. Penultimate judgment is intended to avoid Final Judgment for Israel.**

**The role of the Spirit traced throughout Jesus' ministry and throughout the Book of Acts**

**Finally, the powerful nature of the Word...like the logos of Creation, authoritative and sovereignly effective...God spoke...and it was...**

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**It is critical that we become more competent in our knowledge of the Word...particularly in our ministry to Jewish friends...must be done with respect, kindness, humility...our objective is not to convert but to bear witness from the Bible and to seek understanding together...conversion is God's work, witness is our work. But we need to be able to articulate what the Bible says, and to thoughtfully engage and ask questions and seek to learn as well as to teach.**

**We must be open to those that God sends across our path...to love, care for, encourage, and wonder and worship together with them.**

**We need to hear the story of God's relentless love for his lost and fallen creation, of which we are a part...so much so that God sent his son into the world to save the world...and has touched our lives that through our lives that other lives might be touched and saved as well.**

**Finally, to see our own suffering as ministry like the Cross and Burning Bush...it is not promised that we will not suffer or know loss or pain or disappointment...but will we persevere when we cannot see where we are going...trusting that God's promises are true?**