

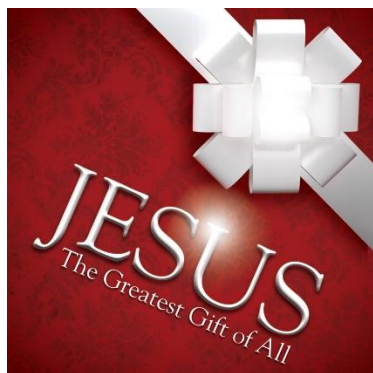
Proclaiming the Best Gift

Luke 4:14-22

Online Sermon:

http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page_id=3567

Once again Christmas is just around the corner. Christmas is the time of year when in trying to express our love for others we seek high and low for the very best gifts to give them! We go to crowded shopping malls to find the “right” gift



only later to be left in wonder if they truly liked the gift we have slavishly search and found? But what if we were to examine the true meaning of Christmas, is there not a gift we can give that would truly fill our loved ones with wonder, peace, and inexpressible joy? The answer of course is YES, what better gift to

give than an introduction to the Babe lying in the manger? Jesus emptied Himself of His glory in heaven, was born amongst us and paid the price for our sins so that we would be offered forgiveness and eternal life! Many of our family, friends and acquaintances are destined to hell and we have glorious news to offer them that the Lord wishes none of them to be damned but saved! While most Christians understand the need for

giving the reasons why they have hope in Jesus, many refuse to plant or water seeds of righteousness! While indifference is one reason for not proclaiming the Good News, for most Christians it is not knowing how to proclaim that stops them for giving others such an amazing gift. They fear in proclaiming Jesus they will jeopardize relationships that they hold most dear, family and friends. They also fear they will not know what to say that honors God and reaches them or that the person witnessing too might see the hypocrisy of their living for this world and detract another from even looking at God’s gift!

The following sermon is going to examine how Jesus told the Jewish people and his family and friends about the Good News so that we might imitate His example and be the gift introducing ambassadors God wants us to be on His Son’s birthday!

Witnessing in the Spirit

“Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him” (14-15)

After having been tested and having defeated Satan in the wilderness, Luke tells us that Jesus returned to “his home

region of Galilee to begin His preaching and healing ministry.”¹ Luke portrays Jesus not as the “limping survivor of the temptation experience” but as one who being in the Spirit was



“righteous and vindicated by God.”² From His conception (1:35), to His baptism (3:22), to His temptation in the wilderness (4:1) and now at the start of His

ministry;³ each step Jesus took was in the power of the Holy Spirit.⁴ News soon spread about Jesus “through the whole countryside” to the point that He frequently got invited and

taught in the Jewish synagogues and “everyone praised Him” (14). While Luke doesn’t give us reasons for Jesus’ popularity when we turn to Matthew and Mark’s account of the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, we learn that when in Galilee He “healed every sickness among the people,” casted out demons, and taught the people as one who had authority in word and deed (Matthew 4:23-25, Mark 1:21-28).⁵ Considering “first-century Jews believed that the Holy Spirit ceased speaking directly to God’s people at the end of the prophetic era in Israel,⁶ to hear One speak with authority of the Spirit would have been truly remarkable! Due to His performing miracles and teaching with authority Jesus soon became famous⁷ and earned a “reputation as a respected rabbi and teacher.”⁸ The Jewish synagogues asked this “well known” rabbi Jesus to speak at their facilities⁹ quite frequently.¹⁰ While Luke does not mention what Jesus

¹ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 361.

² James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 133.

³ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 114.

⁴ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 114.

⁵ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 114.

⁶ James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 133.

⁷ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 114.

⁸ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 361.

⁹ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 114.

¹⁰ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 114–115.

taught in Galilee¹¹ Matthew tells us that His message was the Good News (4:23) that we will hear about in later verses. While hearing about Jesus' teaching in the Jewish synagogues seems strange to us "after the cross" readers, it was only "after the Messianic hopes of conquest and power"¹² were dashed by the Suffering Servant of Isaiah that the Pharisees made the doors of the synagogue's hostile to Jesus!¹³ For now Luke wants us to know that the response to Jesus' teaching in the synagogue was the Greek word "doxazo" which was normally reserved for praise only for God Himself.¹⁴

The Good News

“He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day He went into the synagogue, as was His custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. Unrolling it, He found the place where it was written.” (16-17)

¹¹ Craig A. Evans, [The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary: Matthew–Luke](#), ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 2003), 91.

¹² H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., [St. Luke](#), vol. 1, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 89.

¹³ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:15.

¹⁴ Darrell L. Bock, [Luke](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 135.

After having moved to Capernaum¹⁵ and spending a year in public ministry,¹⁶ Jesus visits the town in which He was brought up, Nazareth. Even though this village only had about



four hundred people and "only dirt roads,"¹⁷ it contained a Jewish synagogue. It is at this point that Luke tells us when the Sabbath arrived, as per His custom, Jesus went to the

synagogue. This was apparently the first time Jesus had returned to the synagogue that He attended as a child since His public ministry.¹⁸ A typical synagogue service consisted of singing from one of Psalms 145-150, followed by an opening prayer, confession of the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), further

¹⁵ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 115.

¹⁶ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:16.

¹⁷ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 115.

¹⁸ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:16.

prayers, readings from the Law and prophets,¹⁹ a sermon, and then a closing with the Aaronic benediction.²⁰ Since Jesus was the “hometown boy”²¹ with a stellar reputation for doing miracles and being a rabbi who taught with authority, we can safely assume that the synagogue was packed! The crowd was not dismayed for when it was time to read from the prophets, i.e., the Haftarah, Jesus stood up²² which was the Jewish custom to show respect to the authority of Scripture.²³ You can almost feel the anticipation build for the tone of this reading would dominate the rest of Jesus’ public ministry!²⁴ The “ruler of the synagogue” or “minister”²⁵ selected the scroll of Isaiah²⁶ and gave it to Jesus. Since “there is no evidence that Jewish lectionary readings were prescribed as early as the first century,”²⁷ those attending were likely wondering, “what

passage would Jesus choose?” It was not by chance but by the Spirit²⁸ that Jesus opened to the Messianic passage of Isaiah 61!

The synagogue, i.e., the “religious, social, and educational nucleus of the Jewish community”²⁹ and the whole world was about to change! It is at this point that I can’t help but wonder if we are excited when we read Scripture and like Jesus do we prioritize attending church above all other things happening in our lives? Did Jesus not say we “are not to live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God and “seek ye first the kingdom of God” (Matthew 4:4, 6:33)?

¹⁹ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 115–116.

²⁰ R. Kent Hughes, [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 140.

²¹ R. Kent Hughes, [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 140.

²² R. Kent Hughes, [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 141.

²³ Craig A. Evans, “[Luke](#),” in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*, ed. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2020), 908.

²⁴ Grant R. Osborne, [Luke: Verse by Verse](#), ed. Jeffrey Reimer, Elliot Ritzema, and Danielle Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 115.

²⁵ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:17.

²⁶ Thabiti Anyabwile, [Exalting Jesus in Luke](#), Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), Lk 4:16–20.

²⁷ James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 136.

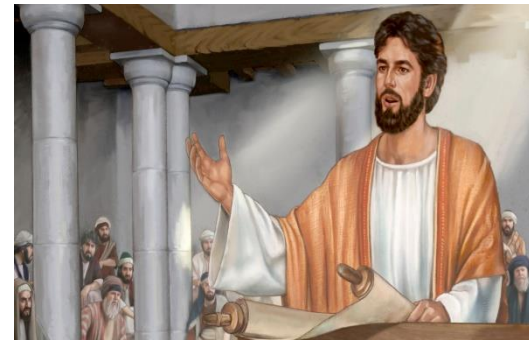
²⁸ Marvin Richardson Vincent, [Word Studies in the New Testament](#), vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1887), 290.

²⁹ James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 135.

“The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim the Good News to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (18-19)

As Jesus stood, opened the scroll, and spoke the words of Isaiah 61:1-2, the crowd quickly realized Jesus had an agenda! This passage was familiar and a great source of hope for the Jewish people of Jesus’ day because it was Isaiah’s prophetic “announcement of the deliverance and release of those in Babylonian exile.”³⁰ While a remnant of Israel had centuries ago returned from Babylon “most of them were still scattered and their own land was crushed under what seemed like a hopeless servitude; poverty, ignorance, universal discontent, reigned alike in Jerusalem, and garrisoned with Roman legionaries.”³¹ As Jesus read Isaiah 61 they soon realized that Jesus was not reading the text verbatim! For example, He omitted the phrase “binding up the brokenhearted” in verse two and added the phrase “to set the oppressed free” from 58:6.³² This was significant considering that Isaiah 58 was God’s indictment against Israel for “not being

a source of liberty for those who are oppressed!”³³ Also, while Jesus quotes verbatim the first part of verse two, “to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor,” He omits the next phrase of Isaiah, “and the day of the Lord’s vengeance” which the Israelite people looked forward to being applied against her pagan enemies!³⁴ While the reading of Isaiah 61 rightly brought to the



people’s minds “Isaiah’s related portraits of the messianic King (11:1-2), and the Servant of the Lord (42:1),” by changing Isaiah 61:1-2 Jesus pointed to the truth

that Israel did not understand Isaiah’s portrait of the “prophetic herald of salvation.”³⁵ Since this would be the primary focus of Jesus’ ministry let’s take some time to reflect on the Good News of our Lord.

³⁰ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 362.

³¹ H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., [St. Luke](#), vol. 1, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 89.

³² James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 137.

³³ Darrell L. Bock, [Luke](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 137.

³⁴ Walter L. Liefeld, [“Luke,”](#) in [The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 867.

³⁵ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 362.

While the Jewish people looked forward to the Messiah's arrival because they thought He would defeat Rome, thus granting them freedom from their oppression,³⁶ Jesus' ministry description of "Israel's Spirit-filled Redeemer" was very different than what they expected!³⁷ The Holy Spirit had anointed Jesus to proclaim the Good News to four classes of



people: the poor, the prisoners, the blind, and the oppressed.³⁸ While Isaiah wrote the poor are God's people who have been exiled because of disobedience (40-66),³⁹ for Jesus His definition of the "poor" was far more inclusive! For Jesus the poor were those who had "no status, honor or glory before God"⁴⁰ due to their sin and/or their supposed position in society. Sin drives a wedge between us and our sinless holy God (1 John 1:5-8)! Later in His Galilean ministry Jesus made it clear

that the primary focus of His earthly ministry was that "The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost (in sin Luke 19:10).⁴¹ For Jesus anyone who was "impoverished in their sin,"⁴² especially the economically poor and marginalized, are offered salvation. Entrance into the kingdom of God would not be based on "education, gender, family heritage, religious purity, vocation or one's economic status!"⁴³ In Matthew it states that any destitute, beggar could come before the Master's table and receive the bread of life (15:21-28)! And in the Gospel of John, Jesus said, "everyone who drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14)!

The Good News is that the Messiah came to "proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (18). Since Jesus did not literally release any prisoners for religious or political reasons during His ministry, not even John the Baptist who was not only imprisoned but later

³⁶ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 54.

³⁷ James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 136.

³⁸ R. Kent Hughes, [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 141.

³⁹ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 54.

⁴⁰ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 55.

⁴¹ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 55.

⁴² Thabiti Anyabwile, [Exalting Jesus in Luke](#), Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), Lk 4:16-20.

⁴³ Joel B. Green, [The Gospel of Luke](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 211.

beheaded (Mark 6:14-19),⁴⁴ unlike Isaiah “freedom” for Jesus meant not a release from an earthly enemy such as Babylon but release from a much greater spiritual enemy, Satan!⁴⁵ “Release” in Luke-Acts and elsewhere in the Bible means “forgiveness of one’s sins.”⁴⁶ Apostle Paul wrote that the “god



of this age masquerading himself as an angel of light has blinded the minds of unbelievers and left them as slaves to sin (2 Corinthians 4:4, 11:14; Romans 6:15-23).⁴⁷ The Good News that

Jesus told the people of the Jewish synagogue was that the Messiah of the “year of the Lord’s favor had come.” This phrase referred to the year of Jubilee as described in Leviticus 25 in which all debts were forgiven, and slaves set free (8-17).⁴⁸ The Good News Jesus declared on that day was that the “captives

sitting in darkness,”⁴⁹ “oppressed, broken in pieces, shattered, and crushed by sin”⁵⁰ had seen a great Light that would cancel the debts of their transgressions and usher in by God’s sovereign grace.

They would be released from the humanly unbreakable hold Satan had on their lives!⁵¹ through forgiveness and divine deliverance!”⁵² Praise be to God the fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1-2, Jesus Christ, provided the means for all people everywhere to be released from the bondage of sin, to be made right with God, and inherit eternal salvation!

Thankfully the Good News Jesus announced in the synagogue in his hometown was that salvation is not earned but a gift of God’s grace!”⁵³

⁴⁴ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 55.

⁴⁵ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 362.

⁴⁶ Joel B. Green, [The Gospel of Luke](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 211–212.

⁴⁷ Alan Carr, [“The Mission of the Messiah \(Luke 4:14–22\),”](#) in *The Sermon Notebook: New Testament* (Lenoir, NC: Alan Carr, 2015), 1276.

⁴⁸ Walter L. Liefeld, [“Luke,”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelien, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 867.

⁴⁹ Marvin Richardson Vincent, [Word Studies in the New Testament](#), vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1887), 291.

⁵⁰ R. Kent Hughes, [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 142.

⁵¹ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:18.

⁵² Darrell L. Bock, [Luke](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 136.

⁵³ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 55.

Responding to the Good News

“Then He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on Him. He began by saying to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” All spoke well of Him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from His lips. Isn’t this Joseph’s Son? They asked?” (20-22)

Once Jesus finished reading, we are told that Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant⁵⁴ to be put away in its case⁵⁵ and as was the custom of his day sat down (Matthew 5:1-2, 26:55; Luke 5:3) in the chair reserved for the Rabbi⁵⁶ for subsequent teaching. The rumors from Galilee about Jesus being an exceptionally gifted teacher had not been exaggerated⁵⁷ for Luke tells us that the “eyes of everyone were fastened” on their homeboy! The crowd waited in great anticipation wondering how He would further expound on “such powerful and emotionally charged words!”⁵⁸ It is not that Jesus said anything that they had not already read but merely that He had

⁵⁴ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#), vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 362.

⁵⁵ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:20.

⁵⁶ H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., [St. Luke](#), vol. 1, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 89.

⁵⁷ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:22.

⁵⁸ John G Mason, [Luke: An Unexpected God](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Second Edition., Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2019), 56.

spoken in the power of the Holy Spirit as one with authority that made His reading truly remarkable! When seated Jesus gave them the “one-sentence sermon that exploded with every word,”⁵⁹ Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Without referring to the “words of apocalyptic eschatology,”⁶⁰ Jesus



claimed that the year of the Lord’s favor was upon them for the “Messianic prophecy of Isaiah had come true today, and that in Him they saw the Messiah of prophecy!”⁶¹ There would be no “fence-sitting” for Jesus was inviting each one

present to personally decide whether to embrace His proclaimed Good News or outright reject it!⁶² The response the crowd gave was amazement at His gracious words but one of questioning His identity. When they asked themselves, “isn’t his Joseph’s son,” it had mixed meaning for on the one hand they were impressed the homeboy and carpenter’s son had

⁵⁹ Thabiti Anyabwile, [Exalting Jesus in Luke](#), Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), Lk 4:21–27.

⁶⁰ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:21.

⁶¹ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:21.

⁶² Darrell L. Bock, [Luke](#), The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), Lk 4:16–30.

become such a gifted Rabbi⁶³ but on the other hand they could not accept that such a humble “man” could possibly fulfill all the things declared by Isaiah!”⁶⁴ While they were initially unmoved and likely did not understand the significance of the Good News message,⁶⁵ their wonder and praise of Jesus’ gracious words soon turned to “whispers and nods and even scowls to doubt and hostility”⁶⁶ as can be seen in the Lord’s statement, “no prophet is accepted in His hometown” (24). “Rarely does a sermon – especially a one-line sermon – elicit such roller coaster response!”⁶⁷

Your Choice!

Christmas is upon us, and we too are left with a similar decision, “what will we as born-again believers do with the Good News of Isaiah 61?” There is much that can be learned from the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. First, if we truly desire to walk in the footsteps of our Lord then proclamation of the Good News must be a priority over Christmas shopping, gifts, visitation, and food! Don’t you love those who are spiritually blind and still imprisoned by sin enough to tell them the reason for the hope you have in the Messiah (1 Peter 3:15)? Second,

⁶³ Thabiti Anyabwile, [Exalting Jesus in Luke](#), Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), Lk 4:21–27.

⁶⁴ Darrell L. Bock, [Luke](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 137.

⁶⁵ R. Kent Hughes, [Luke: That You May Know the Truth](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 142–143.

if we are to convince the self-infatuated people who are blinded by the god of this age their need for a savior don’t attempt to do so without the power of the Holy Spirit! The need for salvation is not seen and accepted with clever words but through the Spirit who lights the dark highways of their lives



with the One who is the way, truth, and life! Third, don’t be quick to write any off as unredeemable. Remember in today’s passage Jesus began His ministry by going to the Jewish synagogue and

telling them they could be saved from their sins! Fourth, the closer you are to the person you are witnessing too the more the person knows whether your lifestyle matches those walking in the light. As with everyone and even more so with family and friends live for Jesus so that your deeds point to the glory of God the Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16) and not your hypocrisy. And finally, since the lost are yet able to understand deep spiritual truths keep your witnessing to the basics of the

⁶⁶ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Lk 4:22.

⁶⁷ James R. Edwards, [The Gospel according to Luke](#), ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2015), 138.

Good News, lest the message gets lost in foolish human arguments.

Christmas is almost here, and you have a decision to make: will you tell those around you what the Babe lying in the manger means to you or will you remain silent and let them perish?
