

Showing the Authority of Jesus as He begins His Ministry

a chiasmic or focused outline of Luke 4:14-44

- A Jesus teaches in the synagogue, gloried by all:** 4:14 "Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all."
- B Jesus sent to heal the sick:** 4:16 "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 "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; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." 20 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."
- C People are amazed:** 4:22 "So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?""
- D "brood of vipers" rebuked:** 4:23 "He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.' " 24 Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. 25 But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; 26 but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." 28 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. 30 Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way."
- E Word of Jesus has authority!** 4:31 "Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. 32 And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority."
- D Demons rebuked:** 4:33 "Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, 34 saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!" 35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him."
- C People are amazed:** 4:36 "Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." 37 And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region."
- B Jesus heals the sick:** 4:38 "Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. 39 So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them. 40 When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.
- A Jesus teaches in the synagogues, sought by all:** 4:42 Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; 43 but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." 44 And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

Scripture Reading:

Isaiah 61: 1 1 "The Spirit of Jehovah God is upon Me, Because Jehovah has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of Jehovah, that He may be glorified."

4 And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations. 5 Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, And the sons of the foreigner Shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. 6 But you shall be named the priests of Jehovah, They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast. 7 Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, And instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs. 8 "For I, Jehovah, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant. 9 Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, And their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, That they are the posterity whom Jehovah has blessed."

10 I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its bud, As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, So Jehovah God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

“Doing the Lord’s Work in the Lord’s Way”

Title shamelessly taken from my friend Dr. Francis Schaeffer!

Note copy of chiastic outline: This morning we will focus on verses 14-32 remembering that Luke focuses on the authority of Jesus.

We learned from the account of the Roman Centurion how central the understanding of authority is to our faith!

I also pointed out last week that as we proceed through the Gospel of Luke we will see the authority of Jesus demonstrated in many ways and see how various people react:

- We will see how it captivates His disciples and followers.**
- We will see how it intoxicates the crowds**
- We will see how it confounds His enemies.**
- We want to immolate His loyal followers and learn lessons of what to avoid from the crowds & enemies!**

The account this morning from the synagogue in Nazareth will show how Jesus confounds His enemies with His authority and power.

So why the title, “Doing the Lord’s Work in the Lord’s Way?”

As we move through this account in Luke this morning we will see there is a major conflict: We can understand this ONLY if we see that it is a conflict over what God was saying in Isaiah chapter 61 which we read last week and this morning.

Last week we saw the honest Scribe who came to Jesus asking about the greatest commandment. When he considered the answer that Jesus gave, he knew that accepting it at face value would upset most of the priorities he had established in his life! He certainly seemed open to doing just that and we hope that he bowed the knee fully and will one day share his story in heaven.

What we will come to today are God’s Covenant People who refuse to bow the knee! The truth that Jesus brings to them is a stumbling block for them, and their story is a solid lesson for us today!

MANY are anxious to do “The Lord’s Work” THEIR way! They busy themselves with doing what they think pleases God, often even doing outward things that were commanded by God.

This is how the book of Isaiah begins with God laying out His charges against His covenant people: “I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me... A people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers.”

Goes on to condemn even their sacrifices and prayers and calls on them to repent of their evil ways:

They had become a proud and stubborn people and God calls them back to His gracious redemption:

Verse 18: “Come now and let us reason together. Say Jehovah. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken!”

So things had not changed much in almost 700 years!

➤ **Once again in Luke we see God coming to a proud & stubborn people.**

First we have some excitement:

Luke 4:14 “Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.”

Here is the first example of the authority of Jesus intoxicating the crowds... Something we will see often.

16 “So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.”

[there are no “accidents” in God’s plan!]

“And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 “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; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

- **Nothing unusual about reading from Isaiah and this would have been a VERY popular section of Scripture: Not unlike the "end-times madness" we see around us today!**

20 "Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him."

- **Perhaps they were waiting for some new insights on when the Roman conqueror would come or some "new charts!"**

21 "And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." 22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?""

- **They liked their idea of God's Grace: That the time to conquer the Roman empire had come!**
- **But they were a little confused about what Jesus meant by this being fulfilled "today":**
- **They saw Jesus as being too small or insignificant to be "their messiah" AND what they saw the role of God's Messiah was also far too small compared to God's plan!**
- **Jesus quickly explains what the problem is, and they DO NOT miss His point... Although we might!**

4:23 "He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'"

Jesus tells them that they are ready to be excited about a little showmanship

BUT He does not come to do tricks, rather He has come to save His people from their sins and establish His Kingdom!

- **Jesus hits these proud folks right where it hurts:**

24 "Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. 25 But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and

there was a great famine throughout all the land; 26 but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.” [a gentile woman]

27 “And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” [Another Gentile]

Jesus uses two pointed Old Testament examples to show how God’s grace was given to Gentiles over God’s Covenant people.

4:28 “So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,...”

➤ They did NOT miss the point Jesus was making!

28 “So ALL those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.”

➤ Ironic that they now want to “cast Jesus down” just as Satan did just a short time before: Explain title of “brood of vipers”

30 “Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

31 “Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. 32 And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.”

So what does this have to do with Isaiah chapter 61 and us today?

It means that we must be willing to bow before the authority of the Son even when it does not fit our neat little plans or systems!

How these Jews saw Isaiah 61 was not unreasonable: They wanted out from under the hand of Rome and it looked like the Messiah was going to come and do that!

Isaiah 61: 1 1 "The Spirit of Jehovah God is upon Me, Because Jehovah has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;”

- Here is a key question to ask:

Who are the “broken-hearted”...

the “captives”...

the “bound?”

- Are they Israel...or the nations?

61:2 “To proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; ...”

- Just what the weary Jews wanted to hear!

Isaiah seems to point toward victory over the Gentiles: “They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast.”

- But, then comes to the critical statements in verses ten & eleven:

61:10 “I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its bud, As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, So Jehovah God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”

- The Gospel will blossom & bear much fruit among the Gentiles!
- Just as the Saints in the Old Testament were supposed to be Priests for the nations: Now we are given the Great Commission to disciple the nations!

This was a sad day for this synagogue:

- As I said, they saw Jesus as too weak for what they wanted
- And what they wanted was much too small a picture of what Messiah would really come to do!

Do we have the same kind of problems today?

- We certainly do with the dominant American views of Revelation: And it is very similar:

Is the New Jerusalem a picture of the future heavenly Kingdom or a picture of Christ Church as she moves into the future filling the earth with the Kingdom of Christ?

- **How we answer this question greatly impacts how we live in the here and now:**
- **One answers means we say, don't worry about the culture or try to polish the brass on a sinking ship: Just grab a few brans from the fire while there is still time!**
- **The other means we have to be serious about how we live here and now and to think generationally**

On another front, we live in a very individualistic time, and it has impacted how we read the Bible: We see ALL references to salvation in regard to the individual and almost never corporately, which is where much the Bible's focus is placed!

- **One view leads to "me and Jesus" thinking, with no importance in church attendance or priority for the church community.**
- **The other sees us as parts of the Body of Christ: Needing to worship together as God renews His Covenant with His PEOPLE and working to build a strong community**

Another area that can be a problem is where, as a reaction to the anti-family hostilities from the world today, we have a focus on family replacing the problem of being too individualistic! "Home-church" or even home schooling can be just as destructive to the Church or community life if done for the wrong reasons.

- **The bottom-line is what Dr. Schaeffer said years ago: We must do the Lord's Work in the Lord's Way!**

Our end-times mania has spawned many "evangelistic efforts" which have cast the seeds mostly among the rocks and in shallow soil.

However, those involved are sure they are about the Lord's work when it comes to "saving souls!"

We focus on the individual coming to Christ and then our discipleship is all focused on that individual as well. We have massive programs to find "our gifts" and to find out how "I" can serve the Lord! Again this sure seems

like a lot of good activity going about the Lord's work, but are we doing it HIS way?

We have often touched on the purpose of training our covenant children: It is NOT so that we have well-behaved children, though this is something the Lord certainly expects: Our job is to raise faithful disciples who WILL do the Lord's Work, the Lord's Way. Ones who hear the Shepherd's voice and who are ready and willing to bow to the authority of the Lord in whatever area they may be challenged!

They, & we, should be Good Bereans, always taking what they are taught or think back to the Scriptures to see if it is truly from the Lord!

- **Doing the Lord's work in the Lord's way is not a burden or a heavy yoke:**
- **It should be a pleasure and rewarding:**
- **Just like the picture we were given by the Prophet Isaiah of springtime coming after winter in all its glory, which we can observe all around us this time of year:**

61:11 "For as the earth brings forth its bud, As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, So Jehovah God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

Our song of response this morning is Onward Christian Soldiers: As we sing, let us rejoice in the work that God has given us to do, bringing the springtime of salvation to a world that has long been in winter, and let us REMEMBER that we must do the Lord's work in the Lord's Way!

Communion meditation:

We see a similar situation in John 6:

John 6:35 “And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day...”

61 ..."Does this offend you? 62 What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.