

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

† THE BOOK OF LUKE

WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely

“And
stood up

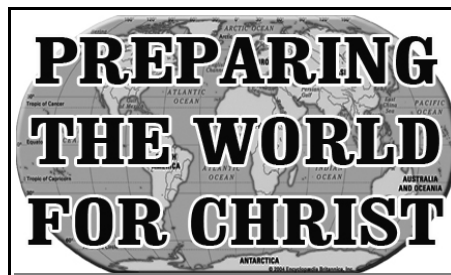
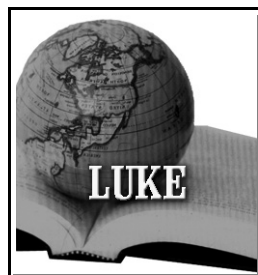
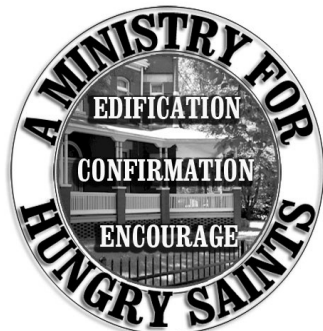
Lesson #14

for to read.”

COMMENTARY ON: 4:14-30

JESUS PREACHES IN HIS HOMETOWN

Jesus returns to Galilee “in the power of the Spirit.” His fame began to spread as He “taught in their synagogue, being glorified of all.” Finally, He made His way to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. On the Sabbath day, as was His custom, He was in the synagogue, and “stood up for to read.” The scroll of Isaiah was handed to Him, and He found the appropriate text to be read to the people. After reading from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, He declared to the people that this text had been fulfilled in their ears. The people could not correlate the Jesus they had just heard with the One who had been brought up among them. Knowing their hearts, Jesus delivered a word that brought out what was in them. It stirred up their wrath, and after they had marveled at His gracious words, they led Him out of the city to the brow of a hill where they intended to cast Him to the ground. But, they could not do it, for Jesus simply passed through them, and went on His way. The Messiah was doing His work.

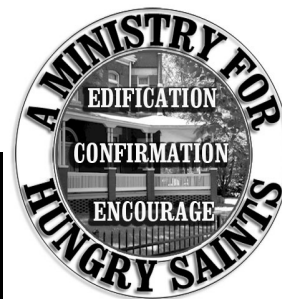


Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



The Book of Luke 3/20/2015

Lesson Number 14



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

----- GREEK LEXICON LEGEND -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

JESUS PREACHES IN HIS HOMETOWN

Luke 4:14 "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. ¹⁵ And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. ¹⁶ And 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 for to read. ¹⁷ And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. 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 hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, ¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ²⁰ And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. ²¹ And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. ²² And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? ²³ And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto He this proverb, Physician, heal Thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. ²⁴ And He said, Verily, I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵ But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; ²⁶ But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. ²⁷ And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. ²⁸ And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, ²⁹ And rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. ³⁰ But He passing through the midst of them went His way." Luke 4:14-30

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Jesus returns to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit." His fame began to

spread as He "taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all." Finally, He made His way to Nazareth,

where He had been brought up. On the Sabbath day, as was His custom, He was in the synagogue, and "stood up

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for to read." The scroll of Isaiah was handed to Him, and He found the appropriate text to be read to the people. After reading from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, He declared to the people that this text had been fulfilled in their ears. The people could not correlate the Jesus they had just heard with the One who had been brought up among them. Knowing their hearts, Jesus delivered a word that brought out what was in them. It stirred up their wrath, and after they had marveled at His gracious words, they led Him out of the city to the brow of a hill where they intended to cast Him to the ground. But, they could not do it, for Jesus simply passed through them, and went

on His way. The Messiah was doing His work.

REFERENCES TO DEITY

It is instructive to observe the frequent references to Deity in this text, containing sixteen verses. First, the text is about the work of God – particularly what the One sent by God had been commissioned to do. The text did not deal with human response or obligation. There are thirty specific references to Deity, as indicated on the above.

- "He" = 15
- "His" = 3
- "Him" = 6
- "Jesus" = 1
- "Spirit" = 1
- "Lord" = 2
- "Me" = 1
- "Thyself" = 1

In the Gospel of Luke itself, the following references are found.

- ⇒ "Jesus" – 98 times
- ⇒ "Christ" – 13 times
- ⇒ "Son of God" – 5 times
- ⇒ "Son" – 45 times
- ⇒ "Master" – 13 times
- ⇒ "Teacher" – 14 times
- ⇒ "Lord" – 74 times
- ⇒ "God" – 124 times
- ⇒ "Father" – 19 times
- ⇒ "He" – 366 times
- ⇒ "Him" – 257 times
- ⇒ "His" – 104 times
- ⇒ "One" – 8 times

Grammatically, the heavy use of pronouns indicates a main personality to which these refer. The mentioning of the Individual is so significant that at frequent times the writer only has to say "He," or "Him," or "His," and the reader will immediately know who is being referenced. There are over 600 such references in the Gospel of Luke alone, and they all refer to Deity.

Mark refers to the record of Jesus birth and ministry as *"the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ"* (Mk 1:1). **This being true, the Gospel is not the proclamation of what men are to do, but what the Living God has done through the Lord Jesus Christ.** This is seen in the following:

- ⇒ The miracles of Jesus confirm His Deity.
- ⇒ The teaching of Jesus confirm His

wisdom and knowledge of God.

- ⇒ The death of Christ, and the events leading up to it, confirm the purpose of God and the submissiveness of the Savior.
- ⇒ The resurrection of Christ confirms He was the Son of God with power.
- ⇒ The ascension of Christ confirms that Jesus is building His church, and bringing the sons of God home to glory from heaven.

The experience of many contemporary believers is that it has taken some time for these things to register upon their hearts. **The reason for this circumstance, in my opinion, is that men have not been properly prepared to hear the Gospel.** You may recall that the ministry of John the Baptist – calling men to repentance – was actually a preparation to be confronted with the Messiah, and take advantage of what He came to give.

The modern tendency to take men from their troubles to Jesus is flawed to the core. You will search in vain for any word from Jesus concerning the general problems men. He did address the matter of food, shelter, and clothing (Matt 6:25-32; Lk 12:22-30). He did not say a word about marital or family difficulties, except that becoming His disciple could very well produce division in the family (Matt 10:35-38).

The practice of Christian leaders involving themselves in the affairs of other men has no Scriptural precedent, and no directive from the Lord. **The truth of the matter is that newness of life (Rom 6:4), and "the new man" (Eph 4:24), coupled with access to God and the reality of faith, fully addresses every facet of life.** Jesus taught that, instead of focusing on matters relating to food, shelter, and clothing, one should *"seek . . . first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"* (Matt 6:33; Lk 12:31).

Speaking of a proper focus of life, Paul (the apostle to the Gentiles) admonished, *"And whatsoever ye do in*

word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him" (Col 3:17). And again, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). The thrust of much of the preaching of our day actually omits these admonitions. Living is approached as though this kind of life

is not possible – at least, not without the guidance of some professed expert in life. This is why the modern trend of life-coaches is taking the country by storm. It is all a miserable substitute for Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Throughout the Gospel of Luke these things will be conformed by

everything Jesus says and does. **It will become increasingly apparent that the teaching and manner of Jesus has all but been eliminated in modern Christianity.** Our text in this lesson will make all of this very apparent. Jesus will nail down what He was sent to do, and it will be apparent that it does not fit into modern agendas.

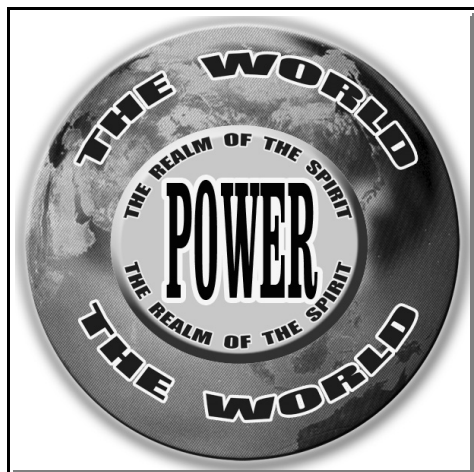
HE RETURNED IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

Luke 4:14 *"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about."*

JESUS RETURNED IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee . . ."

Most versions read *"in the power of the Spirit."* Other versions read, *"filled with the Holy Spirit's power,"* ^{NLT} *"by the power of the spirit,"* ^{PNT/TNT} *"full of the Holy Spirit's power,"* ^{LIVING} *"with the power of the Holy Spirit,"* ^{IE} *"in the Spirit's power,"* ^{WEYMOUTH} *"with the power of the Spirit,"* ^{CEV/ERV} *"the power of the Holy Spirit was with him,"* ^{GNB} *"Under the power of the Spirit,"* ^{GOODSPEED} *"powerful in the Spirit,"* ^{MESSAGE} and *"full of and under the power of the [Holy] Spirit."* ^{AMPLIFIED}



There is a domain ruled by the Holy Spirit – a domain, or arena in

which the will of God is thoroughly and effectively wrought. Men may operate this realm, although they cannot determine what takes place in it. This is the realm in which the will of God is carried out in meticulous detail. Men cannot exploit this area for personal advantage. It is only as they are engaged in the will of God that they will be admitted into the realm of the Holy Spirit – the place where He effectively carries out the will of God.

There are statements made about this realm that signify its manner.

- ⇒ *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* (Rom 8:9)
- ⇒ *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."* (Gal 5:16)
- ⇒ *"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."* (Gal 5:25)
- ⇒ *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."* (Eph 6:18)
- ⇒ *"Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit."* (Col 1:8)
- ⇒ *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."* (Rev 1:10)

Being *"in the Spirit"* is often contrasted with being *"in the flesh,"* or

operating in the realm of mere nature (Rom 2:28; 7:5; 8:3,8,9; Eph 2:11; Phil 3:3-4; 1 Pet 4:2).

Remember, Jesus is returning from a time in which He fasted for forty days and forty nights, in which *"He did eat nothing"* (Lk 4:2). Compounding the situation, He was tempted throughout His entire period of time in the wilderness. **Yet, His energy had not been depleted.** He had been, and continued to be, at the peak of alertness, so that Satan could gain no advantage over Him.

Being in the realm of the Holy Spirit, He is going to speak and work within the framework of the work of God – and that is something that cannot be done in the energy or realm of the flesh. **While Jesus was in the world, in order to be effective, He had to operate in the realm of the Spirit.** While it may differ in measure, that is still required for anyone and everyone who is doing the work of the Lord. I do not believe this is commonly practiced in the professing church. Nor, indeed, can be it done within the framework of religious institutionalism. **I do not know how any person would go about substantiating that what was required of Jesus is not also required, in proper measure, in everyone engaged in being a laborer together with God** (1 Cor 3:9).

THERE WENT A FAME OF HIM THROUGH ALL THE REGION

" . . . and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about."

Other versions read, *"news of Him went throughout,"* ^{NKJV} *"news about*

Him spread," ^{NASB} "a report about Him," ^{NRSV} "a report concerning Him," ^{RSV} "His reputation spread," ^{NJB} "Reports about Him spread quickly," ^{NLT} "He became well known," ^{LIVING} "Stories about Jesus went all over," ^{IE} "a reputation went forth," ^{ABP} and "News that He was back spread." ^{MESSAGE}

It ought to be observed that **when God sends someone, He sees to it that he is heard.** This was true of Moses, the Prophets, John the Baptist, and, above all, the Lord Jesus Christ. In the case with the Lord Jesus, a harbinger was sent in advance to prepare the way for Him – John the Baptist. He told the people what the Christ would do.

- ⇒ He would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Matt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16).
- ⇒ He would thoroughly purge His floor, gathering His wheat into the garner, and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire (Matt 3:12; Lk 3:16-17).
- ⇒ He affirmed that Jesus was the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
- ⇒ He said Jesus was preferred before and existed before him (John 1:30).
- ⇒ He said Jesus would be manifested to Israel (John 1:31).
- ⇒ He declared he saw the Spirit descend from heaven upon Jesus, and remain on Him (John 1:32-33).
- ⇒ He affirmed that Jesus was "the Son of God" (John 1:34).
- ⇒ He declared that a man can receive

nothing, except it be given Him from heaven (John 3:27).

- ⇒ He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom (John 3:29).
- ⇒ He must increase (John 3:30).
- ⇒ He is above all (John 3:31).
- ⇒ He will testify what He has seen and heard (John 3:32).
- ⇒ God gives Him the Spirit without measure (John 3:34).
- ⇒ The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand (John 3:35).
- ⇒ He that believes on the Son has everlasting life. He that believes not the Son shall not see life (John 3:36).

John did not say what Jesus would teach. He did not affirm He was going to **die** for the sins of the world, or raise from the dead. **He did not prepare people for Jesus by teaching extensively about Him.** Instead, he did so by preaching that men should repent, and bring forth fruit that confirmed their repentance (Matt 3:11; Lk 3:3,8. **That is what prepares men for Christ.**

The "fame" that went abroad concerning Jesus was owing to His own ministry, not that of John.

- ⇒ THE HEALING OF THE INFIRM. "And **His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those**

which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them." (Matt 4:24)

- ⇒ THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER. "And **the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.**" (Matt 9:26)
- ⇒ THE HEALING OF TWO BLIND MEN. "But they, when they were departed, **spread abroad His fame in all that country.**" (Matt 9:31)
- ⇒ THE REPORT OF HIS WORKS. "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of **the fame of Jesus.**" (Matt 14:1)
- ⇒ CASTING OUT UNCLEAN SPIRITS. "And immediately **His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.**" (Mark 1:28; Lk 4:37).
- ⇒ THE HEALING OF A LEPER. "But so much the more **went there a fame abroad of Him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.**" (Luke 5:15)

The fame of Jesus was owing to the uniqueness and power of His works. It was also among "the common people," who "heard Him gladly" (Mk 12:37). The religious leaders, however, did not hear Him gladly, because His presence and message sharply contrasted with their own, and even threatened their position.

However, as the time for Jesus to die drew nigh, His popularity began to wane. Because regeneration did not exist among the people, they were turned against Jesus by their leaders. **From the higher perspective, this was in order that He might lay down His life.**

HE TAUGHT IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES

" ¹⁵ **And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.**"

HE TAUGHT IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES
"And He taught in their synagogues . . ."

Other versions read, "He began teaching in their synagogues," ^{NASB} "He taught regularly in their synagogues," ^{NLT} "He became well known throughout all that region," ^{LIVING} "He proceeded to teach in their synagogues," ^{WEYMOUTH} "He

taught in the Jewish meeting places," ^{CEV} and "conducted [course of] teaching in their synagogues." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Matthew says of these beginnings, "And Jesus went about all

Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt 4:23). He places this after John was imprisoned, and after the calling of Peter Andrew, James and John (Matt 4:13-22). This report appears to have taken place after the events of our text. **Luke has the calling of Peter, Andrew, James, and John taking place after the this report of Jesus teaching in the synagogues** (Lk 5:1-11).

Teaching in the Synagogues

It appears as though Jesus commenced His public ministry by teaching in the synagogues. He continued this practice throughout His prodigious ministry (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 12:9; 13:54; Mk 1:21,39; 3:1; 6:2; Lk 4:15-16; 6:6; 13:10; John 6:59; 18:20).

Jesus was a **Preacher** (Matt 4:17,23; 9:35; 11:1; Mk 1:14,38,39; 2:2; 4:18,19,43,44; 7:22; 8:1; 9:2,6; Lk 20:1), and a **Teacher** (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; 21:23; 22:16; 26:55; Mk 4:1; 6:2,6,34; 8:31; 12:14; 14:49; Lk 5:17; 13:10,22; 20:21; 21:37; 23:5; John 3:2; 7:35).

This is an aspect of Jesus that is little known in our day. When Jesus walked among men He taught that those who were weary and heavy laden should come to Him, and learn from Him–i.e. He would teach them: *"take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls"* ^{NKJV} (Matt 11:29).

Even now, since Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God, He is still teaching. It is written, *"But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"* (Eph 4:20-24).

Notice the curriculum of Jesus – what He is CURRENTLY teaching:

⇨ *"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts . . ."*

⇨ *" . . . be renewed in the spirit of your mind. . ."*

⇨ *" . . . that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."*

What shall we say when these results are not found? How should we react to professing Christians who have not put off the old man, and are therefore living in the flesh? How are we to assess those who are not being

5:19), God has been provoked (1 Cor 10:22), and Jesus, who is speaking from heaven, has been refused (Heb 12:25). Each person is responsible for examining himself on these matters.

BEING GLORIFIED OF ALL

" . . . being glorified of all."

Other versions read, *"praised by all,"* ^{NASB} *"everyone praised Him,"* ^{NIV} *"praised by everyone,"* ^{NRSV} *"all men gave Him praise,"* ^{BBE} *"everyone respected Him,"* ^{CJB} *"being acclaimed by everyone,"* ^{CSB} *"was magnified by all,"* ^{DOUAY} *"was honored of all men,"* ^{GENEVA} *"lauded by every one,"* ^{MRD} *"commended of all men,"* ^{PNT} *"winning praise from all,"* ^{WEYMOUTH} and *"being recognized and honored and praised by all."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Let it be clear, that where what Jesus is said to teach is not found, His teaching has been rejected –just like it was when He walked among men.

renewed in the spirit of their mind? What are we to think of those who give no evidence of having put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness? Are those conditions about which we are to be concerned?

Mind you, I am not suggesting we should be hasty in judgment, fail to be merciful, or be quick to break a bruised reed and quench a smoking flax. **However, neither are we to imagine that Jesus has ceased to effectively teach these things.** How can Jesus be called *"faithful and true"* (Rev 3:14; 19:11) if He is not doing what He is declared to be doing? I fear that some people are asking us to accept such erroneous postulates. **Let it be clear, that where what Jesus is said to teach is not found, His teaching has been rejected –just like it was when He walked among men.** In such a case, however difficult it may be to receive, the Spirit has been quenched (1 Thess

The teaching and preaching of Jesus was refreshing in comparison with the lifeless teaching of the scribes and Pharisees. The people noted, *"He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes"* (Mark 1:22). The Message Bible reads, *"not quibbling and quoting like the religion scholars."*

The words of Jesus are so poignant and critical that He said, *"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God"* (John 8:47). **There is, then, a dividing line drawn whenever Jesus speaks.** Those who pick up on what He says, are of God. who do not, are not of God. As it is used here, the word translated *"hear"* [akouo] means "TO ATTEND TO (USE THE FACULTY OF HEARING); CONSIDER WHAT IS OR HAS BEEN SAID; TO PERCEIVE BY THE EAR WHAT IS ANNOUNCED IN ONE'S PRESENCE (TO HEAR IMMEDIATELY): TO GIVE EAR TO ONE, LISTEN, HEARKEN," ^{THAYER} "OF DISCIPLESHIP LISTEN TO, PAY ATTENTION TO, OBEY; OF INNER

COMPREHENSION UNDERSTAND, BE AWARE OF, LISTEN TO," FRIBERG "HEED, LISTEN TO, UNDERSTAND." GINGRICH

While we are not at liberty to

judge others in this matter – unless there is undeniable evidence of hardness of heart – we are to examine ourselves. It seems to me that it is

necessary to be sure we are not among those who are continually confused by His Word. This is not a trait of those in whom Jesus is abiding.

HE CAME TO NAZARETH WHERE HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP

" 16 *And 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 for to read.*"

THE SILENT YEARS

With the single exception of the time of the Passover when Jesus was twelve years of age, **we do not have a single record of anything He said or did.** And why is this so? This would be a time concerning which those of the world would be interested: the terrible twos, His teenage years, and young manhood from twenty through thirty. Some might even imagine that this would be an excellent pattern to codify for parents. Instead of such details, we are simply told He *"was subject"* to Joseph and Mary, and *"increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man"* (Luke 2:52).

Those are the areas we are to ensure take place in our children:

- ⇒ Obedience to parents.
- ⇒ Growing in stature.
- ⇒ Growing in wisdom.
- ⇒ Growing in favor with God.
- ⇒ Growing in favor with man.

It should not surprise you to know that there are multitudes of "church people" who neglect these areas, even though they are, by Divine appointment, stewards of their children.

HE CAME TO NAZARETH

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up . . ."

Following the return of Joseph, Mary, and the young child Jesus, from

residing in Egypt until wicked Herod died, Joseph being instructed in a dream, *"came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene"* (Matt 2:23). The word "Nazarene" is translated from a word meaning, "ONE SEPARATED," ^{STRONG'S} "ONLY," AND "AN ALLUSION TO THE PASSAGES WHERE THE MESSIAH IS CALLED A BRANCH OR SPROUT" (ISA 11:1; JER 23:5; 33:15; ZECH 3:8; 6:12). ^{McCLINTOK & STRONG'S}

The idea of **one separated**, or being described as "only" is also embedded in the term *"Nazarite,"* which was applied to one who separate himself wholly to the Lord, either for a particular season, or a lifetime (Num 6:1-8). It is also found in the terms *"Rod"* (Isa 11:1), *"a Branch"* (Isa 11:1), *"a righteous Branch"* (Jer 23:5), *"The Branch of righteousness"* (Jer 33:15), *"My Servant the Branch"* (Zech 3:8), and *"the Man whose name is The Branch"* (Zech 6:12).

Thus, Jesus lived a separated life in a city from which devout people thought nothing good could come (John 12:46). It was there that He grew in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man. It is there that He cultured the custom to which Luke now refers.

AS HIS CUSTOM WAS

" . . . and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day . . ."

Other versions read, *"as His way was,"* ^{BBE} *"as He normally did,"* ^{CEB} *"as usual,"* ^{CJB} *"as he was accustomed,"* ^{MRD} *"as he usually did,"* ^{NJB} *"That is what Jesus always did,"* ^{IE} *"as His habit was,"* ^{WILLIAMS} *"according to the thing accustomed for Him,"* ^{ABP} and *"as was His custom on the Sabbath day."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

This is the only place in the King James Version where a *"custom"* of Jesus is mentioned. The Revised Standard Version mentions other "customs" Jesus had. The KJV uses the word *"wont"* in these texts.

⇒ **TEACHING:** *"And He left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again; and again, as His custom was, He taught them"* (Mark 10:1).

⇒ **PRAYING:** *"And He came out, and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him."* (Luke 22:39)

"In the Sabbath service there were two lessons read. The first was always taken from the Pentateuch (the Law). The five books of Moses were written on parchment, (usually) between two rollers, and the day's lesson was left unrolled for the reader's convenience. The Prophets were on single rollers, no special portion being left open. It has been suggested that the great and famous Messianic passage read by our Lord was the lesson for the day. This is quite uncertain; indeed, it is more probable that Jesus, when the roll of Isaiah was handed to him by the ruler of the synagogue, specially selected the section containing this passage." ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY}

On the Sabbath day, this is where you would find Jesus – in the synagogue. Time in the synagogue was devoted to *"preaching"* Moses and the reading of Scripture (Acts 15:21). Jesus Himself is said have *"preached in the synagogues of Galilee"* (Lk 4:44). Paul *"preached Christ in the synagogues"* Acts 19:20). Barnabas and Saul also *"preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews"* (Acts 13:5).

Thus, we see the following developed a God-chosen people, sanctioned by the Lord Jesus Christ, His apostles, and others used by God in the good work of preaching and teaching.

- ⇒ Regularly honoring God by meeting on a certain day.
- ⇒ The public reading of Scripture at a certain time and in a certain place.
- ⇒ Preaching and teaching a body of people gathered together at a certain time, and in a certain place.

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT

Matthew give this account: *"And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue . . ."* (Matt 13:54a)

MARK'S ACCOUNT

Mark gives the account of Jesus returning to Nazareth, placing it after He had raised Jairus' daughter from the dead. *"And He went out from thence, and came into His own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the Sabbath day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue"* (Mark 6:1-2a).

AND STOOD UP FOR TO READ

" . . . and stood up for to read."

Other versions read, *"got up to give a reading,"* ^{BBE} *"he rose up to read"* ^{DOUAY} *"stood up to read the lesson"* ^{GWN} and *"stood up to read the Scriptures."* ^{NLT}

Some who have researched this subject have written: "CHILDREN AT THE AGE OF FIVE YEARS WERE ADMITTED INTO THE SYNAGOGUE, AND AT THIRTEEN ATTENDANCE THERE WAS PART OF THE LEGAL LIFE OF THE JEW. THESE SYNAGOGUES WERE THE REGULAR PLACES FOR RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS EVERY SABBATH DAY, AND ALSO USUALLY ON MONDAYS AND TUESDAYS, BESIDES ON OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS." ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY} We read



of synagogues in Jewish literature after the Babylonian captivity. They are mentioned in the seventy-fourth Psalm: *"They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land"* (Psa 74:8). Other versions read, *"meeting places,"* ^{NKJV/NASB} *"every place where God was worshiped,"* ^{NIV} *"synagogues of God,"* ^{ASV} *"God's places of worship,"* ^{BBE} *"God's meeting places,"* ^{CEB} *"every place throughout the land where God met with us,"* ^{CSB} and *"God's meetinghouses."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

It appears that during the Babylonian captivity, the Jews made a practice of gathering together on the Sabbath day, building synagogues in the various Babylonian cities where they were located. This was apparently one of the ways they had of preserving devotion to God and the remembrance of what He had done with and among them.

Now, the practice of meeting in the synagogue was not only in place, but Jesus made a practice of honoring that day by meeting together with other Jews in a synagogue. Every Sabbath day, you could find Jesus in a synagogue

- ⇒ *"And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught."* (Mark 1:21)
- ⇒ *"And when the Sabbath day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands?"* (Mark 6:2)
- ⇒ *"And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that He entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered."* (Luke 6:6)
- ⇒ *"And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath."* (Luke 13:10)

One of the prominent synagogue exercises was the reading of God's Word. Paul referred to this practice in a synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia: *"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him"* (Acts 13:27). James referred to the practice at the Jerusalem conference, in which the issue of circumcision was discussed: *"For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day."* (Acts 15:21). It is in this context that Jesus will now speak – in a synagogue on the Sabbath day.

HE FOUND THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS WRITTEN

"¹⁷ And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias."

And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written."

THERE WAS DELIVERED TO HIM
"And there was delivered unto

Him the book of the prophet Esaias. . .”

Because Moses and the Prophets were publically read regularly in the synagogue, the people were eventually exposed to all of the Scripture. Sections were read from Moses and the Prophets, and apparently they were read sequentially, or with some semblance of order.

Many professing Christians have

The fact that Scripture was first written hundreds of years before, and had been translated into other languages, did not present a problem in the days of Jesus and the apostles. It is generally agreed that the writings of Moses commenced about 1446 B.C. Malachi wrote about 430-420 B.C. The Septuagint version, the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, took place between 300-200 B.C. For modern Bible translators conditions like

testified of Him (John 6:39). An angel told John that the *“testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”* (Rev 19:10). Paul taught that all of Scripture was in order that *“the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work”* (2 Tim 3:176-17).

⇒ **The “understanding of Scripture” is something that is traced back to Divine activity** – the opening of the understanding (Lk 24:45).

⇒ **The Scriptures produce patience and comfort**, in order that we might have hope (Rom 15:4).

⇒ **There is a “mystery” that is unfolded by the Scriptures** (Rom 16:26).

Admittedly, this is quite different from a “scholarly” approach to the Word of God:–i.e. original language, context, cultural setting, etc. However, it is a way that faith can grasp, and allows for Divine direction, to which no thinking person will object.

WHEN HE HAD OPENED THE BOOK

“ . . . And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written.”

It is generally understood that the Scriptures they used had no divisions or punctuation. Yet, there was a clear message that could be located, read, and expounded. **Of course, this required an unquestioned familiarity with the text that can only come by frequent and extended exposure to it.**

In this text, there is the added dimension of Divine direction, and the precise understanding of the Savior Himself. **This entire event was being directed from heaven, and was designed to enable people to understand Jesus, but not according to the flesh.**

Many professing Christians have never been exposed to the reading of Scripture in an orderly manner – particularly in a group setting.

never been exposed to the reading of Scripture in an orderly manner – particularly in a group setting. The omission of such reading has contributed significantly to the growing diminishment of Bible knowledge that exists within the professed church. Public Christian assemblies are much like a season of entertainment, when the mind is spiritually dormant. It is a most serious circumstance that provides little or no Divine involvement with the people. The significance of this deficiency can be seen in the inspired statements about *“Scripture”* – or Divinely inspired writing. From Matthew through Second Peter, there are fifty-three references to *“Scripture”* or *“Scriptures.”* **When these terms are used they are invariably associated with truth.** There is not a syllable in all of God’s Word that casts any kind of doubt upon the Scriptures. They confirm the identity of Jesus (Matt 21:42), and they are related to Divine power (Matt 22:29). Those associations leave no place for error.

that present monumental problems – **but no such problem erupted while Jesus walked among men, or after He ascended into glory.** Jesus, for example, did not ask what version of the Scriptures had been handed to Him. Nor, indeed, is there any record of a comparison being made between the various copies or translations of Scripture.

At the very least, this suggests there really was no significant difference in the copies. However, there are other reasons.

⇒ **The Jewish people knew what the Scriptures said** – the events and teachings contained in them. They had been raised from their youth up with a detailed acquaintance with the Scriptures.

⇒ **There is a thread of reasoning in Scripture that weaves all of it together** – a solitary focus and emphasis. Jesus said the Scriptures

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME

“ 18a The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to

preach the gospel to the poor . . .”

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me...”

The majority of versions read, *"the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,"* or *"the Spirit of the Lord is on Me."* God's Word Bible reads, *"The Spirit of the Lord is with me."*

This text is a statement that can only be said of the Incarnate Word. It is not a circumstance that existed prior to the Word becoming flesh (John 1:14). **The fact that "The Word" became flesh required such a humbling that the Holy Spirit had to be upon Him in order that He might fulfill the will of God.** Jesus often referred to this aspect of Him coming into the world. In the form of a Servant, and as a Man, He could not function on His own.

- ⇒ *"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."* (John 5:19)
- ⇒ *"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true."* (John 5:31)
- ⇒ *"I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not."* (John 7:28)
- ⇒ *"I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things."* (John 8:28)
- ⇒ *"For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak."* (John 12:49)
- ⇒ *". . . the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."* (John 14:10)

Isaiah referred to the Spirit being upon the Messiah when He wrote, *"And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD"* (Isa 11:2). In other words, the Holy Spirit enabled Jesus, **as a Man** to be equal to completing the task given Him.

Something To Think About

If it was necessary for the Holy Spirit to be upon the Incarnate Word, who was in the beginning with God and was God (John 1:1), **then who can imagine any one from Adam's lineage being able to do the will of God without the Holy Spirit?**

HE HATH ANOINTED ME

" . . . because He hath anointed Me . . . "

Other versions read, *"marked out by him,"* ^{BBE} *"did anoint Me,"* ^{YLT} *"appointed me,"* ^{LIVING} *"chose me,"* ^{IE} *"consecrated me,"* ^{WILLIAMS} and *"chosen me."* ^{CEV}

The act of anointing appears to have been viewed as emblematic of a particular sanctification, of a designation to the service of God, or to a holy and sacred use. Hence the anointing of the high-priests (Exodus 29:29; Leviticus 4:3), and even of the sacred vessels of the tabernacle (Exodus 30:26, etc.); and hence also, probably, the anointing of the king, who, as "the Lord's anointed," and, under the Hebrew constitution, the viceroy of Jehovah, was undoubtedly invested with a sacred character . . . It is from this that the high-priest, as well as the king, is called "the anointed" (Leviticus 4:3; 5:16; 6:15; Psalm 133:2). – ^{McCLINTOK & STRONG'S}

On earth, **men** anointed priests (Ex 29:229; Lev 4:3), kings (1 Sam 15:1; 2 Sam 2:4; 1 Kgs 1:34,39), prophets (1 Kgs 19:15-16), and vessels (Ex 30:26). **However, when it comes to the Lord's Christ, God Himself did the anointing.**

This anointing signified that Jesus of Nazareth had been selected, chosen, and appointed to do the work He will now announce. It was the work that God Almighty had determined to be done – and Jesus, the Son of God, would see to it that it was completed.

The only reception of Jesus that is valid is that of receiving Him in the capacity for which He has been anointed. God did not anoint Jesus to fulfill the desires of men – unless they are in accord with the purpose of God. **There has been too much presentation of Jesus Christ as the answer to personal and social ills. While there may**

be an element of truth to such a view, it is slanted in the wrong direction. God's purpose in creating men was *"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us"* (Acts 17:27). That is the objective that is realized in Jesus Christ. **Every Divine determination for men – justification, sanctification, and glorification) is realized in Christ, and in Him alone.** Any purpose that does not clearly integrate with that revealed objective is a vain pursuit.

TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR

" . . . to preach the gospel to the poor . . . "

Other versions read, *"preach good news to the poor,"* ^{NIV} *"preach good tidings to the poor,"* ^{ASV} *"bring glad tidings to the poor,"* ^{NAB} *"proclaim good news to the poor,"* ^{NET} *"bring the good news to the afflicted,"* ^{NJB} *"announce good news to the poor,"* ^{ABP} and *"tell the good news to the poor."* ^{CEV}

The words reading *"preach the Gospel"* are translated from a single Greek word [euaggelizo]. It means, "to BRING GOOD NEWS, TO ANNOUNCE GLAD TIDINGS," ^{THAYER} *"BRING OR ANNOUNCE GOOD NEWS,"* ^{FRIEBERG} AND *"COMMUNICATE GOOD NEWS CONCERNING SOMETHING."* ^{LOUW-NIDA}

A **message of cursing** was delivered to Adam and Eve (Gen 3:16-19), and to Cain (Gen 4:11-12). Moses delivered a **message of requirements** (John 1:17). The prophets often delivered **messages of judgment** (Ezek 7:8; 18:30). They announced the dispersion of Israel (Isa 7:17-20; Jer 9:16), the fall of Jerusalem (Jer 39:1; 52:4), the captivity of Judah (2 Kgs 24:1; Jer 27:20), and the judgment of Gentile nations (Isa 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:11,13).

But Jesus was sent with a message of good news. It is written that He *"preached the Gospel"* (Lk 20:1). He announced a Divine provision, and proclaimed a message of blessing and benefit.

He preached this message *"to the*

poor." The word "*poor*" comes from a word meaning "TO BE THOROUGHLY FRIGHTENED, TO COWER DOWN OR HIDE ONESELF FOR FEAR; HENCE, PROPERLY, ONE WHO SLINKS AND CROUCHES), OFTEN INVOLVING THE IDEA OF ROVING ABOUT IN WRETCHEDNESS . . . DESTITUTE OF WEALTH, INFLUENCE, POSITION, HONORS; LOWLY, AFFLICTED . . . EQUIVALENT TO HELPLESS, POWERLESS TO ACCOMPLISH AN END," ^{THAYER} AND "OF ONE DEPENDENT ON OTHERS FOR SUPPORT POOR, DESTITUTE . . . OF LITTLE VALUE, WORTHLESS, POWERLESS." ^{FRIBERG}

We must see this from a heavenly perspective. Many of these people were economically impoverished – but that is not the focus of the good news Jesus brought. These were the "*poor in spirit*" (Matt 5:3), who, in the presence of the Almighty shrunk back in fear, knowing their unacceptable condition. They were spiritually destitute, **and they knew it.**

This message integrated with that of the forerunner, John the Baptist. His message involved a call to repentance, which tended to make people more aware of their moral and spiritual condition. Taken seriously, a call to repentance leaves the guilty in a spiritually impoverished condition that is recognized. The good news is that, in Christ Jesus, God has provided a complete and effective remedy to the condition brought on by sin. **The good news, or Gospel, is simply the announcement of that provision – "A Savior, which is Christ the Lord"** (Lk 2:11). In Him, God has dealt with sin so thoroughly, that imputing His own righteousness to the guilty, yet believing, sinner, is now a righteous thing for Him to do (Rom 3:26).

The Gospel being preached to the poor is parallel with this word from Jesus: "*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and **learn of** [from] **me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*" (Mat 11:28-30). The "*poor*," viewed from this perspective, are those who are burdened and heavy laden under the weight of guilt. It includes those who have become weary from sin, and seek thorough freedom from it.

Adam made us "*poor*," and those who finally come to see this will find that Jesus is the complete answer to that dilemma.

SENT TO HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED

^{18b} . . . *He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted . . .*"

SENT ME

" . . . He hath sent Me . . . "

All versions read the same: "*sent Me.*" That is, **Jesus was on a mission originated by God Himself.** Thirty-nine times during His ministry, Jesus referred to God as having "*sent Me.*" It is Jesus who, prior to becoming "*flesh*" (John 1:14), said to God, "I come to do Thy will, O God" (Psa 40:6-8; Heb 10:5-10).

HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED

" . . . to heal the brokenhearted . . . "

This phrase is **OMITTED** in the following versions: ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, RSV, CEB, CJB, CSB, DARBY, ERV, ESV, GWN, NAB, NAS, NAU, NET, NIB, NJB, NLT, IE, WEYMOUTH, ISV, WILLIAMS, MONTGOMERY, CEV, GNB, GOODSPEED, GW, LEB, MSG, and AMPLIFIED

This phrase is **INCLUDED** in the following versions: KJV, NKJV, BBE, DOUAY, GENEVA, MRD, PNT, RWB, TNT, WEB, YLT, LIVING, ABP, EMTV, JUB, LITV, MKJV.

Other versions read, "*make well those who are broken-hearted,*" ^{BBE} "*heal the contrite of heart,*" ^{DOUAY} "*heal the broken hearted,*" ^{GENEVA/PNT/RWB/TNT/WEB/LIVING/EMTV/JUB/LITV} "*heal the contrite in heart,*" ^{MRD} "*heal the broken of heart,*" ^{YLT} and "*heal the ones being broken in heart.*" ^{ABP}

I can find no explanation for the omission of this phrase in the thirty-one versions mentioned. Whatever the purported reason for their exclusion, I refuse to accept it. **The omitted phrase IS in Isaiah's prophecy** (Isa 61:1). All of the versions omitting it in Luke's gospel, include it in Isaiah's prophecy. I therefore accept the phrase as valid and etymologically accurate.

Those who are "*brokenhearted*" are specifically those crushed by the guilt of sin. There are numerous references to this condition.

⇨ "*The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*" (Psa 34:18)

⇨ "*I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.*" (Psa 38:8)

⇨ "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*" (Psa 51:17)

⇨ "*Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.*" (Psa 69:20)

⇨ "*He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.*" (Psa 147:3)

It is always a matter of deep concern when transgressors are not smitten with guilt, and sinners can easily speak of, and even excuse their transgressions. Some can even represent their sin as caused by someone else – which is what both Adam and Eve did (Gen 3:12-13). **The sinner must always own the responsibility for his sin.** When he does, his is a heart that is more likely to be broken, which will cause God to hear his cries.

There is also a broken heart that is brought on by the awareness of wrong

doing in others.

⇒ BECAUSE OF FALSE PROPHETS. *"Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness."* (Jer 23:9)

⇒ *"I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word."* (Psa 119:158)

⇒ *"Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee?"* (Psa 139:21)

WHEN GOD HIMSELF IS BROKEN

"And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from Me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations" (Ezek 6:9).

A transgressing people grieves God! Thus we read:

To heal the brokenhearted means their sorrow is replaced by joy, and a sense of alienation is removed by the persuasion of acceptance. If you will walk with the Lord, you will soon sense the ongoing need for this healing.

⇒ *"And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at his heart."* (Gen 6:6)

⇒ *"And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel."* (Judg 10:15-16)

⇒ *"Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a*

people that do err in their heart, and they have not known My ways." (Psa 95:10)

When men see sinners like God sees them, they will also be grieved and broken at the sight. Jesus came to heal this kind of brokenheartedness also, lest we be overcome by it. The infrequency of this kind of brokenness is a matter of great concern to the godly.

To heal the brokenhearted means their sorrow is replaced by joy, and a sense of alienation is removed by the persuasion of acceptance. If you will walk with the Lord, you will soon sense the ongoing need for this healing.

PREACH DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES

^{18c} . . . to preach deliverance to the captives . . ."

TO PREACH

" . . . to preach . . ."

Other versions read, "proclaim," NKJV "to say," BBE and "announce." GWN

This is the second time preaching, or proclaiming has been mentioned. **Something that is preached or proclaimed, has already been accomplished or provided.** Preaching deliverance amounts to proclaiming the prison in which one was held no longer has any doors. Those, for example, who have been held captive by sin can get up and walk out of it, just as surely as Israel walked out of Egypt, or lame

people picked up their beds and walked. That is what makes recovery systems so inferior. They are not addressing the case, but only the symptoms.

DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES

"...deliverance to the captives. . ."

Other versions read, "liberty to the captives," NKJV "release," NASB "freedom," NIV "will be let go," BBE "announce forgiveness to the prisoners of sin." GWN

How is it that liberty can be announced to prisoners while they are still in bondage? Allow me to touch on what is involved in this deliverance.

⇒ THE JUDGMENT OF THE OPPRESSOR. Jesus has bruised the serpent's

head, delivering a mortal bruise to him (Gen 3:15). It is written that by means of His death, Jesus *"destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil"* (Heb 2:14). Further, in the cross Jesus plundered principalities and powers, rendering them incapable of retaining any power over those who believe what Jesus preached. Satan simply cannot dominate a person who believes that proclamation.

⇒ A CHANGE IN THE OPPRESSED. The oppressed are "changed" – given a new nature that is superior (2 Cor 5:17; Eph 4:24). They now occupy the status of "more than conquerors" (Rom 8:37). Their faith makes them overcomers (1 John 5:4-5).

⇒ **THE REMOVAL OF THE ENEMY'S POWER.** Satan and all of his hosts, together with the world no longer have power over those who believe the message. Their power withers in the presence of Jesus, and where there

is genuine faith in Him. Faith is, indeed, *"the victory that overcometh the world"* (1 John 5:4).

All of this amounts to the removal of the prison doors. The deliverance

that is announced is not hypothetical. It is not a mere possibility. Satan and all of his hosts will respond to the person in Christ just as they respond to Christ. If this was not the case, deliverance could not be preached, or proclaimed.

PREACH RECOVERING OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND

^{18d} **and recovering of sight to the blind . . .**

Other versions read, *"recovery of sight,"* ^{NKJV} *"the blind will see,"* ^{BBE} *"renewed sight,"* ^{CJB} *"to the blind sight,"* ^{DARBY} *"restoring of sight"* ^{GWN} *"the blind will see,"* ^{NLT} and *"receiving of sight."* ^{YLT}

prefigured in the healing of the blind during Jesus' ministry (Matt 9:27-31; 15:30; Mk 8:22-36; John 9:1-41; Matt 20:29-34). It was wrought in the sense of this text when Jesus opened the understanding of His disciples (Lk 24:45), and in the opening of the heart of Lydia (Acts 16:14). This is what Paul

people exist in the professed church? Why is there so little *"spiritual understanding"* (Col 1:9)? Is it that Jesus has not done what He has been anointed to do? Has He been unfaithful to His commission? OR, has a *"form of godliness"* been introduced in which Jesus does not minister to the people (2 Tim 3:1-5)?

Where Jesus remains, or abides, He will minister, and the things for which He was anointed will take place.

There is no justifiable reason for any person in Christ to remain spiritually blind, or ignorant of God, Christ, and God's great salvation.

Speaking of the day of Christ, Isaiah prophesied, *"And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness"* (Isa 29:18). Again, *"And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken"* (Isa 32:3). And again, *"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped"* (Isa 35:5).

The reality of this promise was

prayed for the Ephesians – *"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened"* (Eph 1:18). It was a ministry in which Paul participated, being called to *"open their eyes"* (Acts 26:18). It is *"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God"* mentioned in Second Corinthians 4:6. **It is an integral part of Jesus' current ministry of giving us an understanding** (1 John 5:20).

It is a reproach to Jesus when spiritual ignorance lingers in those professing to be in His church. *"Ignorance"* alienates men *"from the life of God"* – professed "Christian" or not (Eph 4:18). **If Jesus was anointed to bring the recovery of sight to the blind, then how is it that so many "blind"**

It must be remembered that where Jesus is not received, He will not remain – and the ministry for which He was anointed will not be performed in such places. As it is written, *"And they did not receive Him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village"* (Luke 9:53-56).

Where Jesus remains, or abides, He will minister, and the things for which He was anointed will take place. There is no exception to this. Jesus is never unfaithful! He will never fail to do what He has been given to do. Believing this will assist the godly in evaluating many religious circumstances.

TO SET AT LIBERTY THEM THAT ARE BRUISED

^{18e} **. . . to set at liberty them that are bruised . . .**

Other versions read, *"to set at*

liberty those who are oppressed," ^{NKJV} *"to set free those who are downtrodden,"* ^{NASB} *"to release the oppressed,"* ^{NIV} *"to let the oppressed go*

free," ^{NRSV} *"to make the wounded free from their chains,"* ^{BBE} *"to liberate the oppressed,"* ^{CEB} *"to release those who have been crushed,"* ^{CJB} *"to send forth*

the crushed delivered" ^{DARBY} "to forgive those who have been shattered by sin," ^{GWN} "to send away the contrite with forgiveness [of their sins]," ^{MRD} "To send away the bruised with deliverance," ^{YLT} "that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors," ^{LIVING} "He sent me to lift up broken-hearted people," ^{IE} "to send away free those whom tyranny has crushed," ^{WEYMOUTH} "to send [to the ones being devastated a release]," ^{ABP} "to free everyone who suffers," ^{CEV} "To set the down-trodden at liberty," ^{GOODSPEED} "to send out in freedom those who are oppressed," ^{LEB} "to send away the ones being crushed, in remission," ^{LITV} "To set the burdened and battered free," ^{MESSAGE} and "to send forth as delivered those who are oppressed [who are downtrodden, bruised, crushed, and broken down by calamity]." ^{AMPLIFIED}

I include the representation of various versions, although I must admit I see them mostly as emissions of spiritual fog. After reading all of them, what is the average reader to conclude is the meaning of the text? **Like it or not, scholarship does not bring much to**

When Jesus liberates sinners from prison, they come out without their bonds, or chains. They do not remain enslaved to sin when they are liberated from the prison house!

the table of spiritual understanding, and worldly wisdom brings nothing at all.

Isaiah's prophecy reads, "the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa 61:1). Other versions read, "the opening of the prison and of the eyes to those who are bound." ^{AMPLIFIED} The bruising of reference is the effects of the bonds, or chains, that held the prisoners. When Joseph was in prison, he experienced this kind of bruising. It is written, "**Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron**" (Psa 105:18).

The meaning of the text is that they were released from their prison, and the chains that held them as well.

This contradicts the postulation of some professed Christian recovery programs that declare the professing Christian has been saved, yet remains "addicted" to some form of sin. Such claims may bring comfort to those without understanding, but they bring great reproach to Jesus, and negate the prophecy of Isaiah.

When Jesus liberates sinners from prison, they come out **without** their bonds, or chains. **They do not remain enslaved to sin when they are liberated from the prison house!** Those who teach otherwise have simply not told the truth – and when it comes to representing Jesus, nothing could be more reprehensible than that!

PREACH THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD

"¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Other versions read, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD," ^{NKJV} "TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD," ^{NASB} "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor," ^{NIV} "To give knowledge that the year of the Lord's good pleasure is come," ^{BBE} "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward." ^{DOUAY} "the time of the LORD's favor has come," ^{NLT} "God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him," ^{LIVING} "to announce the welcome year of the Lord," ^{IE} "This is the year the Lord has chosen," ^{CEV} "the time has come when the Lord will save his people," ^{GNB} "This is God's year to act!," ^{MESSAGE} and "the accepted and acceptable year of the Lord [the day when salvation and the free favors of God profusely abound]." ^{AMPLIFIED}

This was an appointed time, determined from before the foundation of the world.

- ⇨ The Savior through whom the day would be validated, initiated, and carried out to its completion, was determined "before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet 1:19-20; Rev 13:8).
- ⇨ Those who were to be accepted in Christ were chosen "in Him before the foundation of th world" (Eph 1:4).
- ⇨ The Kingdom to be inherited by the saved ones was "prepared . . . from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34).
- ⇨ So far as Divine intention was concerned the all of the works

associated with the day of salvation were "finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb 4:3).

The Prophets commenced to speak of a coming time when men would be accepted upon the basis of Another. Here are a few of them.

- ⇨ Isa 2:2 – All nations shall flow into the Lord's house.
- ⇨ Isa 25:6-7 – A Feast of fat things.
- ⇨ Isa 29:18-19,24 – A dramatic change in the people.
- ⇨ Isa 32:1-2 – A Man for a hiding place.
- ⇨ Isa 35:8 – A highway of holiness.
- ⇨ Isa 44:3-4 – Springing up of life.

- ⇒ Isa 46:13 – Salvation will not tarry.
- ⇒ Isa 52:10 – All the ends of the earth will see the salvation of God.
- ⇒ Isa 53:1-12 – A bearer of iniquity, and a Source of blessing.
- ⇒ Isa 55:3 – The sure mercies of God.
- ⇒ Isa 61:11 – Righteousness and praise will spring forth.
- ⇒ Jer 3:17 – All the nations will be gathered to the name of the Lord.

- ⇒ Jer 33:9 – Joy, honor, and praise to God before all nations.
- ⇒ Joel 2:32 – The Spirit of the Lord poured forth.

These were all speaking of the year of acceptance – a time when men would be received upon the basis of ones acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. That reception would not only be acceptable, and a genuine experience, it would be a wholly righteous transaction. **Jesus came to announce the commencement of that**

day, which continues to this day.

A NEED FOR THIS PROCLAMATION

There is a serious need for this proclamation, and especially for people to be prepared to receive it. It is really not enough for people to know their sins can be forgiven. **The reason sins are forgiven is in order that the forgiven one can have access to God, and receive the things God has prepared for them who love Him** (1 Cor 2:9). It is imperative that we know what God has determined to be accomplished by Jesus – and then for us to look for the fulfillment of these things in us.

THIS DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED IN YOUR EARS

"²⁰ And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. ²¹ And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

I do not doubt that the audience had never heard the reading of Scripture with such power and authority. Their response, as stated in this text, confirms to me that this was the case.

HE CLOSED THE BOOK

"And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. . ."

The orderliness and respect with which they handled the Scriptures is worthy of note. Everyone apparently did not have a copy of the Scriptures. The synagogue copy, however, does not appear to have been at the disposal of the people. It was treated with respect by the Lord Jesus Himself.

THE EYES OF THEM

" . . . And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. . ."

Other versions read, *"were fixed on Him,"* ^{NKJV} *"watched him closely,"* ^{GWN} *"were gazing upon him,"* ^{MRD} *"looked intently at him,"* ^{NAB} *"looked straight at*

Jesus," ^{CEV} and *"gazing [attentively] at Him."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

It is evident that when Jesus read the Scripture it became apparent that He knew the Scriptures well – their content and their meaning. He immediately drew the attention of the people, and they looked at Him intently, obviously desirous to hear what He was going to say.

HE BEGAN TO SAY TO THEM

" . . . And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

THE SITTING TEACHER

"The master sits at the head, or in the chief place, and the disciples before him in a circuit, like a crown; so that they all see the master, and hear his words; and the master may not sit upon a seat, and the scholars upon the ground; but either all upon the earth, or upon seats: indeed from the beginning, or formerly, "the master used to sit", and the disciples stand; but before the destruction of the second temple, all used to teach their disciples as they were sitting." ^{MAIMONIDES, HILCH. TALMUD TORAH, c. 4. sect. 2.}

Following the reading of the Scripture, Jesus sat down – as a teacher would do. Jesus is frequently depicted as sitting to teach (Matt 5:1; 15:29; 26:20; Mk 9:35; Lk 5:3; John 8:2; 13:12). **The posture itself indicates that the discourse was not intended to**

be brief. The words indicate that this is a summation of what Jesus taught: *"He BEGAN to say."* It ought to be noted that in our day, preaching and teaching are often associated with brevity, which the masses prefer in matters pertaining to life and godliness.

And what did Jesus **begin** to say? *"This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."* Other versions read, *"in your hearing,"* ^{NKJV} *"just as you heard it,"* ^{CEB} *"Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled,"* ^{CSB} *"This day, is this scripture which ye have heard, fulfilled,"* ^{MRD} *"This text is being fulfilled today even while you are listening"* ^{NJB} *"The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!"* ^{NLT} *"These Scriptures came true today!"* ^{LIVING} *"While you heard me reading these words just now, the words were coming true!"* ^{IE} *"Today this Scripture has been fulfilled while you are present and hearing."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Jesus was declaring that what this prophecy foretold was beginning to take place as He spoke. The fulfillment was commensurate with the spoken word itself. The people were listening to One who was anointed with the Holy Spirit, which was upon Him. **The Gospel was being preached, and healing and freedom were within the reach of the audience.** That very day, they could **have** what the prophecy had announced.

The Full Prophecy

The full prophecy is found in Isaiah 61:1-7. The following was declared.

- ⇒ Good tidings preached to the meek (Isa 61:1a).
- ⇒ The brokenhearted bound up (Isa 61:1b).

⇒ To appoint to those who mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified (Isa 61:3).

⇒ The old wastes would be built (Isa 61:4a).

⇒ They would experience everlasting joy (Isa 61:7).

This is actually a kind of snapshot of salvation, and this announcement was the heralding of “the day of salvation” (Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2).

Here “fulfilled” does not mean completion, but that the prophecy had commenced – like on the day of Pentecost–i.e. “This is that” (Acts 2:16).

As you peruse this glorious announcement, you will find it is at a sharp variance with what is seen in the modern church. There are actually countless imagined ministries that are miserable substitutes for what Jesus has been anointed and appointed to do. They are the modern representation of the “inventions” God condemned of old Psa 99:8; 106:29,39). Pretentious men have “sought out many inventions” (Eccl 7:29).

Wherever the Gospel is preached and received, we expect these proclamations to be fulfilled. It is dishonoring to Jesus to think anything else. **Candidly, we ought not to be supportive of any purported Christian activity that proceeds as though these things do not actually take place when a person is saved** – forgiven of “all” their trespasses (Col 2:13), delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of Christ (Col 1:13).

As you peruse this glorious announcement, you will find it is at a sharp variance with what is seen in the modern church. There are actually countless imagined ministries that are miserable substitutes for what Jesus has been anointed and appointed to do.

⇒ Liberty proclaimed to the captives (Isa 61:1c).

⇒ The opening of the prison announced to those who were bound (Isa 61:1d).

⇒ The acceptable year of the Lord proclaimed (Isa 61:2a).

⇒ The day of the vengeance of God proclaimed (Isa 61:2b).

⇒ Comfort proclaimed to all that mourn (Isa 61:2c).

⇒ The former desolations would be raised up (Isa 61:4b).

⇒ The waste cities would be repaired, and the desolations of many generations (Isa 61:4c).

⇒ Others would serve them (Isa 61:5).

⇒ They would be named “the Priests of the Lord” (Isa 61:6a).

⇒ Men would call then “the Ministers of our God” (Isa 61:6b).

IS NOT THIS JOSEPH’S SON

“²² And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph’s son?”

BARE HIM WITNESS

“And all bare Him witness . . .”

Other versions read, “and all were speaking well of Him,” ^{NASB} “they were all giving witness,” ^{BBE} “Everyone was raving about Jesus,” ^{CEB} “all spoke

highly of Him,” ^{NAB} “He won the approval of all,” ^{NJB} “the people were saying good things about Jesus,” ^{IE} “All the people started talking about Jesus,” ^{CEV} “They were all well impressed with Him,” ^{GNB} “Everybody noticed what He said.” ^{PHILLIPS}

Everyone was quite impressed with the way Jesus spoke. He read the Scriptures well, and in an impressive manner. They might have said things

like, “He is a good speaker.” or “He surely knows the Scripture, that is one of my favorite passages, or “Very impressive!”

WONDERED AT THE GRACIOUS WORDS

“ . . . and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. . .”

Other versions read, “words of

grace," ^{ASV} "appealing words," ^{CJB} "beautiful words," ^{LIVING} "sweet words of kindness," ^{WEYMOUTH} "words of charm," ^{MONTGOMERY} "words of favor," ^{ABP} "wonderful things," ^{CEV} "eloquent words," ^{GNB} "winning words," ^{GOODSPEED} and "how well he spoke." ^{MESSAGE}

What "gracious words" – words of the poor hearing good news, broken hearts being healed, captives being delivered, blind being given sight, those in bonds being liberated, and an acceptable year. You certainly could not deliver better words than that! However, they were little more than words to the audience – oratory, and a good speech. No personal association was made with them and actual human experience.

IS NOT THIS JOSEPH'S SON?

" . . . And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"

Other versions read, "This is Joseph's son, isn't it?" ^{CEB} "Can this be Yosef's son?" ^{CJB} "This is Joseph's son, surely?" ^{NJB} and "Isn't this Joseph's son, the one we've known since he was a youngster?" ^{MESSAGE}

Among other things, this confirms that Joseph and Mary never told of Jesus' miraculous birth, Mary being conceived by the Holy Spirit. Men would not have believed such a testimony, and it would have moved some to think Mary was guilty of adultery. Later in is ministry, some people said He was a "Samaritan," and had a demon (John 8:48). Joseph and Mary did not tell people what had been told to them, that Jesus was "the Son of God" (Lk 1:35), or that He was going "save His people from their sins" (Matt 1:21), or that He was going to be given "the throne of His father David" (Lk 1:32).

It would have been inappropriate to speak of those things to the general public. They were intended for the people actually involved in the work of the Lord, like Elizabeth, Zacharias, Simeon, and Anna.

There are some things that are not intended to be spoken to general public.

They are more intended for the family of God. These things are not able to be comprehended by those who are not in Christ Jesus. Examples of these are as follows.

⇒ We are "born again" (1 Pet 1:23).

In the case of Jesus, when He began to divulge who He really was, there was nothing in His life that could be interpreted as contradicting what He said. Suffice it to say, and in our measure, the same must be said of us.

⇒ We have access to God (Eph 3:12).

⇒ We are kings and priests (Rev 1:6).

⇒ We are being conformed the image of Christ (Rom 8:39-30; 2 Cor 3:18).

⇒ We are "accepted" by God (Eph 1:6).

⇒ We have been made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places (Eph 2:6).

⇒ We have the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:12).

Because Jesus was totally free from sin, He could say to the multitudes, "I came down from heaven" (John 6:38). He could challenge them, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" (John 8:46).

When we bear testimony to men about our status with God, freedom from sin's dominion, etc, it must not be contradicted by our lives. **When Paul testified to Agrippa of His calling, he told the things that could be seen in his life: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I**

send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:16-18).

Testimonies given by people who remain dominated by sin are hurtful, not helpful.

In the case of Jesus, when He began to divulge who He really was, there was nothing in His life that could be interpreted as contradicting what He said. Suffice it to say, and in our measure, the same must be said of us.

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT

Matthew gives this account of Jesus' visit to Nazareth. "And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this Man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not His mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in Him . . ." (Matt 13:54-57a).

MARK'S ACCOUNT

Mark gives this account of the occasion: " . . . many hearing Him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this Man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the Carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with

us? And they were offended at Him." (Mark 6:2-33).

They recognized that what works they had seen were "mighty," and that He had received great "wisdom." Yet,

they thought of Him only as they had seen Him in ordinary life. They saw no connection between Him and God.

YE SHALL SURELY UNTO ME

"²³ And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto He this proverb, Physician, heal Thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country."

Like it or not, the Lord accentuates glaring differences between Himself and men (Prov 21:8; Isa 55:8-9; Rom 8:7; James 4:4). Natural men object to any mention of their variance with God, but they are wrong in that objection.

Jesus will now expose the enmity of the people He is addressing by prophesying what they will do.

YE WILL SURELY SAY

"And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country."

So far as the record is concerned, this is the only time Jesus returned to

Nazareth, where He had been brought up. Luke gives no record of Him working a miracle there, or doing anything supernatural. All manner of reports concerning what He was and would be doing elsewhere were brought into Nazareth, but few reports are said to have gone out of Nazareth concerning what He had done there. Other Gospel writers do mention of a few things Jesus did there – very limited. Luke, however, makes no mention of them.

NO PROPHET IS ACCEPTED IN HIS OWN COUNTRY

"²⁴ And He said, Verily, I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵ But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; ²⁶ But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. ²⁷ And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

NO PROPHET IS ACCEPTED

"And He said, Verily, I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. . ."

This is an accurate assessment of fallen humanity, as history will bear witness. Those who have been raised with holy people generally have rejected them when their real status was made known. Outside of Christ, fleshly familiarity trumps exposure to newness of life, or a new kind of life. As a carpenter, Jesus posed no threat to the people. However, when His real Person

was revealed it was devastating to the flesh – even those of His own family.

MATTHEW'S RECORD

Matthew gives this record: *"And they were offended in Him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in His own country, and in his own house. And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief"* (Matt 13:57b-58).

MARK'S RECORD

"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in His own country, and among His own kin, and in his own house. And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them" (Mark 6:4-5). It appears that this was done in a more private manner due to the spiritual hostility in that place.

MANY WIDOWS WERE IN ISRAEL

" . . . But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great

famine was throughout all the land; ²⁶ But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. . ."

This well known account is found in First Kings 17:9-24. To a favored, but haughty, nation, this would make no sense. After all, some would reason, "charity begins at home." What such shallow people do not recognize is that Divine love did begin with Israel. He was gracious and kind to them, but they responded by turning their back to Him (Jer 2:27). The people standing before Jesus were members of a "faithless and perverse generation" (Matt 17:17).

MANY LEPERS WERE IN ISRAEL

" . . . And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

This record is found in First Kings 19:19-21. Again, a bigoted people, though they had been favored by God, would not consider this to be proper. Similar things take place today. In my

own experience, when I was walking among a certain sect, I was upbraided for preaching to what was considered an unacceptable denomination, and even forbidden to do so. I did not honor the sectarian mandate. It was

motivated by the Nazareth-spirit revealed in this text – a spirit that wanted all of the attention, but was unwilling to give their own attention to the truth of God, particularly as it was embodied in the Son of God. The

seriousness of this attitude is rarely acknowledged. In fact, considerable effort is being expended to sanctify it as being from God Himself. Throughout the history of God's people, this kind of attitude has been confronted.

THEY WERE FILLED WITH WRATH

"²⁸ And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,²⁹ And rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong."

IN THE SYNAGOGUE

"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath . . ."

Other versions read, "filled with rage," ^{NASB} "were furious," ^{NIV} "were very angry," ^{BBE} "filled with fury," ^{CJB} "was enraged," ^{CSB} "these remarks stung them to fury," ^{LIVING} "became very, very angry," ^{IE} "filled with wrath," ^{EMTV} and "was furiously angry" ^{PHILLIPS}

And, what was it that caused

identical positions did not. And who was it that made the decision that led to this mercy? It was none other than Almighty God, whom these very Jews professed to worship. But they really did not worship Him, because they had a controversy with Him because of what He did. For them, their will was the primary will, and they despised any will that was contrary to it– even if it was the will of God. Mind you, they had been given to know more about God than any other people. To them belonged *"the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen"* (Rom 9:4-5).

However, Divine privilege and

brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong."

All that were in the synagogue acted upon the hatred, and gave vent to their fury. The gathering of the day was instantly concluded. They got up, in some way gathered around Jesus, and all went to *"the brow of the hill whereon their city was built."* Jesus did not resist them. In mercy He did not strike them down, or even slay them. The time from the synagogue to the brow of the hill was, if it could only have been seen, *"space to repent"* (Rev 2:21): but the people did not! They fully intended to throw Jesus down to the base of the mount, where He would be dashed to pieces.

You see what corrupt religion can do to a person. Throughout history, some of the most violent crimes have been committed by professing Christians. Religious wars are sometimes some of the worst of wars. In Biblical history, prophets were stoned (Matt 23:37), thrown into miry dungeons (Jer 38:6), and persecuted. The apostles suffered at the hands of religious leaders (Acts 5:40; 2 Cor 11:24).

It has been confirmed that the worst of all flesh is religious flesh. It even opposed the Lord Jesus Christ and those He sent out.

You see what corrupt religion can do to a person. Throughout history, some of the most violent crimes have been committed by professing Christians. Religious wars are sometimes some of the worst of wars.

everyone in that synagogue to suddenly be filled with rage, wrath, anger, and fury? It was a word, or report, taken from Scripture, of two people who were not Jews who received tender mercy from the Lord, while some Jews in

blessing do not change the heart, as Israel and Judas prove.

THEY ROSE UP

" . . . And rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the

HE WENT ON HIS WAY

"³⁰ But He passing through the midst of them went His way." Other

versions read, *"But He walked right through the crowd and went on His*

way," ^{NIV} *"But He walked right through the middle of the crowd and went*

away," ^{CJB} and "But Jesus walked right by them and went away." ^{GWN}

He was apparently completely undetected. Walking right through the middle of the crowd, no one could see Him. Perhaps the Lord seemly shut their eyes to His Person. Or, He could have

changed His appearance as He did to the two on the way to Emmaus, appearing in "another form" (Mk 16:12).

The truth of the matter is that His hour had not yet come –the hour in which He would lay down His life, a

"ransom for many" Matt 20:28). Jesus spoke the absolute truth when He said, "No man taketh it from Me" (John 10:18). It simply could not be done, whether an angry crowd attempted it, or a cluster of scribes and Pharisees. He went on "His way," to do the will of the Father who had sent Him.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 3/20/15. We will continue our series of lessons in the Gospel of Luke. The fifteenth lesson will cover verses 30 thru 44 of chapter 4: "JESUS BEGINS AN AGGRESSIVE MINISTRY." Having preached in His hometown, and been rejected, He goes to Capernaum, and begins His aggressive ministry. He ministers in another synagogue, and assaults Satan's kingdom. The people zealously sought Him, while He affirmed He had to preach the kingdom of God to other cities also. He also preached in the synagogues of Galilee. The region was lit up with the glory of as preaching Deliverer. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.