

SERMON REFLECTIONS

1. What was meaningful to you in Sunday's sermon? (A Promise Fulfilled--Luke 4:14-30)

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Luke 4:30 ends with Jesus miraculously walking away from the angry crowd that wanted to drive him out of Nazareth, his hometown. Following this vehement rejection, Jesus continues preaching and healing in Galilee and says he must preach "the good news."

1. What are ways you've observed people react to rejection?
2. What does it take for a person to go from being rejected to proclaiming good news?

READ Luke 4:31-36

In Nazareth, Jesus was driven out of the synagogue. In Capernaum, Jesus drove a demon out of a man who came into the synagogue. This is Luke's first account of demon possession. Jesus didn't converse with the disruptive demon; he commanded it to come out of the man. The demon obeyed, and the people were amazed at the authority and power of Jesus.

DISCUSS

1. In what ways were the people in the synagogue in Nazareth similar to those in Capernaum? How were they different?
2. How do you account for the different responses to Jesus by the people in Nazareth and those in Capernaum?

READ Luke 4:38-44

As Jesus continued healing and casting out demons, people pleaded with him to stay with them. His response stated the essence of his message--*"I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent."* This is the first mention of the kingdom of God in Luke. In commenting on what "kingdom of God" meant to Jesus, William Barclay suggests that the kingdom represents three things at the same time--the past, the present, and the future.

DISCUSS

1. What does the "good news of the kingdom of God" mean to you?
2. How does the kingdom of God incorporate the past, the present, and the future?
3. How do vs. 43-44 apply to Christians today?

READ Luke 5:1-11

The Sea of Galilee (Lake of Gennesaret) is the setting for Jesus as he preached, called disciples and demonstrated his power. Look for the qualities that were part of the miraculous, net-breaking catch of fish. There was an observant eye, an extra effort, and a willingness to attempt what seemed hopeless. Jesus' instruction to, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch," (5:4) resonates in the Puritan prayer:

"And let me not lay my pipe too short of the fountain,
never touching the eternal spring,
never drawing down water from above."

Simon Peter, James, and John were astonished at the catch of fish. Jesus told them that from now on they would "catch men." In this text, John Piper sees four ways that describe how followers of Jesus become fishers of men--a) teach the word of God, b) obey the commands of Jesus, c) humble oneself, and d) treasure Christ above all.

DISCUSS

1. What is meaningful to you in Luke 5:1-11?
2. How could you share these verses with someone who needs encouragement?

READ Luke 5:17-26

Jesus heals a man with leprosy and heals a paralytic in Luke 5:12-26. The beginning of the opposition to Jesus by the Pharisees and teachers of the law is found in this passage. They knew all of the law's rules and regulations and separated themselves from sin and sinners so they could keep their laws and remain clean. They were angry because Jesus forgave the paralytic's sins. In their eyes, Jesus was a lawbreaker; only God could forgive sins.

1. How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees' charge of blasphemy?
2. Did the friends bring their paralyzed friend for forgiveness? Did anyone ask for healing? How did the friends' faith figure in the healing?
3. What does this incident show about God's grace and the deity of Christ?

READ Luke 5:27-32

Jesus called Levi (Matthew), a tax collector, to follow him. Levi followed him immediately. Because tax collectors were disliked and excluded from religious fellowship, the Pharisees and teachers of the law complained and asked, "Why?" Jesus's answer reflected that his mission was to help those in need.

APPLY

1. In summarizing the Luke 4:31-5:31 account of Jesus' ministry to a friend, how would you use the words "healing," "calling," "forgiving," "amazing"? What other words would you use?
2. What characteristics of the people interacting with Jesus in these passages do you see in others today? In yourself?
3. What qualities of Jesus stand out for you in these verses? How can they help you in your daily life?
4. How can you apply the message from the Puritan prayer excerpt to yourself? Your family? Your church?

References:

William Barclay's Daily Study Bible, Luke 4.

<http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/luke-4.html>

John Piper, Breaking Nets, Sinking Boats and Saving Men.

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/breaking-nets-sinking-boats-and-saving-men> *Adventuring Through the Bible,*

"Self Knowledge," *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers & Devotions.* Arthur Bennett, ed. The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1995.

Bob Diffenbach, from Luke: the Gospel of the Gentiles Series, Bible.org (Luke 4:31-44, 5:1-11, 5:12-26, and 5:27-39).