



The Gospel According to Luke Wk. 18 "His Rejection" By Pastor Joseph L. May

Luke 4:16-22 ESV

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³ And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself.' What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'" ²⁴ And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, he went away.

CONFLICT:

CONVICTION:

CONFIDENCE:

CONDUCT:



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You know what I like to do when the kids are home for long vacations? Watch one of the great Trilogies with them like Star Wars, LOR, or yes Rocky. Trilogies are written for us when just one story is not enough, where character expansion is needed and there is a greater story arch that encompasses multiple story lines. The next three weeks as we go through this Christmas Season, we will be experiencing from Luke a mini-series, like a Trilogy if you will, that is given to us to develop a story arch.

First let me state the aim of the Trilogy:

Luke 4:42-44ESV

⁴² And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, ⁴³ but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." ⁴⁴ And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

The point of this trilogy, as Luke is writing to the ancient church, is ask, "Are you ready to take a trip with Jesus to discover Salvation/Life/Freedom to see what He can do and to hear His message?" To have certainty according to what you were taught (1:4).

Secondly, you will see that this Trilogy takes place around the familiar, the churches/synagogues near His home town of Nazareth. These stories share Jesus' encounter with people and places He was familiar with. So by the end of the three weeks you should associate yourself with one of the three different groups of people that we will encounter; **Those that thought they knew Him, those that are hostile to Him, and those that wanted Him for what He can do.** And even if you say I am all three you still get the invite for 2019 to travel with Him and see Jesus for yourself. Now here are your **3 titles** for this **trilogy**:

Week 1 – His Rejection – The dangers of thinking you know Jesus well (16-30).

Week 2 – His Authority – We can learn from the enemy on how we should fear Him (31-37).

Week 3 – His Compassion – The demonstration of how He cares for people (38-41).

Now on with Week 1: I think it to be no accident that right after the scene of possibly Jesus' greatest victory outside the cross, 'The Temptation', that Luke shares with us this heartbreaking story of Jesus' rejection. AND this is no slight diss this is the casting out, the threat of death, from the town that He had once called home. These people were the neighbors



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he helped, the kids He played with, and those undoubtedly that He had taught about God. This synagogue was His home church where He learned about the OT scrolls for the first time, where He celebrated weddings, grieved over deaths, who knows how many of these faces had looked on Him, hugged Him, kissed His cheek, laughed, and praised His name. Some of the homes held the furniture He made, as well some most likely had his help in constructing as He was the carpenter. He had helped build this place, to be a town where a little place of God's Kingdom would be revealed.

This should have been a great homecoming, you see a year has passed since the baptism. It's not in the text but Jesus Has been busy -

Now as you remember, Luke skipped over the first few months of Jesus' ministry. His ministry actually began with His first miracle up in Cana, which is a town adjacent to Nazareth. **After being baptized by John, He was tempted by the devil forty days in the wilderness. After that He was ministered to for a while by the angels, then He went up to Cana to attend a wedding** to which His family had been invited. Weddings usually lasted a week. It was there that He did the **first of His miracles, turning water into wine. After that, He left and came south to the north end of the Sea of Galilee, a town called Capernaum, where He ministered for a few days and did some miracles, as verse 23 in this passage indicates. Then He proceeded directly back south into Judea and Jerusalem where He ministered for many months in His first Judean ministry.** Luke doesn't tell us about that. Neither does Matthew or Mark, **but John fills in the gaps** there in the first three chapters of John's gospel, actually the first four chapters because in chapter 4 He's trekking north and goes through Samaria where He meets the woman at the well and many of the Samaritans believe in Him as Savior and Lord. **So Luke picks up the story after He's come back into Galilee and launches His Galilean ministry.**¹

Jesus returns after a lot of notoriety, there are many stories of His greatness and healing ability, this should be a scene of rejoicing but as we will learn it turns into a scene of abject rejection, because Jesus does what He does so well, **He distinguishes Himself by being honest yet graceful and people hate Him for it.** So, let's see now what got Jesus in such hot water.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.

¹ MacArthur, John. <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/42-54/jesus-return-to-nazareth-preaching-in-the-synagogue> Web 12/14/2018.



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Jesus, as was custom, found himself in a synagogue on the sabbath. That's just a good take away right there, a small lesson this morning. Jesus did not agree with how the gospel was taught in His day, He did not agree with the Pharisee translation of God's law making the Gospel a work-based program for people instead of a believing in the Messiah in that He would do the work. **BUT He still went to the synagogue/church to worship corporately** with the people, to hear the scripture taught or to teach it Himself.

That example still stands for the church today we are to gather with one another to experience the proclamation of good news, the confession of sin, and the repentance that accompanies it, and experience the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper.

Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV

²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Let it stand as a reminder today, that as we age as a body we are to meet more together, inside the walls and out, as the day of Salvation draws near, for those not saved as well as we progress towards the day of Christ return. **The conclusion; let us all in 2019 work on meeting more not less.**

Jesus is invited to read the scriptures for the day and to give His interpretation on them. In that time Jesus would stand to read and then sit to give His sermon. He reads from Isaiah 61:1-2a, which is a Messianic prophecy on what will the Messiah, the King, do when He comes.

- ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
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He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
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And in this first installment in this series we see His grace and mercy as He forgoes reading part 2 of verse 2:

[¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me...]
... ^{19b} to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

Jesus is not ready to pronounce judgment and tribulation on His people. That's an important part of the gospel as well - **The Gospel comes with a Warning on the Label along with the Rejoicing it brings.** The Messiah will be the one that must enforce God's Justice in the end, He will bring great tribulation and judgment on those that rejected Him, for it is the right thing to do, but what you see here is His desire to extend to His people, Grace...

What is this Grace He brings? All of the people in this prophecy have something in common, they need a savior. The condition of their lostness has played out differently amongst them.

- Those that suffer from poverty are not promised release from it but are given news that makes being poor not 'the' issue in life but perhaps a blessing compared to riches...
- Those that are held captive, trapped by sin, habits, and looking at death are set free.
- The spiritually blind will see and the remnant number will now grow and more will be saved.
- Oppression from the world's teachings, thoughts, seductions are dismantled by the Gospel.
- To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor was to establish for all people for all times the year of Jubilee from Lev. 25, where all debts are considered paid and slaves are set free. **Along with the Gospel comes an eternal Freedom.**

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Then what is the **shortest sermon in the Bible** is given because what else can He say - the expectation for the reaction to the Hometown hero should applause, I mean He just experienced before this a bunch of Samaritans/Gentiles of which many were saved and came to faith, I



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mean this proclamation should be the beginning of a Revival in His town! BUT here's their reaction, they liked His presentation (thumbs up), but doubted by evidence of their question, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Great sounding sermon but it had no impact!

And now here's where I want you to pause and see this morning, there's nothing scarier and more dangerous as thinking you know who Jesus is especially when you are blind to your need for Him.

Just like these good town folks many of us have grown up with Jesus. We went to the Sunday School classes where we memorized scriptures and learned all the names. We participated in the Nativities and Easter Cantatas, we went and worked in the VBS, we came down the aisle when the pastor warned us about going to hell. Yeah, we know Jesus, He is the guy that died to save me and all I gotta do is say 'I believe' and everything is ok. We grew up thinking that after we invited Jesus into our hearts we did not need Him anymore. **There is nothing scarier and more dangerous than that right there of which Jesus is well aware of. We saw that the Gospel was to bring joy but we did not read the warning sign that without Jesus as Lord in your life constantly there is no lasting effect.** So, in good Jesus fashion He stops to set everyone straight.

He's like, "You want proof don't you?"

²⁴ And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.

These stories of Elijah and Elisha was to show that when the people did not welcome the Word of God, the prophet, were blind, then God sent that prophet to the Gentiles. There is no favor or reward for doing works, going to church, following rules, etc... you were considered just as dirty and unclean as the Gentiles. You see when you think you know Jesus, you think you have the ability to judge whether you need His Words or not, that the bread He provides is ok to go



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without, that pursuing and growing in the Gospel is an academic endeavor and not a spiritual quest needed for Salvation then you are on deadly ground.

When that happens all heck breaks loose in your heart when someone tells you like a pastor, or a friend/family member that they think you got it wrong, that you're in sin, that you need to repent, that you need to seek forgiveness. When you think you don't need Jesus there is nothing that infuriates you more than when someone says you're missing the point of the gospel, to be saved is to realize you need and want Jesus all the time.

²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, he went away.

They were required not by Roman law but Jewish to hold a trial but at that moment, Jesus' confrontation of their sin, earned Him, according to Rabbinic traditions, the proper way to stone someone to death, throw Him off a cliff. That leads me to this one simple question for you today. "Who is Jesus to you?" Are you too familiar with Him, do you think you have Him figured out? Does the presentation of the Gospel, cause you to rejoice at the message and repent of sins, or do you critique me by applauding or criticizing what I say? **Are you heeding the warning here as well as receiving the Joy of the Gospel.**

Wherever you fall today, I want you to know that Jesus is still inviting you today to go with Him in 2019, to these other towns in v.43 to preach the good news, to see if it plucks at your heart. Maybe today you have heard this story and felt sympathy for Jesus, and along with being hurt over how He was treated there was joy mixed in with it over the fact that it pleases you to hear about Him and the good news He brings. Perhaps the Gospel is taking its' desired effect.

- **Through witnessing and experiencing Jesus' Rejection you may actually be receiving God's Affirmation.**
- **Hearing and realizing the horrific news that He was chased out of His hometown for the offensiveness of His message, we find ourselves longing for what He is offering, could it be we are receiving that costly good news as poor people hitting the lottery?**
- **When we see their closed mindedness and know that we have those tendencies as well the proclamation of good news is setting us free.**



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- When we scream in our spirits you fools what's wrong with you while understanding that without the HS we would be in the same boat your spiritual eyes are opening.
- When we feel sympathy for Christ and compassion for His lost town we are experiencing the release of being oppressed from this world and the devil for our anger and fear is falling away.
- When we see Jesus on the cross dying for that town, we remember that while we were still sinners Christ died for us as well.

Yes, be encouraged my family by your affections for Jesus and just be careful when you think you got this Christian life figured out for that is a scary and dangerous place to be in. Jesus' message for us today is one of warning and one of rejoicing. **The mixture of warning and rejoicing gives us one of the best qualities of the Gospel that we celebrate as Christmas - Peace.**

John 16:33 ESV

³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

PRAY

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

- Go in the name of the Father that has set you free and has cured your blindness.
- Go in the name of the Son who establishes the Peace of the Gospel in your hearts.
- Go in the Power of the HS that helps you to obey and share this good news.