



**CAPITOL[®]
COMMISSION**

Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders



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He [Jesus] began by saying to them, “Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled.”

Luke 4:21

Luke 4:16-44 - Jesus Makes His Messianic Claim

Jesus’ teaching is spreading his fame around the northern countryside of Galilee (read Luke 4:16-30). When He returns to His hometown of Nazareth, He goes to synagogue on the Sabbath, as was His custom as an observant Jew. He stands up to read from the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-2. If you look up that reference you will see that Jesus stops mid-verse. He is revealing Himself as One sent by the Lord God, anointed by the Spirit of God to heal and proclaim liberty and God’s favor. The next phrase in Isaiah is about the Day of the Lord, a time of just wrath poured out on evil doers and mentioned many times in the Old Testament. I suggest Jesus’ mission on Earth there in the Nazarene synagogue focused on mercy and grace which will later be purchased on a Roman cross; whereas His second coming will initiate the final judgment. Thus He stops there, He is fulfilling that 1st portion of the prophecy at that time.

However, it is one thing to read the Scripture and decide when to stop, it is quite another to apply the prophecy to yourself. Unless You are Whom You claim to be—the Messiah (Anointed One of God). After reading the scroll, it is rolled back up and placed back into its container for safekeeping. Jesus sits, the posture of a teacher. The men in the place are raptly attentive to Jesus, perhaps expecting a treatise on Isaiah. Instead He reveals His presence fulfills that 700-year old Messianic prophecy; He is the Servant mentioned in Isaiah. Luke indicates they had been speaking well of Jesus because of His spreading fame—and the miraculous signs. But now they cannot get past the fact Jesus grew up as one of their own, asking “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” As we have covered, no He was not! (see Matthew 1:18-21, Luke 3:23). Of all the people in the world, the religious people of Nazareth should have known Him.

The tone of the narrative shifts at verse 22, indicating the Nazarenes expected to see the miracles which Jesus had performed in or near Capernaum, a town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, about 20 miles NE of Nazareth. Only Luke shares Jesus’ rejection at His hometown, which explains why Capernaum becomes His headquarters for

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastor-missionaries who in session teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for all those in our state capitols. The Bible studies are hand distributed to each legislative office, are available online at capitolcom.org, and shared across the Capitol Commission community. This ministry is an extension of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message and help believers mature through Biblical expositional instruction. Prayer is foundational to this ministry, consistent with proper submission to governmental authority (Rom 13:1-7) and obedient to the command to pray for our appointed leaders (1 Tim 2:1-4).

Our desire is to witness God’s work in transforming hearts.

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the rest of His ministry (Matthew 4:13, Mark 2:1). As Jesus frequently does, He anticipates their hearts and thoughts and calls them out with a diatribe against Israel's history of mistreating God's prophets (e.g., Hebrews 11:32-38). Note how the narrative started with Jesus revealing Himself as their Messiah and ends with them trying to kill Him. What is the reason for their fury? From vv 24-27 He relates Elijah being sent to a Sidonian widow (and not to a widow of Israel) and the healing of Naaman the Syrian. Both were Gentiles, so for a Jew under first century Roman occupation to hear that God showed favor to people outside of their camp infuriates them. To suggest the people of the promise could be left out and the Gentiles shown grace ignites their anger. Verse 28 specifically mentions their peaceful worship venue fills with wrath. Amazingly, Jesus just walks through the mob and leaves, an important point in that Jesus' time had not yet come—and when it does He surrenders Himself willingly. No number of men could kill the Son of God unless He first yielded Himself to their power. Scripture does not record that He ever returned.

Read 4:31-44. Jesus, now at Capernaum, begins teaching in the synagogue there and the people are amazed at the way He taught, as one with authority over His message. An example of this is the Sermon on the Mount, which begins at Matthew 5:1. Notice how often He says "you have heard it said, but I tell you..." The teachers of that day would not dare to command the people in their own words. Nor would I!

To add to their amazement, Jesus confronts a demon-possessed man there *in their synagogue*—a fact I find amazing. It seems that Jesus' invasion of the world controlled by Satan was met with an unprecedented amount of demonic activity in response to His presence. And the demons know exactly who He is but He silences this one and orders the demon out of the man. This highlights Jesus' authority and power over the unseen spirit world.

He then goes to Simon Peter's house and verbally heals his mother-in-law. Word is spreading fast and people line up for healing from disease and deliverance from demons. Verse 40 notes He healed every one of them; no one who sought help left without complete healing. In vs 41 the devils again exclaim His divinity, but He would not allow their testimony to define Him. Jesus' power here illustrates His authority over the human body as Creator.

The other gospels tell us the crush of the demanding crowds often forced Jesus to withdraw from the cities to lonely places, where He could pray to God and find rest. The will of the people would be for Jesus to set up shop and heal everyone from there (one might imagine the commerce that would bring) but Jesus leaves to travel the circuit in order to preach the "good news (gospel) of the kingdom", stating this was His purpose. Note He also ventures into Judea, the southern portion of Israel, where Jerusalem and the ruling religious authorities lived.

Applications

1. The saying goes, "familiarity breeds contempt". How were the Nazarenes of Jesus' day too familiar with Him as a person they failed to see Him as God? How might we be too familiar with Bible stories that we miss the point of God breaking into our lives to reveal Jesus is not just a good teacher, He is the Savior of the world?
2. In verses 33-34 and 41 demons loudly acknowledged who Christ is. Do you agree we who have repented and believed should be louder than these fallen angels in proclaiming who Christ is? If so, get to it!

My desire is to highlight Jesus Christ to you. Toward that end, I am available to discuss any biblical topic or question you may have. I especially want to ensure all who read the studies understand how Jesus Christ is distinctively important to the entire world and to each of us individually. Lastly, all Bible studies are available at Capitol Commission's Alabama page: <https://capitolcom.org/state/alabama>.

Plan to attend our in-house Bible Study during session: Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. in Room 602 of the State House.

A key facet empowering our ministry is prayer, especially prayer for our elected leaders. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 commands Christians to obediently pray for all in authority. A tool for America's churches to help consistently pray for you, our elected leaders, is available to all via: www.Pray1Tim2.org - Select Alabama and sign up for daily email reminders, courtesy of Capitol Commission.

Share this link with your home church!