

SERMON NOTES
Luke 4:14-21
“Jesus’ Mission Statement”

Intro:

- As the Son of God, Jesus could have succeeded at anything
- *He could have been a Shakespeare or a Bill Gates or a Steven Spielberg or an Albert Einstein or a Beethoven or an Abraham Lincoln or a Tom Cruise or a Martin Luther King, Jr., or a Michael Jordan or a Michael Jackson*
- You are Almighty God – and you plan to visit earth in human flesh – and you want to make a difference – you want to leave a huge footprint
- *So how do you invest your life? How do you use your power? Where do you pour your best energies? What do you make the passion of your life? Of all the good you could accomplish – what do you actually devote your life to?*
- God actually announced His mission through the prophet Isaiah 700 years before sending His Son to earth
- *In a very real sense, Jesus was born to die – he came from heaven to earth in order to die as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*
- That is true – but it is not the whole truth
- For not only his death, but also his life had significance and meaning
- *Jesus did not just live a random and purposeless existence until it was time for him to go to the Cross*
- Christ was given a mission to accomplish before the Cross as well

Isaiah 61:1 - 2 (NIV) ¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD’S favor

- **Of all the good that the Son of God could accomplish with his divine power – he would focus his life and ministry on preaching good news to the poor and healing and liberating all who were under the power of the devil**
- **When God visited our world and lived among us as one of us – he devoted his life to serving the poor // the brokenhearted // the oppressed – the most vulnerable of human beings**
- *What does this reveal to us about the heart of God?*

- How did Jesus understand and define his mission – the purpose of his ministry?
- ***Jesus’ own mission statement is recorded in chapter 4 of the Gospel of Luke***
- Jesus launched his public ministry in his hometown synagogue in Nazareth shortly after his baptism and his temptations in the wilderness
- *Jesus was asked to read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and comment on the reading*
- Whether selected by Divine Providence or His own choice, Jesus turned to Isaiah 61 – read a couple of verses – and then announced: ***Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing***

Luke 4:16 - 21 (NIV) ¹⁶He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ **“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”** ²⁰Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, ²¹and he began by saying to them, **“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”**

- *By announcing the prophecy fulfilled – Jesus was claiming to be the promised Messiah, and to be embarking on a mission of liberation*
- ***Jesus had come to invade the kingdom of Satan and to set free his captives***
- C.S. Lewis captures the essence of Jesus’ mission in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*
- **Aslan came to Narnia not only to sacrifice his life for Edmund – but to free all of Narnia from the White Witch’s tyranny**
- *So also Jesus came to earth not only to save individuals from their sins – but also to liberate us from Satan’s tyranny*
- Jesus looked at our predicament in this fallen world the same as Aslan looked at Narnia: *as captives being oppressed by the tyranny of the Evil One*
- **His mission: to abolish that tyranny and set the captives free**

I. THE POWER SOURCE FOR JESUS’ MISSION

- As the Son of God, Jesus is fully divine as well as being fully human

- *All the fullness of Deity dwells in the human body of Jesus of Nazareth*
- And John's Gospel makes clear that the miracles Jesus performed testify to him being the Son of God
- Yet a case can be made that the NT as a whole – and especially Luke – attribute the miracles of Jesus to the power of the Holy Spirit filling Jesus
- **Jesus was led and empowered by the Spirit throughout his ministry, beginning with his baptism**

Luke 3:21 - 22 (NIV) ²¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “*You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.*”

Luke 4:1-2 ¹Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit to go out into the wilderness, ²where the Devil tempted him for forty days.

Luke 4:14 ¹⁴Then Jesus returned to Galilee, full of the Holy Spirit's power.

- *Jesus received spiritual power to do ministry and miracles from the anointing of the Holy Spirit*
- *Jesus Himself said so at the beginning of his mission statement, quoting from Isaiah's prophecy of the coming Messiah:*

Luke 4:18 (NIV) ¹⁸ **“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.”**

- The word for “anointed” is the same Greek word from which we get “Christ” and “christen”
- **Jesus is the Spirit-anointed Messiah who was empowered by the Spirit in his mission of preaching, healing and deliverance**
- *This is also Peter's understanding of Jesus' ministry:*

Acts 10:38 ³⁸ God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the Devil, for God was with him.

- *Why does the NT place so much emphasis on Jesus relying on the Spirit for the power to do his ministry?*

- To counteract our natural tendency – and disbelief – that we could ever do the same works that Jesus did
- *After all – Jesus is the divine Son of God – we mere mortals could never do the same works that Jesus did*
- But what if – in great measure at least – the works that Jesus did were done in the power of the Holy Spirit – spiritual power that was released in and through him because he lived a God-reliant life in obedience to the will of his Father?
- ***And what if this same spiritual power is available to us if we will live a life of humble dependence and obedience and full surrender to God?***
- Of course, this is exactly what we see the church doing in the book of Acts
- **And the same Spirit that empowered Jesus' ministry 2000 years ago can empower our ministry today**
- How else could Jesus have promised us:

John 14:12 ¹²*The person who trusts me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things, because I, on my way to the Father, am giving you the same work to do that I've been doing. You can count on it.*

- ***If we want to do the works of Jesus – then we must allow the Spirit to have free reign in our lives and in our church***
- If Jesus needed the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to carry out his mission – *how much more so do we need that same empowerment!*
- That is why Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they first received the power of the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost)
- **What was the key to the significant impact Jesus made among the poor // the brokenhearted // the oppressed // the sick // the lost // the hurting // the vulnerable people of his day?**
- ***His hard work? His winsome personality? His strategic planning and leadership skills? His mastery of available technology? His communication skills? His community organization skills?***
- **Jesus of Nazareth was a spiritually dynamic man – a spiritually powerful man – a man full of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Spirit – *and it was that spiritual power that fueled and energized his preaching and his compassion and his healing power and his ministry of setting captives free***
- **And the same Spirit that empowered Jesus' ministry 2000 years ago can empower the ministry of the body of Christ today**

II. THE FOCUS OF JESUS' MISSION

Luke 4:18 (Amplified): The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the good news to the poor; He has sent Me to announce release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to send forth delivered those who are oppressed – who are downtrodden, bruised, crushed and broken down by calamity.

- *Now, of course, God loves everyone, and Jesus came to offer His salvation to everyone*
- But this Scripture specifies that the Messiah's mission would be focused on people who were suffering most severely the miseries of this fallen world
- *Jesus devoted his life and ministry to serving the vulnerable people of his day*
- ***The poor***
- The Good News of the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes – *but throughout history it has been the poor who have been more receptive to that Good News*
- The materially successful tend to be more self-reliant and self-sufficient and self-righteous – *but God gives grace to the humble but opposes the proud*
- Jesus' Sermon on the Mount begins with these words:

Matthew 5:3 (NIV) ³ **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**

- ***We enter the kingdom of God by becoming as children – trusting, dependent, acknowledging our neediness and our inability to make it on our own***
- **Churches that want to grow in Christ-likeness will focus their evangelism and outreach on the poor and needy**
- ***Prisoners of war***
- There are many different kinds of prisoners or captives – but the Greek word in Luke 4:18 specifically means “*prisoners of war*”
- **Prisoners of what war?**
- *The invisible war between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan*

- *Perhaps one reason why Jesus was so compassionate and merciful and friendly toward sinners and outcasts is that he didn't see them merely as bad people or losers – but rather he saw them as prisoners of war – held captive by Satan*
- *How might our view of lost sinners and the poor and needy change if we viewed them as prisoners of war in need of the liberating and life-giving power of Jesus?*
- ***The blind / those living in spiritual darkness***
- *The Greek text in Luke 4:18 speaks of recovery sight for the blind – and Jesus did literally give sight to the physically blind during his ministry*
- *But the Hebrew text in Isaiah 61 speaks of bringing people out of the darkness – perhaps the darkness of prison – or perhaps spiritual darkness*

2 Corinthians 4:4 ⁴Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe, so they are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News that is shining upon them. They don't understand the message we preach about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

- *All of us know people – some quite intelligent – who are held captive in a dark, satanic prison-house of deception and false beliefs – and are spiritually blind and unable to understand or believe the Gospel message*
- **They need to be delivered from the darkness and brought into the Kingdom of Light**
- ***The oppressed / downtrodden / bruised / crushed / broken-hearted***
- *Jesus came for the broken – for the physically broken // emotionally damaged // for the sinned-against and abused // for the wounded and broken-hearted*
- ***For it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick***

Isaiah 42:3 (NIV) ³ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;

- *We all know some people who are bruised reeds and smoldering wicks – who need the healing love and life-giving hope that only Jesus can give*
- ***These are the kinds of vulnerable people that Jesus focused his ministry on because there is a special place in God's heart for the bruised and crushed and broken-hearted and downtrodden and vulnerable people of this world***
- **God's heart hasn't changed** – *churches that align their priorities and ministries with God's heart will experience a special blessing and spiritual empowerment*

III. THE ACTION STEPS OF JESUS' MISSION

- What action steps were involved in the mission assignment given him by God?

Luke 4:18-19 **“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors, and that God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him.”**

- *Preaching good news to the poor*
- *Heralding liberation for prisoners of war*
- *Recovery of sight for the blind*
- *Releasing from spiritual darkness*
- *Bandaging the wounded and healing the broken-hearted*
- *Setting at liberty the oppressed and downtrodden*
- **Preaching / proclaiming / releasing / healing / liberating / setting free – these are the verbs of Jesus’ mission statement that describe what he will be doing during the course of his ministry on earth**
- *Preaching good news is one word in Greek – it is the word from which we get evangelism and evangelical*
- *The word for **release** is an interesting word – it can refer either to the release of captives or to the forgiveness of sins*
- *The double meaning is appropriate as applied to the work of Christ on the Cross – because it is by means of the forgiveness of our sins through his shed blood that we are released from Satan’s captivity*

Colossians 1:13-14 ¹³For he has rescued us out of the darkness and gloom of Satan’s kingdom and brought us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, ¹⁴who bought our freedom with his blood and forgave us all our sins.

- *Jesus purchased not only the forgiveness of our sins but also our freedom from Satan’s tyranny with the blood of his sacrificial death on the Cross*
- **This is why the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is such a powerful spiritual weapon to use against Satan and his evil spirits in spiritual warfare**
- *At the heart of Jesus’ mission was the liberation of prisoners of war*

- *The ultimate deliverance would be accomplished by his death and resurrection*
- *But the assault on Satan's kingdom would begin immediately with a threefold ministry of preaching, healing and deliverance*
- What do we find as read on in Luke 4?
- *After escaping the hostile crowd in the Nazareth synagogue – what is the first thing that Jesus does?*

Luke 4:33-36 -- *Jesus launches his first offensive against Satan's prisoner-of-war camp* – and he liberates one of Satan's captives by casting out a demon from a man in the synagogue in Capernaum

Matthew 12:28 (NIV) ²⁸**But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.**

- The exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue was followed by the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law

Luke 4:39 (NIV) ³⁹So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them.

- *He rebuked the fever, and it left her.*
- Interesting word choice.
- *Almost as if Jesus was evicting an alien force and commanding it to leave*
- This exorcism and healing were followed by many more healings and exorcisms

Luke 4:40 - 41 (NIV) ⁴⁰When the sun was setting, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them.

⁴¹Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ.

- **This is what the coming of the Kingdom of God means: healing people / setting people free from the scourges of the enemy / driving out evil spirits / binding the strong man, Satan, in order to liberate his prisoners of war**
- *How did Jesus make a significant impact in the vulnerable people of his day?*
- *Jesus preached the good news of the Kingdom of God and then demonstrated the meaning and power of the Kingdom by healing all who were oppressed by the Devil*

IV. STRONG IN THE SPIRIT, SCRIPTURES AND SERVICE

- Is it possible for Christians and churches today to continue that ministry of Jesus?
- **Not only possible – but expected – and needed**
- **Paul wrote the Ephesians that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at God’s right hand is available to all who believe**
- *All over the world today, the Kingdom of God is advancing by preaching the Gospel to the poor // by healing the sick & broken-hearted // and by delivering captives from Satan’s grip*
- *As the incarnation of Christ in the world today, we need to continue Jesus’ ministry of proclaiming the Good News and healing the sick and broken-hearted and releasing captives from Satan’s grip*
- **To be the body of Christ continuing the mission of Christ in the world today, we need to be strong in the Word // strong in the Spirit // strong in service and compassionate ministry to hurting and broken and vulnerable people**
- *How do we as the body of Christ make a significant impact in the lives and families of vulnerable people today?*

(1) The Power of Love

- Spiritual problems are often emotional problems rooted in relational problems
- *Trace sinful patterns of behavior back far enough – and you will often find damaged emotions or a broken heart or some kind of abuse or trauma or grief that has deeply wounded the inner core of a person*
- Many of our compulsive sins are unhealthy coping mechanisms attempting to deal with pain of damaged emotions and wounded hearts and broken relationships
- **The love of God – conveyed through the compassionate service of a Christian – is a powerful healing force**
- *Sin often loses its power – and Satan loses his foothold – when the love of God penetrates deeply enough to heal the wounded and empty places of our heart*
- **One of the most powerful ways of bringing people out of darkness into the light is by extending Christ’s love to them in practical ways**

- *To make a significant impact in vulnerable families – we need to be strong in service – passionate about serving others in love and meeting their physical, emotional, financial, educational, vocational, relational and spiritual needs*

(2) *The Power of Truth*

- One of Satan’s favorite and most effective tactics is to attach a lie to an emotional wound
- *The lie continues to keep us in bondage long after the hurtful event that caused the wound*
- It could be a lie about us // or a lie about God // or a lie about a family member // or a lie about the church // or a lie about the Bible
- *And the lie gains power over us because it has been attached to a painful wound*
- **The wound needs to be healed by love – and the lie needs to be replaced with truth**

John 8:31-32 ³¹Jesus said to the people who believed in him, **“You are truly my disciples if you keep obeying my teachings. ³²And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”**

- *This is not just intellectual knowledge of truthful information – this is experiential knowledge of truth that comes by living and thinking and obeying it*
- Most satanic footholds or strongholds in our lives are rooted in some kind of lie or deception or false belief
- ***One of our most powerful spiritual weapons to set people free from Satan’s power is biblical truth***
- As Jesus said: *God’s Word is Truth – Truth liberates // Truth sanctifies // Truth protects us from Satan’s schemes // Truth demolishes demonic strongholds*

2 Corinthians 10:3 - 5 (NIV) ³For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- *The Greek word for “take captive” is the same word used in Luke 4:18 for “prisoners of war”*

- **When Satan tries to take us captive by filling our heads with his lies – we fight back by taking captive every thought to make it obedient to the truth of Christ**
- *To be able to do this effectively – it is essential that we be continually growing in a true knowledge of God and sound doctrine according to His Word*
- *To make a significant impact in the lives and families of vulnerable people, we need to be strong in the Scriptures*
- **Truth in combination with love is a powerful healing and liberating force to set captives free**
- *But there is a third dimension that is needed in many cases – and it is this third dimension that is missing in many American churches*

(3) *The Power of Spiritual Power*

- *Some people will never be brought to complete healing and freedom in Christ apart from the proper exercise of spiritual power and authority*
- *To make a significant and lasting and life-changing impact in vulnerable people to enable them to begin a new life will often require more than acts of service and words of truth – it will also require the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit*
- **We will need to become a spiritually dynamic body in order to make a significant impact in many vulnerable families**
- *To be strong in the Spirit we will need to be strong in worship and strong in corporate prayer and strong in exercising the gifts of the Spirit and appropriating the supernatural power of the Spirit by faith*
- **God has given us the spiritual gifts and power of the Holy Spirit to continue the ministry of Jesus – we need to be good stewards of those gifts and that power and use them to set captives free**
- *When we look at the spiritual gifts listed in the NT – we see that some gifts are useful and needed for preaching and teaching // some for healing the sick and comforting the broken-hearted // some for ministering to the poor and needy // some for spiritual warfare – everything needed for continuing Jesus' ministry of preaching, healing and deliverance*
- *Some gifts are useful and needed for expressing love in practical ways and for showing mercy to the hurting and broken // some are useful and needed for teaching and applying the truth //*

- And some are useful and needed for works of healing and deliverance and winning spiritual battles and setting captives free – *everything needed to be strong in love // strong in truth // and strong in spiritual power*
- **I believe Cornerstone is becoming a spiritually dynamic church body that is growing strong in service // strong in the Scriptures // and strong in the Spirit**
- *May that continue to be the case so that Jesus can work through us in the power of the Spirit to continue his ministry of preaching good news to the poor // of healing the broken-hearted // of liberating prisoners-of-war // of rescuing people from the kingdom of darkness and bringing them into the Kingdom of Christ // and of setting at liberty those who are oppressed and downtrodden*

V. JESUS' MISSION AND CORNERSTONE'S VISION

- Notice the similarities between Jesus' mission statement and the vision team's vision statement:
- Jesus' mission statement: *The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*
- Cornerstone's vision statement: *Becoming a spiritually dynamic body making a significant impact in vulnerable families through our neighborhood schools.*
- Notice the points of common emphasis: (1) *Jesus' ministry was carried out in the power of the Holy Spirit. He was Spirit-anointed, Spirit-led, and Spirit-empowered in everything he did.* (2) *Jesus' ministry had a specific focus: the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the prisoners of spiritual war, the physically and spiritually blind, the oppressed.* (3) *Jesus' mission had specific objectives and action steps: preaching good news to the poor, binding up and healing the brokenhearted, proclaiming freedom for the captives and prisoners, restoring sight for the blind, releasing and setting at liberty the oppressed, and proclaiming the grace of God.*
- Our vision statement aligns nicely with Jesus' mission statement:
- *"Becoming a spiritually dynamic body" aligns with "The Spirit of the Lord is on me because He has anointed me" and with "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power."*
- By the way, the NT Greek word for "power" is "dunamis" – from which we get our word "dynamic"

- *“Making a significant impact in vulnerable families” aligns with “preaching good news to the poor, healing the brokenhearted, setting captives free, and releasing the oppressed” and with “going around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil.”*
- Each of the groups of people that Jesus focused his ministry on could be classified as “vulnerable”
- ***God is calling us to go around doing good in our community and in our neighborhood schools – making a significant impact in vulnerable families – spiritually, physically, emotionally, financially, educationally, vocationally, and relationally.***
- **Is this not what it means to be the body of Christ?**
- *The correlation is so close that you might think we patterned our vision statement after Jesus’ mission statement*
- But instead, the vision team started with a blank slate and asked God what the vision should be – and then we waited and prayed and listened for His voice
- *Little by little, God gave the vision – and of course, it aligns with His own heart – as revealed 2700 years ago to the prophet Isaiah – and as fleshed out in the ministry of Jesus 2000 years ago – and now God is calling us to align ourselves with His heart and with Jesus’ ongoing mission in the world*
- **There will be great blessing and spiritual power flowing through our church body as we align ourselves with God’s heart and with Jesus’ mission – and as we rely upon the power of the Spirit to be the body of Christ in our community and in our neighborhood schools**
- **May it be so: May God so work in us by His Spirit that we will become a spiritually dynamic body making a significant impact in vulnerable families through our neighborhood schools**

Prayer for the fullness and anointing of the Spirit

“Spirit of the Living God” and “Let It Rain”