



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Lk. 4:18-19; Lev. 25; Isa. 61:1-2

16 He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. As usual, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day & stood up to read. 17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, & unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was 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 release to the captives & recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

20 He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, & sat down. And the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 He began by saying to them, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled."... 28 When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was enraged. 29 They got up, drove him out of town, & brought him to the edge of the hill that their town was built on, intending to hurl him over the cliff. 30 But he passed right through the crowd & went on his way.

31 Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, & was teaching them on the Sabbath [in the morning]. 32 They were astonished at his teaching because his message had authority. 33 In the synagogue there was a man with an unclean demonic spirit who cried out with a loud voice, 34 "Leave us alone! What do you have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!" 35 But Jesus rebuked him & said, "Be silent & come out of him!" And throwing him down before them, the demon came out of him without hurting him at all. 36 Amazement came over them all, & they were saying to one another, "What is this message? For he commands the unclean spirits with authority & power, & they come out!" 37 And news about him began to go out to every place in the vicinity.

38 After he left the synagogue, he entered Simon's house [around noon]. Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, & they asked him about her. 39 So he stood over her & rebuked the fever, & it left her. She got up immediately & began to serve them.

40 When the sun was setting [late in the day], all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to him. As he laid his hands on each one of them, he healed them. 41 Also, demons were coming out of many, shouting & saying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them & would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.

42 When it was day [the next morning], he went out & made his way to a deserted place. But the crowds were searching for him. They came to him & tried to keep him from leaving them. 43 But he said to them, "It is necessary for me to proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because I was sent for this purpose." 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

1. Jesus Proclaims The Year of Jubilee in Nazareth (Lk. 4:18-19; Lev. 25; Isa. 61:1-2) "Jubilee (Lev. 25) [includes] the freeing of slaves, the cancellation of debts, the fallowing of the land, & the returning of all land to its original distribution under Moses. The jubilary theme is most evident in 4:18-19 by the repeated use of 'release' ('the year of release' in Lev 25:10) & the phrase, 'the year of the Lord's favour,' borrowed from Isa 61:2... This interpretive tradition encourages a reading of Luke 4:18-19 as the announcement of the eschatological epoch of salvation, the time of God's gracious visitation, with Jesus himself presented as its anointed herald." (Joel B. Green, *Op Cit*, p. 286)

a. What was the Year of Jubilee?

- a. "The fiftieth year was... known as the Year of Jubilee. It began on the Day of Atonement following seven sabbatical year cycles (forty-nine years). Slaves were to be set free, the land was to lie fallow, & was to revert to its original owner." (William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, p. 162)
- b. "The one metaphor that dominates Jesus' declaration... is 'release.' The picture of Jubilee, which foresees a total release from all enemies & debt, wonderfully describes the essence of salvation. The books are wiped clean; all legal obligations are removed through the grace Jesus provides. In addition, there is a new way of seeing, so that life from the old perspective is now appreciated as darkness & blindness. One needs only to look at Jesus' compassionate ministry through miracles to see the sense of release that so many experienced through what he did." (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit*, p. 142)
- c. "The word 'jubilee' (Heb. lit, 'the blast of a horn') is defined in Leviticus 25:9 as the sabbatical year after seven cycles of seven years (49 years). The fiftieth year was to be a time of celebration & rejoicing for the Israelites. The ram's horn was blown on the tenth day of the seventh month to start the fiftieth year of universal redemption... [It] involved a year of release from indebtedness (Lev. 25:23-38) & all types of bondage (vv. 39-55). All prisoners & captives were set free, all slaves were released, all debts were forgiven, & all property was returned to its original owners. In addition, all labor was to cease for one year, & those bound by labor contracts were released from them. One of the benefits of the Jubilee was that both the land & the people were able to rest." (gotquestions.org/Jubilee.html)

a. Showing God's heart for a society built around rest, healing, & recovery

- a. "God's heart for a society built on Sabbath is reflected in the Jubilee commands (Lev. 25). Every seventh day, God's people were to rest. Every seventh year, the land was to rest, giving it a chance to heal, breathe, & recover from human toil. Then there was the Jubilee. While Sabbath may already seem extreme, every fiftieth year was to be a complete societal overhaul. Debts would be canceled. Land would be returned to its original owner. And the poor would be released from exorbitant burdens. The Jubilee commandment would drastically alter the economic system... It was as though, in the Jubilee, everything returned to God." (A. J. Swoboda, *Subversive Sabbath*, p. 107)
- b. "Imagine the consequences of [the Jubilee]. The rich would no longer be able to rule the poor with exorbitant taxes or rents. All bad debts would be null & void. And any land taken away from you would be returned. The poor would sing in the streets. One almost hears in Mary, celebrating over her baby Jesus, a sense that she saw him as the Jubilee: 'He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty (Lk. 1:51-53)." (A. J. Swoboda, *Op Cit*, p. 108)

b. God's message to his people to not be in endless bondage to work & greed, but to enjoy rest

- a. "At the end of seven sabbatical years came the Year of Jubilee. Observance of these years taught the people not to be in bondage to endless work or to greed. Yahweh wanted them both to enjoy the results of their labors & at the same time to trust him for sustenance (vv. 18-22). During these years of rest, not only the land but the animals & the people had a chance to rest." (William Sanford Lasor, David Allan Hubbard, Frederic William Bush, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, & Background of the Old Testament*, p. 90)

b. Was it ever carried out? No real evidence of it, or at least not consistently

c. How did Jesus bring in the reality of it?

- a. "The Jubilee presents a beautiful picture of the New Testament themes of redemption & forgiveness. Christ is the Redeemer who came to set free those who are slaves & prisoners to sin (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 5:1; 3:22). The debt of sin

we owe to God was paid on the cross as Jesus died on our behalf (Col. 2:13-14), & we are forgiven the debt forever. We are no longer in bondage, no longer slaves to sin, having been freed by Christ, & we can truly enter the rest God provides as we cease laboring to make ourselves acceptable to God by our own works (Heb. 4:9-10).”
(gotquestions.org/Jubilee.html)

d. Jesus proclaimed, “Today!”

- a. “The Greek word ‘today’ (σήμερον, sēmeron) occurs 11 times in the Gospel of Luke...Its use, especially in passages such as 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 19:5, 9, signifies the dawning of the era of messianic salvation & the fulfillment of the plan of God. Not only does it underscore the idea of present fulfillment in Jesus’ ministry, but it also indicates salvific fulfillment present in the church (D. L. Bock, Luke [BECNT], 1:412; I. H. Marshall, Luke, [NIGTC], 873).” (NET)

2. On the Morning of the Sabbath, Jesus is in the Synagogue (Lk. 4:31-37)

- a. “Luke is able to show how the bare outline of Jesus’ self-understanding as proclaimed in Nazareth (4:18-19, 25-27) begins to work itself out in Capernaum. As anticipated, his is a ministry to the marginalized of society – to the demonized, to the diseased, to women as well as men. Moreover,...Jesus’ ministry carefully balances word & deed, teaching & healing/exorcism...both exorcism & teaching are described as ‘word...with authority.’” (Joel B. Green, NICNT: Luke, p. 293)
- b. “Luke highlights the importance of response to God’s work in Jesus by narrating a range of responses to Jesus’ activity. In 4:31-44, the sequence of action-response is repeated four times: Jesus’ teaching results in the astonishment of the people (vv 31-32), Jesus’ exorcism leads to wonder & regionwide acclamation (vv 36-37), Jesus’ healing Simon’s mother-in-law is followed by her service (vv 38-39), & Jesus’ ministry leads everyone to bring their needy to him & the crowds to attempt to prevent him from leaving them (vv 40-42). Perhaps it is too early to tell in the narrative what responses are advocated by the narrator, but the inevitability of response is again proposed.” (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 293)

a. Capernaum

a. A significant place

- a. “Capernaum was a more significant place than Nazareth. It was a lakeside town, with a flourishing fishing industry. Its location as the last town in Galilee on the road around the north side of the lake made it a border post where taxes were collected (5:27) from traders en route between the tetrarchies of Antipas & Philip (3:1), as well as from boats coming across the lake. The presence there of a detachment of Roman troops (7:1-2) testifies to its importance, as does the fact that it already had a purpose-built synagogue at this period (7:5).” (R. T. France, Teach the Text Commentary Series: Luke, p. 156)

b. Elevation in comparison to Nazareth

- a. “Capernaum was a small town on the upper northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, about two miles from where the Jordan flows into the lake. Jesus literally did go ‘down to Capernaum’ because Nazareth was 1,200 feet above sea level & Capernaum some 686 feet below sea level.” (R. Kent Hughes, Preaching the Word: Luke, pp. 158-9)

c. A major Jewish center in the region

- a. “Capernaum...was a major Jewish center in the region, with trade centering in fishing & agriculture.” (Darrell Bock, The NIV Application Commentary: Luke, p. 146)

b. In the morning, Jesus taught in the synagogue with authority (vv. 31-32)

a. Scribes of that day merely quoted older rabbis from earlier eras & therefore lacked authority

- a. “It is said that Hillel...talked on a particular point of interpretation all day, but the other rabbis would not accept his opinion ‘until he said, Thus I heard from Shemaiah & Abtalion,’ two rabbis from an earlier era.” (Robert M. Bowman, Putting Jesus in His Place, p. lv.)

b. Jesus didn’t teach like the Scribes taught, but he taught with authority

- a. “Not as the scribes”: “It was common for rabbis to cite opinions & teachings which had been made by their teachers or by other rabbis, much in the manner of judges citing opinions given in previous legal cases... That Jesus would teach without citing any other opinions, but announce simply, ‘I say to you...’ was astonishing.” (Gustaf Dalaman, John Lightfoot, Jesus Christ in the Talmud, p. 66)
- b. “The congregation that gathered in the synagogue in Jesus’ day was made up of...fishermen, merchants, craftsmen, & laborers & their wives. As they participated in the psalms, the blessings, the prayers, & the reading of the Law & the Prophets, they eagerly awaited the sermon from the Nazarene who had been causing such a stir around Galilee. And they weren’t disappointed. ‘They were astonished at his teaching’ (v. 32a). The Greek word for ‘astonished’ literally means ‘to strike with panic or shock.’ They were ‘struck with amazement’ – thunderstruck in their souls! Jesus’ preaching packed a powerful punch! Why? Because ‘his word possessed authority’ (v. 32b), or as the parallel passage in Mark has it, ‘He taught them as one who had authority, & not as the scribes’ (Mk. 1:22).” (R. Kent Hughes, Op Cit, p. 159)

c. Jesus’ authority is recognized

- a. “Having recounted how Jesus’ initial exercise of authority was murderously rejected by his hometown, Luke now describes another Sabbath in another town, Capernaum, where Jesus’ authority was given full recognition.” (R. Kent Hughes, Op Cit, p. 158)
- b. “Jesus’ listeners in Capernaum were convicted by his words. As Amy Carmichael, the great missionary, said, ‘If you have never been hurt by a word from God, it is probable that you have never heard God speak.’ The people were shocked, thunderstruck, sublimely hurt. Jesus’ teaching was authoritative because he proclaimed God’s Word clearly & with conviction. We ought to pray for such divine hurt!” (R. Kent Hughes, Op Cit, p. 160)
- c. “The content of Jesus’ teaching is not indicated, but the parallels between vv. 15-16, 31-32 imply that Jesus’ message in Capernaum was analogous to that in Nazareth. Here, however, the reason for their astonishment is specifically related to their recognition that his word carried authority.” (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 294)

d. Jesus begins to fulfill his words from Nazareth

- a. "Jesus declared the fulfillment of God's promise at a synagogue in Nazareth [4:18-19]...Now he shows the presence of such fulfillment." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 146)

c. Jesus cast an unclean, demonic spirit out of a synagogue man & people saw Jesus' authority (v. 36)

- a. "What was started in the reading from Isaiah 61 saw its first small beginnings in the healings of Capernaum. God was moving to free persons from the debilitating & dehumanizing conditions that prevented human beings from living as God willed life to be." (Allan Culpepper, The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary: Luke, John, p. 91)

- b. "[Demons]...have...insight into Jesus' real nature that is not yet open to human observers, & they recognize him as their natural antagonist. The title 'Holy One of God' suitably contrasts him with the 'unclean' demon." (R. T. France, Op Cit, p. 158)

a. What is the significance of an unclean, demonic spirit? (Zech. 13:2)

- a. "Because Israel's sin was idolatry, the nation had worshiped demons, & their punishment was 'consistent with the crime.'...Israel had been overrun with demons, now Zechariah promises that one day this problem would at last be set right. Since Zech. 13:2 is the only place that the exact expression 'the unclean spirit' [LXX] is found in the canonical OT, it is clearly an important backdrop for the Synoptic Gospels where the phrase 'unclean spirits' is most frequently found." (Sharon Beekman, Silencing Satan, p.)

- b. "[In Greek] 'having an unclean, demonic spirit,' i.e., an evil spirit. This is the only place Luke uses this lengthy phrase. Normally he simply says an "unclean spirit." [NET]

- c. "Luke does not stop to puzzle over the presence of a demonized man in the synagogue, but is more concerned with communicating the evil influence at work in this man. For this reason, he employs a clumsy phrase, combining 'spirit,' 'unclean,' & 'demon.' 'Spirit,' of course, has already been used with reference to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Lord (4:1, 14, 18), so additional adjectives are needed here to negate any possible confusion between the spirits at work in the narrative." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 294)

- d. Jesus' reading of Isaiah 61 "in Luke 4:18-19...[contains] references to 'liberty' for the captive & oppressed...As the episode [in Nazareth]...is followed closely by Luke's first story of exorcism, the latter [Jesus' exorcism] is difficult not to read as an attempt to illustrate how the Isaiah prophecies were fulfilled; however, as 4:31-43 include[s]...several deeds of exorcism...[so] all of 4:31-43 is closely tied to 4:16-30...The healing at Simon's house [also] serves to clarify how...the Isaiah prophecy is 'fulfilled'." (Todd Klutz, Exorcism Stories in Luke-Acts, p. 59)

b. Is there any significance to this being Jesus' first act in his ministry?

- a. "A man with 'an unclean spirit' challenges Jesus. This is one of four exorcisms in Luke & the first of the miracle stories. In effect it demonstrates that the power & authority of Jesus' words were also demonstrated in his mighty works. A contest of spirits is also implicit here. What Jesus did, he did because the Spirit of the Lord was upon him (v. 18), & the spirit of an unclean demon was no match for the Spirit of the Lord." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 88)

- b. "As important as miracles are...in the life of Jesus, they also serve as visual indications of deeper realities...All Jesus' miracles in some way reflect a visual representation of some significant spiritual reality – often the depth of the cosmic struggle associated with his ministry. Since his work represents the powerful arrival of the force of righteousness into God's world, is it any wonder that Jesus must go in hand to hand combat with the forces of evil? In a real sense, the miracles pull back a veil on the cosmic forces at work within creation." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 146)

- c. "The first miracle of this Gospel is an exorcism. The major opponent in Jesus' ministry consists of the spiritual forces of evil. Demons are noted 23 times in this Gospel, with 14 of those references occurring between here & 9:50 in the Galilean ministry section. Judaism believed that in the messianic times demonic power would be crushed. Jesus has already met with Satan; now he is facing off against Satan's cohorts." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 147)

- d. "In Mk. 1:25 [Lk. 4:35] Jesus confronts another transcendent being, an unclean spirit, whom Jesus rebuked...saying, 'be muzzled, & come out of him!' Unclean spirits, or demons...are rebuked by YHWH alone...The authority to rebuke fallen angels/demons was the prerogative of YHWH, not even angels. In Mk. 1:25 Jesus takes that divine prerogative for himself." (Scott Brazil, Jesus & YHWH-texts in the Synoptic Gospels, p. 84)

- e. "'What kind of word is this?'...Jesus has not only declared fulfillment of the promise of deliverance of the captives [4:18], but by his word he has also released one who has been held captive by a demonic spirit. Jesus had returned to Galilee 'in the power of the Spirit' (4:14); now that power was becoming evident to others." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 89)

- f. "Jesus' presence makes the demon nervous, & it cries out through the man, asking him what he is planning to do? Will he destroy it? In Greek the question in v. 34 is... 'Why do you want to bother us?' The remark is revealing, since it indicates both the inherent authority Jesus possesses & the demon's awareness of that power." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 147)

- g. "Even the demon's attempt to harm the man by throwing him to the ground fails...The destructive tendencies of evil are overcome by the authority that Jesus possesses to deliver humanity from the clutches of the demons." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, pp. 147-8)

- h. "The amazing event & its lesson are not lost on the crowd, who immediately...recognize that demonic forces have been subdued by his word... authority..." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 148)

- i. "The spirit's response, throwing the man down before them, may appear to be an act of violence, but Luke explicitly disallows such a reading by his conclusion, 'without having done him any harm.' The picture is rather of the complete acquiescence of the demon & his delivering the man over to Jesus. The demon's work is ended; the man is free of its influence & restored to his people." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 296)

- j. "The synagogal responses to Jesus' encounter with the demon parallel the response to his teaching. Both expressions of the good news, exorcism & teaching, are 'words with authority,'..." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 296)

3. At Noon, Jesus Demonstrated his Authority by Healing Simon's Mother-in-Law (Lk. 4:38-39)

a. Lunch at Simon's house is another opportunity for Jesus to demonstrate his authority

- a. "Luke paints this scene very much as an exorcism...Jesus 'bends over' the woman, signifying his authority over the fever, a practice paralleled in stories of exorcism. As Jesus 'rebuked' the demon in the previous story (vv 35-36), so he 'rebukes' this fever..." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 297)

- b. "It was customary for synagogues to conduct a midmorning service & for the Sabbath meal to be served right after synagogue at noon. So Jesus was invited to the home of his soon-to-be-disciple Simon Peter...[where his] mother-in-law was ill with a high fever. [She] may have prepared the meal, but someone else would have to serve it...[Jesus] stood over her & rebuked the fever, & it left her...[demonstrating] Christ's kingdom authority..." (R. Kent Hughes, Op Cit, p. 166)

- c. "A second demonstration of the power of Jesus' word follows immediately...Luke describes the mother-in-law's illness in terms that border on possession. Luke uses a term that suggests that she was oppressed, ruled, or held captive [Gk. *synecho*] by the fever. Jesus rebukes the fever, just as he had rebuked the unclean spirit, & the fever released her, just as Jesus had declared that he had come to proclaim release to the captives." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 89)
- b. Fulfilling Jesus' prophetic announcement in Nazareth
- a. "Luke's account of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law functions differently from Mark's in that it demonstrates the fulfillment of Jesus' prophetic announcement in Nazareth, & it dramatizes the power of Jesus' word, which was also emphasized in the first scene in the Capernaum cycle." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 89)
- b. "As Jesus 'rebuked' the demon in the previous story, so he 'rebukes' this fever; just as the demon 'went out' of the man, so the fever 'departs' this woman. Clearly, Jesus' ministry of 'release' has begun to take shape." (Joel B Green, Op Cit, p. 297)
- c. The mother-in law's "afflicted state is expressed with...*synechmene* [to be held by something, to suffer (4:38)], which, though having the simple meaning of 'to suffer from' [CSB], also denotes the sense of being hemmed in or held captive, Jesus' imminent healing of her fever is related to...[Jesus'] vocation to release the captives (4:18)." (Nicholas Perrin, Luke, p. 91)
- c. Simon's mother-in-law serves as a pattern of gratitude in all who are delivered
- a. "The scene closes with the report that Peter's mother-in-law recovered instantly & that she began to serve them. In this respect, she serves as a pattern for all who would subsequently be delivered by Jesus' word & then expresses their gratitude through serving (8:1-3; 10:38-42; 23:49, 55; 24:24)." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 89)
- b. "[The healing of Peter's mother-in-law] is less dramatic but just as significant...As he has just done with the demon, so now with the disease. He rebukes the illness, & the woman is restored to life & begins serving them. This remark not only testifies to her recovery; it also reflects her gratitude." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 148)
- c. "Jesus' ministry dealt with the fever, but it also restored this woman...Her response is not one of 'wonder,' as was the case with the synagogue congregation, but is one of hospitality & gratitude...Luke regards this as an authentic, positive response to Jesus' salvific ministry (Lk. 7:36-50; 8:1-3; Acts 16:33-34)." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 297)
4. In the Evening, Jesus laid his hands on those with various diseases & again, demons came out (Lk. 4:40-41)
- a. "Word spreads quickly, & Jesus finds himself dealing with people who come to him with all kinds of maladies. Healings continue without interruption. There is no unevenness in his ministry. His authority flows constantly. In addition, demons are exorcized regularly. They confess Jesus to be the Son of God, meaning that they recognize him as the Christ. The Anointed One is showing the evidence of his unique calling." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 148)
- b. "The popular response to Jesus recorded here [v. 40] ...grow[s] out of his success in healing earlier in the day; the large numbers of people...point to the immediate growth of Jesus' reputation as a healer with authority." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 297)
- c. "The third healing scene in Capernaum culminates in the confession of Jesus as the Son of God & the Christ. This third scene continues the portrayal of Jesus as healer & exorcist..." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 89)
5. The Following Morning, Jesus Declared His Mission to the People of Capernaum (Lk. 4:42-44)
- a. The people want Jesus to stay with them
- a. "Those in Capernaum want him to stay, but Jesus' mission is not provincially limited. Jesus has been called to preach the kingdom of God elsewhere, so he must go where he is sent...His message of the 'kingdom of God' is...a word of release & fulfillment...a place of deliverance, where the forces of evil can be overcome." (Darrell Bock, Op Cit, p. 148)
- b. "The crowd seeks Jesus to prevent him from leaving them...[but] Jesus refused to allow [them] to impose their restrictions on the work of the kingdom..." (Allan Culpepper, Op Cit, p. 90)
- b. Jesus' God-given purpose, "To proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to others also." (v. 43)
- a. "Within its local context, 'kingdom of God' is associated with the 'good news' announced (4:18-19) & the Spirit-anointed ministry of Jesus (4:31-41) – that is, it connotes a new world order where the demonized, the sick, women, & others living on the margins of society are embraced in the redemptive purpose of God." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 298)
- b. "Already embodied here is a fundamental clash between the kingdoms over which the devil has authority & the authority & power of Jesus — the one intent on the bondage & segregation of persons, the other on release & human wholeness in community." (Joel B. Green, Op Cit, p. 298)
- c. "Proclaiming good news is at the heart of Jesus' mission (4:18), but this is the first time its content has been spelled out as 'the kingdom of God.' It is a central theme of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptic Gospels that God's reign is being established through his own ministry." (R. T. France, Op Cit, p. 161)

- d. "Jesus' actions...showed that God's age of salvation had arrived...They also demonstrated who the true enemy of God's people was...The 1st [episode] that Luke introduces after Jesus' ['Jubilee] announcement...was Jesus' healing of a man who was possessed with an unclean spirit [Lk. 4:31-37]. Luke highlights Jesus' attack on the kingdom of Satan through the demon's words, 'Have you come to destroy us?' [4:34]. The [episode] that follows is the healing of Peter's mother-in-law & then the healing of many people who were sick [4:38-41]. In Luke's narrative, the actions of Jesus (healing & exorcism) were closely linked with his...inauguration of the age of salvation ['Jubilee']...Jesus' freeing people from Satan's oppression was a sign that God's age of salvation had come...Jesus said: 'If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you' (Lk. 11:20) ... ['Come upon'] in this context is the actual presence of the Kingdom of God." (A. Sue Russell, *In the World but Not of [It]*, p. 63)

6. Parallel Events in Jesus' Ministry in Nazareth & Capernaum

- a. "[Luke 4:31-44] amplifies the nature of Jesus' ministry in a parallel setting. Jesus travels to Capernaum, where he is again in the synagogue, again meets conflict, & ultimately moves on...The repetition of the setting (teaching on the Sabbath in a synagogue) prepares the reader for a repetition of the events of the previous scene. The amazement of the people (v. 32) echoes the initial response of the people of Nazareth (v. 22)..." (Allan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 88)
- b. "Note...the parallels between vv. 16, 31, 33 (teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath) & vv. 22, 32 (initial responses of wonder)." (Joel B. Green, *Op Cit*, pp. 292-3)
- c. "Although receptive to his ministry among them & affirming of his status as one who works authoritatively, the people at Capernaum also make the mistake of their counterparts in Nazareth: Failing to understand who Jesus is &, therefore, the scale of his mission, they hope to limit his ministry to their own boundaries (4:42b)." (Joel B. Green, *Op Cit*, p. 293)

7. Are We Embracing or Rejecting Jesus' Authority & Blessing?

- a. The blessing of God cannot be possessed, contained, or limited for our own purposes
- a. "The...Nazare[nes] wanted God's deliverance for themselves..[B]ecause they were not open to...others sharing in the bounty of God's deliverance, they themselves were unable to receive it." (Allan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 87)
- b. "God's grace is never subject to the limitations & boundaries of any nation, church, group, or race. Those who would exclude others thereby exclude themselves. Human beings may be instruments of God's grace for others, but we are never free to set limits on who may receive that grace." (Allan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 87)
- c. "Jesus could not do more for his hometown because they were not open to him. How much more might God be able to do with us if we were ready to transcend the boundaries of community & limits of love that we ourselves have erected?" (Allan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 91)
- d. "Running through both the Nazareth & the Capernaum episode is the warning that the power of God cannot be possessed, contained, or limited for our own purposes. It moves on, & it is always reaching across the barriers that separate communities & peoples from one another." (Allan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 91)
- b. There is hope for the worst of us
- a. "There is hope for the worst of us. Someone may seem to have the hardest heart possible – impenetrable, irredeemable – & the proudest will – bloodied, unbowed, unbroken, condemned. Yet there is great hope for that person, for Christ can free him or her from the evil that has him or her in bondage. If that person will bow to the authority of the Word & Jesus Christ, he or she will be saved, & the Savior's power will come as a healing balm." (R. Kent Hughes, *Op Cit*, p. 164)
- c. Release people in the name of Jesus
- a. "While careful to assert that 'the Bible speaks more about resisting the devil than it does about binding him,' [Jim] Cymbala has been part of necessary exorcisms in the process of leading a church with a very complex & troubled population in the middle of Brooklyn. He tells one story of a...girl who came forward to the front of the church in a 'daze.' Cymbala & those coming with him to pray felt instantly alerted. As soon as the name of Christ was mentioned, the small girl lunged for the pastor's throat & 'body-slammed [him] against the front edge of the platform.' At the same time, a 'hideous voice from deep inside her began to scream, 'You'll never have her! She's ours! Get away from her!'" Obscenities followed. In the name of Jesus, those praying with her addressed the spirits, & in a few minutes the girl was set free & now serves the [church]. Her testimony has been a great encouragement to those coming to the church." (R. T. France, *Op Cit*, p. 164)
- d. The practical implications
- a. "The healings...convey important insights into God's intention for human life & God's unrelenting efforts to free captives & give sight to the blind. Healing & deliverance are manifestations of the work of the kingdom. Where Jesus' words are heard, there the power that was manifested in the miracles continues to be active. In the contemporary congregation, the hearing of the Gospel leads to acts of ministry in which the hungry are fed (soup kitchens), the blind see (eye clinics, literacy programs), the lame walk (programs for the disabled), & prisoners are set free (prison ministries & rehabilitation programs)." (Allan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 91)

- e. What are we to make of Jesus saying to his disciples, "All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, & make disciples of all nations..."? (Matt. 28:18-19a)