



SENDTHEFIRE.CA

theme: The Gospel in a Nutshell (Luke 4:14-32)

materials: Bibles, news story, paper, pencils

welcome

What was your nickname when you were a child/teen? How did you get it? Did you like it or have to endure through it? When was the last time someone called you by your nickname?

Bring in a news item about your neighbourhood, city, country or world that you can discuss with the cell. Where do you see God in this story? Ask other members of cell to bring in stories to discuss in subsequent weeks.

worship

Where have you seen God this week? Where have you experienced community this week? Share this with each other, and then pray for one another, that we would give all of our hopes and fears over to the Lord, trusting Him and following His guidance.

word

Read Luke 4:14-32

As the cell leader, it may also be wise as well to read all of **Isaiah 61** to your cell group.

When was the last time you read this passage and gave it a close examination? Does the story remind you of any other places in the New Testament?

Why does Luke include this story about Jesus being rejected in this 'hometown' so early in his book? What point is Luke trying to make?

When Jesus and his family were in Jerusalem a couple of stories back, where did Jesus say his Father's House was? Why does that matter when we read this story?

Why is it significant that Jesus is portrayed as being rejected in Luke 4 in this 'hometown'?

Is Jesus rejected anywhere else in Luke's Gospel? Where is he rejected? What are the connections between these stories?

Why does Jesus get so mad when they start calling him 'Joseph's son'? Who are the people not recognizing him as? Does this happen anywhere else in Luke?

If Jesus grew up in your hometown, do you think you would have recognized who he was?

Jesus starts saying that the prophets, when being rejected by the People of God, would go to the rest of the world (like the Jezebel-born city of Sidon or people with leprosy in Syria) to bring healing, restoration and miracles. Why is this important to the story of Luke/Acts and where the Gospel ends up going?

The people in the town become furious and 'drive him out of the town' to 'kill him'. Does this happen anywhere else in Luke? How are these stories related?

Even though they try to kill Jesus, he defeats death and His gospel continues, growing everywhere. ...Does that sound like another story in Luke/Acts?

In testimony form, who do **you** see Jesus as? A son of Joseph? A neat guy who loved the poor? The Son of God? Poison? A lunatic? A sage/prophet?

Who does Jesus declare Himself to be in this passage after saying that Isaiah 61 is fulfilled?



witness

Continue reading through the entire books of Luke and Acts with one other person. If the other person is a fellow believer, read them through in a public place, like a café (not yelling it out or anything, just reading it to one another). Make a regular time to come in and read together, and more likely than not someone will eventually ask you what you are reading and why.

If the other person is not a fellow-believer, perhaps choose a less public place to read, but again set regular times, daily if possible, to get together and read the Gospel. You don't have to read it all at once. Read two to three chapters at a time, and then meet another day to read some more.

People in the story do not take the wealth of Jesus' words seriously when He states such things as, "Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing". In much the same way, many of the so-called new "People of God" laugh at the spreading of this very same Gospel story by not putting their money where their mouths are, refusing to spread this story's richness with their tithes, offerings and blessings—even in North America, a place where many in the world imagine the new "hometown" of Christianity to be. How dare they?! So, give to your local church/corps/ministry unit to spread Luke's Gospel messages that the Spirit of the Lord is on you by the power of Jesus Christ to proclaim good news to the poor, set prisoners free and bring sight to the blind.

action points

Have you accepted the message in this passage: that Jesus came to set you free and bring vindication to you and your life? Please ask every person in the room.

Are you a part of the people who want to see the fulfillment from Isaiah 61 Jesus speaks of? How are you being used by God to continually usher it in? How are you encouraging others to do the same?

Tell someone you know for sure does not know this message about who Jesus is and what He wants for their lives. This week. Yes, we are asking you to tell someone about Jesus.

leader's guide

Luke begins his first book the same way he ends his first book: with the story of Jesus being rejected in His hometown—at the beginning of the book Jesus is rejected in the place where He grows up (Nazareth) and at the end of the book Jesus is rejected in the place he states is his Father's house (Jerusalem, mentioned only two chapters before in Luke 2). In short, Jesus shows up to declare to the People of God that the time of vindication has come—and the People of God are all but too quick to reject Him. They take him to be a nice guy with powerful words. "This is just Joe's kid" they say to each other. Jesus, after hearing their words of rejection, declares that the message will go to others who were not thought of at the time to be the People of God and that those who reject him will not be able to receive God's true blessing. The people in Nazareth and Jerusalem become hostile to Jesus and try to put an end to his life: but Jesus defeats death and continues to grow His Gospel Message with the entire world. Jesus declares that no longer will the blessings of this prophecy be for the original People of God, but for everyone who will listen and accept. Jesus will come to seek and to save those who are lost (Luke 19)—no matter who they are or where they are from—so long as they recognize that He is the one who has the saving power of Isaiah 61. Some Jesus saves are Romans,



others Jews; others rich, others poor; others men, others women; everyone who will bend an ear, Jesus will speak to—seek and save.

Luke paints a portrait of Jesus with this little story in order to set the mood for what is to come. Jesus comes, preaches, invites, condemns, is tried by a mob, is not defeated by a mob's execution and spreads His message to the masses. We, being 21st century, educated Christians are quick to know the end of the book—but perhaps not so good at picking up the clues in the beginning as to what will happen to the man from Nazareth. Luke wants his readers to watch Jesus and His followers as they journey to the cross as: Jesus 'turns his face towards Jerusalem'. In almost every chapter, Jesus' death is either explicitly or implicitly forecasted—and if we miss that—we miss the story of Luke in his first book.