



Good News in the Resurrection Derrick Shields “Good News...or Not?” March 10, 2024

Key Verses: Luke 4:14-30

Key Thought: While teaching in the synagogue in His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:1-2. These verses lay out His mission and, as His agents, it becomes our mission, too.

Points to Consider:

- The passage Jesus read from Isaiah referenced the year of Jubilee (see Leviticus 25:8-12) which occurred every 50 years and was inaugurated by the Day of Atonement. Thus, the issue of sin was addressed first, followed by the release of slaves into freedom, release from debts, and allowance for people to return to their own families and property. The forgiveness of sins brings spiritual transformation and provides a foundation for change within a society.
- Jesus' preaching addresses:
 - i. The content of the Gospel – the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus that allows for the forgiveness of our sins
 - ii. The scope of the Gospel – He came to redeem the poor, the captive, and the oppressed. His redemptive power touches all aspects of society – economic, political, and social.
- Jesus declares that He is the fulfillment of Scripture (v.21) and the people are astonished. Biblical scholar N.T. Wright believes this astonishment was about the fact that Jesus was speaking about God's grace for everyone, including those nations in opposition to the Jews.
- It is important to note that Jesus omitted the last portion of Isaiah 61:2 which speaks about the day of vengeance. The Jews were longing for their oppression under Roman rule to come to an end and were awaiting the Messiah to bring victory. They were more interested in what Jesus would do than who He was (v.23-24). Jesus was interested in salvation, not vengeance.
- Those in the synagogue that day were enraged at the words of Jesus and sought to kill Him, yet He walked away as His time had not yet come. His love for the people kept Him on the path of fulfilling His mission until the appointed time (v.28-30).
- We are His agents and have been empowered to carry on His mission of changing the world in which we live by leading others toward spiritual transformation through the forgiveness of sins.

Discussion Prompts:

- Do you believe that God's grace is for everyone? Confess if you are harboring resentment toward any individuals or groups.
- As you continue to reflect on that idea, is what Jesus does more important to you than who He is? What might it look like if you were to release any expectations you may have of Jesus and simply embrace who He is as your personal Savior and King?
- Do your words and actions demonstrate understanding of your role as an agent tasked with continuing Jesus' mission? Are there any steps you need to take to more intentionally and effectively point others toward Jesus?