

Session 8 Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (Mk. 1-2; Lk. 4-5)

I. JESUS IN GALILEE: HEADQUARTERS IN CAPERNAUM

A. In this session, we look at Jesus' ministry in the Galilee region that lasted about 18 months (from the autumn AD 27 to spring AD 29). Luke gave an overview of Jesus' ministry (4:14-5:11) and how He interacted with His opponents (5:12-6:11) and His disciples (6:12-49).

B. Jesus was initially received very well in the synagogues in Galilee, especially after the people heard of the many miracles that He had done recently while in Jerusalem (Jn. 4:45).

14Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. (Lk. 4:14-15)

45So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast. (Jn. 4:45)

C. Jesus healed a royal official's son (Jn. 4:46-54). The nobleman was mistaken in thinking that Jesus needed to leave Cana to travel the 15 miles to Capernaum to heal his son. If the nobleman believed that Jesus was God, then He could have spoken the word and healed him. It was 1 pm (the seventh hour), so if he had left right away, he could have been home at 6 pm that night.

46So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee...And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum...47he...implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs...you will by no means believe." 49The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" 50Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him....51And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!...52Yesterday at the seventh hour [1pm] the fever left him." 53So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household. (Jn. 4:46-53)

D. Jesus' first recorded message was given in Nazareth; Jesus declared that the Spirit was on Him (Lk. 4:16-21; cf. Isa. 61:1-2). The favorable year of the Lord referred to the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8).

16He came to Nazareth...as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day... 17And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives...19To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." 20Then He closed the book...And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing..." (Lk. 4:16-21)

1. Jesus read Isaiah 61:1-2a about the ministry of Messiah emphasizing the power of the Spirit and focused on the good news. Jesus did not read “*and the day of vengeance of our God*” in Isaiah 61:2b. This is a reference to the day of the Lord or Great Tribulation judgments.
2. The present day—the “today” (4:21) is the promised time of salvation or favor (2 Cor 6:2).

E. Jesus was rejected in Nazareth (Lk. 4:22-30)

²²So all...marveled at the gracious words... ²³He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum [Jn. 4:46-54], do also here in Your country.” ²⁴Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine...²⁶but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” ²⁸So all those in the synagogue...were filled with wrath, ²⁹and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill...that they might throw Him down the cliff. ³⁰Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way. (Lk. 4:22-30)

1. Jesus found favor with them as long as He only spoke positive words (4:22). His claim to be anointed by God did not offend them since they had heard of His miracles (4:23). But quickly they rejected Him (4:28) when He spoke as a prophet—revealing the condition of their heart.
2. ***Do also here:*** Jesus refuted the mistaken idea that Nazareth had a special claim on Him since He was raised there. They probably felt they should see special miracles.
3. Jesus used two examples from Scripture to show how the God of Israel crossed all barriers to aid foreigners who believed, while rejecting Israel who did not believe. Gentiles, like the Phoenician widow and the Syrian leper, who believed were more receptive than unbelieving Nazareth (1 Kgs. 17:12-24; 19:10, 14; 2 Kgs. 5:1-14).
4. Proverb: “Physician, heal your own limp!” or “If you can fix others, please first fix yourself.”

F. Jesus settled in Capernaum instead of Nazareth or Jerusalem (Lk. 4:31; cf. Mt. 4:13-17; Mk. 1:14). Capernaum was 20 miles from Nazareth. The cycle of initial excitement began again in Capernaum as the people were astonished at His words later rejected Him as in Nazareth (Mt. 11:23; Lk. 4:22). Nazareth was about 1,200 feet above sea level; Capernaum was about 700 feet below sea level.

³¹Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. ³²And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. (Lk. 4:31-32)

G. Jesus' first call of the four fishermen—Peter, Andrew, James, and John by the Sea of Galilee in Capernaum (Mk. 1:16-20; cf. Mt. 4:18-22). Notice the instant response of these four disciples. Jesus' disciples did not regularly travel with Him in ministry until around the autumn of AD 27.

¹⁶And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee [Capernaum], He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea...¹⁷Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."¹⁸They immediately left their nets and followed Him.¹⁹When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James...and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets...²⁰He called them, and they left their father Zebedee...with the hired servants, and went after Him. (Mk. 1:16-20)

- H. Jesus taught in the synagogue and healed a demoniac in Capernaum (Mk. 1:21-28; Lk. 4:31-37). Jesus rebuked demons and then silenced them. He did not allow His Messiahship to be proclaimed prematurely and not by demons so that the leaders could not claim that demons promoted Jesus.

²¹Then they went into Capernaum...on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught...²³Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!"²⁶And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.²⁷Then they were all amazed...saying, "What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." (Mk. 1:21-27)

³¹Then He went down to Capernaum...³³there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon ...³⁵And when the demon had thrown him...it came out of him and did not hurt him...³⁷And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region. (Lk. 4:31-37)

- I. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law in Capernaum (Lk. 4:38-39; cf. Mt. 8:14-15; Mk. 1:29-31).
- ³⁸Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her.³⁹So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them. (Lk. 4:38-39)***

- J. Jesus healed many as whole town gathered at the door (Lk. 4:40-41; cf. Mt. 8:16-17; Mk. 1:32-34). Mark added that the "whole city gathered together at the door" (Mk. 1:33).

⁴⁰When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.⁴¹And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ. (Lk. 4:40-41)

- K. Jesus engaged in early morning prayer often (Mk. 1:35-38; Lk. 4:42-43). Jesus' first preaching tour in Galilee probably lasted about 4 months in early AD 28 (Mt. 4:23-24; Mk. 1:39; Lk. 4:42-44).

⁴²Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them... (Lk. 4:42)

³⁵Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.³⁶And Simon and those who were with Him searched for

Him. ³⁷When they found Him, they said to Him, “Everyone is looking for You.” ³⁸But He said to them, “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.” ³⁹And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee... (Mk. 1:35-39)

²³And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness ...²⁴Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. (Mt. 4:23-24)

II. JESUS' SECOND CALL OF THE FOUR FISHERMEN

- A. Jesus' second call of the four fishermen—Peter, Andrew, James, and John (Lk. 5:1-11). From this time on they permanently travelled with Jesus. At Jesus' first call to these four fishermen, Simon and Andrew were *casting a net* into the sea, and James and John were *mending nets* (Mk. 1:16-20).

¹...He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, ²and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen...were washing their nets. ³...He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat...⁴He said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” ⁵But Simon... said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.” ⁶...they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. ⁷So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to...help them...⁸When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”...¹⁰James and John...were partners with Simon. Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.” ¹¹...they forsook all and followed Him. (Lk. 5:1-11)

1. The Lake of Gennesaret is the Sea of Galilee. Gennesaret was a district at the northwestern end of the Sea of Galilee. The district's name is associated to it, thus the Lake of Gennesaret.
2. Peter's heart is seen (5:8). Most would have rejoiced to have contact with a miracle worker. They would be thinking of the blessing they would get from Him, but Peter recognized something more than a miracle. He saw God and worshiped in humility.

- B. Jesus healed a leper, then many came to that town in Galilee (Lk. 5:12-16; cf. Mt. 8:2-4; Mk. 1:40-45). This is the beginning of hostility with the Pharisees in Galilee (Lk. 5:12-6:11).

¹²...behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” ¹³Then He...touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴And He charged him to tell no one, “But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.” ¹⁵However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. ¹⁶So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed. (Lk. 5:12-16)

⁴¹Then Jesus, moved with compassion...said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed"...⁴³He strictly warned him...⁴⁴"See that you say nothing to anyone;" ⁴⁵However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely...so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction. (Mk. 1:40-45)

1. Jesus revealed Himself as willing to heal. This settled the issue about healing (Heb. 13:8). In the person of Jesus, the Father clearly revealed His willingness and desire to heal the sick.
2. The people in Israel wanted a political kingdom, not a spiritual kingdom.
3. Leviticus 13-14 described the cleansing procedure described by Moses where the cleansed leper was to show himself to a priest. Jesus sought to respect the authority of the priests.

C. Jesus healed and forgave a paralytic in Capernaum (Lk. 5:17-26; cf. Mt. 9:1-8; Mk. 2:1-12).

¹⁷...as He was teaching...the Pharisees and teachers of the law...had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them. ¹⁸Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed...¹⁹because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling...²⁰When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ²²But...He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? ²³Which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven you," or to say, "Rise up and walk"? ²⁴But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." ²⁵Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house...²⁶And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!" (Lk. 5:17-26)

1. Jesus was often charged with blasphemy (Mk 14:64; Jn 5:18; 10:33, 36).
2. The religious leaders were right in claiming that only God can forgive sins.
3. It is easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven" than "Get up and walk" because the legitimacy of the claim that God forgave someone cannot be disproven, whereas declaring the healing of a paralytic can easily and immediately be verified.

D. Jesus called Matthew also named Levi (Lk. 5:27-28; cf. Mk. 2:14). Matthew tells this story using his name Matthew instead of Levi (Mt. 9:9). Here Jesus manifested His compassion toward sinners.

²⁷After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁸So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. (Lk. 5:27-28)

1. Levi was not the chief tax collector, but an agent working at a tax office in Capernaum.
 2. In Matthew 9:9, the tax collector was called Matthew, not Levi, and in all four lists of the twelve apostles Matthew is the name that is used. Jews often had two names (one in Hebrew or Aramaic and the other in Greek or Latin); he was probably called Levi Matthew.
- E. Levi held a banquet in gratitude to Jesus at his house in Capernaum (Lk. 5:29-32; cf. Mt. 9:10-13; Mk. 2:15-17). We see the joy of Levi and his sinner friends in contrast to the Pharisees and scribes. The religious leaders were against eating with sinners because of the risk of ceremonial defilement.
- ²⁹Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. ³⁰And their scribes and the Pharisees complained ...saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (Lk. 5:29-32)***
- F. Matthew added Jesus' exhortation that they go and learn what it means when God says, "*I desire compassion and not sacrifice*" (Hos. 6:6). True spirituality is to result in compassion for people and zeal for holiness. When zeal for holiness motivates us to condemn people, then it is not God-like.
- ¹²...He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." (Mt. 9:12-13)***
1. Test your zeal for holiness by your love for man to see if it is real or "religious" holiness.
 2. The Bible teaches that there are none righteous (Rom 3:10).
 3. Some use this passage to validate hanging out socially in wrong places as a "silent witness."
- G. Jesus was asked about fasting by John's disciples (Lk. 5:33-39; cf. Mt. 9:14-17; Mk. 2:18-22). This happened in or around Capernaum. Jesus described the apostles as "friends of the bridegroom" who should not "mourn" as long as the Bridegroom was with them (Mt. 9:14-15). But after Jesus, the Bridegroom, was taken from them at the crucifixion, then they would fast with deep longing to encounter His presence in a greater way as the Bridegroom God—"the Bridegroom fast."
- ³³They said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" ³⁴And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast [mourn] while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days." (Lk. 5:33-35)***
- H. Jesus taught about the new order of the kingdom that was being established by His very presence.

³⁶Then He spoke a parable to them: “No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. ³⁷And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. ³⁸But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” (Lk. 5:36-38)

²¹“No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse.” (Mk. 2:21)

1. Wineskins were containers made from the skins of animals. The expansion caused by the fermenting of new wine bursts old wineskins because they have already been stretched as far as is possible. Thus, it was not possible to mix the old legalistic structures of Judaism with the new experience and activity of the Spirit associated with having a relationship with Jesus.
2. Jesus taught that one cannot put a “new patch” on an old garment or system and that one *must* put new wine in new wineskins. Seeking to add the work of the Spirit to the older order of Judaism would ruin the new-wineskin order, and it would not preserve the old order either.
3. Jesus was saying one cannot bring a new move of God into an old setting unless that old setting is willing to set aside some of the old ideas, values, and practices. Jesus did not come to put a patch on Judaism, but to establish the new covenant order with His people.