

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

## "HOMETOWN DISADVANTAGE" | LUKE 4: 16-44 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

### WARM-UP QUESTION:

What's the best part of visiting your hometown? Worst part?

### *"The Message of Jesus" (Luke 4: 16-30)*

Jesus says he's come to give good news to the poor, the blind, the prisoner, and the oppressed. **What does that show about Him? What does that mean for people?**

Jesus' hometown rejects Him and tries to throw Him off of a cliff, unwilling to believe Joseph's son is really more than a carpenter or that they needed help. **What reasons do people have today for rejecting Jesus?**

### *"The Mission of Jesus" (Luke 4: 30-44)*

Jesus' actions show His priorities as he makes time to talk about God and His word (Preach), help the hurting and demon-possessed (meet Physical needs) and find time to be alone with God (Pray). **What are ways to live out these priorities today? What are difficulties in trying to live these out?**

### REFLECTION QUESTION:

This passage contrasts those who believed Jesus and experienced His love and power and those who rejected Jesus and missed out. Pastor Brian points out that it depends on whether or not people are willing to be humble and admit they are spiritually poor, blind, captive and oppressed. **How would you characterize your attitude towards Jesus lately? What are ways you can humble yourself towards God?**

## *Hometown disadvantage*

### I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2-7 Lar: Women's Retreat. Food Drive. Marriage Retreat. School Preview Night. Volunteer Opportunities. Retreat Planning.
- B. Slide8 MP Ukraine Relief Fund. Jeff Thompson.
- C. Prayer: For Ukraine. Justice and peace. Protection.

### II. Slide9 **Intro:** *Hometown disadvantage* (sports it's an *advantage*) Pic: Kel at Naz.

A. Between 4:13,14 comes John ch.'s 2-5. So chronologically this happens a little bit later. But Luke *front loads* this story of His ministry, so his gospel would be read through *this filter*.

1. Sometimes things happen that change an entire event.
2. There was a South Carolina Baseball Team that were playing a group of inmates one time, in a prison. One of the players from South Carolina got in an **argument** with the **umpire**. And they yelled out, "*you better not argue with the umpire ... he's doing life for murder*".
  - a) You know that event changed how they played the rest of the game. That little bit of information matters. Luke's saying, *this is something that you should hold in your mind as you read the rest of the story.*

### III. Slide10 **THE MESSAGE OF JESUS (16-30)** *Read 14-30*

- A. Slide11 Nazareth in that day had a pop of about only 400 people.
- B. It was our Lord's custom to attend public worship, a custom His followers should imitate today. He might have argued that the "religious system" was corrupt, or that He didn't need the instruction; but instead, *He made His way on the Sabbath to the place of prayer.*
- C. A typical synagogue service consisted of: *the Shema was recited, prayers were offered and Scriptures were read. A section of the Torah were read and then a*

*section from the prophets. Then an instruction. then a benediction. And often if guests were present they were given an opportunity to teach.*

D. This is Jesus' first public speech. Notice he doesn't start in Jerusalem.

E. (21) Jesus' powerful 1 line sermon.

1. His birth was pretty exciting, a lot of eyes were on Him. But here (don't picture how famous He is today) it's been 30 years now, and now He shows up and says this?

F. (18) This is what he came to do ... & is still doing in lives today.

1. He came looking for us in the sick, the maimed, the lame, the bruised, the broken hearted, the wretched wanderer, the poor and forgotten, the prisoner, and the lonely rich. [Has he found you?]
2. He came to proclaim liberty to captives, to set at liberty the downtrodden.
3. Anyone poor in spirit? (opposite of proud in spirit. not even middle class in spirit). Anyone brokenhearted over their sin? Anyone need liberty from: phobias, insecurities, worry, anxiety, jealousy, envy, temper, wrong desire, passion. Anyone need released from a prison of: despair, depression, or despondency? Anyone need released from a prison of conscience?

G. I guess that's what I like most about this ... is "who" He came for.

1. Not the perfect, the strongest, the physically healthy, or the spiritually healthy. Yet that's who we often feel who He's "really" looking for. The "A" team, not me!

H. (22) Isn't this Joseph's son? – just an average life. I agree with Abraham Lincoln's remark about *God preferring common people or He would not have made so many of them!* [Jesus looked so normal, no Halo!]

I. (23) Here Jesus starts interpreting their unspoken thoughts.

1. He uses 2 OT examples to illustrate why He cannot perform the miracles in Nazareth that He has elsewhere ... i.e. their unbelief.

J. (25-27) His ministry was as broad as human need.

1. He couldn't be confined to His hometown, or even His own nation.

2. So, the illustration of these 2 Gentiles being healed, when Israel of old wouldn't listen.

K. (28) They wanted a **comforting** sermon *not* a **convicting** one.

L. Slide12 They were filled with wrath – *Blossoms aren't always a sign of fruit.*

1. The Peoples reactions were initially positive: [1] they were in rapt attention, all eyes fixed on Him (20a). [2] marveled at the gracious words (22a). [3] Great surprise he was just Joseph's son? (22c).

2. But it just went negative to *an angry opposition*. [1] filled w/wrath (28). [2] drove Him out of town ... tried to throw him off a cliff (29).

a) *Blossoms aren't always a sign of fruit.* [our parking lot trees, pretty white *no fruit*]

M. We see a cameo portrait of Jesus' whole ministry. This will be repeated over & over ... all the way to the cross.

1. *He lives his whole ministry under the shadow of rejection, He lives under the shadow of the cross.*

N. Slide13 Here's the problem, *the people of Nazareth didn't* consider themselves those mentioned in vs.18. *Do you? Jesus invites us to come to Him and ...*

1. Trade in your works for His Grace.

2. Swap your Churchianity for Christianity.

3. Exchange your, *"I deserve better than this"* for, *"I'll take His mercy"*.

4. Surrender your religion for, just Jesus.

5. Relinquish your Gloom for radiant Joy.

6. Give up your *spirit of heaviness* and accept *His garment of praise*.

O. Jesus wasn't the first preacher to be rejected. Both *Elijah and Elisha* were rejected. But notice Jesus doesn't stop here, *He keeps preaching*.

P. The Nazarenes were confronted on their **ethnic pride** and their **spiritual pride**.

Q. (28-30) In Nazareth they weren't ready to admit that they were *poor in spirit, or were captive, or needed to be set free, or were blind*.

1. The gospel message is only **Good News** to those who *humble themselves* and *acknowledge that their spiritual condition* is characterized by *poverty, bondage, blindness and oppression*.

R. We **don't** read of Jesus, throughout the rest of Luke, **ever going back to Nazareth**.

S. **Slide14** Can I share with you my personal story about these verses?

T. I did my 2nd memorial service in 1989. It was a HS boy from our youth, Adam. He was a friend & a TVHS student who drowned off 1 of the *Oceanside Jetty's*.

1. I was scared, nervous, **and then** I saw my pastor Garry Ansdell from Hosanna Chapel, sitting in the audience. And someone took my notes.

U. At the end of the service Pastor Garry came up to me and said, *I have a word from the Lord for you*. He told me to open my bible and read ... Isaiah 61:1,2a (4:18,19)

1. **Slide15** For the next 20 yrs all I saw was, "*preach, proclaim, proclaim*".

2. **Slide16** **Then** my eyes were open to really see ... *the poor, heal the brokenhearted, the captives, & those who are bound*.

[It's **not** either/or, **but both/and**]

a) **Jesus came for:** *the sick, the maimed, the lame, the bruised, the brokenhearted, the wretched wander, the poor and forgotten, the prisoner, and the lonely rich*.

3. That's why for the last 15 years there was a serious **focus change** for me. God opened my eyes **to Love God and the Hurting of His world**.

[i.e. a 9 yr old girl who changed my life in Shan State. The plight of the Rohingya. Human Trafficking. etc.]

V. Now let's move from the **Message** of Jesus, **to the Mission** of Jesus *in Capernaum*.

#### IV. **Slide17 THE MISSION OF JESUS (31-44) Read 31-37**

A. **Slide18** Capernaum Synagogue (31-37) *pic*, built on the same foundation.

B. (33) **in the synagogue** - surprising a demon-possessed person was **in the synagogue**.

1. Luke might be subtly critiquing *the spiritual state of Capernaum* at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Elsewhere, encounters with demons mark the inauguration of *the kingdom of God*.

C. Jesus never put on a healing tour. He went out preaching & healed as He was there.

D. In each these stories, you have to do something with them. (believe? blow them off?)

E. This is the first of 21 miracles in the gospel of Luke.

F. Slide19 Simon's House (38-41) Read 38-41

G. Inside Peter's House (38,39)

H. After church what do you do? Have Sunday Lunch, what else. And so they march right outside of the synagogue & right into Peter's house.

I. Here was a home loved by Jesus, near to Jesus, & yet sickness came.

1. If sin had brought on this illness, shouldn't there be a rebuke for it?

J. Outside Peter's House (40,41)

K. Morning in the synagogue. Midday at Peter's. Crowds at Sunset and into the Night now that Sabbath was over.

L. Griffith Thomas said, A heart that feels is never callous. Jesus the compassionate.

M. I wonder how happy this made Jesus feel being able to heal all these people?

1. What's Jesus' facial expression here you think? Do you picture him serious or smiling as He's doing this?

N. Slide20a Other Synagogues (42-44) Read 42-44

O. (42) After work, rest in proportion. went into a desolate place (5:16, 6:12, 9:18,28, 11:1)

P. (43) I must preach.

Q. We see here Jesus' priorities. And they should be equally important to us to:

1. Meet Physical needs of people. Pray. Preach.

2. You may not always be able to heal, but you can always love.

- R. Slide20b Our message is not that we have it all together. Our message is that *we know the One who does!*
- S. Ask yourself: Does my life reflect only *religious activity* or does it bear the mark of profound love?
1. Don't fall into the trap of the Pharisees who "*caught the disease of the devoted!*" (Pippert)
- T. Keywords: cross, gospel, grace, Holy Spirit, Jesus, Joy, justice, love, mercy, prophet, sin.