

'On the road'

Luke's account of the life and ministry of Jesus

Luke is up front about his intention in writing his gospel record: it was to help a man called Theophilus to have the confidence to trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He wanted to bolster the embryonic faith of this man in the face of both the hostility he was likely to face and the adversity which almost certainly would be his experience.

The aim of this study of Luke's gospel, therefore, is to help us all "*fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*", to the end that we "*run with perseverance the race marked out for us*" (see Heb.12.1-2)

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

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4. Luke 4.14-30 [w/b Sunday 18th February 2018]

“.. Today this Scripture is fulfilled..”

Jesus came to do what Adam failed to do: His ministry as the ‘second Adam’ (see Luke 3.38) marks the start of ‘human history - take 2’. That ministry is, as Adam’s was intended to be, a ministry of the Word, founded on Jesus first *believing* the Word of God. That’s what we saw in the previous verses (4.1-13).

Now we begin to see how Jesus *releases* the Word of God. As the one anointed by the Spirit (‘Messiah’ means simply ‘the anointed one’) He proclaims God’s message - and the message is (as God’s word has been from the start, and as we shall shortly see) full of power, *effecting* what it announces.

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! Key questions which you should certainly be covered are perhaps questions 1, 3 & 6. Do try as always to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Luke 4.14-30.** Jesus’ ministry from the outset was very clearly a ministry of the Word, exercised in the power of the Spirit.

What would you identify as the ‘stand-out’ features of Jesus ‘manifesto’?

Read **Acts 2.14-39:** Jesus continues to exercise His ministry through His church - in what ways is the start of

Jesus own ministry paralleled in the ministry of His church?

2. Read Luke 4.14-17. In a single verse (v.14) Luke skips over Jesus' early ministry in Judaea and records Jesus' participation in the weekly gathering of worshippers in His 'home church' as the starting point for his record of Jesus' ministry.

What does this teach us about the importance of joining week by week with our fellow believers for worship?

How high a priority is it for you (as you are able) to join others here at Gilcomston for worship Sunday by Sunday?

Should we come to worship on a Sunday expecting that in a real sense, through His Holy Spirit, the Word of God will be read and proclaimed, as here, by Jesus Himself?

3. Read Luke 4.18-19 & Isaiah 61.1-3. The passage Jesus reads is a powerful statement of the ministry He has come to exercise.

Compare the two passages: why do you think Jesus stopped short of reading the final words about 'the day of vengeance of our God'?

If this is the ministry He continues to exercise through His church by the Holy Spirit, what should be our expectations and how will that inform our praying?

4. Read Luke 4.20-21. Both Jesus' reading of the Scripture and then the way He immediately applied it were alike evidences of 'the power of the Spirit' (v.14) resting on Him.

How do you think you would have felt as part of the congregation that day when you heard Jesus say, *'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing'*?

Why would His words have had that effect on you?

Do they have that effect on you today?

5. Read Luke 4.22-24. Luke records the impact of His words on those hearing Jesus, and then narrates how Jesus began to challenge His hearers further.

Does the question they ask (v.22) detract from the statement that they *'all spoke well of Him and were amazed'* at what He said?

What is it in the response of the people which Jesus challenges here?

Why is it often the case that *'a prophet is not without honour except in his own town'* (Mark 6.4)?

6. Read Luke 4.25-27. The initial warmth and enthusiasm of the people (v.22a) will soon turn to angry hostility (compare the same change between palm Sunday and 'Good Friday'): Luke records what it was which provoked that change.

Why does Jesus refer to these two Old Testament stories?

What was it about these two references which made the people so furious?

7. Read Luke 4.28-29. It's clear that the pattern which would culminate in the cross was set right from the start of Jesus' ministry: Sabbath worship suddenly turned rather sour!

John characterizes Jesus as being 'full of grace and truth' (John 1.14): how did that combination find expression in His ministry in Nazareth?

What is that to this day people find so uncomfortable and unpalatable about the 'grace and truth' in Jesus' ministry?