

**A SUMMARY OF JESUS' GREAT GALILEAN
MINISTRY
Luke 4:14-15**

INTRODUCTION

There really have only been two revolutionaries in the history of the world. Everyone else has just been moving the furniture around - Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, ...

→ The two revolutionaries are Adam and Jesus.

The fall of the first Adam polluted all of creation.
We have been living behind enemy lines ever since.

The first Adam failed while feasting.
The second Adam triumphed while fasting.

In the best of circumstances, Adam fell. In the worst imaginable circumstances, Jesus stood and did not fall.

The best of men are men at best ... but now comes the man Jesus

Jesus hits the target. He meets the standard.
He fulfills the requirement. He is the Promised One.

Because Jesus triumphs in the wilderness, He will triumph in the garden and He will triumph at Calvary. He will triumph at the cross and He will triumph over the grave.

He paves the way. He cuts the narrow path for you to follow.

This is the Jesus who stands in the shadows of your life and says, "If no one else understands, I understand. I have been there before. And I will be with you."

Application – **James 1:12** – “Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the

crown of life, which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.”

Luther → There are three things that make a man of God: prayer, meditation, and trials – “*Temptation and adversity are the two best books in my library.*”

Luther also said that one Christian who’d been tempted was worth a thousand who hadn’t been tempted.

Iain Murray – “*It is better to be preserved in brine than to rot in honey.*”

Application – **Heb 4:15** – “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.”

Application – Beloved, when it comes to trials in life and temptations, we have the same battle. We have the same choices. And we have the same weapon!

READ Luke 4:14-21

Think of the first two verses as a small simple door leading to great treasure.

Illustration – “I do.” “Not guilty.” “Stick ‘em up.”
Little short phrases – few words that carry great meaning.
That is what we have in these first two verses!

Illustration – There was a popular, but probably mythological story, about Einstein not speaking until age 4.
When all of a sudden at the dinner table, young Albert announced, “The soup is too hot.”

His startled parents asked him, “Why didn’t you say something before?” → “Because before this, everything was in order.”

We understand why Christ came – because everything is not in order.

Our text today is Luke 4:14-15

Proposition:

- I. His **Power** is by the **Spirit**
- II. His **Proclamation** is in the **Synagogue**
- III. His **Popularity** is **Surging**

This outline sets a pattern for the rest of His Galilean ministry which begins here and goes all the way up to **9:50**

So That:

- I. His **Power** is by the **Spirit** **4:14**

Point – Jesus is a Spirit-empowered man

Proof – “¹⁴**And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.**”

“^{14a}**And Jesus returned to Galilee**”

There is about 1 year in between **4:13** and **4:14**, mostly in Judea. This is recorded by John.

John 1:19-4:45 → “Year of Obscurity”

- First converts (Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathaniel)
- Miracle at wedding in Cana – turned water into wine
- First cleansing of Temple – in Jerusalem
- Ministry to Nicodemus (New Birth)
- Ministry in Judea through Samaria (woman at the well) to Galilee
- Ministry to Samaritans – Savior of the world

Then about one and a half years ministering in Galilee – **4:14-9:50**

3 Divisions of the Promised Land at that time:
Galilee, Samaria, Judea

Jesus begins His ministry in Galilee

- the most fruitful and populous
- larger Gentile element than Judea

John 4:1 – “When the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John.”

Matt 4:12 – “when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee;” into Capernaum (Matt 4), the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee

Galilee was not as priest-ridden and Pharisee-dominated as Judea

- provides right environment for this phase of His ministry
- more freshness and less formalism
- Pharisees have less influence

→ according to His perfect plan... with His perfect timing

“^{14b}**in the power of the Spirit;**”

Jesus has never sinned. He never quenches the Holy Spirit. He is always totally controlled by the Spirit. No sin. No weakness. No chink in His spiritual armor.

The world has never seen anything like this next year when Jesus travels through Galilee. His ministry will transform this entire area. He will banish disease from the place. He will bring the message of the Kingdom of God – the reign of grace over the lives of men and women – to Galilee.

“^{14c}**and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.**”

Josephus, the early Greek historian said there were about 240 towns in Galilean area

“**news**” –the Greek word translated as ‘news’ is φήμη – this is where we get the English word ‘fame’

This news about Him spreads through the whole countryside. The women at the wells, the elders at the town gates, even the children as they play talk to one another about this new preacher. Initially, He finds favor in everyone’s eyes. They all speak well of him.

Application – Now, since the Holy One of God, the God-man, the only begotten Son of God was empowered by the Spirit ... how much more do sinful saved servants need to be empowered?

Acts 1:8 – “you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Illustration – a southern Baptist preacher said this – *“I would rather fly to the moon on a broomstick than preach without the Spirit.”*

Illustration – It would be easier to dam Niagara Falls with toothpicks than to preach with power without the Spirit.

When there is no power, there is no preaching.

But!!! ...

When there is Holy fire in the pulpit, it will catch in the pews.

Illustration – Like a distant rumble from a cloudless sky.

Illustration – Spirit-empowered preaching is like the tide that comes in and lifts all the driftwood upward.

Application – You do not want to fly solo in the pulpit.

II. His Proclamation is in the Synagogue 4:15a

Point – **Romans 1:16** – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Proof – ^{15a}**And He began teaching in their synagogues”**

Synagogues aren’t mentioned in Old Testament, they began after the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. in the Babylonian Captivity

The Israelites couldn’t access the temple, so they started meeting together for prayer and the study of the Law.

Each synagogue had elders who would be responsible for the reading and explaining the Law. If there was a visiting scribe or rabbi, he would do this.

Now that Jesus starts His ministry, the synagogues are the perfect place for Him to go from town to town to teach, “to the Jew first”.

4:16 – “He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.”

4:33 – “there was a man in the synagogue possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,”

4:44 – “He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.”

6:6 – “it came about on another Sabbath, that He entered the synagogue and was teaching;”

13:10 – “He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.”

Paul as well – **Acts 9:17-20**

Jesus ministry of teaching began in the synagogues in all four Gospels. As His ministry proceeds, the synagogues are

mentioned less and less – human wisdom and divine providence for the perfect timing ...

“***began teaching***” – the NASB translation had the courtesy to put ***began*** in italics because it is not in the Greek text (should have in v. 2 ☺)

- imperfect tense – “was teaching” – habitual practice
- this is the hallmark of His ministry, the cornerstone of His ministry.

This is a summary statement of the **ministry** of Jesus.

This is an announcement and a summons

- a proclamation and plea
- an indicative followed by an imperative
- an exhortation grounded in a Truth

→ We teach the Truth. We apply the Truth.

The Truth?

Matt 4:17 – “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 1:14b-15 – “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Now, at this point in time, Jesus is not as much speaking of a Kingdom, as He is speaking of a Kingship. It’s not as much a place as it is a practice. It’s not as much a what as it is a who.

John → He is coming! – “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”

Jesus → I have arrived!

Misunderstanding – in the people of this time- they didn’t fully understand that for the Kingdom to be embraced, it must be following after repentance

2 Sam 7:8-12; Dan 7:13-14

→ even the believers were impacted by the misunderstanding and error of the Scribes and Pharisees not understanding repentance

Here, Jesus teaches the **Kingdom is present**.

The Kingdom is at hand because the King is in your presence!

He also teaches elsewhere that the **Kingdom is still future**

→ Present reality and future hope → Already, not yet

He is on the throne now ... in Heaven and in the heart

He will be on the throne physically on earth in the future.

The time is at hand, among you, drawn near → → Now what are you going to do about it??

The Kingdom is only realized through prepared hearts.

Proof – **Mark 1:15** - “**repent and believe in the gospel**” The grammar here means: Keep on Repenting! Keep on Believing!

Point – This is massively important for us to understand ...

- the Gospel is a **command** to obey.
- the Gospel is not an **invitation** to consider.

Jesus continues what John began

John – preached “a baptism of repentance”

Jesus – preaches “**Repent!**”

Illustration – Like continually changing the **soiled diaper** of a baby, you are always putting on new clean diapers. Eventually, you move out of diapers into big boy clothes ... but even these get dirty. You continually change out of dirty clothes and **put on** new clothes.

→ This is a great picture of repentance in the life of a believer!

Application – Christian, what are you repenting of? What do you need to repent of???

Maybe it's not the same level of soiling and stain as the sins you repented of when you were a babe in Christ.

The Christian life is one of continual repentance ... one of continually putting off the **Old Man** and putting on the **New Man!**

The Kingdom is at hand in the presence of the King, but...

Illustration – remember the old sign → “No Shirt, No Shoes, No Service.” → No Repentance – No Belief – No Kingdom!

“and believe the gospel.”

You already believe in God. You know He exists.

- You know because of creation
- You know because of your conscience ... because of your innate understanding of right and wrong; of good and evil

You already believe in God.

You need to begin believing God

... what He says in Scripture ... His promises... His warnings

III. His Popularity is Surging 4:15b

Proof – “^{15b}**and was praised by all.**”

Grammatically – present passive participle – He was continuously being praise by all

Why? Because His teaching was in contrast to the lifeless repetitions and senseless trivialities of the majority of the synagogue teachers.

Mark 1:22 – “they were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”

- the scribes, the professional interpreters of the Scriptures
- they habitually established their views by long

quotations from other rabbis

Illustration – When I was Outreach Pastor at GCC, we had an opportunity to minister to a remote group of Pacific Islands, Kiribati, right on the equator by the International Date Line. These were Christianized islands with a spiritual war raging between the Truth and liberalism.

A seminarian, Bryan Murphy, went to minister and as he was teaching, one of the liberals chided him for not giving “the other views.” Bryan responded and said, “I did not travel thousands of miles to come and teach you error.”

Think about it ... Jesus is the greatest preacher ever.
He is always totally controlled by the Spirit.

He knows the heart of man. **And** He knows the heart of God.

He never misspeaks. His illustrations are always perfect.
His applications are always to the perfect point.

Jesus’ preaching does not invite debate – it confronts the absolute claim of God upon your whole being.

As the greatest preacher ever, surely everyone will love Him, right?

God gives the requirement for teachers to be beyond reproach ... there has never been anyone as beyond reproach ... utterly ... completely ... perfectly ... as Jesus Christ.

Surely His hometown, and the people that grew up around Him and have seen His flawless sinless life will receive Him well like the rest of Galilea ... right?!?!?

No. As the greatest preacher ever, He will meet the greatest hostility and have the greatest opposition ever.

It will begin in His hometown → v.16 and forward

The dark cloud of opposition unbelief and open hostility to Jesus is all through the Gospel → there is an ongoing war

- from demonic forces
- from religious leaders
- eventually from the multitudes

CONCLUSION

Beloved, please understand this → You can affirm the gospel with your life. But you cannot preach the gospel with your life.

Preaching today has been accurately described as,
“a mild-mannered man standing before mild-mannered people urging them to be even more mild-mannered.”

This is a Christianity which offends nobody and requires no sacrifice. This is a cheap Christianity which costs nothing and is therefore worth nothing.

Soft preaching produces hard hearts.
Hard preaching produces soft hearts.