

Read: Luke 4:16-30

Good News Worth Rejecting or Cheering?

Luke 4:16-19,24,28-30

[Jesus] returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

"I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown."

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up and drove him out of the town and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The teacher stood at the front of the room with a joyful expression on his face. "I have good news!" he said. The whole class sat quietly holding their breath for what he would tell them. "You all received A's on your Social Studies test!" The class happily cheered.

Do you like hearing good news? Jesus has some good news for his hearers today. If you've been following the devotions this week, they may sound familiar. In an earlier devotion, the prophet Isaiah prophesied words that Jesus would say hundreds of years later. In the lesson today, we see how Jesus lived out that prophecy.

Jesus told people that he was the one to preach the good news, to free them, to release them, and to comfort them. But the good news Jesus talked about was so much more than an earthly freedom. He was talking about freedom for people from their sins, from the enemy—the devil, and recovery of sight for people who blinded by the darkness of their sin. But what Jesus said next seems strange: "No prophet is accepted in his hometown." It seems strange, but it was sadly true. The very people Jesus told good news were the people who rejected him. Why would they try to run Jesus out of town? It doesn't make sense! Sometimes, people don't like everything Jesus has to say because they want something different from Jesus. They want him to be the kind of Jesus that fits the ideas they have of him in their minds.

Don't we do the same thing sometimes? We hear God's Word, but we don't like everything it tells us. We like to hear how good we are, but we don't like hearing when we do things that are not pleasing to God. We don't like to admit when we do wrong if it means someone else is right. We become slaves to our own stubbornness. That's why repentance is an important word to understand. It means to be sorry in our hearts and to ask God to forgive and change us.

Jesus is the Son of God who came to forgive and free us from the punishment of sin and the power of devil's hold on us. That's good news worth cheering! Believe it! Share it!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Share one thing that made you happy today.
- What's the good news Jesus shared that makes you happy today?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- In today's devotion, why did people run Jesus out of town and reject him?
- How does Jesus want us to react when we realized we've sinned?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- What do you have to do to get an A in Social Studies? What is needed to get an A in faith?
- Repentance is meant to be part of daily life. Share something done or said today you are sorry for. (Parent: Immediately be ready to share today's good news of Jesus' forgiveness.)

Closing Prayer:

O Lord, Heavenly Father, forgive me for the times I've turned from your Word and gone my own way. Give me a heart that follows you and cause my life to be a reflection of your Son, Jesus my Savior. Amen.