

“Rich Man...Poor Man”

(Luke 4:16-30)

Dr. Richard S. Koole
Chapel Pointe
October 11, 2009

I. Introduction

A. Preaching at Newhall Baptist

1. Raised there as a kid
 - a. My attempt to sing
2. Ministry in California
3. GARBC conference in Indianapolis
4. More nervous at Newhall
5. People were surprised I turned out half-way decent

B. When Jesus returned to Nazareth

1. Before he left
2. But when he returned...
 - a. A rock star!
 - b. Packed the synagogue
3. However, things certainly didn't go as people expected

C. The 12 months we covered last Sunday

1. Luke now picks up the story
2. Jesus returns home to city of his youth

II. Text....Luke 4:16-21

A. The Return (v. 16)

(16) Jesus 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.

1. Jesus returned to his home town of Nazareth
2. Went to the synagogue on the Sabbath
 - a. Sabbath began at sundown Friday
3. The synagogue
 - a. The synagogue was like his “home church “
 1. We have lots of churches in Hudsonville
 2. They had multiple synagogues in Nazareth
 - b. The call to the synagogue
 1. Visiting Tiberius
 - a. The call to the synagogue
 - b. Families streaming to their synagogue
 2. Alfred Edersheim

Starting on Friday as the lengthening shadows of Friday’s sun closed around the quiet valley, Jesus would hear the well-remembered double blast of the trumpet from the roof of the synagogue, proclaiming the advent of the holy Sabbath. Once more it sounded through the still summer air to tell all that work must be laid aside. Yet a third time it was heard and the one who blew it would lay it down right where he stood and not profane the Sabbath by carrying it, for now the Sabbath had really commenced and the festive Sabbath lamp was lit

4. Jesus was invited to speak.....v.16
 1. The ruler of the synagogue would invite visiting rabbis and teachers
 2. Like me inviting a special speaker of renown in California

a. John MacArthur, Dave Jeremiah, Josh McDowell, David Hocking, Tim LaHaye

3. All good....but none as good as Jesus

a. The synagogue was undoubtedly packed with people

b. Would they see a miracle?

5. Their order of service similar to ours

a. Singing of some songs (Psalms)

1. Modern praise music

b. Prayer

c. Reading of Scriptures

1. The Law

a. The 1st 5 books of the Old Testament

2. The Prophets

a. Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, etc.

d. Sermon

1. A Rabbi (or teacher) would comment on what had been read

2. Paul in Acts 13:14-15

On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. (15) After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak."

3. What I do each Sunday

B. The Reading (v.16-21)

(16) ... And he stood up to read. (17) The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Jesus. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

1. The scroll was taken out and handed to him.....v.16-17

- a. The scrolls were wrapped in cloth and kept in a chest
 - b. Would be taken out by the attendant
 - c. He was the officer responsible for the caring of the scrolls
2. They were reading the book of Isaiah...like we are in Luke
- a. Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1-2
 - b. May have been where they were in Isaiah...or he may have chosen the passage
3. The reading talked of the coming Messiah

(18) “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,

- 4. Contained an incredible truth
 - a. Why the Messiah was coming, and
- 5. It also talked of a special time.....v.19

(19) to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

- a. It means salvation has arrived!
6. Pictured in something called “The Year of Jubilee” (Lev. 25)
- a. The Jews were instructed that every 50 years there was to be a Year of Jubilee.
 - 1. A once in a lifetime event
 - 2. Like Halley’s comet
 - a. You’ll only get one chance
 - 1. Every 75 years
 - b. If you missed it in 1986....next chance 52 years
 - b. How the poor must have looked forward to that year
 - 1. All slaves were set free

2. All debts were cancelled
3. All property returned to original owners

7. After the reading, Jesus began to preach.....v.20-21

(20) Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down...

- a. Stood to read....seated to teach.....v.20a

(20) ...The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

- b. He opened his sermon with a bombshell....v.21

(21) and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

8. He didn't need to say anything else!

- a. Today, scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.....v.21
- b. Claimed to be the long-awaited Messiah
 - a. Shock and Awe!
 - c. "This is the year of God's favor!"
 - d. "And I'm the one the generations have been waiting for!"

C. The Rejection (v. 22-24)

1. They were stunned.....v.22

(22) All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

- a. Jesus was the greatest speaker ever
 - b. They were transfixed
2. But...they had some issues with what he said...v.22b
- a. "***Isn't this Joseph's son?***" they asked.
 - b. "Is he claiming to be God's son?"

3. Jesus knew what they were thinking

(23) Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’

4. An idiom for “prove it”
 - a. They wanted to see a miracle
 - b. Like he had done in other cities
 1. Especially in Capernaum
 2. Healing people
 - c. They wanted proof
5. No prophet is accepted in his hometown...v.24

(24) I tell you the truth,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.”

- a. The rest of the Galilee may have been electrified by Jesus
- b. And yet his home town was skeptical
 1. “We know who you are!”
- c. Difficult when people have known you as a child
7. Then Jesus gets real blunt

D. The Response (v.25-27)

1. The two examples

(25) I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. (26) Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

- a. Elijah in I Kings 17:8-24
 1. The famine
 2. The city of Zarepath
 - a. A gentile city

b. Modern Lebanon

3. Meeting the poor widow
4. The tough request
5. The miracle of the oil and the bread

b. Elisha in II Kings 5

(27) And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.

1. The prevalence and horror of leprosy
2. How Elisha healed Naaman
2. Jesus' point for both was that God bypassed all the widows and lepers in Israel, yet showed grace to two poor Gentiles
3. One of the themes of Luke is God's concern for the outcasts of society

E. The Rage (v. 28-30)

(28) All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.

1. Jesus undoubtedly said more
 - a. They understood what he was getting at
 - b. He lit their fuses
 - c. To even suggest that God's grace might be withheld from them yet extended to Gentiles
2. They considered themselves righteous
 - a. The Pharisees and Sadducees despised the poor
 - b. Thought God favored the rich
 1. Unwilling to come as the poor and oppressed
 - c. Didn't need to be forgiven

c. Jesus reminded them that God used Elijah and Elisha to show his love to gentiles

3. Attempted to kill Jesus

(29) They got up, 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.

a. A lynch mob

1. That didn't happen to me at Newhall

b. The degree of their rage

3. His miraculous deliverance....v.30

(30) But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

IV. Summary

A. Why did Jesus come to us?

1. The answer is back to Luke 4:18

(18) "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,

2. Originally Isaiah wrote as a comfort for Jews captive in Babylon

3. Jesus is speaking of both physical and spiritual deliverance

a. Will take his healing to the poor and heal the blind

b. Will deliver the oppressed from demons

*next Sunday

4. Yet it speaks of Salvation....deliverance from sin

a. When the blind can see

b. When the oppressed are freed from their sins

c. The poor seemed more receptive

B. Who are the “poor?”

(18) “The spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

1. Two Greek words for “poor”

a. The widow’s mite in Luke 21:2

1. “pentichros” (pen-tikh-ros’)
2. Somebody who has very little
3. She gave a few pennies

*the widow’s mite

4. Not the word used here

b. The word for “poor” used here in Luke 4:18

1. “ptochos” (pto-chos’)
2. Comes from a verb that means “to cringe and cower”
3. A person in total destitution who crouched somewhere in a corner begging. In classical Greek, the image was that one hand went out and the other hand went over the face to hide identity. Absolute shame and abject destitution

4. Lazarus the beggar in Luke 16:20

a. Begging for crumbs to eat

5. That’s who Jesus came for

a. To bring good news to them

6. Our spiritual poverty

2. The prisoners

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

- a. Satan held us captive....but Christ delivered us

3. The blind

and recovery of sight for the blind,

- a. We had eyes but could not see

4. The oppressed

to release the oppressed,

- a. Our deliverance from evil
b. Your power....their terror

C. Our need to do as Jesus did

1. To reach the poor, the imprisoned, the blind and the oppressed
2. Their spiritual and physical needs
3. We must do both
 - a. Churches that err by choosing one or the other
 - b. Those that care just for physical needs
 - c. Those that ignore the physical needs

*Just salvation

4. You are heavily invested in caring for the poor and needy
 - a. Through your giving
 - b. 20% to missions
5. Includes traditional and non-traditional work:
 - a. The display in the foyer
6. Some others that aren't even on our missions board

a. Orphans Hope

1. Orphanage in Jamaica

2. Garage sale at the church
3. God's love for widows and orphans

b. Mel Trotter Mission

1. The homeless and hungry of West Michigan
2. Nobody will die of hunger or exposure in our community

c. Alpha Women's Center

1. Saving the unborn
2. Unplanned pregnancies
3. Formula and diapers and clothes for their babies
4. 16 year old girls with nowhere to turn
5. We are their largest supporter

d. Love, Inc.

1. Those in need in Hudsonville, Jenison, etc.

e. Shepherds Home

1. Mentally handicapped
2. Downs Syndrome

f. Benevolence

1. Nobody goes hungry or homeless from Chapel Pointe!
2. How it has grown
 - a. Have given away more than \$20,000 already this year
 - b. How we get the money
3. And we never run dry

g. Student ministries trips

1. This coming summer.....Brazil
2. Carolyn and the poor pastor and his wife
2. Rio DeJaniero and the Olympics
3. The Favelas

*unbelievable poverty

h. Adult missions trips

1. Orphanage in Jamaica
2. Lakeshore Mississippi and Hurricane Katrina

j. Transport for Christ

1. Lonely truck drivers

k. LifePointe

1. Tapes, DVD's and CD's
 2. Shut-ins
7. The struggle to keep the spiritual in the physical
 - a. Easy to get lopsided
 8. We are the hope of the world
 9. Lord give us the resources to do more