

THE NEW NORMAL #8
“Social Justice in the Ministry of Jesus”
Luke 4:14-21

Social justice is a term we hear frequently these days. In personal conversations, on the news, in talk shows, in newspapers, and now we are hearing a great deal about social justice from pulpits across America. There is no universally agreed upon definition of the term, which makes it problematic. What did Jesus have to say about social justice? Was social justice an integral part of Jesus’ ministry? Today’s teaching will answer that question and more.

- 1. JESUS CONDUCTED HIS MINISTRY IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Luke 4:14-17**
 - A. Jesus defeated Satan in the power of the Spirit
 - B. Jesus goes to his hometown in the power of the Spirit
 - C. Jesus is the guest speaker on the Sabbath
 - D. Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2: return of the exiles from Babylon
 - E. Jesus is creating a Messianic community
 - F. This is Jesus vision statement for his ministry

- 2. JESUS WAS ANOINTED TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR, Luke 4:18a**
 - A. The good news is the preaching of the gospel, 1 C 15:3-4
 - B. Jesus singles out the poor (*ptochos – beggars, destitute*) – poor in spirit or poverty stricken? (Mat 5:3)
 - C. The poor are vulnerable & easily exploited

- 3. JESUS WAS SENT TO PROCLAIM FREEDOM FOR THE PRISONERS, Luke 4:18b**
 - A. Jesus proclaimed freedom (*aphesis - release*)
 - B. Who are the prisoners (*aichmalotos – prisoners of war*)
 - C. The prisoners are those bound by Satan, sin & the world

- 4. JESUS WAS SENT TO PROCLAIM RECOVERY OF SIGHT FOR THE BLIND, Luke 4:18c**
 - A. Recovery of spiritual blindness / darkness, Acts 26:16-18
 - B. Recovery to the physically blind

- 5. JESUS WAS SENT TO SET THE OPPRESSED FREE, Luke 4:18d**
 - A. The oppressed (*thrauo – brokenhearted, shatter, break in pieces*), Isa 58:6
 - B. The Lord offers healing & restoration, Lk 7:21-22
 - C. The social & spiritual results of his mission

- 6. JESUS WAS SENT TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD’S FAVOR, Luke 4:19-21**
 - A. An allusion to the year of Jubilee, Lev 25
 - B. The year of the Lord’s favor begins with Jesus
 - C. Jesus fulfilled this Scripture – the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom on earth has begun
 - D. The Messianic age brings salvation & the Holy Spirit
 - E. Did the people grasp the importance of this sermon?

- 7. JESUS WAS REJECTED BY HIS HOMETOWN, Luke 4:22-30**
 - A. The people were initially amazed at Jesus, v. 22
 - B. Jesus knew they didn’t believe & wanted a sign, vv. 23-24
 - C. Israel rejected God in Elijah’s day, vv. 25-26
 - D. Israel rejected God in Elisha’s day, v. 27
 - E. Nazareth rejected God in Jesus’ day, v. 28
 - F. They turned into a mob & tried to kill Jesus, vv. 29-30

Hillcrest Church
©Pastor Bruce Guckelberg, PhD
July 12, 2020

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Luke 4:16-21: 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. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 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, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, ²¹and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. ²³Jesus 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.'" ²⁴"I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. ²⁵I 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. ²⁶Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. ²⁷And 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." ²⁸All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. ²⁹They 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. ³⁰But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Isaiah 61:1-2: The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ²to

proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,

Acts 26:16-18: 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Luke 7:21-22: At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. ²²So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Discussion Questions for the Week

1. Discuss the importance of the connection between Isaiah 61:1-2 and how Jesus applies this passage to himself in Luke 4:18-19.
2. Do you agree or disagree that this passage serves as Jesus mission statement for his ministry? Explain why.
3. When Jesus mentions the "poor" define what he means by that term. (Mat 5:3)
4. When Jesus mentions the "prisoners" define what he means.
5. The poor, prisoners, blind and oppressed are the people Jesus desires to reach. Which term(s) best describes you?

6. In v. 19 Luke records “to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” This is an allusion to the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25). What is significant about this?
7. What are the implications of Jesus saying, “today this is fulfilled in your hearing” (v. 21)?
8. Read vv. 22-30 and discuss why the people were so angry with Jesus that they attempted to kill him.
9. In what way(s) have you experienced healing / release (emotional, spiritual, or physical) after coming to know Jesus?
10. What is your big takeaway from this teaching?