

## Third Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon Road Map  
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

Luke 4:16-30  
January 23, 2022

### Rely on God's Word, not your familiarity.

- The proverb: *Familiarity breeds contempt* is first found written in English in the 1300s
- Jesus said, ***Amen I tell you: No prophet is accepted in his hometown.***
  - ◆ *He's just one of us. What's so special about him?* - Familiarity bred contempt.
- While none of us grew up in Jesus' hometown, many have grown up knowing Jesus.
  - ◆ We would be wise to be warned: *Open your eyes! Familiarity often breeds contempt.*

### Rely on God's Word, not your familiarity.

- ❖ Jesus returned to his hometown - to those who thought they knew him.
  - They knew Mary and Joseph. They knew Jesus since his returned from Egypt.
  - They knew Joseph mentored Jesus as a carpenter. Mt. 13:55; Mk 6:3
  - Many, if not all, heard how *all who heard [Jesus] were amazed at his understanding and his answers*, when he first visited the Temple at the age 12. Lk 2:47
  - Jesus had learned the Scriptures in this very synagogue. They witnessed his growth *in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.* Lk 2:52
  - What they thought they knew about Jesus was tested here.
    - ◆ ***They all spoke well of him and were impressed by the words of grace that came from his mouth. And they kept saying, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"***
    - ◆ How could they reconcile his gifts and abilities with their impression of Jesus?
    - ◆ He spoke ***words of grace*** - God's unconditional saving love, not laws and rules.
      - His message didn't match the message they were familiar with.
  - Their familiarity with Jesus bred contempt for the clear word of God Jesus taught.
- ❖ In love Jesus tried to expose their blindness and captivity to rescue them.
  - ***"Certainly you will quote this proverb to me, 'Physician, heal yourself!' Do here in your hometown everything we heard you did in Capernaum."***<sup>24</sup> ***And he said, "Amen I tell you: No prophet is accepted in his hometown..."***
  - They were familiar with the reports of Jesus' miracles. *We never saw him do that!*
    - ◆ It was **not** a humble request of faith, but a challenge - interest in the spectacular.
    - ◆ They were blinded by what they thought they knew. Blinded by their egos.
    - ◆ They were captive to **their** way of thinking, **their** view of God and self.
    - ◆ They were just the kind of people Jesus came to help, rescue, and free.
  - Jesus calls to mind two accounts that took place in their region 850 years earlier.
    - ◆ Familiar with Elijah and Elisha, the people despised these prophets - impoverished
    - ◆ It was clear. Jesus said they were blind and captive, worse than Gentiles. Outraged!
      - Why? Ego. *Who is this kid to talk to us like that?!*
      - They judged by the familiar - not letting God's word make things clear.
- ❖ Watch out. Our egos can get in the way of seeing and hearing God's clear word.
  - *I've been a Christian all my life. I know my Bible Stories and Catechism.*
    - ◆ Those who rely on what is familiar, but are not open to further instruction, are blind.
    - ◆ Just as Satan misapplied God's Word, our ideas/familiarity can misapply it.

- Our delight in Jesus is a delight in his gifts and good news. We cannot get enough.
  - ◆ Jesus has replaced our helpless poverty (*poor miserable sinner*) with his riches.
  - ◆ Jesus has set us free from captivity to Satan, our flesh, the crush of the Law, & death.
    - Forgiven and given new life, Jesus is our Lord, not these cruel taskmasters.
  - ◆ Jesus called us out of blinding darkness and deception into his eye-opening light/truth.
  - ◆ *The year of the Lord's favor*: slaves freed, debts canceled, land restored, made whole
  - ◆ We gladly confess Jesus is the Messiah whom God sent to do all this for us.
    - Daily humbled by our own sin, living faith returns to Jesus for more good news!
- Watch yourself! Rage is the response of your ego, not your faith.
  - ◆ Jesus' followers live a life of repentance, aware of our sin and eager to expose it.
  - ◆ When accused, consider is there any truth to the charge? What can I learn about me?
    - When true, repent and rejoice that Jesus sets you free. Seek to heal those you hurt.
    - If upon reflection the accusation is questionable, ask fellow believers, *Is this true?*
  - ◆ True or false, let it draw you closer to Jesus. Find your identity in him, not your ego.
    - Our ego makes us either an arrogant blind fool or self-loathing nobody.
    - Jesus makes us restored, renewed, humbled, yet honored children of God

### **Rely on God's Word, not your familiarity.**

- ❖ Those who rely on God's Word faithfully gather with others around the word.
  - *As was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day...*
    - ◆ Thank God! He fulfilled all righteousness for us. But there is more.
  - If as our fully human brother, Jesus needed to grow in the word, we need it too.
  - *All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, well equipped for every good work.* 2 Tim. 3:16-17
  - *All these things that were happening to them had meaning as examples, and they were written down to warn us, to whom the end of the ages has come. So let him who thinks he stands be careful that he does not fall.* 1 Cor. 10:11,12
  - Jesus did **not** go to the synagogue to check that off his *To Do list*.
    - ◆ He teaches us his word is our life. Long for it. Rely on it. Dig into it.
    - ◆ Jesus went to study and teach. We learn so much by studying together, sharing.
    - ◆ Challenge yourself to see the familiar with fresh eyes and look for what you missed.
      - Jesus works through his word to peel back our blindness, one layer after another.
  - Some have wondered why we ask another Christian to take instruct to join us?
    - ◆ Let me ask: *Can you ever study God's word too much?* That's what we are about.
      - Many have told me that they were sad when we were done. They wanted more.
    - ◆ If someone joins us not knowing what we teach and relying on *their familiarity*, sooner or later I would expect to hear, *We teach what? We believe what?*
    - ◆ Remember, taking offense over Jesus' teachings is what happened in Nazareth.
    - ◆ To rely on my familiar, is relying on me. Christians rely on Jesus and his word.
    - ◆ When a teaching is challenged, don't respond: *This is what I was taught.*
      - Go back to God's word and answer the challenge with God's word. It's the light!

### **Rely on God's Word, not your familiarity.**