

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Feb 10, 2019

Rejected (Restorative Justice Sunday)

Pastor Temple 8:15, 10:55 Pastor Hall 9:30

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15-20 min)

- Anything to share about in the past week? About follow-ups from last Sunday, on In The Power of The Spirit?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- Opener Questions: Have you ever felt the pressure to do special favors for those closest to you? Under what circumstances would it be ok or not ok to comply with their wishes?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture below, Luke 4:14-21. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

²⁰ Then 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. ²¹ He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

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. ²³ Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’” ²⁴ “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.

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. 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.”

²⁸ All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 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 off the cliff. ³⁰ But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- How did the testimonies of Jose Linares and Beth Morrow speak to you about the power of God’s grace and new life in Jesus Christ?

- In verses 23-24, what desires of the people does Jesus seem to be picking up on?
- Why does Jesus not feel compelled to respond to their desires (verses 25-27)?
- The story of Naaman the Syrian is told in 2 Kings 5:1-14, a story in which a gentile from a non-Jewish territory is healed by the prophet Elisha of leprosy. What kind of feelings does Jesus' referencing these two stories in the Old Testament in verses 27-28, evoke in the people of Nazareth?
- How do these stories justify Jesus' not granting them whatever requests they might have?
- Why do they make the people so angry that they try to kill Jesus after what started out as a fine sounding sermon?

Other Related Scriptures (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read out loud Hebrews 4:12-13 and James 1:23-25.
- How is God's word like a sword? How does it divide soul and spirit and judge the attitudes of the heart?
- How is God's word like a mirror? How are we prone to forget the discoveries we have made about ourselves from the mirror?
- When do the blessings of the Word really come into play?
- What would have been a faithful response of the people of Nazareth to the Word that Jesus shared with them? (hint: it was not trying to kill him!)

Personalizing and Applying The Message (15 min)

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional scripture above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- Has reading parts of the Bible made you mad before? Have you been able to probe below the surface to discover where those feelings were coming from?
- What kind of personal prejudices does the God's word sometimes confront in us?
- How does the witness of Christians such as Howard Thurman help make visible where Christ continues to confront prejudice and injustice among the marginalized in society?
- What kinds of people groups does this passage inspire to reach out to? Are they communities the church is already reaching out to? or are there new ones?

Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)

- A grudge "hangs on a hurt and ends with a decision to carry it or bury it." What grudges may we have been carrying that have been an obstacle to the grace of God in our personal outreach or reconciliation with others?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer.