

Lesson 113: Jesus Heals Many

Scripture: Luke 4:14-44 (Also Mark 1:21-38; Matt. 8:14-17)

Memory Verse: "I must preach the kingdom of God." (Luke 4:43)

One day, Jesus was teaching at the synagogue in the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home. He stood up and read from the scroll of Isaiah the prophet which said:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come."

He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. Then he began to speak to them. "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!" However, the people of His hometown would not receive him as the anointed one (Christ).

Then Jesus went to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and taught there in the synagogue every Sabbath day. There, too, the people were amazed at his teaching, for he spoke with authority.

Once when he was in the synagogue, a man possessed by a demon—an evil spirit—cried out, shouting, "Go away! Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

But Jesus reprimanded him. "Be quiet! Come out of the man," he ordered. At that, the demon threw the man to the floor as the crowd watched; then it came out of him without hurting him further.

Amazed, the people exclaimed, "What authority and power this man's words possess! Even evil spirits obey him, and they flee at his command!" The news about Jesus spread through every village in the entire region.

After leaving the synagogue that day, Jesus went to Simon's home, where he found Simon's mother-in-law very sick with a high fever. "Please heal her," everyone begged. Standing at her bedside, he rebuked the fever, and it left her. And she got up at once and prepared a meal for them.

As the sun went down that evening, people throughout the village brought sick family members to Jesus. No matter what their diseases were, the touch of his hand healed every one. Many were possessed by demons; and the demons came out at his command, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But because they knew he was the Messiah, he rebuked them and refused to let them speak.

Early the next morning Jesus went out to an isolated place. The crowds searched everywhere for him, and when they finally found him, they begged him not to leave them. But he replied, "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns, too, because that is why I was sent." So he continued to travel around, preaching in synagogues throughout Judea.

Jesus came to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth. That's what Isaiah meant when he said "the year of the Lord's favor." And the Kingdom of Heaven is Spiritual (that's why even the evil spirits were able to recognize Jesus for who he was, even when Jesus' own friends and neighbors couldn't). So when Isaiah wrote about the oppressed being released, he was talking about the spiritually oppressed. And when he prophesied about giving sight to the blind, he was talking about having spiritual eyes that

could see Jesus for who He really is. And when Isaiah wrote about prisoners receiving freedom, he was referring to the spiritual freedom those who put their trust in Jesus will experience when freed from the bondage of sin. And this IS good news for the poor in spirit (and we're talking about everyone here).

In healing the many people of their afflictions, Jesus proved to be the one prophesied by Isaiah hundreds of years before. And it all came down to what Jesus was sent to do – establish the Kingdom of God here on earth.