

Purposeful Yet Realistic
Luke 4:14 – 44

Introduction

(14 – 15) *Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.*

Purposeful Yet Realistic
Luke 4:16 – 31
Realistic about His Audience

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’

Purposeful Yet Realistic
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Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?” He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.’” Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.

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But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

Purposeful Yet Realistic
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Realistic about His Audience

- Mark 6:6 He marveled at their unbelief.
- Northern Kingdom defeated and deported by Assyria (721 BC)
- Babylon defeated Assyria (614 BC)
- Jerusalem and the Temple destroyed (586 BC)
- Persian defeated Babylon (536 BC)
- Persians allow Israelites to return (532 BC)
- Fulfilled: borrowing an Old Testament scene to describe a present attitude among the people.
- Preach the gospel to those who feel trapped by life.
- God is interested in the faithful of all backgrounds and ethnicities.

Purposeful Yet Realistic
Luke 4:31 – 37
Competency

Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet and

Purposeful Yet Realistic
Luke 4:14 – 44
Competency

come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, “What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Purposeful Yet Realistic
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- Authority: mastery of truth, not with complicated philosophical terms, but with statements that were just obviously true.
- Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8); the demon would be chained in the abyss within a little less than 40 years (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6); although their destruction would not come until Judgment (Revelation 20:10 – 15).

Purposeful Yet Realistic
Luke 4:38 – 44
Purposeful

Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. But Simon’s wife’s mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them. When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

Purposeful Yet Realistic
Luke 4:38 – 44
Purposeful

And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ. Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.” And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

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Purposeful

- Do we know our purpose?
 - We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us (2 Corinthians 5:20).
 - We are comforters (2 Corinthians 1:4).
 - We are edifiers, those who build up others (Romans 14:19).
 - We are those who demonstrate that the gospel makes stuff happen (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Purposeful Yet Realistic
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Conclusion

- Take time for significant prayer.
- Raise questions and engage people positively so they begin to ponder something about God.
- Help people physically, then make the connection to the principle it teaches.
- We comfort others because God comforts us.
- Jesus demonstrated how godly character operates in a broken world so people could escape its corruption (2 Peter 1:4).
- We use the world; it no longer uses us