

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 49

April 8, 2020

Let's begin by going back to **Luke 4:14** and I do want to read the entire context tonight. I want to go back to get continuity and perhaps we will be able to finish this section tonight.

“And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. ¹⁵ And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

¹⁶ And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.”

²⁰ And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” ²² And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, “Is this not Joseph's son?”

²³ And He said to them, “No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.’”

²⁴ And He said, “Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. ²⁵ But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; ²⁶ and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” ²⁸ And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; ²⁹ and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, He went His way.”

This is a very dramatic scene here. Jesus was going to a typical synagogue service, and being asked to read on that occasion, a reading from the prophet **Isaiah chapter 61:1-2**, and then applying that prophecy to Himself as the Messiah. This is where the drama began. We're really going to focus on verse 21 in Luke when Jesus began to say to them, “**Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**” We want to concentrate a little bit on the word *fulfilled*. Obviously this is a major theme during the life of Christ.

Christ lived with the knowledge that He was *fulfilling* Old Testament Scripture, and it has been interesting to me just try to understand; in understanding the mind of Christ, how Jesus understood the fulfilling of prophecy. How mindful was Jesus, as He was fulfilling it, that He was actually fulfilling Scripture; and I believe he did ... He understood that very well, and I believe that this is a place where that is made very clear. When He read the Scripture, Jesus said, “**Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**” So, again, I will be referring back to my journals that I began writing in 2010 and some of the notes that I took on that occasion as I was working my way through this passage.

Previously, we have talked about Jesus' sense of timing. He must have lived in His thinking with an *acute* sense of timing as to the fulfilling the will of God. If we go back to the story in **John 2:1-10** when he was asked to turn the water into wine, to provide wine on that occasion when they ran out, He said, "***My time has not yet come***" (v. 4). You will see statements like that throughout the ministry of Jesus where Jesus is really acutely aware of the 'timing' of things. He has come to earth. He has waited 30 years before He started His public ministry. And that is a little bit curious too; but now as He has started his ministry, He is beginning to fulfill the different prophecies about Himself.

So Jesus says here, "***Today this Scripture has been fulfilled...***" ***So many Scriptures had to be fulfilled; they had to come to fruition in the life of Christ.*** In fact, all of the Old Testament prophecies about Him had to be fulfilled so that when Jesus was on the cross, He could say, "It is finished." And I believe that part of what He was talking about there was that He had fulfilled the Scriptures up to that time. The word '*fulfilled*' is the word Pleroo, {which is πληροω in the Greek}. It means to fill something up or to complete it. It could be too simple and casual to say that this is Jesus' kind of 'punch list'. It's like we way we have a 'punch list' of all the things we'd like to do in our life. Jesus had, like, a *prophetic* 'punch list' if you will; but I think it would be too 'simple' to say that He was going out, let's say, "today I'll go out to fulfill this Scripture; tomorrow we'll do this one ..." I don't think it was that simple; but He *did* have to get a lot done during His short time on the earth.

Let's look at some other places where this word "pleroo" was used. In **Luke 1:20** the angel tells Zacharias, "***And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time.***" Zacharias will be mute and not be able to talk *until the words of the angel are fulfilled in their proper time*. This was, of course, until the time when his son would be born.

Jesus was always aware of the "*proper time*". In **Luke 9:31** on the Mount of transfiguration as Jesus was talking with Moses and Elijah, they spoke of His departure; "***who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.***" They were talking about the time of His departure; they were *foreseeing* the departure that He was about to make to go back to the Father.

Peter proclaims that the Jews acted in ignorance in putting Christ to death, **yet** the Bible says in **Acts 3:17-18**, "***And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. ¹⁸ But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled.***"

Then Paul proclaims in that the Jews nevertheless participated in this fulfillment as well.

In **Acts 13:27** Paul said, "***For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him***". Even the Jews were fulfilling the prophecies themselves, even though they weren't aware that they were doing so. Jesus was fully aware of the fulfilling of prophecy but those who assisted often were totally unaware of the role they were playing in these same prophecies.

As we have seen previously, Jesus' mind is characterized by His *total awareness* of the will of the Father whether that will was rooted in past declarations and prophecies, or rooted in current world decisions that Jesus was making in 'real time'. He was absolutely aware of the will of God at all times.

If we are going to have the mind of Christ; that is *one* of the **essential** things we are going to *have* to do. We are going to have to be **so imbedded** in the will of God; we will have to understand it **so completely** as we go through our day, that the things we decide to do will always be determined by whether or this is the will of God or whether this is **not** the will of God. It should become second nature to us. To have such a high degree of sensitivity to His Father's heart is remarkable and **sets Jesus apart**. And I just simply, when I was writing this, I asked myself these questions:

How do I gain this *same* sense of awareness? Is it possible? Can I grow in this?
How do I get into this kind of awareness in my life?
Am I always in the will of God in the things I am doing?

Luke gives us some insight into what is going on in the minds *also* of the synagogue attenders; the people who attended that day; what were *they* thinking? The first thing they did was to *speak well of Him*. The second thing they did was they *wondered about the gracious words that were falling from His lips* in **Luke 4:22**. The third thing is that they associated Him with Joseph as His father. "[And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"](#)" Again, notice that it was **not Mary as His mother**; but as *Joseph as His father*. Let's take that apart a little bit.

The idea of *speaking well* literally means "to be a witness, to testify, to have a good rapport with". If you were a character reference or character witness for someone, you would be speaking well of them. Emphatically, it means 'to testify strongly', to 'bear honorable testimony or even to give applause to someone.' You are saying that they are *doing a good job*. But in **Acts 15:8** it says, "[And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us](#)". Here, it says that God was *bearing witness* to the Gentiles, and the way He did that was by allowing them to have the Holy Spirit!

In **Hebrews 11:4** the word is used again to define the faithful who were commended, *especially Abel*, for whom God **testified**. "[By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.](#)" It is pretty good when you have God as your character reference ... when God is able to speak well of you!

In **Luke 6:26** "[Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers used to treat the false prophets in the same way.](#)" although a different word is used, it's the same concept. Woe to you! Beware! If all men speak **well** of you, for *in the same way* their father's spoke of the false prophets. In other words, it's *not always a good thing* when someone speaks well of you. And they weren't being genuine in **this** case when they spoke well of Jesus.

In **Psalm 12:2** the psalmist says they speak vanity; everyone with his neighbor, with flattering lips and a double heart they do speak.

When you're not being genuine in what you say, when you give compliments to people and speak well of them and don't really mean it, you're just *saying it* ... Jesus understood the fickleness of the crowds. We call it *politics* ... *playing politics*. People can love you *one* minute and then they can hate you the *next*, because again, we can be very fickle.

This is why Jesus did not entrust Himself to any man ... because *He knew* what was **in man**. **John 2:24-25** “But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.”

A *variation* on this is found in Jesus' sermon in **Matthew 23:29** as the Jews honored and decorated the tombs of the prophets they have killed. On one hand, they participated in killing the prophets; and then they go and “look like” they are honoring the prophets by decorating their graves by going and leaving flowers on their graves. They didn't treat them very well during their lifetime; in fact, they put them to death during their lifetime! *So it works both ways*. True prophets are often flattered, and then they're killed; false prophets are often flattered, and they're kept in authority. The operating principle is “what do people want; and what are they *willing to do* to get it?” That's the nature of politics; that's the nature of backslapping or playing a role by saying nice things about people.

When I was writing this back in 2011, it happened to be the day in Haiti when one of their previous rulers, a man they called ‘Baby Doc’, Jean-Claude Duvalier, returned to Haiti. He had essentially been run out of Haiti a few years before. He had stolen a lot of money from the treasury, he had gone to live in Paris very high on the lam there; now he was coming back to Haiti and you would think that it was Jesus coming back because of the way they honored him. They ran him out of the town, and now he's coming back and everybody thinks he's great because they think he will be better than the guy they have right now. People are fickle. Be aware when people speak well of you.

It is somewhat curious that Jesus will be referred to as “Joseph's son”. *Technically*, he *wasn't* Joseph's son, but legally, I guess He was. Was Joseph still alive? There is *no* indication that he *was* at this point. Certainly, by the time of Jesus' death on the cross, about 3 years later, he was not alive. Had he recently died? Had the scandal of Jesus' birth been forgotten and people in Nazareth had accepted things, because, again, there was a scandal over the birth of Jesus that He may not have been Joseph's son actually? Did they just assume that Joseph had fathered this child before the wedding? But the intent of their questions seems to be, ‘*how can Jesus speak so well, and distinguish Himself so well, when He is merely the son of a carpenter with no rabbinic training?*’ So, they're kind of saying, “Jesus, we're not so sure that we should take you seriously here.” This is a classic case of small-town boy of humble beginnings ‘making good’. And everyone likes a ‘story’. But Jesus is not buying it. He doesn't play into this flattery. His next words turn the tide against Him. They are ‘telling words’ since they go against the grain and against the culture, and He flies in the face of popular thought.

Jesus was not just simply interested in people making compliments or giving Him compliments or speaking well of Him. He does not merely ‘think it’; He says it to *their* faces in *their* place, in *their* town, in *their* synagogue without hesitating.

This is boldness in action. Jesus knew where they would be going next and so He quotes a proverb concerning the situation. A proverb is like a parable, and the proverb is this: “Physician, heal yourself”. He says, “You will probably say to me, ‘Physician, heal yourself’”. The intent is plain. Jesus should not presume to be the One who is going to provide healing for them because He had just talked about recovery of sight to the blind. He has talked about being the *One* who has been *anointed* to *give* them sight, and so **He** is saying that you will probably say to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself.’

Jesus is really saying that ‘you are not going to really accept Me as your doctor. First, you don’t really believe that your blind, and second, you’re not going to accept healing from Me. They are saying that He should just stay focused on Himself. This is a classic way not to have to listen to someone who is telling the truth. Turn it back on them is what He is saying they are going to do.

In the case of Jesus, He needed no healing because He was not blind. He wasn’t sick. In *our* case *we do* need to give greater attention to self-healing because we attempt to practice on others. In other words, in our case, when we are trying to be the doctor to someone else, Jesus tells us in **Matthew 7:5** that we need to first practice medicine on our ‘self’; not try to ‘practice’ medicine on someone else. We have to try to get the beam out of our own eye before we try to get the speck out of someone else’s eyes.

Jesus knows this is where they are going so He *preempts* them. It is interesting that Luke, the **physician**, is the one who points this out. And I’m just pointing that out to you. Luke is the one who is recording this story. And I ask the question: can an obese person talk about weight loss? And those are the kinds of things (heal thyself) that might be brought up. The *proverb must* have been a common saying of the day but it is not an Old Testament quote. At least, I couldn’t find it in the Old Testament.

This show Jesus is willing to state truth in forms other than simply ‘Biblical language’. *Jesus is fluent in cultural expression*. Paul did this also in Acts 17 when he quoted the philosophers. But **Jesus** is the Great Physician. There is a famous evangelist among Churches of Christ back in the early to mid fifties of the last century named Marshall Keeble. He had a famous sermon called “The Doctor Who Never Lost a Case”.

The reputation of Jesus had spread. The royal official’s son in **John 4:43-54** was healed at Capernaum. And even though Jesus was in Cana at the time, He was aware that they were talking about this miracle. Nazareth and Capernaum are only about 20 miles apart so it would have been very easy for them to understand what was going on in the city of Capernaum. That’s why they said to Him, “Do here what you did in Capernaum”. They were aware of the miracles He had done there.

People were impressed with the miracles but they didn’t want to accept the implications that went with them. This flaw of man is often his downfall. The temporary excitement of a thing that gives someone a temporary high is considered more desirable than what Peck calls the Road Less Traveled.

As I wrote in my blog back in 2011, “Quick, Easy and Seems Like Quality”. That is often what we ‘go for’. We want something that’s *quick*, something that’s *easy* and that seems like it has quality. We can do that with food, and thrill rides, and instant messages and all kinds of ways. We want something that is quick, it’s easy, it seems like it has quality, it feels good; and then we move on to the next thrill. It becomes a show. But they were more interested in the ‘show’ than they were in the ‘substance’ of *who Jesus is* and what He came to do.

There was a difference between doing a good show that would hold their attention for a few minutes or days, and truly being welcome, because Jesus says in **Luke 4:24**, “...Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown.” He uses the word “welcome.” Hometown here is ★ key. They were *familiar* with Jesus; but they did not **know** Jesus. Familiarity with something often leads to taking it, or him, or her for granted. There is a big difference between knowing someone and being familiar with them. Jesus had lived in Nazareth for about thirty years ... a long time to be taken for granted, especially when He kept a much lower profile than he did these days. Jesus turned up the intensity of revealing Himself, and acceptance was not coming easily; at least not in His home town. The phrase, “too big for your raising” comes to mind here. People are beginning to look at him and say, “Maybe Jesus is getting a little too big for his raising.” There may be also a sense of, “You might be able to fool people *out there* who don’t know you, but *we know you*; who you are and you are not fooling us.” That may be more of what they had in their minds.

But they wanted to see some miracles to see if He was the real deal ... like a performer. Play us a song and let’s see if you’re as good as they say you are. *This attitude* is what they would judge Him by. He had to prove Himself to them, as C. S. Lewis would say about his famous phrase about “God in the Dock”. The word “Dock” means God being put on the witness stand, or being put on trial. This notion that man has that he can sit in judgement of the Divine is wrong at the base of it. It says I do not have to submit to God until I determine **if** He exists, what **kind** of God He is, and if He really **expects** certain things of me and on and on we go. **We** drag out the trial although **no** verdict is ever rendered, and *we die* without switching places with Him where **we** get into the witness stand and He is the One questioning us. We are afraid He will put **us** in the dock and examine us. Will He find us to be fakes, and unbelievable, and unworthy of His love? So the Nazarenes were setting themselves up as Jesus’ examiners. This is a tough position to be in.

What if He **is** the Son of God and not just the son of Joseph? Then, the one thing they are judging will become their judge. And whatever measure they use to judge *Him*, perhaps *He* will use to judge them. They were doing to Jesus what God did with Belshazzar in Daniel 5 when the handwriting came on the wall and it says in verse 27, ‘You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting!’ They would not welcome Jesus. Using that word “**welcome**” means that they would not **approve** Him, they would not **accept** Him, they would not decide *favorably* about Him.

In **Acts 10:35** this word is used of how *God welcomes the man from every nation who fears Him and does what is right.*

Phil. 4:18 speaks of “a gift that is an *acceptable* sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.”

In **Matthew 10:13-14** Jesus speaks of those who received the apostles into their homes. The “worthy” house ... the house that does not welcome them, the greeting they had given to it should be withdrawn and the dust shall be shaken from their feet. “If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you.”¹⁴ If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet.” Jesus says that it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for *that* city, so He’s talking about His judgment. In all of this, the question is not whether or not Jesus welcomes us; Jesus is willing to welcome *all* of us. The question is, are *we* willing to welcome Him, receive Him and accept Him? Now these people in Nazareth were not willing to do that.

Jesus expresses God’s outrage in how prophets are normally treated by God’s people. *This is a very serious section*. This is what is going to get Him in trouble and get Him almost thrown off the brow of the hill. In **Matthew 23:29-39** we have one of the longest sections; and the words of Jesus are an indictment of all the generations in which God sent his prophets to unrepentant people ... people who would not only not listen, but people who killed and shut up the prophets so that they would not have to listen to them. He says, on that occasion; fill up then the measure of the guilt of their fathers. He says, “You serpents! You brood of vipers! How can you escape the sentence of Hell?” He tells them in **23:35-36** “upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it.”

What Jesus is saying here is that He is going to start with the first righteous prophet who was murdered, which was Abel, all the way down to the last prophet in the Old Testament in the chronologically, who was Zechariah, the son of Berechiah who was murdered between the temple and the altar found in **2 Chronicles 24**. Jesus is going to hold *this* generation accountable for all of those murders.

Now, what does that have to do with Jesus? Well, Jesus is **the** Prophet; ‘the prophet **like Moses**’. He has come to them, and are they going to treat Him differently than they actually treated all of the other prophets? Jesus goes on to say, “Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation.”

Then Jesus gives His most heart-wrenching lament in **Matthew 23:37-38**; “Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.” These are chilling words. And when coupled with **Matthew 24**, we can understand the horrible judgment that came upon that generation in AD 70. And if you want to get into that more deeply, I would encourage you to read the eye-witness account of Josephus, the historian who witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem.

In Jesus’ mind, this event in Nazareth was a typical Sabbath day that was *not* typical. *That* was the crux of the problem for mankind ... our *inability to recognize* what is truly valuable ... our unwillingness to be gathered under His wings, and our total disregard for the consequences of that. And those who point that out are not listened to. They are generally ignored or pacified or even silenced.

The independence of man, his belief that he is autonomous, that he is the master of his own ship will be his own destruction! Jesus' heart must have 'ached' within Him as He looked into the faces of those He had known all of His life, and knowing that they were destined to Hell. This was a *painful* Saturday for Jesus.

What enraged the Jews? What made them so angry on this occasion was to say that God had turned from His "*chosen people*" to the Gentiles? They had nursed this bigotry for centuries. It was **ingrained** in them as much as the prejudice of the whites and the blacks in the south during the 1950s.

Jesus offers **two illustrations** to give them among many that He could have used. One was from the days of **Elijah**, and the other from the days of **Elisha**. The context of the first story in **1 Corinthians 17** is, of course, chapter 16. It says that **Ahab** did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

The king, during this time, was not favorable to the prophets or to the Lord; in fact, he married Jezebel who served Baal and introduced Baal and the Asherah poles into Israel. Also, in this time, Hiel began to rebuild Jericho totally disregarding God's word through Joshua that whoever did this would lose his first and last son (**Joshua 6:26, and 1 Kings 16:34-35**).

This total disregard for God's word during this time, without thought of consequence, caused God to withhold dew and rain from heaven for three years. Elijah stayed by a brook; he was fed by ravens until the brook was dried up, and then God told him to go to a widow in *Sidon*. The place is important because this is where Jezebel was from; it was her hometown. This **Gentile** widow of Zarephath was to provide for Elijah. God made it where her flour and oil would not run out until the end of the drought.

The point was that **Israel** was struggling for three years during the drought. This **Gentile** widow was being blessed by God! They understood this to be a story of how *God turned from the Jewish people and bless the Gentiles in a time of crisis*.

The second story is the story of **Naaman** in **2 Kings 5**. Naaman was from Syria. He had captured an Israelite maiden who attended his wife. When he got Leprosy this girl told him that his cure was in Israel. He sent a letter to the king, who he thought was picking a fight with him, asking the king to direct him to the cure. But Elisha sent for him with *this* reasoning ... Now let him come to me and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. Naaman was healed by dipping seven times in the Jordan River, the very river where John the Baptist had been baptizing. Overcoming his initial anger, Naaman humbled himself.

Now in this story of all the Lepers in Israel, *none* of them were cleansed by Elisha! The only one who was cleansed was this **Gentile**! Jesus told these two stories and it made these Jewish people in Nazareth very, very angry. Surely, these two stories were well known to these Sabbath-schooled Jews. They knew Jesus' point and they did not like it. The rest of the story is that Gehazi, {Elisha's servant}, because of his greed for what Naaman could give him; the Leprosy transferred to him ... *from Gentile to Jew*.

These two stories were not stories that the Jews liked in the Old Testament. But this same *Elijah* prayed for rain after 3½ years, and it rained at Carmel in the great contest between the prophets of Baal and the prophet of God. The people's hearts were turned back again (**1 Kings 18:37**) and this great *prophet* outran Ahab's chariot to Jezreel in a heavy shower. But when he heard of Jezebel's wrath, he went as far north in Israel as he could get ... all the way to Beersheba **1 Kings 19**.

Then Elijah trekked a day's journey into the wilderness sitting under a Juniper tree, and here he requested that God would take his life because 'I am not better than my ancestors ... my fathers'. Elijah believed that he was going to be killed as well. God prepared him two meals of bread and water which lasted for 40 days and 40 nights. It sounds like the reverse of what Jesus went through in His wilderness experience.

In **1 Kings 19**, Elijah makes his way to Horeb and is depressed because the sons of Israel have forsaken their covenant and they have torn down the altars and have killed the prophets with the sword. In other words, there is no honor. And I'm telling you all this to say *this is the time that Jesus is referring to in His message to the people at Nazareth*. Elijah felt that he alone was left, even though God told him to leave his cave and stand on the mountain of the Lord, before the Lord. He told them that there were more than 7,000 prophets who have not yet bowed their knee to Baal. God brought before Elijah wind, earthquake, and fire, but God was not in these. God was in the still, small voice. God reminds him that not all Israel have bowed the knee to Baal, and there **is** a future for Israel.

Surely Jesus knew the story and it was *part of His thinking*. As Elijah escaped the sword and he escaped defeat although there was much suffering, Jesus too would be *left standing* while all the enemies would be destroyed. Jesus selected two of the most revered prophets of Israel's past who ministered to the Gentiles as illustrations of His own ministry, and it says that they were *filled with rage*. The word "thumos" (θυμοις) is the word used here. It means passion, fierceness, indignation, or wrath. There was a violent commotion of mind inside of them; an inward feeling.

It was used by Luke in **Acts 19:28** where the people of Ephesus were filled with rage at the downfall of Artemas, or Diana. "Moses left Egypt not fearing the *wrath* of the king" it says in **Hebrews 11:27**. It is the same word used there.

It is used by God in **Revelation 14:10** in order to describe the wine of the wrath of God.

The response of anger or rage turned to *mob action*, and three actions are given here in the text. *First*, they rose up; *secondly*, they kicked Him out of the city; and *thirdly*, they led Him to the brow of a hill. It also produced a **fourth** action if they would not have been prevented; they would have thrown him over the hill. Rage turned into violence against the Prince of Peace. Mob action is found at the crucifixion, at the stoning of Steven, and several times in Paul's life as well.

The feeling produced in the vindictive wrath, in the midst of a crazed crowd must have been terrifying. However, like Jesus in the storm sleeping while the disciples fretted, Jesus knew He had power over the wind and the waves. He also knew He had power over this crowd.

Nothing happened outside the foreknowledge of God, but the disciples were not as sure about that; and what of His family in Nazareth? This caused a major stir in the city. There is no charge mentioned; and certainly not even a pretense of a trial. This was all pure passion and impulse. Jesus merely passed through their midst and went away. It says He went through the middle; “the mesou”, (μεσου), the median like Moses and Israel passing through the middle of the Red Sea.

In **Matthew 10:16** Jesus tells His disciples that *they* will find themselves in the midst of wolves, and *Jesus* was in the midst of wolves here.

In **Matthew 18:2** Jesus sets a child in the middle of the disciples. Being in the middle can be good, or it can be bad, depending on who is surrounding us. An angry crowd bent on violence and death is terrifying.

Jesus knew His time had not yet come and so He passed through them and went on His way. What was the discussion that night like for the Synagogue people? What was the discussion that night like for Jesus and the disciples? What about for Jesus’ family, or for the townspeople? Was this stressful for Jesus? Did His heart rate go up? Did He struggle with fear? Was He afraid? What was He thinking? The hearts of the people were being revealed and His mind, surely, was being revealed!

I believe this is one of the most dramatic stories we have in the life of Jesus. If we can, just for a moment, have a little bit of “**holy imagination**” and wonder what must have been going through the mind of Jesus during this critical time where He is launching His ministry, and He knows that the very people He has grown up with are **not** going to receive Him. And Jesus can say some things and speak truth from the Old Testament and it will so enrage them that they are going to **want** to ‘literally’ *kill Him*.

How do you go from ‘sitting in church or synagogue’ to taking somebody and throwing them off the brow of a hill? This is certainly dramatic stuff; and it has a way of revealing the hearts of people, but also revealing the mind of Christ.

I hope this study in Luke chapter 4 has been very helpful to you. We will be going next time to a new section going to **Matthew 4:13-16** and we are going to go back to the city of Capernaum to see what is happening around this time in that city.