

Always Beyond Our Grasp

Living the Liturgical Year

Luke 4:21-30

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

REFLECTION

In this week's passage, Jesus returns to his hometown of Nazareth after spending time away in public ministry. At the risk of sabotaging his popularity among those who helped shape him, he delivers a jarring blow at the end of his very short sermon. **Why was Jesus willing to risk his reputation?**

Jesus' unpopular message is of God's love for those outside the community of faith. His audience simply does not want to accept this, and their intense reaction is to want to throw Jesus off a cliff. Scripture does not prevent us from expressing anger, but to be careful with it and "slow to anger." It can be a gift from God, or expressed when we feel a lack of control. **When have you seen yours or someone else's anger as fruitful, or an expression of love?**

Our own anger can teach us a lot, and be a source of revelation for us. If we are to love as Jesus loves, we must be angry as He is angry. The Jesus we hope for and the Jesus we get are not always in alignment, but we can trust him. **Where do you feel like Jesus not provided for or healed you? How does this reminder of his wide reach encourage you as a contributor to God's work in the world?**

Lord, we know your ways are not our ways, but we affirm that our hope is in you. Expand the borders of our hearts, reveal to us our sense of purpose, and widen our reach in this world. Amen.