

Sermon manuscript

Messianic Manifesto Initiated

Luke 4:31 – 44

You may be wondering how the sermon title fits with this passage. The word “manifesto” is probably the most confusing. It means “a written statement that publicly declares the views, motives or intentions of a person or group.” A good example would be Francis Schaeffer’s book *A Christian Manifesto*, published 1981. Or, Alistar Begg, pastor of Parkside Church in Cleveland OH also wrote a book of the similar title (published 2023). The idea of writing out your life’s purpose raises the question, did Jesus have a manifesto describing his ministry, mission or purpose? And if so, what would it be?

Just last week Pastor Jerry preached from Luke 4:14 – 30 with the title “The Lord’s Favor.” You may remember these verses,

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (ESV)

In a very specific way we can say that this was the Lord’s manifesto. Jesus read from Isa. 61:1 returned the scroll and then declared to those in the synagogue;

Luke 4:21 And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (ESV)

Having been rejected by those of his own home town Jesus travels to Capernaum and begins to fulfill his missionary purpose. This brings us to this morning’s text.

Luke 4:31 And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath,

There are 3 themes that dominate this section of Scripture Luke 4:31 – 44. To begin with first notice that verses 31 – 44 are opened and closed with the theme of preaching and teaching.

Luke 4:31 And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath,

Luke 4:43 but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Second we read that people are astonished by Jesus’ power and authority.

Luke 4:32 and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority.

Luke 4:36 And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? (some translations say “teaching”, “message”) For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!"

Third, we read of Jesus’ authority to heal physical disabilities and spiritual oppression. This is a reality that is somewhat foreign to us – demonology.

4:33 And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34 "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you

come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God." 35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm

4:38 And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. 39 And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose

(As a parenthetical note: Peter's mother-in-law's fever was serious and debilitating)

We again find the matter of demon oppression in v.41 .

41 And demons out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak,

Note that in the beginning Jesus' teaching amazed the people because he taught with authority (v.32) . But when Jesus releases a man from demon possession they were amazed because he had not only authority but power. And, this power was demonstrated in releasing people from spiritual oppression which has its greatest manifestation in demon oppression.

It's interesting that the first act in Jesus' ministry is a direct attack on the spiritual realm. This exorcism confronts a major problem in our fallen world (spiritual powers' influence and oppression). Jesus' release of the man from an unclean spirit is a lesson in action. Jesus mere speaking (the power of Jesus' spoken word) performs a miracle.

4:35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!"

His spoken word has not only authority but power. This power extends to both the physical and spiritual world. By releasing the man from demon oppression he is in part fulfilling his mandate and purpose (Isaiah's prophecy).

to set at liberty those who are oppressed, (4:18)

Jesus' action would indicate to us that oppression can be mental illness or physical disability but also can be manifested spiritually.

So what we find Luke telling us is that Jesus' ministry fulfills Isaiah's prophecy. He demonstrates this by teaching and preaching, which secondly has authority and power. And third, Jesus' authority and power extends to the spiritual world.

In other words, **Jesus' words have power and authority.**

4:36 And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word?.

It's the absolute word of God come to us in the flesh. His authority (teaching) extends to reinterpreting God's Word, his power and authority inaugurates the kingdom of God. His power extends into the spiritual world,

Let's take a closer look at the first element of Jesus' mandate

4:18to proclaim good news to the poor.

Luke 4:31 And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, Luke 4:32 and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority.

Jesus' words have power and authority.

1. His authority extends to reinterpreting God's Word,

What do we mean by this? In order to demonstrate Jesus' style of teaching we need to go to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount . Matthew 5 you will notice a repeated phrase.

-Mat. 5:21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' 22 But I say to you

Mat. 5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that

Jesus uses this phrase again in vv. 33, 36, 43. In essence Jesus is redefining God's Word. He didn't teach the way the rabbis taught from traditions but straight from God's Word, Jesus' authority was unheard of. He taught the word of God not the thoughts of ancient rabbis.

Jesus' words have power and authority.

1. His authority extends to reinterpreting God's Word,

2. Jesus inaugurates the Messianic kingdom of God.

4:19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4:43 but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."

Remember Jesus quote from Isa. 61?

19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

In Jesus' time the "Year of the Lord's favor" was understood to mean the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25). Every 50 years those in bondage were freed. Land was given back to the original owner. Slaves were given their freedom. To demonstrate his authority and power as the Messiah of God's kingdom Jesus releases a man from demon bondage, heals Peter's mother-in-law and heals many others with sickness and spiritual oppression.

4:40, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And demons also came out of many,

Jesus begins to fulfill his mandate from Isa. 61 and inaugurates the Messianic kingdom of God. We'll see this theme repeatedly in chapters 4 – 9 . This passage tells us that

Jesus' words have power and authority.

1. His authority extends to reinterpreting God's Word,

2. Jesus inaugurates the Messianic kingdom of God

3. Jesus' power extends even over the spiritual world.

33 And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34 "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God." (v. 41)

Our technologically, modern western culture thinks little, if any, of demonology. About the only time we consider it is at Halloween and then it's pretty benign. But in third world countries it's believed and practiced. If you do a search on the word "Wiccan" or "Wicca" you will find there is a satanic covenant practicing in Madison, WI. And don't forget about Tarot cards and ouiji boards. So while much of medical science and technology has eliminated the fear of demons and has a better understanding of mental illnesses, we need to remember there is a spiritual world that has an influence in and on our lives. We need to remember Scriptural warnings.

Eph 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience--

Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour

So, while modern medicine has overcome many mental and physical problems, what are we to make of these verses? How do we apply them to our culture and world?

If I truly believe that Jesus' words have authority and that authority extends to Scripture, then

1. Knowing God's Word (Scripture) is imperative.

Knowing that I have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ is the initial step. But understanding how God works in my life is a life long pursuit and study. If I truly believe that God created this world and I am made in His image then how am I to relate to him, to my work, my family and friends and the world around me, and to the body of Christ?

God's word, Jesus authority, unravels these matters. Is it easy and quick? Sometimes yes, but often no. God's word can be confusing and difficult to understand. But wrestling with the knowledge of God is imperative. Time and technology advance and change, but mankind's nature and character does not. God's word speaks to that constancy.

Luke 12:29 And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. 30 For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. 31 Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

Since Jesus' words have power and authority and His authority extends to reinterpreting God's Word, and Jesus inaugurates the Messianic kingdom of God then,

1. Knowing God's Word (Scripture) is imperative.

2. Understanding God's Kingdom requirements is essential.

If you recall we started with Jesus reading from Isa. 61:1 he handed the scroll back and said to the people

Luke 4:21, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Some theologians refer to Jesus words as a declaration of "inaugurated eschatology." Those are big words meaning that Jesus' life, death and resurrection initiated God's kingdom on earth. One verse that would give meaning to this concept is;

Col. 1:13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

If this concept of “inaugurated eschatology” is understood correctly, then God’s people are part of kingdom living now and therefore;

- 1. Knowing God’s Word (Scripture) is imperative.**
- 2. Understanding God’s Kingdom requirements is essential.**

In other words, I need to continually read and wrestle with God’s Word. In need to comprehend my place in God’s kingdom. The third application is just as difficult and important.

Jesus’ words have power and authority.

- 1. Knowing God’s Word (Scripture) is imperative.**
- 2. Understanding God’s Kingdom requirements is essential.**
- 3. Walking daily with my Lord is indispensable**

Scripture tells us there is an unseen force that wants to destroy us. In other words, a satanic power in this world that can oppress us, depress us, attempt to destroy our faith. This what Scripture tells us

Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour

How we deal with this personally is a difficult and lengthy subject. The many questions we have may not be answered but there is one thing I’m sure of.

Jesus’ words have power and authority.

- 1. Knowing God’s Word (Scripture) is imperative.**
- 2. Understanding God’s Kingdom requirements is essential.**
- 3. Walking daily with my Lord is indispensable**