

# Bible Stories for Adults

## Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Luke 4:14-30

### Opening

Gathering: How do people immediately respond when a local person becomes famous?  
Is celebrity long or short-lived?

Today's Focus: Jesus reveals His ministry to his hometown neighbors who quickly reject Him.

Key Verses: *The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me.* Luke 4:18

*Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.* Luke 4:21

Opening Prayer

### Lesson

Luke's Historical Story of Jesus (*Luke 1*) = List Luke's steps on board

What was Luke's purpose in writing his gospel? = From when He began to do until His ascension

Acts 1:1-2 = To write an orderly account of Jesus' ministry

Did he do this because no one had done so before? = Many had written Jesus' story

Luke 1:1-4 = No, but he applied his doctoral research skills to ensure accuracy and truth

How did he begin his story of Jesus?

Luke 1:13, 17 = God started it all by miraculously conceiving John to prepare the way

How else did Luke show that God put the story of Jesus in motion?

Luke 1:30-34 = God miraculously conceived Jesus, His Son, the promised Messiah

Jesus' Childhood (*Luke 2*)

How did Luke clarify that Jesus was a real human and not an apparition of God?

Luke 2:6-7, 10-12 = He was born and God showed Him to people

What are the first stories we have of Jesus after the shepherds visited Him on His birthday?

Luke 2:21-26, 36a = Circumcised (8d), named, dedicated (40d), blessed by Simeon & Anna

What details did Luke give of Jesus' childhood in Nazareth?

Luke 2:40 = Grew physically (strong), mentally (filled with wisdom) & spiritually (grace of God)

Did Luke give us any stories to give us an idea of how Jesus was as a boy?

Luke 2:42-43, 48-49 = Stayed in temple at 12, recognized His relationship with God the Father

Did this change Jesus' relationship with His parents? = No, He was obedient to them

Luke 2:51-52 = Grew intellectually, physically, spiritually & socially

Jesus' Ministry Begins (*Luke 3*)

How did Luke begin his story of Jesus' ministry?

Luke 3:3-4, 16 = John did his job and prepared the way

What did Luke show to be the event that marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry?

Luke 3:21-23a = Jesus was baptized by John, the preparer - *when He began His ministry*

What other detail did Luke include to point out that Jesus was human and came for all people?

Luke 3:23b, 38 = Listed genealogy back to Adam & God – Luke was probably a Gentile

# Bible Stories for Adults

## Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Page 2

### Jesus Dives In (Luke 4:1-15)

How did Jesus immediately show His commitment to His calling that was confirmed at His baptism?

Luke 4:1-2, 13 = Went to wilderness for 40 days of standing up to tests of temptation by Satan  
John tells us the most stories of Jesus' early days in Galilee. How did Luke summarize them?

Luke 4:14 = Traveled in Spirit's power, news spread, taught in synagogues

Besides the miracles that John mentions, what attracted people to Jesus when He came to their towns?

Luke 4:15 = His teaching as a wise rabbi (teacher) in their synagogues

Synagogue (Greek for *called together place*) - The local house of worship and teaching

Rabbis (not priests) taught the people, much more informal than temple

Began during exile in Babylon, synagogues built anywhere there were at least 10 families

Did the idea of coming together weekly for worship and teaching start with the synagogue in Babylon?

Leviticus 23:3 = No, God commanded a weekly sacred assembly

Since Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial law and we are not bound by it, why do we bother meeting weekly?

Hebrews 10:25 = To encourage one another, Plus worship, teaching, fellowship (list on board)

### Synagogue Sabbath Service (Luke 4:16)

What is one of the towns where we see Jesus going to the synagogue?

Luke 4:16 = His hometown of Nazareth, was invited to read

Synagogue Sabbath service had 3 parts: worship, reading and teaching

Worship - Began with words of thanksgiving and reciting of the Jewish creed, the *Shema*:

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (4-9) = The Lord is one, love Him with all your heart, soul & might

After the *Shema*, an adult male was invited to say the *Tefillah*, a prayer of petitions

Each petition was ended with a response like *Blessed are You, O Lord*

Reading - A prescribed section from the Pentateuch (Law) was followed by a Prophet reading

Any congregation member could read; Levites and priests were given precedence

Pentateuch was divided into sections so it would be read completely over one year

*Chazzan* (synagogue care-taker) selected prophet book, reader selected passage

Scripture verses were read in Hebrew, then freely translated in Aramaic

Teaching - Synagogue ruler would invite any competent worshipper to bring the sermon

Many quoted heavily from writings of the rabbis

Visiting rabbis were especially welcomed for this task

Resulted in effective spread of the gospel for Jesus, Paul & others

Readings were made standing up out of respect for God's Word

The sermon was given while seated = lower importance of person's ideas

Worship concluded with a blessing by a priest, or a prayer by a worshipper

### Jesus Reads (Luke 4:17-21)

Which reading was Jesus invited to give as the hometown boy made good?

Luke 4:17 = The prophet message, He unrolled the scroll to Isaiah 61

What text did He read that foretold the work of the Messiah (*The Anointed One*)?

Isaiah 61:1-2 = Told of preaching good news, freedom, healing, Year of Jubilee

Who do we then see was welcomed to give the sermon?

Luke 4:20 = Jesus, He sat down to begin teaching, everyone was anxious to hear Him

How did He begin His sermon? = Luke didn't record Jesus' sermon, only His first few words

Luke 4:21 = *Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing* - I am this Messiah

# Bible Stories for Adults

## Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Page 3

### Activities of the Messiah (Luke 4:18-19)

Was Jesus exaggerating by saying that God's Spirit was on Him and that He was anointed?

Luke 3:21-22 = No, the Holy Spirit descended on Him as He was anointed at His baptism

What five things did Isaiah say the Messiah would do? = Write on board

Luke 4:18-19 = Preach GN, proclaim freedom, heal blind, liberate oppressed, year of Lord

### Activities of Jesus (Luke 4:18-19)

Did Jesus *preach good news to the poor*? = poor in wealth, nourishment, joy, spirit (v 20-22)

Luke 6:20 (Matthew 5:1-12) = Brought riches of God's kingdom to all who are poor in any way

How important did Jesus feel it was for Him to preach God's good news?

Luke 4:42-43 = *That is why I was sent* - left where He had already spread His good news

Who did Paul tell us are the *prisoners* for whom Jesus was *sent to proclaim freedom*?

Galatians 3:22-25; 5:1 = Whole world is a prisoner of sin, set free by faith in Jesus

How did Jesus tell us we can be set free?

John 8:31-32 = Hold to His teaching, this truth will set us free

Will all prisoners of sin be freed?

John 3:18 = No, only those who believe are acquitted, those who don't are convicted

What is one example of Jesus giving *recovery of sight for the blind*?

John 9:1, 6-7 = Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath, Pharisees got very upset

What blindness in this same story was Jesus most concerned about?

John 9:39-41 = Spiritual blindness

What did Jesus' healing ministry show besides God's compassion on His people of faith?

Luke 7:20-22 = That He was the Messiah, fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies of healing & preaching

How did Jesus *release the oppressed*?

Matthew 5:10-12 = Revealed reward waiting for those who were persecuted for faith

How will the oppressed and persecuted be vindicated?

2 Thessalonians 1:4-9 = The oppressors will be punished in hell, faithful will be given relief

Are we to thank God for this vindication and the punishment our enemies will get?

Matthew 5:44 = Be comforted in your reward, but *pray for those who persecute you*

How did Jesus come *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor*?

Matthew 4:17 = Jesus preached that *the kingdom of heaven is near*, now

When did this year of the Lord's favor begin?

Galatians 4:4-5 = *When the time had fully come, God sent His Son*

What was understood by the term "the year of the Lord's favor"?

Leviticus 25:10 (8-55) = Year of Jubilee – slaves released & family lands returned every 50 yrs

How did Jesus bring the freedom of the Year of Jubilee?

Romans 8:1-2 = *Thru Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin & death*

### Show Us a Miracle! (Luke 4:22-23)

Did the people understand what Jesus said in His sermon?

Luke 4:22 = No, they were too focused on His eloquence to hear His message

Did Jesus recognize that the people were watching a show and not hearing His message?

Luke 4:23 = Yes, He said, "You've come to see Me do a miracle like you've heard"

# Bible Stories for Adults

## Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Page 4

Where's the Faith? (Luke 4:24)

What did Jesus think about those who just came to see Him do a miracle?

Matthew 12:38-39 = They were wicked and adulterous by missing the hand of God

What was this sign of Jonah that He agreed to show them?

Matthew 12:40 = He would lie three days in the heart of the earth

What was needed before Jesus would do a miracle?

Matthew 9:22 = An open heart for faith - *your faith has healed you*

What resulted from low expectations by acquaintances during His only other visit to Nazareth?

Matthew 13:58 (54-58) = He was unable to do many miracles *because of their lack of faith*

Did Jesus feel His problem was unique?

Luke 4:24 = *No prophet is accepted in His hometown*

Old Testament Proof (Luke 4:25-27)

What example could Jesus have used to show that *no prophet is accepted in His hometown*?

Jeremiah 1:1; 11:21-22 = Jeremiah's hometown (Anathoth) wanted to kill him

What examples did He give instead?

Luke 4:25-27 = Elijah & Elisha did God's work among Gentiles after rejection by Jews

What was He saying by highlighting these examples?

Acts 28:25-28 = The Jews rejected God's salvation and it would be given to the Gentiles

How do we see this in Paul's work?

Acts 18:4-6 = Paul started with the Jews, they rejected, he went to the Gentiles

They Understood (Luke 4:28-30)

Did the people understand any of Jesus' sermon?

Luke 4:28 = They heard His last point on the Gentiles being saved and were furious

How upset were they? = Lynch mobs were illegal

Luke 4:29 = They were ready to kill Him for blasphemy, even on the Sabbath

How far did they get?

Luke 4:30 = Not far, God protected Him and he just walked through the crowd

Why were they unable to kill Him?

John 2:4b = Jesus said, *My time has not yet come*

Closing Prayer

**Response** - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have the riches of God's kingdom helped me when I have felt poor in any way?  
(Matthew 5:1-12; 6:19-21; 25:34; Luke 6:20-26; 2 Cor. 6:10; Colossian 2:2; 1 Timothy 6:17-19)
2. How have I felt the freedom that Jesus has given to me?  
(Psalm 142:7; 146:7; John 8:31-36; Romans 6:15-23; 7:21-25; Galatians 3:22-25; 5:1; 1 Peter 2:16)
3. When in my life have I been spiritually blinded and when has God especially helped me see?  
(Matthew 13:10-17; John 1:4-9; 3:19-21; 9; Acts 26:13-18; Hebrews 11:13-16; 1 Peter 2:9)
4. Have I ever felt oppressed or condemned for my faith?  
(Matthew 5:10-12; 10:16-23, 28-33; John 15:18-25; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10; 2 Timothy 3:10-12)
5. How do I respond to the knowledge that the year of the Lord's favor is near?  
(Matthew 4:17; 24:1-25:30; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 12:35-48; 17:20-35; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)