Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“I must proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God, because for this purpose I have been sent” (Luke 4:44).

Col 1:1-8; Luke 4:38-44

We recall that Jesus was rejected in his own hometown and did not do many miracles there for their lack of faith. But this is not the case in Capernaum. When he drives out an evil spirit in the synagogue, the last place we would expect such a baleful presence to be hiding, the people are astounded at Jesus’ command of spirits. Word passes quickly into the town and crowds begin to gather. Multiple healing miracles and exorcisms occur. The message rejected in Nazareth comes true in Capernaum.

But these astonishing events are only signs of a deeper power at work, which Jesus calls the coming of the reign of God. The reign of Satan is broken and his minions are being routed. People sense that something has changed, and the rest of that day anyone who is brought to Jesus shares in this remarkable spirit of goodness and joy. The many unclean spirits that inhabit every small town and so many families, spirits of jealousy, envy, gossip and resentment, are dispelled and relationships are restored. Love is in the air as night falls and peace descends on every household.

Yet, Jesus knows his mission is not as a wonder worker but to preach God’s invitation to enter this timeless moment of grace that restores the world to God’s authority. Those who believe in it experience new freedom and wholeness. This Good News is not for one group or locale, but for everyone and everywhere. Jesus rises early to

find a quiet place to pray, and when people pursue him to keep him from departing, he declares his purpose to preach, and he and his disciples move on to other towns.

The Gospels celebrate this period of early success until resistance mounts against Jesus, led by official rejection and suspicion that all of this is too good to be true and that Jesus must be a fraud and a danger to the status quo.

We are invited to believe in the reign of God not as a past or future event but as the moment we are now in. Our faith will determine whether miracles are possible or not, whether we trust the living Word being addressed to us or are living in the white noise of everyday life, limited and predictable.

Jesus is passing by, awakening in us a new possibility for goodness and freedom. The spirits that lurk in us and all around us will try to discourage us, make us feel guilty and suspicious of the wonder and grace that promises us joy. But in the presence of Jesus they will have no power. Being with Jesus is the one thing necessary for every disciple. Be one today, and you will never look back.

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