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Luke 4:14-21

Welcome to Cornerstone

"Gospel Words"

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Series & Sermon Introduction:

1. Today we're launching a new series called "Welcome to Cornerstone."
2. This series will introduce our vision and mission as a new church.
3. You might not realize it, but you see vision and mission all around you everyday.
4. See if you recognize who the following vision and mission statements belong to.

- To refresh the world...
- To inspire moments of optimism and happiness...
- To create value and make a difference. (The Coca-Cola Company... polar bears, open happiness)

"Our mission is to bring humanity back to air travel" (JetBlue... free snacks/tv, corp/social responsibility)

"To see life; to see the world; to eyewitness great events ... to see strange things ... to see and be amazed." (Life Magazine... visual discovery expressed in The Secret Life of Walter Mitty film)

One non-profit's mission is "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all." (YMCA... swimming, roller skating, disc golf)

"The [.....], an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination." (The Salvation Army... Christmas alleviation, human trafficking, hunger, missing persons.)

"Vision: A gospel-centered church that changes lives through sharing the message of Jesus Christ in word and deed... Mission: To make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus..." (Cornerstone Congregational)

(Cornerstone's vision and mission come from Jesus Christ and his purpose for ministry.)

I. Jesus' ministry began with a purpose. (**Read v. 14-15**)

A. Jesus' ministry began with a purpose.

1. Jesus returns to his home region (Galilee) and town (Nazareth).
2. The author places this story early in the book after the temptation (c.f., Mk 6:1-2, Mt 13:53-54).
3. Jesus' speech acts as a preview for the gospel of Luke and Jesus' life and ministry.
4. This matters because it gives Jesus ministry vision and purpose.

B. Our ministry begins with a purpose.

1. We define **Vision** as what we want to become and accomplish.
2. We define **Mission** as how we carry out our vision.
3. We define our **Core Values** as the primary characteristics and DNA of who we are.

Vision: A gospel-centered church that changes lives through sharing the message of Jesus Christ in word and deed

Mission: To make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus

(Come back in November for our “Cornerstone Core” series to learn what they are.)
(Why do vision, mission, and core values matter?)

- C. Setting out on a road trip with no destination or map can be fun but you might get lost.
 - 1. Monica and I want to one day drive to Alaska (vision = destination, mission = map).
 - 2. We’ll need a map to make sure we stick to our planned route (Alaska highway/Alcan)
 - 3. Our core values are a bit like the camper, what you live in and do every day.
 - 4. We need our vision, mission, and values to get us where we want to go.

(Our vision, mission, and values are based on Jesus’ purpose for his ministry.)
(What is Jesus’ purpose for his ministry?)

II. Jesus’ purpose is to change lives with his words. (**Read v. 16-19**)

(Jesus is not a motivational speaker like Tony Robbins or Zig Ziglar.)

- A. Jesus’ words are God’s words.
 - 1. In v. 18 Jesus tells the Jewish people that he is “anointed.”
 - 2. The words "Messiah" and "Christ" both mean "anointed one" in their original languages.
 - 3. In v. 21, Jesus says, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”
 - 4. Jesus is saying that he is the long awaited Messiah or king of Israel!
 - 5. In the Old Testament, when God chose the first kings of Israel, a prophet anointed them.
 - 6. Samuel anointed both Saul and David to signify God choosing them (1 Sam 10:1, 16:13)
 - 7. Jesus is anointed by God to speak God’s words to us (“The Spirit of the Lord is on me…”).
 - 8. In Luke 3:21-22 Jesus is baptized, the Holy Spirit descends on him as a dove, and the Father says, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

(When Jesus speaks, we should listen, because God is speaking.)

- B. Now what if I were to say “there’s a man giving a speech on the Westford common”?
 - 1. What if instead I said, “the President is giving a speech on the Westford common”?
 - 2. This might be the only time you get to see someone with so much power and authority.
 - 3. Jesus is a man but he’s also the Christ, anointed by God, so we should listen.

(Jesus' words are God's words.)

- C. Jesus’ words are good words.
 - 1. The word “gospel” means “good news”.
 - 2. So when we say we’re gospel-centered at Cornerstone, we’re saying we’re good-news centered.
 - 3. Jesus delivers the “good news” to the “poor.”
 - 4. The question is, do we need God? (Westford isn't known as an impoverished town)

5. Matt 5:3 says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (NIV)
6. When we hit hard times, it's easier for us to recognize our need for God.
7. God wants us to come as those who are “poor in spirit” (humble, broken, sin).
8. The gospel is the good news that those who are poor in spirit become rich in Christ.

(Jesus' words are God's words and good words.)

(What does Jesus do with his words?)

D. Jesus preaches a message of forgiveness and freedom.

1. The word “freedom” is used everywhere else in Luke as “forgiveness.”
2. Jesus can “forgive” any held in bondage by their sins.
3. Jesus doesn't just break people out of jail, he pardon's them.
4. Mark Wahlberg requested Governor Charlie Baker pardon his criminal record.
5. Mark did some things in his past he's ashamed of and can't get rid of.

E. Maybe some of you have heard of "Catholic Guilt" or "Jewish guilt."

1. My wife Monica was at a party in college, not feeling guilty.
2. Her and another girl went outside and began to talk about the stars and life.
3. The girl joked, "I think there probably is something out there, but you know I was raised Catholic, so any of those kinds of thoughts just end with me feeling guilty."
4. Our faith doesn't end it guilt, it begins there, but then Jesus gives us freedom.
5. Jesus preaches a message of forgiveness and freedom.

F. Jesus is addressing religious people.

1. V. 16 tells us Jesus read this text in a synagogue on the Sabbath (church, Sunday).
2. The point is that he was telling religious people that they're also blind people.
3. I was blinded by my own "Baptist guilt" when I was just a kid.
4. At 13, I became so obsessed with my sins I added "I guess" to my sentences to avoid lying.
5. Over time Christ not only opened my eyes to my sin, but to the forgiveness I have in him.

(Our vision is to change lives by sharing the message of Jesus Christ in word and deed.)

III. Jesus' words can change your life. (**Read v. 20-21**)

A. Jesus' words can change your life.

1. When Jesus read from Isaiah, there was power in his reading (God's words = his words).
2. I'm going to tell you a mystery, and all good mysteries are meant to confuse us.
3. Not only are Jesus' words God's words, Jesus is God's word.
4. John 1:14 tells us “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...” (NIV)
5. Jesus' words can change your life because Jesus is the very word of God.

B. How can you respond to this message?

1. If you don't know God, stop asking God to show himself to you.
2. You're using the wrong sense (sight)—start listening instead of looking (hear).
3. Take a Bible home this week and come back next Saturday ready to hear more about Jesus.

(Jesus' words can change your life.)
(Invite musician up.)

Conclusion:

1. I truly believe that Jesus' words can change your life.
2. But instead of me trying to prove this to you, I want to help you experience it.
3. As we close, I'm going to read some of Jesus' words that he spoke to people just like you.
4. Here these words as if Jesus is speaking them to you today.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28, NIV)

"...do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matthew 6:34, NIV)

"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2:17, NIV)

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10, NIV)

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6, NIV)

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16, NIV)

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26, NIV)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." (Matthew 5:6, NIV)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3, NIV)

Big Idea: Jesus' words can change your life.

*Pray for offering.

Numbers 6:24–26 (ESV) — 24 The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; 26 the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.