

## JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY



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**CHRIST TO THE WORLD MINISTRIES**

# Jesus Begins His Ministry

**Read Luke 4:14-5:11 in your Bible.**

How does someone begin a new movement that needs to spread throughout a people? Jesus faced this question after his baptism. He expressed his thought in one sentence: “*The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!*” (Mark 1:14).

The “*kingdom of God*” was not a new idea to the people of Galilee and Judea. It was a dream that had been preached by prophets of God for hundreds of years. It envisioned a descendant of the great king David sitting on the empty throne of Israel. This king would rule in “righteousness,” one who would bring justice and mercy to his nation. He would also overthrow the rule of Rome and restore greatness to the kingdom of Israel.

## **Jesus Taught In His Hometown**

But Jesus saw the kingdom of God in a new way. He brought this idea to his home synagogue in Nazareth, where he had been raised. He did it by reading a stirring passage from the prophet Isaiah (61:1-2a). The men (and perhaps women) sitting cross-legged on the dirt floor of the synagogue were thrilled. The ideas of “*good news to the poor,*” “*release to the captives,*” “*recovery of sight to the blind,*” that the “*oppressed [would] go free*” was welcome news to them. There were plenty of people in their nation who needed this kind of help!

But then Jesus said something else that amazed them: “*Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing*” (Luke 4:21). Was he talking about himself? But they knew who he was: Son of Joseph the carpenter, who had grown up in their town. God’s anointed, whom the prophets had proclaimed, wouldn’t be somebody like them! Maybe he would do some special miracles for them.

But Jesus refused. Instead he reminded them that God works differently from human beings (Luke 4:25-27). God chooses people we would never think of to receive his blessings. If God wanted Jesus to be the long-awaited Messiah, God would do that. So the people rejected him. That happens, too, when a new idea comes to people.

## **Jesus Ministered Throughout Galilee and Judea**

Jesus continued to spread his new idea. Along with his preaching the kingdom of God, he ministered to the needs of his people (Luke 4:40). He did this, not to prove his claim to be the Messiah, but because this is what the prophet promised. No one could preach the kingdom of God and not care for those for whom the kingdom came. He even moved on to other towns in Galilee so that he could spread “good news to the poor” there (Luke 4:44).

## **Jesus Called Helpers**

But Jesus also recognized the importance of having helpers. His mission was too great for him to shoulder it all alone. He needed people to whom he could transmit his idea and with whom he could minister to those who needed it.

He did not pick learned people or those who were rich. He looked among the people he already knew. Some of these were men who were in the fishing business. They owned boats, and they fished in the lake of Gennesaret (also known as the Sea of Galilee). One boat owner was called Simon, and he had partners named James and John, who had their own boats. Jesus called them to leave their fishing business and to become his followers. They were so impressed with Jesus that they answered his call immediately. Jesus picked other persons who were ready to follow him wholeheartedly. They were his constant companions. He taught them especially. He sent them out to preach his “new idea.”

Jesus now had the elements of his mission. He had a “*new idea*” about God that he preached to everyone. He met the needs of his people as the scriptures had said God’s anointed would do. He surrounded himself with eager disciples. He could carry out the mission to which God had called him at his baptism.

## **Conclusion**

Do you find yourself burdened and weighed down with sin and the problems of life? Does physical or spiritual bondage grip your life? What about the bondage of sin? The bondage of guilt? The bondage of money? The bondage of worry? The bondage of sensuality and worldly pleasure? Is your life broken in pieces? Are your dreams shattered? Do you yearn to be lifted from your moral and spiritual poverty?

Jesus can forgive your sins and heal your brokenness. He can set you free. He is the compassionate Savior who loves you with an everlasting love. He is waiting. Surrender your life to him and trust him as your Savior.

The Bible teaches that you are a sinner. But God loves you and sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for your sins. You receive Christ as your Savior by turning from your sin and placing your faith and trust in him.

**Pray this prayer:** “*Dear God, I know that I’m a sinner. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead and is alive today. I now turn from my sins. I am placing my faith and trust in Jesus alone to be my Savior and to forgive me. I receive Jesus into my life as my Savior and Lord. From this day forward, I will follow Jesus. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for loving me and for coming into my life. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.*”

**Welcome into God’s family!** Share with others that you have received Christ as your Savior and Lord. Ask for baptism in a local church as a public expression of your faith. If there is no church near you, start a church by gathering a group of persons in your home and worship together on a regular basis. Read your Bible and pray each day. Tell others what Christ has done for you and what he can do for them.