Jesus Preaches in Nazareth



Scripture Reference: Luke 4:14-30

Suggested Theme: God wants everyone to hear the good news, but not everyone will like it.

Memory Verse: “Anyone who is learning the teaching of God should share all the good things he has with his teacher.” Galatians 6:6, ICB

Story Overview:

For the first time in his ministry, Jesus preached at his home synagogue. At first, the listeners liked the message that Jesus preached. When the people began to disagree with Jesus’ message, they got mad at Jesus and tried to throw him off a cliff. Even though the whole crowd was trying to kill him, Jesus miraculously walked right through them and left. Sharing God’s Word is important, but not everyone will be happy to hear it.

Background Study:

Jesus began to rise in popularity as he preached more and more. One Sabbath, Jesus was invited to speak at the synagogue in Nazareth. Although he was born in Bethlehem, he grew up in Nazareth. This was his hometown. The people who had watched Jesus grow up would have been excited that such a popular preacher had come from their town. It was the custom to allow visiting teachers to speak to the congregation with the special invitation of the synagogue leaders.

Notice in verse 16 that it was Jesus’ custom to attend the synagogue every Sabbath. This is a lesson in itself that the children can relate to.

Jesus read from the book of Isaiah. The custom was to read from Hebrew, and then he or someone else paraphrased it in Aramaic, the common language of Palestine, in Jesus’ day. The scrolls were most likely kept in a special place in the synagogue and handed to the reader by a special attendant. The passage Jesus read about the Messiah (Isaiah 61:1-2) may have been one he chose to read, or it may have been the assigned passage for the day. The verse tells of the Messiah’s ministry of preaching and healing—to meet every human need. Jesus was proclaiming liberation from sin and brokenness in all aspects of human life. Jesus was proclaiming a time when God would make all things whole and all things right.

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The Lord God has put his Spirit in me. This is because he has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor.
He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken.
He has sent me to tell the captives they are free.
He has sent me to tell the prisoners that they are released.
He has sent me to announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness and the time when our God will punish evil people.
He has sent me to comfort all those who are sad.
Isaiah 61:1-2, ICB

It was customary to stand while reading Scripture but to sit while teaching.

In verses 26-27, Jesus refers to 1 Kings 17:1-15 and 2 Kings 5:1-14, which mention Gentiles whom God helped. Jesus' point was that when Israel rejected God's messenger of redemption, God sent him to the Gentiles—and so it would be again if they refused to accept Jesus. God's message and work of liberation (redemption) was for all people. This is the point when the people of Nazareth became so furious with the message that they tried to take Jesus to a cliff and throw him off.

Verse 30 does not say whether Jesus escaped miraculously or was able to simply walk through the crowd due to his commanding presence. In any case, his time to die had not yet come (John 7:30).

Way to Introduce the Story:

If possible, have some pictures of someone preaching. Show them to the children and discuss what it must be like to get up in front of people and talk. Share your own experiences of making speeches and ask the children to share. "In the lesson today, we will be talking about a time when Jesus preached in the town of Nazareth."

The Story:

Jesus went to many places to tell people about God. After he had been doing that for a while, he decided to go back to the town of Nazareth. Nazareth was the town where Jesus had grown up. That was the town where his old friends and teachers lived.

People in Nazareth had heard about Jesus. They knew that he was a preacher and that lots of people liked him. They were proud of Jesus and were glad that he was from Nazareth. Maybe he would do a miracle in Nazareth.

Jesus was in Nazareth on the Sabbath – the day of worship. Guess what Jesus did? Do you think he went to sport? Do you think he slept in or went to the beach? No, of course not! Jesus did what he did every Sabbath day. He went to the synagogue to worship.

The leaders of the synagogue were so happy to see Jesus that they asked him to read a Scripture and then preach about it.

Jesus stood and picked up the scroll where the Word of God was written. He unrolled the scroll and read from it. Then he sat down and began to preach.

The Jews in the synagogue really liked what Jesus was preaching. They were glad that Jesus was a Jew like them. Some of them even thought that Jews were better than anyone else. Then Jesus said something that they did not like. He said that God loves everyone. God loves the Jews, but God also loves the people who

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are not Jews. God wants everyone to learn about him.

The Jews got very angry. They did not want anyone but the Jews to hear about God. Even though Jesus was preaching the truth, the people got mad at him.

The people started pushing Jesus and telling him he had to leave. They followed him and kept pushing him forward until he got to a big cliff. There was nowhere else for Jesus to go. It seemed everyone was going to push him off of the cliff!

Then something amazing happened. The Bible said that Jesus just walked right through the crowd and left.

How did he do that? How could he just walk right through a crowd that was trying to push him off of a cliff? He could do that because Jesus is the Son of God. He has the power of God. He can do anything!

Jesus was not sorry that he preached the things that God wanted him to preach. He did it even if people did not like him.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

View this slideshow and download it from the original source:
https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/jesus-rejected-nazareth/

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Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

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Review:

- What did Jesus journey to Galilee with? (The power of the Holy Spirit)
- In what city did Jesus preach a sermon in a synagogue? (Nazareth)
- What was the message of the scripture Jesus read in Isaiah? (God sent a savior to heal the world and show people His love)
- Did the crowd in the synagogue at Nazareth like Jesus' sermon at first? (Yes)
- What did the crowd at Nazareth try to do to Jesus when they did not like what he said in his sermon? (They tried to throw him off of a cliff)
- What happened to Jesus in the end? (He walked through the crowd and left)

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- What did you learn about Jesus from this story?
- What did you learn about the Holy Spirit from this story?

Reflection:

- How do you think Jesus felt when the people tried to throw him off the cliff?
- How do you think Jesus was able to escape the crowd?
- Why do you think the people didn't like what Jesus said?
- Have you ever had to be brave and say something important you knew someone wouldn't like?
- Why do you think Jesus told the people this message?
- Who do you think you are the most like in this story?
- What parts of the Bible do you enjoy hearing or reading?
- Why do you think God wanted us to know that the power of the Holy Spirit was with Jesus in this story?
- Who do you know who reads the Bible?
- Who do you know that could teach you about the Bible?

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a life-long friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

Song Suggestions:

- I Can Be a Missionary Song
- Ha-la-la-la Song
- J-E-S-U-S Song
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Ask a preacher to visit your gathering and tell about the work he does. He could also give the children a tour of his office or library.
- Make a gift for someone who preaches. Present it to them at the end of the session or put it on the pulpit.

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- Talk about the special things a preacher's family does to help him: wife encourages, feeds, mends clothes, and takes care of children while he preaches. Children sometimes don't have him at home because he is preaching somewhere or helping someone. Write cards to the preacher's family.
- After the lesson, let the children take turns getting behind a pulpit and "preaching a sermon" about today's lesson. You could also let them do a puppet show and let the puppets "preach."
- Older children can learn how to take notes during a sermon. Provide paper to do this within worship.

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable "God's Story" printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

Crafts:

- Make a scroll and write something about today's lesson.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

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Other Online Resources:

- Colouring page and worksheets (Calvary Curriculum)

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Date
2026/11/11

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