



The Arrival (Luke 4:16-30) Welcome to the Table pt. 1 Pastor Tim Peck

THE BIG IDEA

The arrival of Jesus into our world is an invitation into God's hospitality, which is offered to everyone. Rejecting God's invited guests is a rejection of God himself.

OPENING

- What's the most memorable meal you've ever eaten? What made it memorable?
- What's the most uncomfortable dining experience you've ever had? What made it uncomfortable?

DIGGING DEEPER

- Before Jesus visited his hometown of Nazareth, he was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. Read Luke 3:21-23. How is his baptism an "anointing event"? How does it naturally lead to what Jesus says about himself as he reads Luke 4:16-30?
- Christian author Brendan Byrne says, "*Luke sees the whole life and ministry of Jesus as a 'visitation' on God's part to Israel and the world. From the start this raises the question: how will this guest, this visitor be received? The crucial point is that those who do receive him find that he brings them into a much wider sphere of hospitality: the 'hospitality of God.'*"¹ How does this help frame what happens to Jesus in Nazareth?
- Read Isaiah 61:1-2. While Jesus is reading this passage in his home synagogue, he stops short, leaving out the phrase "[to proclaim] the day of vengeance of our God,

¹Brendan Byrne, *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel* (Liturgical Press, 2000), p. 97.



to comfort all who mourn" (v. 2b).² Pastor Tim suggests that when Luke tells us that the people were "amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips" (Luke 4:23), this is describing their negative response, not a positive one.³ Why do you think the people of Nazareth would have wanted to hear about God's judgment to come rather than grace?

- Read 1 Kings 17:8-14 and 2 Kings 5:1-17. Why do you think Jesus' appeal to these two episodes from Israel's past caused such a hostile reaction from his hometown?
- Pastor Tim cites 1 Corinthians 11:20-32 as an example of Christians who refuse to share a seat at the table with God's invited guests. Read this passage carefully. What do you learn? How might this extend beyond celebrating the Lord's Supper?

PUTTING IT TO WORK

- According to Pastor Tim, God's hospitality is offered to everyone because everyone needs to be reconciled to God. What would you say to someone who doesn't think this applies to them?
- Go out of your way this week to build a bridge with someone who would be hard for you to sit next to for a meal. What do you learn from this experience? Share with your group.

PRAYER REQUESTS

²Even though Bible scrolls back then didn't have verse and chapter divisions like we do today in our Bibles, the people of Nazareth would have noticed that Jesus stops short since this phrase is the grammatically natural ending to this section.

³See G. C. Berkouwer, *Studies in Dogmatics: Sin* (Eerdmans Publishing, 1971), p. 423