

Good news for our community

Vision: to understand Jesus' ministry as both physical and spiritual and the call on us to love people in the same way.

Luke 4:16-21 – Jesus' Ministry

Questions to discuss:

Context: Jesus is just beginning His ministry and begins to tell people who He is.

1. What does 'good news' look like if you are poor?
2. Who are the other key groups mentioned in this passage that Jesus came to help?
3. How does Jesus fulfil these verses before his death on the cross? Think of as many examples as you can.
4. What does Jesus' healing ministry tell us about the kingdom of God?
5. What do you think this passage teaches us about God's priorities?
6. How can we apply this learning to our own lives and community?

Note – you can compare the passage to Matthew 10 where Jesus sends out his 12 disciples to serve people's physical and spiritual needs as they have seen him doing: "Proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near'. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give."

Act of Love: ask participants to pray over and think of one action to do as a group or church before we meet next to follow Jesus' example and bring physical (as well as spiritual) 'good news' to someone who is in need of it.

Going deeper:

Together, rewrite verses 18-19 for our church and community, being as specific as possible. For example:

"He has anointed us to declare hope, to speak life and good news to the poor in heart,

To release people imprisoned and trapped in their thought patterns

To help people find their sense of vision and purpose (contribution)

To discern and release people from spiritual chains

To walk with people who have no voice and choice as they take responsibility themselves, find and make good choices and connect with appropriate sources of support"

Extra resource: Bible Project video <https://youtu.be/slyevQ1LW7A> (4:48)

Notes for facilitator: see over page

Notes for facilitator:

- *'Good news' if you are poor is physical, emotional and spiritual – able to meet basic needs; good mental and physical health; opportunities in education and work etc*
- *Jesus came to help those in poverty, prisoners, blind, oppressed – whether literally or figuratively*
- *Jesus fulfilled these verses before his death on the cross in bringing recovery of sight literally and spiritually, e.g. when he heals the blind in John 1:7*
- *Jesus' healing ministry tells us that He really cares about our bodies and physical needs as well as our relationship with Him*

Good news' for those in poverty touches the whole person and includes personal salvation; acceptance of oneself as loved and valuable in God's eyes; justice at personal and systemic level for those who are oppressed; and access to physical needs such as food and shelter.

Jesus' ministry was physical, emotional and spiritual and He calls us to love people in the same way. Jesus chose this passage from the Old Testament to describe His work on earth to emphasise the vital importance of caring for the poorest in society in God's kingdom, those who are victims of injustice. The passage shows that 'good news' for the poor includes physical, emotional and spiritual transformation so that people are able to meet their basic needs.

God calls on His people to prioritise care for the most vulnerable; to show practical compassion and mercy to them; and to fight against injustice and oppression - in our families, communities, and country policies/ systems.