

The 4th Sunday after Epiphany  
“Meet the Savior, Jesus of Nazareth!” Luke 4:34-37  
February 2, 2025  
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for the 4th Sunday after Epiphany is from our Gospel reading, Luke 4:34-37

**“34 saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”**

**35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. 36 Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, “What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” 37 And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.”**

So far the text:

The report went out about Jesus. Come and meet Him. You need to meet Him! Today’s Gospel reading is at the beginning of Jesus’ Galilean ministry. Last week He was in His hometown of Nazareth, about 40 miles south of Capernaum, preaching in the synagogue. And though the people knew Him since childhood, they were meeting Him for the first time as the anointed One. Jesus read from the book of Isaiah that He was anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, set at liberty the captive and oppressed by sin.

The peoples’ initial reaction in Nazareth, like in Capernaum, was amazement. They marveled at His gracious words. And yet, they thought they knew Jesus as Joseph’s son, the carpenter’s son, they did not want to meet Him as their Savior. Instead of giving Jesus a warm reception, He was taken to the cliff to throw Him over the edge. It is true that Jesus said that “no prophet is accepted in His home town.”

But, being rejected in Nazareth, didn't slow Jesus down. He came to teach the Good News of salvation that is found only in Him. The acceptable year of the Lord has come. It is fulfilled in your hearing! Jesus said.

And when Jesus spoke in Capernaum, the people met Him for the first time. Their reaction was astonishment and amazement. For He spoke with authority. And in the parallel reading from Mark 1, the people said that Jesus spoke a "new teaching".

What was this new teaching? Of course it was the new song of the Gospel. It was the good news, the central teaching of the Bible! For the whole Bible points to Jesus, the Savior. To hear the Gospel leaves one in amazement, doesn't it? Aren't you amazed each time you read the Good News about what Jesus has done for you?

Aren't you astonished that He has won the victory over the devil, death and sin you by His death and resurrection? This Good News, was not what the scribes were droning on about. The people were used to hearing the teachers of the law ramble on about manmade laws and traditions – the purification rites of washing of hands, the Sabbath laws - nothing to get astonished about.

Then came Jesus. Meet Jesus. The Lord of the Sabbath. He didn't abolish the law but fulfilled them perfectly for all people.

Today marks the 40<sup>th</sup> day after Christmas, and according to the ceremonial law, Mary and Joseph went to the temple to present Jesus and offer the sacrifices prescribed by the law on the 40<sup>th</sup> day after Jesus' birth.

But little did they know, that waiting for them was someone that wanted to meet Jesus for the first time. Simeon was an elderly man. But the Holy Spirit told him that he wouldn't die until he saw Jesus. And when he did, awe and joy filled his heart. We know his song as Simeon's song – the Nunc Dimittis.

Meet Jesus the Savior. Now you may go in peace. Why? Listen to his words again.

**“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word;  
30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared before the  
face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,  
And the glory of Your people Israel.”**

Jesus, the baby in Simeon's arms, true man, born of Mary is the Savior of the world- for all people! All the world needs to meet Jesus! For He is not just a man, but also God in the flesh! He is the Light of the world! Meet Jesus – your Light that takes away the darkness of your sin!

So, we will sing in the 1<sup>st</sup> verse of our closing hymn, “Beautiful Savior”.

*“Beautiful Savior, King of creation, Son of God and Son of Man!*

*Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.”*

Yes, there is much darkness in the world ever since the fall of Adam and Eve by the temptation of the devil. Now as an adult, Jesus faced all that we face but never failed. He was tempted by the devil after He was baptized. And the devil didn't give up trying to sabotage Jesus' words.

So as Jesus spoke in the synagogue in Capernaum, a demon possessed man tried to influence the people. Influencers are popular these days. They try to convince people to buy something. This demon wanted the people to buy his lie that Jesus was not the Savior, but had come to destroy.

**“Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us?”**

There was just one demon. Why does the demon say “us”? Who does he speak for? He tried to speak for all the people. But Jesus didn't come to destroy but to save. Yes, in hell all demons are destroyed with all who reject Jesus. But, Jesus came to save and not destroy.

Later in chapter 9 of Luke, when Jesus and the disciples were travelling through Samaria and the Samaritans did not receive Jesus, the disciples wanted to call down fire on them like Elijah did. What was Jesus response?

**“For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.” And they went to another village.”**

Though some rejected him, others need to meet Jesus.

No, it was the Jewish leaders, influenced by the devil, that sought to destroy Jesus. Jesus told them in John 2.

**“John 2:19**

**Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”**

Yes, the Savior’s temple, His body would die and be buried to save the world. But He would show that He conquered death by rising again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day! Meet Jesus!

**“16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”**

Meet Jesus who does not condemn your soul because of your sin, but carried your sin that you may be saved!

So Jesus quieted the demon and wouldn’t let him speak more lies. And then Jesus commanded the demon to come out of the man. And with a shriek it had to obey. And did not harm the man. For Jesus has authority over the demons as the people witnessed and helps the people possessed by them. Meet Jesus the Savior of body and soul.

And the news spread of Jesus’ power and authority. Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law instantly of her fever. And everyone who was sick or diseased or demon possessed was healed. All of them! Meet Jesus the Savior who cares for all people! He cares for you!

Semper Fi. That’s the motto of the Marines. Always faithful. They strive to live up to that ideal by fighting the battles for those on their right and on their left. The marines strive to be faithful to country and to you. Are they perfect? No, there is no one who is faithful 100% of the time in our relationships, work, or to God.

But, there is One who was faithful always. Jesus of Nazareth.

**1 Timothy 1:15**

This *is* a **faithful** saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

## 2 Timothy 2:11-13

<sup>11</sup> *This is* a faithful saying:

For if we died with *Him*, We shall also live with *Him*.<sup>12</sup> If we endure, We shall also reign with *Him*. If we deny *Him*, He also will deny us.<sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Yesterday, in Immanuel's cemetery, a marine was buried – a member from Mision Emanuel, Rudy Gutierrez. Rudy served our country, but there was one battle that this warrior couldn't win. And neither can we – the battle against sin, death, and the devil. Yet, Jesus was faithful to His Father's will, to fulfill His Father's will and this Warrior defeated all enemies on the cross.

Rudy was baptized into Jesus. And united in Jesus death, our sins are buried and we shall also live with Him. Yes, thanks be to God Rudy met Jesus of Nazareth, His Savior and believed in Him.

And so we also give thanks to God that He is faithful to us in Word and Sacrament! Semper Fi.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

**“23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”**

**Amen.**

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**