

28.25 First Preaching Tour in Galilee (Matthew 4:23–25; Mark 1:35–39; Luke 4:42–44)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.

Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *desolate place*: desert-like; uninhabited; wilderness
- *synagogue*: gathering place for Jews where they could be instructed in the Old Testament

Scripture Passages (ESV):

Matthew 4:23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Mark 1:35 And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. 36 And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, 37 and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” 38 And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” 39 And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Luke 4:42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, 43 but he said to them. “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Introduction/Review:

What was the message John the Baptizer preached? [“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is here.”] What had happened to John the Baptizer? [He had been put in prison.] Who then preached John the Baptizer’s message? [Jesus.]

Jesus had preached in the synagogue of Capernaum. A man had called out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.” What was wrong with this man? [He was demon-possessed.] Why didn’t Jesus want the man to tell people he was the “Holy One of God”? [✓Because the devil, the deceiver, was saying these things. Even though the demons spoke the truth in this case, they are liars.] Jesus healed that man. The one who formerly was controlled by the devil was now in his right mind.

What happened at Peter’s house after sunset? [People with all kinds of diseases came to Jesus, and He healed them all.] Why did they wait until sunset? [Because it was no longer the Sabbath when work was prohibited but the first day of the week.]

Story:

✓Even though Jesus was no doubt exhausted from the work of healing He had done the night before, after a short night’s rest He got up very early in the morning. The Bible states He got up “while it was still dark”; the Greek “word *prw* in Mark means the last watch of the night from three to six A.M.” (RWP in Online

Bible). He went to a place away from Capernaum into a desolate place, a place away from people and maybe even away from watered land. Why did Jesus do this? He went to pray.

Jesus prayed

One might ask, “Why did Jesus pray? Isn’t He God? Why did He need to pray?” The answer to these questions is that ✓Jesus always wanted to do His Father’s will. He was about to venture out on a tour of preaching the kingdom of God. He was going to war against Satan’s kingdom. He needed to pray for the Father’s direction and for strength!

Now, I’ll ask *you*, “Why do *you* need to pray?” If Jesus, the Son of God, needed to pray, certainly you and I do. We still war against the devil; we still want to make known the King of God’s kingdom. We need to pray—even “very early in the morning while it is yet dark” sometimes. Jesus said in another place that we should pray that we do not enter into temptation. We have far more reason to pray than Jesus did. Let’s be faithful to pray.

Disciples found Jesus

Simon Peter and ✓probably the other three disciples got up later than Jesus, and when they went to awaken Him, they discovered he was gone. They went to look for Jesus. Not just the disciples but other people looked for Him as well. I wonder how long it took them to find Jesus in that desolate place. When they found Him, though, we know the people wanted Jesus to stay with them. ✓“Don’t leave us! Stay here in Capernaum with us,” they pleaded.

Jesus answered, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” Then, to the disciples He said, “Let us go on to the next towns that I may preach there also.” Notice that He said He was going to preach, not to heal. From this we can learn that preaching is important to Jesus; it should be to us.

Jesus preached in all Galilee and in Judea

Jesus and His disciples left Capernaum and first went throughout all Galilee, an area about as large as from here to Springfield, Colorado, and from here to Las Animas, Colorado. [Teacher, describe an area near you that is about 60 miles long and 30 miles wide.] A Bible historian (Josephus) says that the area included 204 cities and towns, not counting villages. That’s a lot of territory!* But He also preached in Judea. [Locate these regions on a map.]

To what kind of people did Jesus preach? John Gill states, “He took a tour throughout Galilee; a country mean and despicable, inhabited by persons poor, illiterate, vile, and wicked: such had the first fruits of Christ’s ministry, and messages of his grace; which shows the freeness, sovereignty, and riches, of his abounding goodness” (Gill in Online Bible).

In what buildings was He preaching? In the synagogues, for that’s where the Jews gathered for instruction. Like the apostles after Him, He preached first to the Jews.

Although He stressed preaching, He also healed various diseases and cast out demons** as He traveled this large area.

Most important, what did Jesus preach? Jesus said, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God.” *He* was the kingdom of God who had come to earth. These people needed to believe on Him. This is the gospel—good news.

Jesus was famous

Crowds of people came to hear the preaching and to be healed. Jesus was becoming very famous, even in far-away places like Syria [locate these places on a map], Decapolis on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Judea, and the east side of the Jordan River.

I wonder how many of those people actually came to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope it was many,

many people.

*“[Galilee’s] average dimensions were about fifty by twenty-five miles. It contained, according to Josephus, two hundred and forty towns and villages. Its population at that time is estimated at about three millions. Lewin calculates that this circuit of Galilee must have occupied four or five months” (TFG 173-175 in Online Bible).

“Literally Jesus “was going around (imperfect) in all Galilee.” This is the first of the three tours of Galilee made by Jesus. This time he took the four fishermen whom he had just called to personal service. The second time he took the twelve. On the third he sent the twelve on ahead by twos and followed after them” (RWP in Online Bible).

**“Three general words are here used to intimate this; he healed every sickness, *noson*, as blindness, lameness, fever, dropsy; every *disease*, or languishing, *malakian*, as fluxes and consumptions; and all *torments*, *basanouv*, as gout, stone, convulsions, and such like torturing distempers; whether the disease was acute or chronical; whether it was a racking or a wasting disease; none was too bad, none too hard, for Christ to heal with a word’s speaking.

Three particular diseases are specified; *the palsy*, which is the greatest weakness of the body; *lunacy*, which is the greatest malady of the mind, and *possession of the Devil*, which is the greatest misery and calamity of both, yet Christ healed all: for he is the sovereign Physician both of soul and body, and has command of all diseases (Matthew Henry in Online Bible).

Lessons from this lesson:

- If Jesus needed to pray, certainly we need to pray and not just on the day of worship.
- Is morning the best time for prayer? “If [Jesus] did it in the morning, how much more important is it for us, before the world gets possession of our thoughts; before Satan fills us with unholy feelings; when we rise fresh from beds of repose, and while the world around us is still” (Barnes in Online Bible)!
- Jesus can do the impossible just as He could cure the incurable.
- Jesus said He must preach the good news of the kingdom of God. So must we.

Activities:

- Play dough: crutch, blind eyes
- For younger children bring a first aid kit. As you hold up each object, ask children if they know how the item is used. Discuss how Jesus is better than a first aid kit. He didn’t even need one to heal all those people! (<http://missionarlington.org/wp-content/uploads/curriculum/LOC2008-L03-EN.PDF>).
- For younger kids make a doctor kit. Fold a piece of paper in half and tape useful things like cotton swabs, bandages, and cotton balls in the “bag.” Share how doctors help people feel better. Remind the children that God can use doctors to heal us (<http://missionarlington.org/wp-content/uploads/curriculum/LOC2008-L03-EN.PDF>).
- Review Questions: (Game: Purchase some cheap plain bandages, not of popular TV, comic characters, *etc.* A correct answer allows a student to acquire a bandage that [s]he may either take home or put on his/her body.)
 1. What time of the day did Jesus pray? [Very early in the morning, while it was still dark.]
 2. Where did Jesus pray? [In a desolate place.]
 3. Why did Jesus need to pray so much? [He wanted to do His Father’s will; He was about to go preaching the kingdom of God; He was warring against Satan’s kingdom.]
 4. Who found Jesus praying in the desolate place? [The disciples and people.]
 5. What did the people beg Jesus to do? [Stay with them in the area of Capernaum.]

6. What was Jesus' answer to the people's request? ["I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."]
7. In what buildings did Jesus preach? [Synagogues.]
8. What else did Jesus do besides preach? [Heal all sorts of diseases.]
9. In what two main areas of Palestine was Jesus ministering? [Galilee and Judea.]
10. Name or show on the map two specific places from which people came to follow Jesus. [Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.]

Handwork:

- Color the picture found at the end of this lesson.

Memory Verse[s]:

- Luke 4:43—[Jesus said,] "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God."
- Review John 1:1–18:
 - 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 2 He was in the beginning with God.
 - 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
 - 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
 - 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.
 - 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
 - 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.
 - 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.
 - 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
 - 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
 - 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
 - 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

desolate

synagogue



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