Luke 3-4 The mission begins

John the Baptist

John is introduced in the manner of an OT prophet. By referencing the king and political leaders of the time.

Baptism +repentance -> forgiveness/release from sins. Like Acts 2:38, 3:19, etc. repentance is explained by reference to Isaiah 40:3-5 in geographic metaphor. Crooked = perverted low = humble. John prepares the way as Gabriel and Zechariah had predicted.

3 examples of repentance which must result in change of behavior or is worthless.

1. Share your clothes and food if you have any (not if you have extra)
2. Don’t take more than is required (even if allowed). This makes tax collecting no longer a profitable business)
3. Soldiers are not to extort $ either by threat of violence or by false accusation. Severely cuts into the profit to be gained by being a soldier. Maybe even ability to find food and shelter?

Vs 16. John is not the messiah but prepares for him. His baptism will be in spirit (giving of the spirit on Pentecost) and fire (judgement).

Notice parallels between john’s preaching of repentance and peter’s in acts 2. Also note the results of repentance in the description of the church at the end of Ch 2.

*Jesus’s baptism and call*

Jesus is baptized, and then later while praying, the Holy Spirit comes upon him, empowering him for mission ( see 4:18-19). Places emphasis on the Holy Spirit and on prayer.

*Jesus’ Genealogy*

Genealogy-goes back to David but not through any of Davis’s royal descendants. Shows that Jesus’ kingdom is not like any earthly kingdom-not even David’s. Also goes back to Adam as son of God. This is unprecedented. Jesus, like Adam, is the beginning of a new race, one leading to death and the other to life.

*Temptation.*

The devil attempts 3 times to pervert Jesus mission.

1. Make yourself bread by your power of the Holy Spirit. This power is equated with privilege. Use your position to take care of yourself. This is the opposite of Jesus statement that only those who serve are great. The temptation is to believe that being son of God confers the right to act on privilege for self.
2. The gift of all the kingdoms of the world-Jesus does not dispute the premise that the devil can deliver. But Jesus mission is not to become the king of the earthly kingdoms but of the kingdom of god. The kingdom is an important theme of Luke. The temptation is to pursue worldly kingship through worship of the devil rather that heavenly kingship through worship of god. That is why the NT equates any pursuit of the world with idolatry.
3. Leaping off the temple prepares Jesus for the temptation at the end to appeal to god for legions if angels to protect him from the power of Rome. It his mission is to suffer, not to be rescued from suffering. The temptation is to manipulate god into rescuing from death or any of the evils of this world. Faith does not exempt Jesus or is from suffering.

These temptations have parallels in our experience, but the are unique to Jesus since they are tied directly to his messianic mission.

*4:14-30 Jesus’ first recorded speech.*

Power of the Holy Spirit.

2 sections- each sets the stage and themes for the rest of the gospel

1. Reading from Isaiah. This passage is Jesus mission statement and we will see that Jesus’ entire mission is guided by it. Again the Holy Spirit is the enabler of mission. He is to proclaim (and perform) the gospel to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, release for the oppressed and abused, and the favorable year of the Lord. The “Target audience” for Jesus mission is those who are poor, captive (imprisoned or enslaved), blind, and oppressed. In the rest of the gospel we will see that this is both literal and metaphorical. And we will see that the rich, free from captivity, seeing, and free from abuse are generally Jesus’ opponents.
2. Jesus comments to the audience. Without any obvious reason Jesus accuses his home town of demanding miracles and refusing to accept Him. He then cited OT examples of prophets being sent to gentiles to perform healings and life-saving miracles (release from oppression and captivity) and not to Israel. This points to the rejection of Jesus by the majority of Jewish leaders, many of the Jewish people and the opening of the kingdom to all peoples including gentiles.

So Jesus’ mission is to bring salvation, spiritual release, spiritual sight, dignity of acting freely without compulsion of oppressors to all people.

The response was to try to kill him because the people of Nazareth did not accept that God would grant salvation to the non-privileged of the world. The big question is: is God’s deliverance another privilege for the privileged? Or is it for the humble and lowly whose dignity is subject to the privileged?

*Two examples and summary of Jesus’ mission fulfilled*

4:31-37. Jesus casts out a demon and forbids it to reveal his identity, thus fulfilling his mission to bring release to the captives. His fame spreads, but fame is not the same thing as loyal following.

4:38-41. Jesus heals simon’s mother-in-law. She serves him as an example of release from oppression and consequent service. He then continues this pattern. In area villages.

4:42-44. Jesus finds time and solitude to pray. Then left that area to preach the kingdom of God throughout all of Judea. This confirms Jesus’ mission is not just to save the chosen but to bring in the Kingdom for all.