THE PLACE OF PREACHING IN THE CHURCH’S MISSION
LUKE 4:16-30

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ABSTRACT

Both literature on mission and literature on preaching discuss the significance of Luke 4:16-30. In these discussions, however, mission and preaching are not always considered in relation to one another. Luke 4:16-30, emphasizes the holistic mission program of Jesus Christ as he participates in God’s salvific purposes for the world. The same Scripture text, however, also demonstrates that Spirit-empowered preaching is integral to this mission and to achieve its goals. This indicates that Spirit-empowered, embodied, and varied preaching, which focusses on prophetically interpreting the Scriptural text in context, has an essential place in the Church’s ongoing participation in God’s mission in and to the world.

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the place of preaching in the Church’s mission. It does this with reference to Luke 4:16-30. It is widely recognized that these verses, which record a sermon by Jesus at Nazareth, contain a programmatic statement of the mission of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. The suggestive interplay of preaching and mission in this programmatic sermon is the subject of this paper. For, despite this interplay, the literature
which discusses these verses often fails to hold preaching and mission together in a mutually interpretative way. This article, therefore, highlights this disconnect between preaching and mission in some literature, discusses the nature of mission presented in Luke 4:16-30, emphasizes the integral place of preaching in this mission manifesto, and draws out some of the implications of this for our understanding of the place of preaching in the Church’s mission as participation in God’s ongoing mission in and to the world.

THE DISCONNECT: LUKE 4:16-30

There is an apparent disconnect between mission and preaching in some of the literature which discusses Luke 4:16-30. This disconnect is the case in some significant literature concerned with the ongoing mission of the Church and some important preaching literature.

There is a body of literature that discusses the Church’s mission at home as much as abroad, local as well as global, in that mission is seen to be part of the very nature of the Church. Accordingly, it is stated that “a church that is not ‘the church in mission’ is no church at all,” that “Christianity is missionary by its very nature, or it denies its very raison d’être,” and that since mission is the defining essence of the Church and not merely something which it does, “if it ceases to be missionary, it has not just failed in one of its tasks, it has ceased being the Church.” Frequently in such literature, the writers seek to apply the significance of biblical material to the ongoing understanding and practice of the Church’s mission. Bosch, in his still hugely significant book Transforming Mission, draws attention to the centrality of mission in the Gospel of Luke and the importance of this Gospel in establishing a biblical foundation for the mission of the Church. He emphasizes that the Nazareth episode in Luke 4:16-30 has a “programmatic” relationship to the whole. As a consequence, he draws upon Luke 4:16-30 in establishing his understanding of the Lucan paradigm of mission. At no time, however, either concerning Luke 4:16-30 or concerning Luke-
Acts in general, does Bosch discuss the place and of preaching in such mission.\(^8\) That is, while Bosch stresses the missionary significance of Luke 4:16-30, he does not emphasize the fact that this manifesto is articulated in a sermon that contains references to preaching as a means of expressing and extending the mission of Jesus Christ. Bosch is not alone in this sort of omission. Senior and Stuhlmueller, in their study of *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, have a concern for the ongoing universal mission of the Church. They mention the Lukan passage but do not highlight the significance given to preaching in these verses.\(^9\) In turn, Peskett and Ramamachandra highlight Luke 4:16-30 as an important passage in their discussion of *The Message of Mission*.\(^10\) However, even when talking about “proclaiming Jesus and bringing release” they do not develop the place of preaching in this task with reference to these verses.\(^11\) Other significant writing on the mission of the Church, including that by Wright, does not focus on Luke 4:16-30 or indeed major on the nature and place of preaching in such mission.\(^12\)

Just as it is possible to emphasize the missionary emphasis of Luke 4:16-30 while downplaying the significance of preaching, it is also possible to highlight the significance of preaching in this text while downplaying the missionary context. This downplaying is evident in several histories of preaching, which consider the biblical material in general and Luke 4:16-30 in particular.\(^13\) Brilioth, in his older book, *A Brief History of Preaching*, begins his study with reference to Jesus’ Nazareth sermon.\(^14\) He does so because he claims that this sermon is “the most important link which unites the Jewish proclamation and the Christian sermon.”\(^15\) Brilioth focusses on “how” Jesus preached with reference to the “liturgical,” “exegetical,” and “prophetic” elements of the synagogue sermon.\(^16\) He then uses these elements as a framework for evaluating the development of Christian preaching throughout the centuries.\(^17\) While Brilioth’s insights have value, he concentrates only on verses 16-21 and pays little attention to the content or the mission emphasis of the passage and its significance for the nature of preaching. Old, in *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures*, maintains, “Again and
again the Church has returned to the preaching ministry of Jesus for its example.” Regarding the sermon at Nazareth, he says that it “adds substantially to our knowledge of the way Jesus exercised the ministry of the Word.” He observes that Jesus interpreted Scripture, that the sermon continues beyond verse 20 to include the dialogue that stretches to verse 27 and argues that this account may represent the preaching of Jesus rather than merely being a Lukan construct. This said, his discussion is relatively limited in depth and scope concerning the content, and he fails to discuss the missionary context of the sermon and the significance of this for the example that Jesus provides for preaching. Larsen, in his work, The Company of Preachers, locates the “Glorious Birth of Christian Preaching” with “The Powerful Preaching of Jesus Christ the Savior.” Larsen’s approach is more thematic, gathering the varied Gospel material under several headings. He does, however, refer to Luke 4:16-30 and makes some valuable observations. These observations include that Jesus announces the Year of Jubilee, the sermon was not necessarily concluded in verse 21, and “the pattern seems to be that Jesus the preacher takes a text of Scripture, reads it, explains it, and applies it.” Again, however, in part because of his survey approach, there is no specific emphasis on the missionary nature of this particular passage and the significance of this for the preaching discussed.

As demonstrated above, therefore, missiologists, while discussing Luke 4:16-30 as a basis for ongoing Christian mission, omit any noteworthy reference to the place of preaching in the mission announced in these verses. On the other hand, writers in homiletics, while highlighting the importance of these verses for the Christian practice of preaching, do not develop the significance of the missionary context of the preaching therein described. Both approaches create a disconnect between the ongoing mission of the Church and the role of preaching in that mission. This disconnect is certainly something with which missiologists should contend. On the other hand, it is also a matter for those concerned with the practice of preaching. Luke 4:16-30 provides an example for Christian preaching based upon
the words and actions of Jesus Christ. This example, however, is of preaching within the context of his missionary task. It should, therefore, be understood and applied in this context. Following on from this, as homileticians like to stress, Jesus came preaching. Preaching was a central activity in his life and ministry. Thus, those concerned with the importance of preaching should be prepared to enter the significant discussions concerning the ongoing ministry and mission of the Church from this perspective. Furthermore, in so far as mission is indeed part of the very nature of the Church, preachers should be concerned to understand what this means for their regular practice.

This article, therefore, seeks to address the disconnect between mission and preaching in relation to Luke 4:16-30. It builds on the above approaches to these verses but in contrast to them, will explore the practice of preaching within the paradigmatic missionary emphasis of Luke 4:16-30.

MISSION IN LUKE 4:16-30


The bold repositioning of Jesus’ sermon in Nazareth, and its dramatic expansion in comparison with its parallels in Mark 6:1-6 and Matt 13:54-58, distinguishes it as the programmatic cornerstone of Jesus’ ministry. The literary artistry of the sermon is as evident as is its placement.
In this way, Luke creates the expectation or “critical narrative need for Jesus to perform in ways that grow out of and reflect this missionary program.” The larger Luke-Acts narrative demonstrates that the ministry of Jesus reflects this program, and later, narrative summaries refer back to this event (7:21-22; Acts 10:38). Luke 4:16-30, therefore, explicates a programmatic mission manifesto. I will now highlight a number of its features.

First, mission in the light of Luke 4:16-30 is participation in God’s salvific purposes. Jesus appeals to the authority of Old Testament Scripture (4:21) and incidents from such (4:25-27). Thus, he emphasizes that the mission in which he is engaged is nothing other than “God’s eschatological purpose.” The theme of prophecy-fulfillment, a central feature in Luke-Acts, also demonstrates the continuity between the experience of Israel and Jesus. This is emphasized not least through his identification with the Spirit-anointed Servant of Isaiah (4:18). This reference and that by the narrator (4:14) can be understood as interpretative “throwbacks” to Jesus’ baptism (3:21-22) and the testing in the wilderness (4:1). These Spirit references at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry seek to establish him as one empowered by God in his acts and actions. The narrative summary of Acts 10:38 supports this reading.

Second, the nature of this mission centers on the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus presents himself as the one who fulfills God’s saving purposes, as revealed in Scripture. It is when “The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him” (4:20) that Jesus affirms himself as the fulfillment of such Scripture (4:21). In this way, he self-presents as the Spirit-anointed prophet of Isa. 61. His use of the phrase “I tell you the truth” (4:24), his identification with Elijah and Elisha (4:25-27), and the theme of “rejection” stated (4:24), and experienced (4:29) all heighten this self-identification of Jesus as a prophet. However, the identity of Jesus, as presented in Luke 4:16-30, is not confined to that of a prophet. It also has “messianic” significance. Marshall says that in these verses, “we have a description of the work of the Messiah in terms of the activity of the eschatological prophet like unto Moses and of the Servant of Yahweh.” Likewise, Bock argues
that Jesus identifies himself as the Spirit-anointed one who not only proclaims the “the arrival of the new era” but who also brings it into being and in this combination reveals both his prophetic and Messianic functions. For the readers of Luke 4:16-30 though not the original congregation, there is also an implicit reference to Jesus as the “Son of God.” This reference is found in the “situational irony” of the narrative as the congregation respond positively and ask, “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” (4:22). For unlike the congregation, readers know from the preceding chapters that this Jesus can fulfill this prophecy and pursue the mission of God precisely because he is not the son of Joseph but the Son of God.

Third, the mission which Jesus announces is one of holistic and transformative salvation. Luke 4:18-19 communicates “that the content of Jesus’s commission consists in nothing else than in carrying out the eschatic transformation of unsalvation into salvation, which God has promised to his people.” This salvation is announced in language that is both “literal and symbolic.” One key term is “the poor.” The various other categories, “the prisoners,” “the blind,” and the “oppressed” are various expressions of this primary term. This primary term of poor, if allowed both a “literal and larger meaning” resists reduction to either merely a personal spiritual or a social-economic interpretation. Instead, as Green argues, the term “poor” can be understood in its “holistic sense of those who are for any of a number of socio-religious reasons relegated to positions outside the boundaries of God’s people.” To such people, variously described, Jesus promises “freedom” (NIV), perhaps better translated as “release.” This term “release” has an emphatic position in the complex composite text cited by Jesus drawn from Isaiah 61:1-2 and Isaiah 58:6. In Isaiah 61:1, “release” belongs to a series of rich eschatological metaphors of hope proclaimed for a post-exilic people. In Isaiah 58:6, “release” involves a distinctly “social profile” highlighting economic injustice as an affront to true religion. Both passages have allusions to the “release” of OT Jubilee legislation (Leviticus 25) that involved the release of slaves, the cancellation of debts, and
the return of land and is suggested by the phrase “the year of the Lord's favour” (4:19). In the Lukan narrative co-text, the term “release” is used in two main ways. One is to refer to release from conditions related to diabolic activity (e.g., Luke 13:10-17; Acts 10:38). The other is to refer to “forgiveness” from sins (e.g., Luke 5:20-21; 12:10). This “spiritual” concern should not be too quickly set over and against the “social” implications of release. For in the Lucan context, “forgiveness of sin” had social ramifications concerning the status of a person in the community. Neither, however, should we downplay the spiritual importance of the necessity of such forgiveness or its prominent place in this manifesto. The salvific mission of God, therefore, expressed and embodied by Jesus, is one of holistic transformation. Bosch writes about the Lukan perspective, “Whatever salvation is, then, in every specific context, it includes the total transformation of human life, forgiveness of sin, healing from infirmities, and release from any kind of bondage.”

Fourth, the mission announced by Jesus in Luke 4:16-30 has a centrifugal orientation of grace. To borrow from Talbert, if Jesus offered salvation for “The Whole Person” it was also “In the Whole World.” In the complex conflated text that Jesus cites, it is noticeable that he excludes the statement from Isaiah 61:1-2 “and the day of vengeance from our God.” Within context, such a statement would have been understood as announcing God’s judgment on the foreign nations that had oppressed Israel. The implication of this omission appears to have been initially missed by the congregation as they welcomed the gracious message that Jesus announced. The significant references by Jesus to Elijah and Elisha (4:24-27) and to the “widow in Zarephath” and “Naaman the Syrian,” however, clearly indicated that Jesus envisioned a mission which extended beyond the people of Israel to include “the poor, the blind, the Samaritan, the Gentile, the tax collector, the sinner, and the outcast.” As a consequence, “The acceptance of the crowd quickly gave way to their rejection because the message of inclusion challenged their predetermined assumptions of God’s work and way.” In terms of the narrative, this section, which starts with Jesus going to Nazareth, ends with
him going on his way into the narrative of Luke-Acts, which takes us to Jerusalem and ultimately Rome.  

Luke 4:16-30 is a programmatic statement of the mission of Jesus. Such mission involves participation in the Spirit-empowered centrifugal grace of God, which seeks relentlessly in concrete manifestations to transform people’s lives. This being the case, the next step is to discuss the place of preaching in this mission.

PREACHING IN THE MISSION OF LUKE 4:16-30

Luke 4:16-30 offers a programmatic statement of the mission of Jesus. In that program, preaching has a prominent place of significance. This prominence of preaching is evident in a variety of ways.

Jesus' announced his programmatic Nazareth manifesto in a sermon. Jesus declares this mission program as he functions as a synagogue preacher. The phrase “and he began by saying,” indicates this is only a summary of what Jesus said (4:21). Indeed, the sermon itself should be seen as continuing to verse 27 as the narrative setting sustains a continuity between 4:20 and 4:29. In 4:20, “he sat down,” the position of the one teaching the Scriptures, a position maintained until 4:29 when “they got up.” This claim is not negated by the argumentative and debating style of verses 23-27, which may have represented the "normal" practice in synagogue sermons. So it is the drama of Luke 4:16-30 takes place around what Jesus said. It was what he said that resulted in the congregations’ positive (4:22) and negative (4:28) reactions. The sermon inaugurated the very mission which Jesus proclaimed as the congregation rejected him like a prophet (4:28-29), as he said they would (4:24), and so went on his way to fulfill the claims made (4:30). At the very least, the nature of this event as a sermon points to the vital place of preaching in the mission Jesus announced.

Although the sermon in Luke 4:16-30 is programmatic for mission, Luke also unmistakably depicts it as a specific example of the regular mission practice of Jesus. This regularity is
emphasized in the narrative summaries 4:14-15 and 31-32, which frame Luke 4:16-30 and underscore the regularity of his synagogue preaching practice. Green writing about 4:14-15 states, “Luke draws special attention to Jesus as teacher…It is precisely in this role that Jesus often appears – cf. 4:31; 5:3, 17; 6:6 et al.” The narrator, almost unnecessarily because of these framing summaries, also stresses “as was his custom” (4:16) when he recounts Jesus going to the synagogue in Nazareth. This stress is a reflection back to 4:15 and describes not only Jesus’ attendance at synagogues but highlights the regularity of preaching as an expression of his mission. This regularity of practice is confirmed in verses 31-32 which are significant in that they are not merely another summary statement of regular practice, but an example of the developing mission announced in Luke 4:16-30 in which preaching had a critical role. The fact the Nazareth manifesto was announced in a sermon is not, therefore, incidental but integral to the programmatic and revelatory narrative of salvation, which is unfolding in the Gospel focussed on the person of Jesus from Nazareth.

Critically the sermon at Nazareth also explicitly indicates the vital significance of preaching in the Sprit-anointed mission Jesus inaugurated. Green writes that the structural nature of Luke 4:18-19 “underscores in the clearest possible way the inexorable relation of the Spirit's anointing and the statement of primary mission, ‘to proclaim good news to the poor.’” This does not mean as some argue that the Spirit anointing was exclusively for the purposes of preaching. To be sure, in his sermon, Jesus refused to perform any miracle in Nazareth. He did, however, identify himself with Elijah and Elisha, who did perform miracles (4:25-27). The narrative co-text also clearly indicates that miracle-working, and preaching, were both parts of Jesus’ Spirit-anointed ministry as announced in Nazareth (4:31-44, 7:21-22). Be this as it may, it is clear that preaching as proclaiming good news to the poor (4:18) and proclaiming “freedom” (4:18) and “the year of the Lord’s favour” (4:10), were essential to the fulfillment of the Spirit-anointed mission Jesus announced. Marshall writes that the “infinitival phrases brings
out more fully through various metaphors the significance of the preaching.” Indeed, the Spirit-anointed preaching announced in this text is not so much a “talking about” but a “bringing about” the transformation to which they refer. Preaching is, therefore, fundamental to the Spirit-empowered mission announced in Luke 4:16-30.

In the paragraphs above, I have been arguing that preaching is essentially integral to the form and content of the programmatic Nazareth mission manifesto. There is, however, a critical issue of definition. For in these verses, several words are used to describe preaching. In the central verses of 18-19 two verbs are used to describe preaching: (euangélion) “to preach the good news” (4:18), and (kērýssō) “to proclaim” (4:18-19).73 Furthermore, when we include the significant narrative summaries of 14-15 and 31-32, we also have the verb (didáskō) “to teach.”74 Each of these terms is used somewhat interchangeably in Luke (compare 4:31-32 and 4:43-44). Nevertheless, each carries some nuance in meaning.75 The preaching discussed in Luke 4:16-30 in keeping with the unfolding practice in Luke-Acts is therefore somewhat dynamic and varied as to its particular expression in the mission announced.

In Luke 4:16-30, Jesus issues a programmatic statement of his prophetic and Messianic Spirit-empowered mission. He makes this statement in a sermon, the content of which indicates that the varied practice of preaching is integral to the nature and fulfillment of this mission. Luke 4:16-30, therefore, is not merely a text about mission nor about preaching but about the missionary intent of Jesus with preaching at its core.

PREACHING IN THE CHURCH’S MISSION

Following on from the above, I will now discuss the value of Luke 4:16-30 for informing the place and practice of preaching in the mission of the Church. In this respect we can note that Bosch suggests that in some sections of the Church, “Luke 4:16-21 has, for all practical purposes, replaced Matthew’s ‘Great
Commission’ as the key text not only for understanding Christ’s own mission but also that of the church.” Whether or not this is or should be the case, Luke 4:16-30 should be of substantial interest to those concerned for a biblical understanding of the nature of the ongoing mission of the Church. This is because of the programmatic missionary nature of these verses in Luke-Acts. In turn, the significance of these verses is heightened in that Luke-Acts “may be the clearest presentation of the church’s universal mission in all of the New Testament” and consists of two volumes in which Luke “indicates that one of his major purposes was to show the relationship between the mission of Jesus and the mission of the church.” Concerning the programmatic Luke 4:16-30, therefore, the following words from Newbigin seems particularly apposite:

In every age, we have to go back to God's revelation of Himself to learn afresh by the guiding of the Spirit, what is our duty for to-day...The Church’s mission is none other than the carrying on of the mission of Christ Himself.

As argued above, in the revelation of Luke 4:16-30, the practice of preaching is central to the mission of Christ, which has to be carried on by the Church. It is, therefore, because Luke 4:16-30 is a key programmatic missionary biblical text with the preaching of Jesus as its core that these verses can claim to have an instructive function for the place of preaching in the Church’s ongoing mission. As a consequence, in the remainder of this article, I will discuss the place of preaching in the Church’s ongoing mission in the light of Luke 4:16-30.

First, preaching, in the trajectory of Luke 4:16-30, is a regular Spirit-anointed practice of God’s ongoing salvific work in the world. Preaching is not, therefore, merely a traditional practice to be evaluated as to its perceived practical value as a form of communication. Instead, it is a practice whose significance in the Church is established through its habitual association with the mission of Jesus and the work of the Holy
Spirit. I am not here establishing some sort of theological no-go area concerning the quality and nature of preaching. For to claim that preaching is particularly Spirit-empowered for mission necessarily raises vital questions concerning what such Spirit “anointed,” “illuminated,” and “empowered” preaching looks like. I am also not denying the necessity and significance of other Spirit-empowered acts and actions. The importance of such is evident in the content and outworking of the mission announced in Luke 4:16-30. Preaching should regularly accompany and be accompanied by such. I am, however, defending the important and particular place of preaching as a regular and Spirit-empowered practice as part of the Church's mission because in Luke 4:16-30, preaching is integral to Spirit-anointed mission announced.

Second, the preaching integral to the mission announced in Luke 4:16-30 has the Scriptures centered on Jesus Christ as its primary content. As the narrative unfolds (4:16-18), Jesus takes the Scripture, reads Scripture, claims its fulfillment in him, and expands upon the meaning for the congregation. Certainly, Jesus establishes a continuity with the faith and practice of Israel by accepting the role of the synagogue preacher and interpreting the Scriptural text. Simultaneously, however, he is also the model for the future, with Luke 4 marking “the origin of Christian preaching.” This is the case both hermeneutically and homiletically. On the one hand, Jesus establishes himself as the hermeneutical prism by which we are to make sense of Scripture. On the other hand, he offers the interpreted and applied elucidation of Scripture as the necessary content for preaching in the mission announced in the manifesto. Preaching in this mission paradigm, therefore, approaches Scripture as an authoritative source. It calls on listeners to change their lives in accordance with the preached message. This call may be in evangelistic preaching. It might also be preaching that reminds a believing congregation of who they are and their role in God's mission. For as Brueggemann argues, there is a massive “amnesia” among the people of God that “causes the church to lack any serious missional energy.” One way or another,
Scripture is the authoritative source for preaching, which seeks to participate in the mission of God as outlined in the Nazareth manifesto.

Third, preaching in the mission paradigm of Luke 4:16-30 is an embodied act. The above paragraphs suggest something of the divine nature of preaching. Preaching, however, is also a human act of communication related to context and culture. Jesus comes preaching, resisting the tempted route of the dramatic supernatural spectacle (4:1-13). Luke 4:16-30 is about a speaker and hearers sharing space and time. It is the humanity of preacher, congregation, and context which make the revelation of Luke 4:16-30 possible and directly relevant. To the home congregation, Jesus was indeed “Joseph’s son.” The human potential and the vulnerability of such Spirit-empowered yet human speech is demonstrated in the reactions it created, including the unsuccessful attempt to kill Jesus. In this model of preaching exemplified by Jesus, physical presence is critical. Here is the Word enfleshed in incarnational embodiment. As a consequence, I would argue that preaching, which serves the mission of the Christian Church in the model of Luke 4:16-30 is primarily a live event when and where a preacher shares space and time with the congregation. Embodied presence in the context of people’s lives is critical. Other forms of mediated preaching may be valuable but are derivative and should be regarded as such both academically and practically in the life of the Church.

Fourth, preaching in the mission of the Church in the model of Luke 4:16-30 should have a prophetic element. This prophetic emphasis has several dimensions. It should envision God’s alternative reality. In quoting Isaiah (Luke 4:18-19), Jesus commandeers the language of the prophet. This prophetic language is the language of the poetic. Such language speaks to the imagination without denying the reality of the freedom to which it points. It should proclaim an understanding of the world as though God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit “were a real character and an effective agent in the world.” While these prior emphases of prophetic preaching need not address specific
issues, I would argue that prophetic preaching should also deal with a wide range of issues in seeking the holistic transformation envisioned in Luke 4:16-30. This approach may require thematic or topical preaching. More regularly, however, it would involve engaging with subjects of social concern while preaching through the Scriptures and relating them to life in the light of the Gospel. This will require preachers “to ground their entire preaching ministries in the kind of deep and passionate social analysis that will change the shape and nature of all their sermons.” Such preaching should be prepared for contested responses. Prophetic preaching may not simply involve “a quarrel with the world” but as in Luke 4:16-30, it may involve a quarrel with the congregation. This quarrel should not be the goal. Forming a missionary people through evangelism, teaching, and proclamation should be the goal of congregational preaching. Opposition by itself is not the measure of faithfulness. Be this as it may, prophetic preaching requires the courage to be contrary for the sake of discovering truth and reality.

Finally, preaching in the paradigm of Luke 4:16-30 is a varied practice. This variety is not only a matter of content but of style, purpose, listeners, and location. Luke 4:16-30 supports Spirit-empowered Scriptural preaching, but no one particular style, purpose, listeners, or location for preaching. Jesus, on this occasion, sits to preach and engages in a somewhat confrontational and dialogical style, which he actively instigates (4:23). As already noted, a variety of terms are used to distinguish the more general practice of preaching. These terms are indicative of different styles related to different purposes as directed towards different listeners: teach, evangelize, proclaim. While Griffiths does not elaborate on “teaching” his word study summary of the use of “evangelize” and “proclaim” in Luke-Acts and beyond demonstrates something of the varied contexts and contents of such preaching in the New Testament. Preaching in the mission paradigm of Luke 4:16-30 will be attentive to this variety for the sake of achieving the mission.

In addition to the above, one critical point on variety requires to be made: locations for preaching can vary. The
Nazareth sermon took place in a synagogue. On this basis, Brilioth sees the “liturgical” as a “basic” element of Christian preaching. This emphasis rightly associates Christian preaching as a practice that takes place among people gathered in worshipful assembly often in a building expressly set apart for such a gathering, whether permanently or temporarily. This is undoubtedly the regular location for preaching, which takes place in the Global North. Jesus, however, through the content of his sermon, subverted this context as the only proper place for preaching to take place. In this trajectory, we can observe that there is a long and varied tradition of preaching, which has taken place out-with gathered worship and out-with buildings set apart for that purpose. The driving force for such preaching has often been a commitment to the centrifugal grace of God demonstrated in the person of Jesus Christ. Preaching, which follows the mission paradigm of Luke 4:16-30, will not confine itself to the liturgical assembly. It will creatively seek other locations and contexts when and where its claims may be heard, and its power demonstrated.

CONCLUSION

Luke 4:16-30 is a key Scriptural text in delineating the mission program of Jesus and subsequently that of the Christian Church. Mission matters to the Church. Luke 4:16-30 presents this mission as the centrifugal grace of God, pushing out in Jesus Christ for the holistic salvation of various people groups. Preaching is not incidental but essentially integral to the elucidation and enactment of this mission. Preaching matters, therefore, in the mission of the Church as a particular Spirit-empowered practice. This calls for heightened attention to the possibilities of Scripturally based preaching in terms of content, purposes, peoples, and locations. In Luke 4:16-30, a program for mission, and the practice of preaching belong together.
NOTES

1. This article is based upon a revision and updating of material which I first studied for my MTh Dissertation, “The Place and Function of Preaching in the Church’s Mission: A theological interpretation with reference to Luke 4:16-30,” (unpublished master’s dissertation: Spurgeon’s College London/University of Wales, 2002). It is also significantly different from an article that was published based upon one section of that dissertation, "Preaching and the Missionary Intention of the Church," College of Preachers Journal, 116 (January 2004): 37-48.
5. Bosch, Transforming, 84.
6. Ibid., 89, 100.
7. Ibid., 100-104.
8. When Bosch discusses Luke 24:46-49, he ignores the fact that these verses speak of repentance and the forgiveness of sins being “preached,” Ibid., 91. Although his section on “The Lucan Missionary Paradigm” contains a heading, “Preaching the good news of the peace of Christ” his focus is on “peace-making” not preaching, Ibid., 118-119.
11. Ibid., 165-167.
12. Wright refers to Luke 4:16-30, but it is not a major focus. In turn, while he mentions evangelism, the Gospel, and proclamation, he does not develop the place of preaching in mission, Christopher J. H. Wright, The Mission of God: Unlocking


15. Ibid., 8.

16. Ibid., 8-10.

17. Ibid., 11.


19. Ibid., 130.

20. Ibid., 130-133.


22. Larsen, Company, 41-42.

23. Quicke drawing on Brilioth also gives significance to this Scriptural passage but does not discuss the missionary nature of the content, e.g., Michael J. Quicke, 360 Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking, and Living the Word (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 19-32, 37.

24. Ibid., 19-20.


30. Ibid., 207.

31. Ibid., 204.


37. Green, *Gospel*, 216-218


41. Green, *Gospel*, 215. I agree with Green and others that, at this point, the relationship between Jesus and the synagogue congregation is positive, and the question of 22b asked in admiration.

42. Ibid., 215.


44. Green, *Gospel*, 211.

45. Green, *Theology*, 79-84.
47. Green, *Theology*, 79.
49. Ibid., 210-211.
52. Ibid., 135.
53. Many writers make a connection to the Jubilee legislation.
55. Ibid., 78.
60. It is possible to understand "the gracious words" (v22) to refer not merely to "how" Jesus spoke, but to the "content" which he announced, Richard Bolling Vinson, *Luke* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2008), 122, *EBSCOhost*.
64. Many writers discuss current knowledge about synagogue worship at the time of Jesus. They generally recognize that the reading, interpretation, and discussion of Scripture were regular features of synagogue gatherings.
67. Prior, *Jesus*, 112-113;
73. In verse 19, the verb kērýssō replaces the Septuagint “to call” (καλέσαι) with “the familiar Christian technical term,” Marshall, Commentary, 183.

74. This is without mentioning the other verbs which are used to describe Jesus speaking in the ongoing sermonic discourse, 4: 21, 23, 24. In verse 21, the verb used to describe his fulfillment announcement is “to say” (λέγω).


76. Bosch, Transforming, 84.

77. Senior and Stulmueller, Biblical, 255.


79. There is much to be gained from recent Pentecostal writing on preaching about the role of the Holy Spirit, Lee Roy Martin, ed., Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Preaching (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2015).

80. Whether Jesus chose or was given the text, a subject of scholarly debate, does not affect this interpretation.

81. Quicke, 360 Degree, 37.

82. Prior, Jesus, 129.


84. Walter Brueggemann, Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 104-105, discusses the Isaiah text and Jesus’ appropriation of it.


86. Christine M. Smith, Preaching as Weeping, Confession and Resistance: Radical Responses to Radical Evil (Louisville: WJKP, 1992), 163.

87. William J. Barber II in Frank A. Thomas, How to Preach a Dangerous Sermon (Nashville: Abingdon, 2018), xii.
89. Brilioth, *Brief*, 8-10, italics original.