

# Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

## Encounters with Jesus: The God Who Defies Expectations (Luke 4:16–30)

### Open

Select one of these “ice breakers” to get the conversation going toward the study.

- How do you feel about going to a high school reunion? Excited? Anxious? Timid? Nervous?
- What’s something that has proved to be different from your expectations?
- What were “the good old days” for you?

### Dig

After reading Luke 4:16–30 together, discuss these questions.

1. Look at the texts from Isaiah that Jesus reads in the synagogue (Luke 4:18–19). Which phrases appeal to you? Which phrases puzzle you? Together, what effect do these words have on you?
2. In verse 21 Jesus effectively says, I’m here to fulfill the biggest promises God ever made. Does that sound to you like good news? A threat? An empty boast?
3. The people of Nazareth know Jesus as “Joseph’s son.” Are they right, wrong, or a combination (see Luke 1:26–38; 3:23)? Could they have figured out what was going on at the time?
4. Jesus talks about God giving blessing to people who weren’t Israelites (Luke 4:25–28). What do you think made that especially hard to hear from this person in this setting?
5. How do you react to the end of the story, both the people trying to kill Jesus and Jesus simply walking away?

### Reflect

Use any of these prompts to encourage group members to apply the text to their own experiences.

- What group of people named in verses 18–19 do you identify with most?
- Have you ever felt like a “prophet without honor”? What does this passage suggest to you about that experience?
- Pastor Jon emphasized the way that in Jesus God defies our expectations. Has that been true in your experience? How?
- In this passage God is in control even when it seems the situation is out of control. In what areas do you need the reminder that God is still in control?

### Pray

Invite the group to pray together using any of these suggestions.

- Are there situations now—big or little—that remind you of the need for good news for the poor, release for captives, sight for the blind?
- Where do you see God working in unexpected ways, and how can we pray about those, to give thanks or to ask for God’s help?
- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?