

Imperfect #1  
**A Line in the Sand**

**Word**

**Scripture Reference**

Luke 4:14–30

**Discussion Questions**

1. Describe some good things that come about when you return to your hometown or to a place you consider a second home.
2. Read Luke 4: 14-30. Jesus returned to Galilee, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by everyone (v. 14-15). Then He came to Nazareth, His hometown, the city where He was brought up. What did He normally do on the Sabbath (v. 16)? How would you feel if you were in the crowd there with Jesus?
3. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah from which He read a messianic prophecy about God reaching out to the outcasts or the imperfect people (sinners). The Messiah came to minister to the needy, a mission every follower of Christ should fulfill. As Christians there are three things that we should cultivate in order to reach out to the imperfect people to make them perfect in Christ. First, we should cultivate a heart for imperfect people (v. 17-19). Having a heart for imperfect people is not because you pity them, but because like them, you are also imperfect, but are now made perfect through the cross. Read Isaiah 61:1, 2. Who are the imperfect people that the Messiah was sent to minister to? Who are the imperfect people around you? How do you treat them? When someone messes up, how do you react to that person's mistake? How do you want to be dealt with when you mess up? Discuss why the way you respond to other people's mistakes says a lot about your heart.
4. Secondly, as a follower of Christ you must be ready to accept rejection by your own (v. 20-24). Jesus basically said that He was the fulfillment of the prophecy—that He is the Messiah (v. 21). Everyone was amazed at the gracious words of Jesus, but despite their amazement, what problem did the people have with accepting Jesus' words (v.22)? Describe how did Jesus took their unbelief. Discuss why people who are "perfect" do not want to associate with people they think are beneath them? How do you deal with those who reject you because you are a

follower of Jesus? Would negative responses keep you from sharing your faith to others, or would you keep sharing it to those who are willing to listen?

5. Finally, as Christians we need to realize that all people are equally loved by God (v. 25-27). Jesus did not try to change the minds of those who didn't believe Him, but instead continued to reach out to the imperfect people. Those people in the fringes of society are the ones for which He came. Similarly, Elijah and Elisha, two great prophets of the Old Testament, were sent by God to reach out to the people He loved, including the Gentiles (non-Jews). Does God give preferential treatment to one culture over the other? How do you feel that God loves even the person you dislike the most? Share how you can reach out to people whom you dislike to associate with. How can you make your church a safe place of healing for the broken? Does your attitude towards them exude grace?
6. How did the Nazarenes react when they heard Jesus preach that God loves all people (v. 28)? What did they try to do to him (v. 29)? Describe what Jesus did in response (v. 30). The Bible records only one other instance that Jesus went back to Nazareth, and He never performed any miracles there. What blessings did these people miss when they rejected Him? What would you miss if you allow Jesus to draw "a line in the sand" between you and Him instead of allowing Him to be the Lord of your life?

**Walk**

Jesus Christ came to earth for the people He loves: for sinners, for imperfect people like us. As imperfect as you are, you are blessed to be saved by His grace in order to be perfect in Him. As a response to God's amazing love, are you willing to persevere more to be Christ-like, reaching out to those outside the church? Are you satisfied in coming to church without rising up and reaching out with the good news of Christ? Ask for God's help to give you a heart for the imperfect, courage to face rejection when you try to reach out, and a conviction that God equally loves everyone in spite of their backgrounds or their imperfections.

**Worship & Prayer**

*"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but not I'm found; was blind, but now I see."*

*Thank You, Father, for the love that cleansed my sin and made me perfect in Your eyes. Thank You for the grace and hope I found in Christ. May you grant me a heart that seeks to reach those who need You, courage to face rejection, and eyes that see people as equally loved by You. In Jesus' name. Amen.*