

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Sep 5th 2017

Luke 4, 16—30

Luke presents us with the beginning of the ministry of Jesus clearly detailing the context: in Nazareth, in the synagogue, the Sabbath. Jesus is placed in the center of the narrative as the Messiah of God in whom the promise of salvation is fulfilled. The reference to the prophet Isaiah emphasizes the historical character of the promise to be made according to the designs of God and not according to the human will of the people. God's will to save creation comes to fullness in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, God present in history.

It is the presence of Jesus in the midst of the assembly gathered in the synagogue that Luke highlights with the expression "all eyes were fixed on Him," noting on the one hand the detailed description of the event and, on the other hand, the strength of The presence of Jesus. But such a reaction changes drastically with the rejection of the Jews of Nazareth who are even willing to stone him for 'blaspheming'. Luke, making a contrast between the reactions of Jesus and the people, closes the pericope saying that Jesus passed among them and left.

What is the intention of the evangelist in narrating this event? The intention is, first of all, to point out to the reader that the beginning of the ministry of Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise of God of all times made by the prophets. Secondly, to underline that this promise is realized in Jesus, the Messiah of God. Third, that the time of Jesus is the time of grace, that is, of a special manifestation of the salvation of God to the world; The wait is over, salvation in Jesus is already being fulfilled. Fourth, that salvation is possible through the Presence of God in his people, not the 'Temple', but in the divine humanity and human divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. Fifth, that the salvation of God does not appear in history as an evident event, but as the surprise of God that passes in the middle of history, often in silence, unnoticed.

So this passage of the gospel invites us to think about the Presence of Jesus in our history, a presence that loves, forgives, transforms and saves. His presence humanizes and frees us and makes us bearers of his. God chooses us to be a liberating presence in the midst of reality, announcing the Good News of hope, liberation and salvation.

We can ask ourselves: Do I live aware of the presence of God that manifests in my life at every moment through others? Do I live in openness to God's surprise? Does my life speak of God? What attitudes and actions do not speak of the presence of God?

Luis Enrique Ortiz Alvarez, cmf