

## **Race & Religion**

### *What Almost Killed Jesus*

**Labels** are powerful!

- Luke 4:14-16 - *Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. 16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.*
- Luke 4:16-22 - *...He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” 20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” 22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.*
- Luke 4:23-30 - *Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’” 24 “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.” 28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. 30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.*

Racism has **spiritual** implications!

- 1 Corinthians 9:19,22-23 - *Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible...I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.*
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 - *For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no*

*longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Being a 922 Christian has **racial** implications.

### **Points To Ponder**

1. What saddens you most about the reaction of the people of Jesus' hometown - that they rejected him or that they were religious and racist? (Consider the implications and who is impacted by each choice.)
2. We have labeled ourselves 922 Ministries which means we want to be "all things, to all people" in our community. We want that to be more than a motto and a label, but something we live out. In order to do that, think of three specific ways you will do that over the next several months to reach people that are a different "race" than you (remember race's broader definition).
3. In his book, *One Blood*, John Perkins said, "Racism is a God-sized problem. It is one that only the Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can heal." How might we use this section of Scripture about Jesus to address the problem and also be a part of the healing process in our community?

### ***Homework: Revelation 7***