

**Feb. 23 - Scripture:** Luke 4: 31-44

*A verse that speaks to you:* And the people sought him (Jesus), and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them.

*Observation:* In this passage, Jesus has begun his ministry successfully as the people of Galilee are awestruck by his powerful preaching and his ability to drive out demons and fevers from the sick. They seek him out without stop to cure their ills, and they beg him to stay with them in Galilee. Jesus, however, must explain to them that he will move on to bring the Good News of the Kingdom of God throughout the land.

*Application:* I am sometimes envious of the Jews of Jesus' day, who had the opportunity to know Jesus, to hear his words, and to experience his healing touch. But I need to remind myself that through Luke and the other Gospels, I, too, can hear his words, and through worship and prayer I can find physical and spiritual healing through Christ. The difficult part is not just to understand what Christ would teach me to believe and to do in order to be fulfilled, but to actually believe and to actually do as he would have me.

*Prayer:* Lord, you have taught us for centuries the path to spiritual fulfillment, health, and the Kingdom of God, Yet, we find it so hard to follow your message genuinely. In this season of sacrifice, help us to truly lay aside our vanity, our selfishness, our creative comforts, our cravings for attention or pleasure or power in order to respond to your Good News with our entire being and devote our life and our soul to you.

*Writer:* Jim Sentman - I am a snowbird from New York, who has been blessed to share in worship with the congregation of Eastminster for four winters now. A retired schoolteacher, I am finding the need to strengthen my faith and my commitment to God.