**1/26/25**

**Boom! Mic Drop!**

**Vicar Vince Piekarski**

**Luke 4:14-21 (NRSVUE)**

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 1:2, NRSVUE) (2) **Amen.**

It was an ordinary Monday night. The honeymoon week in Disney was over. The second week of vacation in Wildwood was over. Heather and I were back at our jobs and back home in Pittsburgh. Now, of course I cannot recall if I was actually in the basement watching TV in our room at my mother’s house, or if we were upstairs watching TV with my mother. Regardless, it was set to be a rather normal night of watching WWE Monday Night Raw and catching up on life, or so I thought. Little did anyone know at that time that the very words and actions of one particular wrestler would change the landscape forever quite honestly. Now, there was no real warning, as there was all the action, jabs, and the considerable amount of drama that anyone would come to expect from a wrestling show. However, June 27th, 2011, would be the night that “CM Punk sat crossed-legged at the top of the WWE stage and delivered the infamous pipe bomb.” (8) This six minute promo to end out WWE Monday Night Raw has really lived on for several years, and it really stirred up a lot of people in the industry. He absolutely despised “how the WWE was run and he wanted to change the system.” (8) In his time on the mic CM Punk would go on to berate other wrestlers, and even the top brass at the company as well. He would go on so much of a rant that his mic would end up being cut off, and his very thoughts would come to a screeching halt at the end of that telecast.

Now, of course, there are some people out there that say this was scripted just like any other part of a wrestling show. Then, there are some people that would also say this was expected for some time coming, as you could see his frustrations coming to a boil. However, it has also been said that this indeed was not scripted at all, nor was it expected despite him being given this very opportunity to speak and blow off some steam. Regardless of which scenario, planning, or lack of planning there was, the very words and the way he delivered them would live on and lead to many other awkward events over the course of the years as well. Despite getting some things he actually desired, his continued anger and discord would even lead him to leaving wrestling for some 10 years. CM Punk found a way to change the industry for sure, but it was not at the very cost of part of his life and his very career.

Now, I for one will tell you that I am not one of the biggest CM Punk fans, but I will admit that what he did is so similar to that in which we encounter with our very Gospel Reading today. For he attended wrestling shows just as was expected by his contract and commitment to wrestling, just like Jesus attended the synagogue as was part of the custom and his commitment to his faith. CM Punk participated and filled his role just as was expected of him, just like Jesus participated and filled his role as well. However, on this particular occasion a little more responsibility was provided, and both CM Punk and Jesus would proverbially be given a live mic. Now, CM Punk spoke out on issues he had within the company and proclaimed that he was the best, and that he should be treated as such. However, this is where some of the similarities end, and we learn and hear that Jesus did not have to proclaim anything, and he focused on everyone. He was not focused on himself, and He did not need to throw anyone under the proverbial bus like CM Punk did. More so, we are also reminded that, this change was not some concept or idea. It was actually Jesus in the flesh doing the business of his Father and carrying out the very mission that the Holy Spirit guided him on. Total confirmation of who he was and his mission was actually already in scripture, and fittingly enough he was even handed the very scrolls to read it from that day. It was put right in front of him, and he turned right to it. Then, one final similarity, as they both were sitting, they both finished their extremely important talks, or lessons, by listing one or two final things. One got cut off by the promotion, and one cut himself off because he made his point. Regardless, both ended with a boom! and a Mic Drop!

This very story in the Gospel of Luke going back to the very message from Isaiah is a classic indeed! This is precisely where we get the very intertwining of the message within the Bible at times, and this is where we get transition from scriptural confirmation to verbal confirmation as well. Jesus was and is indeed the Son of God, and his story has been living on way longer than that of the infamous Pipe Bomb from CM Punk! As a matter of fact, Isaiah chapter 61 verses 1 and 2 sound extremely similar to our reading from Luke and they go like this,

“1 The spirit of the Lord God is upon me

 because the Lord has anointed me;

he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,

 to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives

 and release to the prisoners,

2 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor

 and the day of vengeance of our God,

 to comfort all who mourn,” (2)

Extremely similar wording indeed. Our Gospel Reading is precisely where the Word became flesh! Now, “I imagine that Jesus read the text passionately, boldly, and with conviction, bringing the text to life. With all eyes glued on him, Jesus rolls the scroll up, returns it to the attendant, and takes his seat. From his seat, he states resolutely and unapologetically, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21). Boom! Mic Drop!

 We come to realize that Jesus did not actually have to say anything additional. He would not have to worry about his mic being cut off. He summarized everything in a very short and concise manner. There was a reason this happened in this way. There was a reason that this particular scroll was handed to him.

 In this very message “The Spirit anoints and commissions Jesus to announce good news about imminent physical and spiritual transformation: release from captivity, recovery of lost vision, freedom from oppression. The enslaved and oppressed cannot be absolutely free without a recovery of lost vision or a reimagining or envisioning of a life and mind free of physical and psychological chains.” (4) Jesus yet again is flipping things over, and taking everything out of cultural context. There yet again is another role reversal, and we are reminded that the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

 So, as we wrap things up, I would like to thank each and every one of you for making it out to church and filling in the pews or calling in on the Conference Call. Thank you one and all for continuing to advance your faith, understanding, and this very community. Keep on keeping on in the footsteps of Christ and we will get our eternal and everlasting thanks in the end and that indeed will be the huge boom that we put on Satan, as we confirm who we are and whose we are. Christ will say thank you to each and every one of us at the last hour, and just like in Matthew chapter 25, verse 21, he will indeed say “Well done, good and faithful servant!” and that indeed will be the best and most awesome Mic Drop!

**Amen.**

**References & Study Points**

(1) Sundays and Seasons

 Preaching

 Year C 2025

 January 26th, 2025

 Third Sunday after Epiphany

(2) BibleGateway.com

(3) The Four Pages of The Sermon

 Revised and Updated

 A Guide to Biblical Preaching

 Paul Scott Wilson

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 Abingdon Press

(4) WorkingPreacher.org

 Third Sunday after Epiphany

 Deconstruction is good news for those it frees from physical ailments, spiritual

 delusions, and harmful theologies

 January 26, 2025

 Commentary on Luke 4:14-21

 Mitzi Smith

(5) WorkingPreacher.org

 Third Sunday after Epiphany (Year C)

 This lection reminded me of a book title from a few years back: Good News is Bad

 News is Good News.

 January 27, 2019

 Commentary on Luke 4:14-21

 David Schnasa Jacobsen

(6) WorkingPreacher.org

 Third Sunday after Epiphany

 Resist the temptation to spiritualize this message

 January 23, 2022

 Commentary on Luke 4:14-21

 Elisabeth Johnson

(7) WorkingPreacher.org

 Third Sunday after Epiphany (Year C)

 This passage follows upon the heels of the temptation narrative in which Jesus

 emerges the victor over Satan, at least for the time being.

 January 24, 2010

 Commentary on Luke 4:14-21

 Roy Harrisville III

(8) CM Punk's WWE pipebomb remembered 11 years on

 Lewis Lawes-Cole

 Published Jun 27, 2022

 https://www.givemesport.com/88026423-cm-punks-wwe-pipebomb-remembered-11-

 years-on/

**Luke 4:14-21 (NRSVUE)**

 Near the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth.

 In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.

 14 Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about

 him spread through all the surrounding region. 15 He began to teach in their

 synagogues and was praised by everyone.

  16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the

 synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and

 the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found

 the place where it was written:

  18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

   because he has anointed me

    to bring good news to the poor.

  He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

   and recovery of sight to the blind,

    to set free those who are oppressed,

  19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

 20 And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The

 eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 Then he began to say to them,

 “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”