

FBC POWELL, 4-2-17 PM NOTES
"The Overcoming Power of Christ"
Luke 4:38-44
12 in Series, "The Gospel According to Luke"

John 20:31 "but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

"This closing section of chapter 4 might appear at first glance to be a series of brief, disconnected comments that sum up a certain period in Jesus' life. But they are in reality very carefully connected. The Jewish people wanted to see signs to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, and in this brief passage Luke provided some for them."
—John MacArthur

I. The Power That Overcomes Disease (vv. 38-40)

John 1:40-42 "of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which translated means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter)."

Matthew 28:18b "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."

Isaiah 53:5 "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed."

1 Peter 2:24 "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

- A. New Testament Healings Did Not Depend on the Faith of the Recipient
- B. New Testament Healings Were Completely Successful
- C. New Testament Healings Were Undeniable
- D. New Testament Healings Did Not Involve Interviews and Screenings That Resulted in Some Being Turned Away

II. The Power That Overcomes Demons (v. 41)

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel 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."

"It was altogether inappropriate that Jesus' Messiahship should be proclaimed by representatives of the evil one. Had He allowed this by not silencing the demons, He would have given grounds for a charge brought against Him later by the Pharisees, that of being Satan's ally (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22)."
—Robert L. Thomas and Stanley Gundry

Isaiah 61:1 ""The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel 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."

III. Power to Overcome Diversions (vv. 42-44)

John 17:4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do."

Mark 1:35 "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

First Baptist Church Powell 04 02 17 PM
Sermon 12: The Overcoming Power of Christ

Luke 4:38-44

Have you ever wondered why we have four Gospels? We see the divine wisdom in having four Gospels when we understand that each Gospel had a specific purpose and emphasis. Matthew's Gospel has been called, "The Gospel of the King." Its first readers were Jews. Mark's Gospel has been called "The Gospel of the Servant." It was primarily written for Roman readers. We see Mark explaining Jewish customs that Matthew didn't need to explain because it was aimed originally at a Jewish audience who would have understood those customs. Luke's Gospel emphasizes the humanity of Christ (though it also teaches His deity). In Luke's genealogy, he goes all the way back to Adam, the Father of all mankind. Matthew starts with Abraham because he is targeting primarily Jews who were the physical descendants of Abraham. Luke's primary audience was non-Jews and he was writing to a broader audience than was Mark. John's Gospel was universal in its audience. It was written much later than the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). John supplemented and complimented the other three. The primary message of John is that Jesus is the Son of God – the eternal God made flesh. John tells us why he wrote this Gospel in John 20:31: "but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." No one gospel tells the whole story as God wants us to see it, but put together, the Gospels compliment and do not contradict one another. With all four, we have a balanced picture of who Jesus is and what He did.

In the first message of this series, we looked at Luke's convincing evidence for the things he wrote in this Gospel, which bears his name. Luke gathers the convincing historical evidence that Jesus is the God-man, the promised Messiah, and the only Savior. Luke's purpose was not to give a chronological account of Jesus life, but to cluster various events and messages to show the reader what He taught about Himself, and what it means to be His disciple, to take up the cross and follow Him. Luke also focuses deeply in on the trial, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of Christ, and informs us of details not contained in the other Gospels.

In this text, Luke gives us truth concerning the power of Jesus that overcomes disease, demons, and diversions from His God given task.

I. The Power That Overcomes Disease (vv. 38-40)

Let's set the context. Jesus had been rejected in His home town of Nazareth. When He told them that He was the longed-for Messiah, they were so furious that they tried to throw Him off a cliff. Jesus miraculously walked away from them and they couldn't even touch Him. He then traveled about sixteen miles away, to a city called Capernaum, where he set up what we could call "His base of operations." On the Sabbath, Jesus entered the synagogue in Capernaum and began teaching them with authority and clarity – something the people were unaccustomed to hearing. Luke 4:32: "and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority." In that same service was a demon possessed man, and Jesus cast out the demon. Luke 4:35: "But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be quiet and come out of him!' And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm." That was just the beginning of the manifestation of Jesus' power.

When we come to today's text, Jesus leaves the synagogue after the service and goes to Simon's home. This Simon is later called Simon Peter who had not yet been officially called to be Jesus' disciple. From John's Gospel, we learn that Simon Peter had been introduced to Jesus by His brother Andrew. John 1:40-42: "of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which translated means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter)." *Cephas* is the Aramaic equivalent of the Greek "Peter."

When they get to Peter's home, they find that his mother in law, who likely lived with them, was very sick. Mark says that she had a fever, but Dr. Luke, a physician, uses more technical language and says that she had a "high

fever.” “High” is the Greek *mega*. It wasn’t that she was, what is called in the country, “a little under the weather”; it wasn’t that she “had the sniffles.” This was a serious and probably a life-threatening illness.

In verse 39 we see that Jesus “rebuked” the fever. How do you “rebuke” a fever? You don’t unless you are the Son of God who was involved in creating the body. You don’t unless you are the one who says in Matthew 28:18b: “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

The healing was immediate and complete. The implication is that she was immediately restored to complete health with no residual effects whatever. If you’ve ever had a high fever, you know that when the fever “breaks,” you are so weak that you can hardly move. Peter’s mother-in-law got up and began to serve the guests. This was an immediate restoration to complete health.

At this point, I want to take this incident of healing and use it to warn you of, and equip you to confront, the false, sham “healings” and healers that are duping people when they are in a very vulnerable place. The prominence of phony healers seems to have lost some influence in recent years, but they are still quite active. The umbrella term for this fraternity of “faith healers” is “The Word of Faith Movement” (WOF). This movement’s errors go way beyond just healing, but that is the error I want to focus on in this message.

The recognized leader of the WOF movement, before his death in 2003, was Kenneth Hagin. He spoke for the Word of Faith movement when he said this, “I believe that it is the plan of God our Father that no believer should ever be sick.” [Quoted in *Great Divides*, by Ronald Nash, page 115]

The basis of that statement is that physical healing is in the atonement in the same way that salvation is in the atonement of Christ. By atonement, we mean the price that Jesus paid for our sins on the cross. The proof text is Isaiah 53:5: “But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.” That same truth is proclaimed in 1 Peter 2:24: “and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”

The logic of these “healers” goes like this. “Just as you can claim salvation by faith and expect to be immediately saved, even so you can claim your physical healing by faith and expect to be immediately healed. If you are not healed, it is because you have a weak or defective faith.” I think this is the teaching of the WOF movement that most elevates my blood pressure. I have personally had to deal with people who are messed up and guilt ridden over this false teaching. Every year people die who refuse to seek medical treatment believing it to be a lack of faith. I have been rebuked in hospitals for praying for healing if that is God’s sovereign plan for that specific time. It’s interesting how some of the WOF teachers themselves, and their family members, don’t practice what they preach. I won’t mention names here because it involves some family members of WOF preachers, but I have record of one prominent WOF teacher who recently had back surgery, two who were medically treated for cancer, two whose wives were medically treated for cancer, one who died after his church “confessed” his healing, and one who had quadruple heart bypass surgery. [See *Areopagus Journal*, Nov-Dec 2003 page 21] I in no way want to sound gleeful over these incidents, but I share them to say that they don’t always practice what they preach.

I believe the passages we read in 1 Peter 2:24 and in Isaiah 53:5 are referring to spiritual healing. “Healing” in Hebrew, Greek, and English can mean physical or spiritual healing from the condemnation and guilt of sin. Look again at 1 Peter 2:24: “and He Himself bore our *sins* in His body on the cross, so that we might *die to sin* and *live to righteousness*; for by His wounds you were healed.” I certainly believe that ultimate healing is ours in the atonement of Christ. One day we will get new bodies that never get sick, weak, old, or die. I also believe that God, in His sovereignty, can supernaturally heal right now without medicine or medical treatment. But God is sovereign in that and we have no biblical right to claim that healing as one can claim salvation when they repent and place their faith in Christ. It isn’t wrong to seek medical treatment; it is wise. Even when the body heals naturally, God deserves the glory because He designed and created these bodies. When the body is healed through medicine, God deserves the glory because He gave the researchers and the doctors wisdom to know what to do. When we are not healed and daily draw on God’s sufficient grace to suffer victoriously, God deserves the glory. When a person dies without fear from a sickness, God deserves the glory because of the dying grace He bestowed and because of the promise they have of a new body that never gets sick! The Bible teaches that our outer man (body) is decaying (2 Corinthians 4:16), even the Apostle Paul didn’t heal associates like Epaphroditus (Colossians 4:14), Timothy (1 Timothy 5:23), and Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20).

At this point in the message, I want us to examine some of the characteristics of New Testament healings and see if they differ from modern “faith healers.” [Much of the following content under (Section I) is from John MacArthur, *Strange Fire*, pages 162-175]

A. New Testament Healings Did Not Depend on the Faith of the Recipient

Many, if not most of the prominent “faith healers,” blame failures to be healed on a lack of faith by the sick person. It is ironic that they take some credit for those supposedly healed, but put all the blame on the sick person when healing doesn’t come. When we look at the healings brought about by Christ and the apostles, time after time there is no mention of faith on the part of the one healed. In Luke 17:11-19 only one of the lepers expressed faith, but all ten were healed. The crippled man at the pool of Bethesda was healed without any faith on his part (John 5:13). On three occasions, Jesus raised people from the dead. It obviously didn’t have anything to do with their faith – they were dead. In Acts 3:6-8 Peter healed a man without the man’s faith. Though Jesus often responded to people’s faith, the healing of the hurting was not dependent on their faith. The phrase in the Gospels, “Your faith has made you well” can (and probably should) be translated, “Your faith has saved you.” While salvation is always tied to faith, physical healing is not.

B. New Testament Healings Were Completely Successful

The healing miracles of Jesus never failed. There was no gradually getting better. Some use the healing of a blind man in Mark 8:22-25 as a case of progressive healing. The man said, “I see men, for I see them like trees, walking around.” He was referring the level of his blindness before Jesus healed him and gave his 20/20 vision. There was an incident where the disciples failed to cast a demon out of a boy, but that was because of a faith failure on the part of His disciples.

C. New Testament Healings Were Undeniable

Lazarus was raised from the dead, and there was no doubt! He had been dead for four days. The man healed in John 5:13 had not walked in thirty-eight years and yet stood and walked. That was undeniable. New Testament healings involved changes in the healed person that no one could deny. They were all easy to document that a miracle had taken place.

D. New Testament Healings Did Not Involve Interviews and Screenings That Resulted in Some being Turned Away

In the text in verse 40, it indicates that all who came to Jesus in Capernaum were healed. Notice the phrase, “...and laying His hands on *each one of them*, He was healing them.”

II. The Power That Overcomes Demons (v 41)

We dealt at length with demons and demon possession in the last message, but I want to remind you of some things. In Luke 4:18, Jesus told the people at Nazareth the reason that He came. Luke 4:18: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel 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.” The oppression is from the enemy – from Satan. Jesus came to release the captives. The evil that oppresses is not the feeble Satan of folklore in command of a gang of winged possums. Satan has an army of personal, powerful, spiritual beings who are fallen angels. We see something comforting in verse 41. The picture here is of demons that are terrified of Christ, the second member of the Trinity – the Son of God. They knew Jesus, and they knew, and today still know, His power. The demons (I repeat) are terrified of Christ! The text says they were “...coming out of many, shouting, ‘You are the Son of God!’” I think that is picturing their terror! Notice that Jesus not only had the power to cast them out; He had the power to muzzle them. Jesus did not want testimony from demons. Here is a good explanation of why Jesus silenced the demons. “It was altogether inappropriate that Jesus’ Messiahship should be proclaimed by representatives of the evil one. Had he allowed this, by not silencing the demons, he would have given grounds for a charge brought against Him later by the Pharisees, that of being Satan’s ally (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22).” [Robert L. Thomas and Stanley Gundry, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, page 50; quoted in MacArthur, page 296] Paul also silenced demons’ testimonies when he cast the demons of fortune telling out of a girl in Philippi (Acts 16:16-18).

Because Jesus had power over demons, he could fulfill the prophesy of Isaiah 61:1: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel 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.”

III. Power to Overcome Diversions (vv. 42-44)

Jesus was operating on an agenda and a timetable from the Father. He was on mission and nothing could divert Him from that mission from the Father. As with everything, Jesus accomplished that mission perfectly. On the night He was arrested, and given a mock trial before being nailed to a rugged cross, Jesus said in the High Priestly prayer to the Father in John 17:4: “I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.” In preparation for the accomplishment of His task which included choosing the men He would pour Himself into, notice what Jesus did: He went to a secluded place to pray and hear from the Father. Verse 41 doesn’t say that He prayed, but Mark tells us that is what He did. Mark 1:35: “In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.”

Actually, Luke tells us more than any of the Gospels about Jesus’ emphasis in prayer. This explains why he could not be diverted by pressure and needs. He was on a mission from the Father summarized in Luke 19:10: “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” That was not “the lost” in general, but the ones the Father had prepared to hear. Verses 43 and 44 reflect what He heard while he was alone with the Father before they found Him. Someone said, “Prayer is the greatest means of grace.” And that is so true.

Verse 43 is the first mention of “the kingdom of God” in Luke. We will see that phrase thirty-seven more times in the book of Luke. We will dig much deeper later, but suffice it to say here, that the kingdom of God is the salvation and the rule of God.

Conclusion

Truly, Jesus had all power – power over disease, demons, and over the enemy’s attempts to divert Him from His God given mission.