

Message #18**Luke 4:31-44**

Years ago a friend of mine took his family to a mega church. He said when he walked in there was a marquis-type sign that listed a smorgasbord of choices of entertainment for that particular Sunday. In one room there was a movie being shown; in another there was music; in another there was a puppet show; and in another there was coffee and doughnuts. He made his way to the auditorium and supposedly to the worship service. It began with singing and announcements and special music. When it came time for the preaching, the stage was cleared and people started to act out a play. He said he had enough. He got his wife and children up and said we are getting out of here. A church official followed him out into the parking lot and said, "I hope you will come back." He said, "We will never come back. I take my family to church to be fed the Word of God, not to be entertained by some cheap Vegas-type show." Well, the leader didn't quite know what to say, so he said, "We are just trying to relate to people like Jesus did." My friend said, "Check your Bible, Jesus never tried to relate to people like that."

If ever you want see how Jesus actually ministered to people, all you need to do is take a journey through Luke. Jesus Christ was dedicated to preaching and teaching God's Word, and any miracle He ever did was designed to show He had the full authority of God, as God.

THE PRIMARY PURPOSE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST WAS TO PREACH AND TEACH GOD'S WORD SO PEOPLE COULD GET INTO A PROPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, AND HIS MIRACLES WERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY IN HIS TEACHING.

Christ's miracles were not designed to impress an audience like some illusionist in Las Vegas. The things Jesus Christ did were not for the sake of entertaining some crowd or drawing some crowd; they were for the purpose of establishing His authority as a preacher and teacher. He used miracles to show He was God and to show He was preaching the Word of God. He used miracles to establish His credentials as God. Miracles had revelational and redemptive significance.

There are five glimpses that Luke gives us of Jesus Christ:

GLIMPSE #1 – Jesus Christ amazed people by the authority of His teaching. **4:31-32**

Capernaum was located 20-25 miles NE of Nazareth. **Verse 31** says, "He came down to Capernaum." This is a reference to the topography of Galilee, not the geography of location. Nazareth was located in the high land about 1200 feet above sea level and Capernaum was in the lowland area about 686 feet below sea level.

Jesus Christ went to the synagogue and taught on the Sabbath Day, and when He taught, there was something alive and dynamic about His teaching. There was power in it. His teaching wasn't stale and dead. There was a fresh vibrancy and authority to the way He taught.

In fact, **verse 32** says the people were “amazed” at His teaching. What that means is that the people were shocked and astonished by the powerful way He taught.

Make no mistake about this point: Jesus Christ carefully taught the Word of God and when He did, there was an authoritative, dynamic ring to it that the people sensed. When He taught, the people sensed God’s power in it. There was nothing stagnant or dull, but there was an authoritative, life-dynamic in His instruction.

When the Word of God is rightly divided by one gifted by God to do it, I am fully convinced this same dynamic can be sensed. One may go to a church and listen to someone talking about the Bible, but there is deadness in it. But when you go to church and the Word of God is accurately expounded, there is an authoritative, supernatural stirring of the soul that comes alive.

The first time I heard Dr. S. Lewis Johnson preaching, it was like that. The first time I heard Dr. Haddon Robinson preach, it was like that. The first time I listened to a tape of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, it was like that. The first time I heard John Miles teach, it was like that. When they spoke, there was power in it; there was a quiet reverence, and you could hear a pin drop.

That is the way it was when Jesus Christ spoke. In fact, it was more powerful than that. There was amazing power and authority to the way He preached. His preaching of God’s Word became the landmark of His ministry.

GLIMPSE #2 – Jesus Christ demonstrated His authority by His power over demons. **4:33-37**

When Jesus Christ was here on earth, demonic activity was intense. He already went head-to-head against Satan, and now He has to confront the demonic. Jesus Christ demonstrated that He had complete, total authority over the demonic world.

As we examine this particular episode, there are six facts we may observe about this demonic possession:

Fact #1 - The demon-possessed man was in the synagogue. **4:33a**

We could say that this demon-possessed man was a man who regularly went to church. He was a very religious individual. Demons do their greatest work in people in the church who appear to be very religious (II Cor. 11:13-15). As we will see, one of the things that indicates a demonic presence is some negative or unusual reaction to the truth of God when expounded.

Fact #2 - The demon-possessed man is unclean. **4:33b**

In Biblical terms, there is no such thing as a clean demon. The Greek world taught that there were good demons and bad demons. By using the term “unclean,” Luke was clearly showing Theophilus that even though this was a religious man in a synagogue, the demon is still unclean.

Fact #3 - The demon reacts against authoritative teaching. **4:33c**

In the original Greek text there is a conjunction “and” that begins **verse 33**. The text literally reads “and in the synagogue.” That conjunction connects the reader to the preceding clause. In other words, it was the authoritative, true teaching of Jesus Christ that triggered this demonic reaction.

Had Christ been your typical Pharisaical teacher, the demon would have probably enjoyed the message and the man would have quietly sat there and when the service was over, would have went merrily on his way. But when Christ accurately and powerfully expounded the Word of God, the Satanic world came to life and the demon “cried out.”

Fact #4 - The demon recognized Christ’s superiority. **4:34a**

Notice the demon cries out “Let us alone” and “What business do we have with each other?” What Christ is doing is admitting there is no basis for any fellowship between Jesus Christ and demons. One is the world of God and the other is the world of Satan.

Keep in mind this is taking place “in the synagogue” which is the place of worship. This demon is responding to the presence of Jesus Christ at the worship service, and he realizes there is a big gap between his world and God’s world.

Fact #5 - The demon recognized Christ’s future demonic judgment. **4:34b**

Demons know what their outcome will be and they know what judgment will ultimately do. They are very much aware that one day they will be eternally destroyed by Jesus Christ. Demons know Biblical prophecy; it is a shame many churches don’t know it. The demons are fully aware that they will one day be judged and cast into hell and burn forever and ever, and they also know Jesus Christ will be the One who will put them there.

Fact #6 - The demon recognized Christ’s identity. **4:34c**

Demons know that Jesus Christ is the Holy One of God. They knew that Jesus of Nazareth was God.

It is important to point out this demon is testifying of exactly what Jesus wanted the people to realize, and that is, He is the Holy One of God. Demons know more about the Person and work of Jesus Christ, more than most who go to church. In fact, the demons knew more about sound doctrine concerning Jesus Christ than many of the people He healed.

But you will notice in **verse 35** that Jesus tells the demon to be quiet and come out of the man. He will do exactly the same thing in verse 41. He will not allow the demons to speak. He silences demons from testifying of His identity. Jesus Christ does not need, does not want, and will not permit the witness of demons.

Now why would Christ not permit demons to testify of His identity, when one of the purposes of the miracles is to establish His identity (Luke 5:24)?

The answer is that **with God, the end never justifies the means**. God will not tolerate nor accept unclean demons leading or even communicating His truth to people. This same mentality existed in the mind of the Apostle Paul (Acts 16:16-18).

God does not sanction anything demonic to do His sacred work. God is far more interested in our righteousness rather than our results.

According to **verse 35**, Jesus commanded the demon to come out of the man and the demon threw the man to the floor, not hurting the man, and immediately came out.

Well according to **verses 36-37**, the people were amazed and they began talking. They had never seen or heard anything like this. Word spread that this Jesus is no ordinary man. Now the critical question about these people is not about their amazement; it is about whether or not they believe in Him. Being amazed is not the same as having real faith that Jesus Christ is, in fact, your only God/Savior/Messiah/King.

GLIMPSE #3 – Jesus Christ demonstrated His authority by His power over a fever. **4:38-39**

Christ left the synagogue and went to Simon's home. Simon's wife's mother was sick with a fever. Dr. Luke points out it was a "high fever." Peter was a married man (I Cor. 9:1) and his wife's mother was very sick.

A fever is some virus, inflammation, or disease that is characterized by a rise in body temperature. The typical way you treat some infection is with an antibiotic. What is perfectly normal and natural when you have something like this is for you to have a conversation with your doctor. Dr. Luke, who was a medical doctor, certainly knew this. What he describes here is truly proof of who Jesus Christ actually is.

I don't know of any other person or doctor who carries on a conversation with a fever. You don't normally speak to a fever. But that is exactly what Jesus Christ did. He "rebuked" the fever that was in Peter's mother-in-law. He actually is talking to a fever, and the text says that it obeyed Him and left her.

In this case, Jesus Christ not only has a conversation with the fever, but the fever obeys Him. Jesus Christ talks to a fever and the fever left immediately, and the woman got up and started serving Christ and them.

So this was complete, instantaneous healing to full strength. Peter's mother-in-law used her health to "wait on them." Typically when one is getting over a sickness, you wait on the one who had been sick.

GLIMPSE #4 – Jesus Christ demonstrated His authority by His power over various diseases.
4:40-41

Word was spreading about the power of Jesus Christ and all the sick of Capernaum came to Him. Notice he laid “His hands on every one of them” (4:40). Now He had just spoken to a fever in a private setting; but now Luke develops a more public setting.

People who had all kinds of diseases came to Christ, and we may notice from **verse 40** that He laid His hands on each of them as He healed them. In the case of Peter’s mother-in-law, He simply spoke to the fever, so why did He lay His hands on every person? Because He is illustrating a very important point, and that is those who are sick need to be individually touched by Him. No one is automatically right with God just because Jesus Christ died on the cross for sinners. Each person needs to be personally touched by Jesus Christ to be healed of their sins.

Now Christ was also casting out many demons who were actually shouting out “you are the Son of God” and they knew He was the “Messiah.” But Christ would not permit them to be His witnesses.

Just because someone says the right things about Jesus Christ does not mean they are in a right relationship with God.

GLIMPSE #5- Jesus Christ demonstrated His authority by His power in preaching everywhere.
4:42-44

In contrast to those who love big crusades and crowds and applause, Jesus liked to get alone and get away. He certainly got away to pray. There is no ministry on this earth that will ever succeed in God’s estimation without prayer. It is interesting that the crowds of people were not interested in prayer; but they sure were interested in seeing Jesus Christ.

What a contrast. In Nazareth, the people wanted Him out of their city (4:29). In Capernaum, they never wanted Him to leave their city (4:42).

But look carefully as to what Jesus saw as His primary purpose—“I must preach.” Not I must heal. Not I must cast out demons. But I must preach and proclaim the truth of God.

Now the truth that Jesus proclaimed while He was here was truth about “the Kingdom of God.” In view of this very context, when the Kingdom of God is actually here, Jesus Christ will reign over everything and everyone.

There will be no more demonic or Satanic issues. There will be no more sickness. There will be tremendous preaching and teaching when God’s Kingdom is established on earth.

There is only one way into that Kingdom. There is only one door of entrance, and that is Jesus Christ.