

# When Jesus Shows His Power

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[0:00] I invite you to turn in your Bibles if you have one to Luke chapter number 11. If you're able to stand for the reading of God's Word, ask that you would. We're in a series going through verse by verse here in Luke's Gospel and looking at Jesus and His mission.

Jesus' mission is simple, to seek and to save that which was lost. And we see throughout this Gospel how Jesus did that, how He's teaching us to do the same thing. Because if we're to follow Christ, we're to be on the same mission that He's on.

And so we're looking at that in depth and we found our place here in Luke chapter number 11. If you don't have a copy of God's Word, you can follow along on the screen. Verse number 14 says this, And He, talking of Jesus, was casting out a devil and it was dumb.

And it came to pass when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devil through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.

But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation. And a house divided against a house falleth. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?

[1:08] Because you say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?

Therefore shall they be your judges. But if I, with the finger of God, cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

When a strong man is armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all of his armor, wherein he trusted and divideth his spoils.

Jesus says in verse 23, He that is not with me is against me. And he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest.

And finding none, he saith, I will return into my house once I came out. And when he cometh and findeth it swept and garnished, then he goeth and taketh unto him seven other spirits, more wicked than himself.

And they enter in and dwell there. And the last state of the man is worse than the first state. And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto him, Behold, blessed is the womb that bear thee and the paps which thou hast sought.

[2:22] But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. Now some of this we're going to walk through and you think, what is Jesus talking about? What is taking place here is Jesus performs a miracle.

And because of that miracle, there comes all these opinions. And the reality is this, is when we see Jesus' power, we cannot remain neutral. When Jesus shows his power, a response must be made. And Jesus is kind of illustrating that through some illustrations there. And we're going to walk through that and see, and I think it would be a help to us. But let's ask him to bless our time together. Father, Lord, we come to you now as we open up your word and we need you.

Lord, I need you right now. I need your strength. I need your spirit to guide me, to guide my words. Lord, I pray that you would just help what needs to be said to be said. Lord, I pray that you would be with a listener.

That you would just quiet the hearts and minds. That we would focus on your word. Lord, we're asking you to comfort us, to challenge us, to convict us where need be. Lord, if there's somebody here that needs to know you as Savior, that today would be that day.

[3:27] Lord, I pray that you would be with us now.

And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you for standing. May be seated. Amen. Have you noticed how everybody's an expert until something actually happens? You know what I'm talking about? I mean, it's easy to have opinions until facts show up. Until real life comes. I mean, we're all professional football coaches on Monday morning. Everybody in here can fix the Cowboys. No, only God could do that. And I don't think he cares about that. But it's easy. You know, well, if I was the coach, well, you're not the coach. There's a reason you're sitting in a lazy boy chair and not coaching football because you're not good at coaching. You know, everybody knows how to parent until you have kids. And you have kids on a snow week.

[4:29] I told my kids, I love you and I love spending time with you. But if they cancel school tomorrow, I'm still taking you. And that's kind of where we are right now. And we're alive and we're loving each other and we're happy about it.

Everybody knows how everything in the church should work until you volunteer in kids ministry. I mean, I love our teachers and our Sunday school teachers. That's not for everybody. Everybody knows how to fix the economy while we struggle to keep our own budget. And I think sometimes we think, oh, I know how prayer works until God doesn't answer the way that we expect it to.

See, the reality is this, is that we can all be confident until reality interrupts our theories. That we have opinions and we know how to handle it. But when life shows up, what are we going to do? When things happen, how do we respond to that? And that's kind of what Luke is showing us here in this passage that we read. And I know it's been a little bit since we've been together, but in the first 14, 13 verses of this chapter, Jesus was teaching his disciples how to pray.

[5:34] They saw him praying. They saw that every time he did something, it was always fueled by prayer. They were running around trying to figure everything out. And they looked over there and Jesus is praying.

He's praying before he does this. He's praying before he does that. Prayer was the fuel that Jesus needed. Prayer was the thing that keeps us connected to the Father. And they realized, I need that in my life.

And they told Jesus, teach us to pray. So Jesus laid out this prayer. And it's not something we are to quote word for word. We can. There's nothing wrong with that. But it's really a pattern. And it shows our dependence on our Heavenly Father.

And He reminds us and He gives us some illustrations there in those opening verses of how to persist in prayer. Jesus reminds us, we don't just pray one time and say, well, if He doesn't answer, I'm just going to move on.

No, He says, we've got to keep coming to the Father and keep being in that dependence upon Him. And how we trust Him. So now Luke introduces a new section of Scripture here.

[6:33] And he's showing us and reminding us why prayer matters. Because the one that we are praying to has absolute authority over everything. There is nothing that Jesus has ever faced.

He said, well, didn't see this one coming. Because it just seems like it's so abrupt that in verse number 14, He kind of just nonchalantly says, yeah, and He was casting out a devil. Because to us, that seems impossible. And sometimes we have a hard time wrapping our 2026 brain around these kind of events. But to Jesus, this was nothing. He has all authority. He has all power. He tells the disciples before He ascends into heaven, all power is given unto me in heaven and earth. And the same He gives to us when He's showing us this truth and He's reminding us that He has the authority.

Because this miracle that we read, and really it's just one little verse and kind of the rest of this text is based off of it. But it wasn't done in a vacuum. It seems like Jesus is just kind of sitting there doing this like it's no big deal.

[7:36] And it happens visibly for the masses to see. And because of the way that it happened and because of the environment that it happened in, it forces everybody that sees this to really decide what they believe about Jesus.

Because they can't sit there anymore and be neutral. Because they have seen something that in their mind they thought, how is that even possible? There's this man that was possessed by a devil and because of that he was unable to speak.

That's what it means when it said it was dumb. He had no ability to speak, no ability to do those type of things. And yet Jesus shows up, says something to him, and the man starts talking. And everybody's looking around like, did you see that?

What just happened there? And instead of the crowd agreeing and saying, well, look what God did. Look what Jesus did. Look at this miracle. I'm so happy for that man.

They immediately become a panel of experts. They all have their opinions. They all have how it happened. One of them says, well, he obviously isn't God.

[8:43] Which just seems dumb to say, just to be honest. You see something that nobody's ever done and you think, well, that can't be God. That was one of the opinions. Others said, well, you know what? We need a little bit more evidence.

We need a little bit more signs. If he would just write it in the sky and say, this is a miracle from God, then I'd believe. That's kind of what they're saying here. Others just stand there.

They're not sure where they stand. They're amazed, but they're not really committed to it. Because when Jesus shows his power, whether it's in first century Israel or even today in our own lives, the real question isn't what happened.

It's what do we do with him? How do we respond? How do we make it real in our own lives? And the way that Luke introduces this, he wants us to understand something from the outset.

And you look throughout scripture, you look throughout all the gospels, Jesus never does a miracle to impress people. Jesus is not doing a miracle to draw crowds.

[9:46] That is never his goal. Now, when miracles happen, crowds come. When you start feeding people with five loaves and two fishes, people are definitely going to show up. Because they're hungry. They want that.

He's going to draw a crowd. But here's why Jesus performs a miracle. Every time you see a miracle in scripture, Jesus preaches the word of God. Because you know what the miracles do? They expose our heart.

They show us where we are. Many times it's just an illustration of where our life is. And Jesus uses it to preach the message. That's why he came.

He came to seek and to save. How does he do that? By preaching the good news. By preaching the gospel. And the way that we respond. The way that we respond to the power of Jesus reveals what we truly believe about him.

We need to think about that in our own life. So, I want us just to walk through this text. And we see a few things. We see, as we mentioned already in verse 14, we see the power of Jesus is clearly revealed.

[10:48] The miracle is simple in the fact of the way that it's described. It's very direct. It's undeniable. This demon was controlling this man and he had stolen this man's voice.

And Jesus simply removes it and the man speaks. Luke doesn't have to embellish it because none was needed. For those that were there in the crowd, it was obvious what was going on.

The miracle itself is not debated. But what takes place after is how it happened. That's really the issue that they were having. And before we really move on, I just want to remind you of a few things.

In scripture, this demonic oppression, it's never neutral. Listen, the enemy is not for you. He doesn't care anything about you. He doesn't care anything about your family.

He doesn't care anything about your children. No, he came to steal, kill, and destroy. And that wasn't some Old Testament, some New Testament. No, he's still alive and well today, might I remind you.

[11:48] And he walketh about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. That's the enemy that we're facing. He diminishes. He enslaves. He silences. And this man is kind of a picture of what God does.

I mean, what Satan does. Because sometimes what we see here is we see people in the Bible that are bad off like this. This man can't speak. And we see other people that are paralyzed. We see people that are dead.

We think, man, they're really bad. But let me just remind you. Before you met Christ, you were dead and your trespasses and sin. You were way worse than a guy that couldn't speak.

We had no hope. Hell was the only option that we had. And yet, Jesus showed up. And really what every miracle does, it kind of points to the gospel.

Because when Jesus shows up, he replaces that bondage with freedom. That we're free in Christ. That he's given us a new life and a new hope. He replaces that silence with a testimony.

[12:46] Listen, if you're saved, you have a testimony. And sometimes we look at people and they maybe have what we would call an amazing testimony. And God uses that in great ways.

And you can say, well, I was so far gone and this and that and all these things. But listen, if you were dead and now you're alive and you're on your way to heaven, you have a testimony. And you should tell somebody about it.

That's what our whole job is. Is to tell others what Jesus did for us. We see this man's oppression is replaced with complete restoration.

And it doesn't matter if you're in a first century village in Israel or in Gainesville, Texas on a cold February morning. When Jesus works powerfully in a life, neutrality is impossible.

And that's the issue that the people, that the crowd is having in this text. And more often than not, when God does work in a life, people begin to try to explain it away.

[13:48] They begin to make excuses for it. You say, well, what does that look like? Maybe sometimes God restores a marriage. It's been on the rocks and it restores a life. And it seems like it's going down a wrong path.

And people say this, well, that won't last. But if Jesus showed up, guess what? It will last. There's testimony all over this room where God showed up in your life.

And you were going down that road. And God showed up. And guess what? You're here this morning. Why? Because God is good. Someone gets saved. And coworkers say, yeah, it's just a phase.

He's just on that religious holy roller stuff right now. I'm so thankful that when Jesus saved me, it wasn't just a phase. It wasn't just a moment in my life.

No, it changed my entire direction. August the 2nd, 2002, my life has not been the same. Has it been perfect? No. But God has been good. Sometimes God answers a prayer so clearly, just so just unbelievably to us.

[14:45] And you may have close friends, family members. You may even have fellow church members say, hey, you just got lucky. Let me remind you, God still answers prayer.

God is still working. And the reality is that when you step out in obedience, sometimes it's going to make people uncomfortable. Because they're not really sure how to respond to it.

They think, well, God doesn't work like that in my life. Well, maybe you're not taking that step. God sometimes, you got to get out of the boat for God to work sometimes in your life. You got to take that step of faith. And Jesus is showing, I have the power to do it.

Because maybe you have something in your life and you think there's nobody that can do anything with this situation. I think there is. I think there is. And we're not loud about it because of what we've done.

No, we should be loud about it because of what Christ did. Because many times he shows up in these impossible situations to show his glory. To show who he is.

[15:46] Because if it was simple and logical, we'd say, well, look what I did. I did this and this and this and here it is. You know what we all have to say? Listen, I have nothing. God showed up. God did this.

God worked in that. God took care of this. And so Luke immediately shows how these people begin to respond to the working of Jesus. And what we find in verse 15 and 16 is the hearts of men are immediately exposed.

This great miracle happens. This man's life is changed forever. Verse 15. But some of them said, he casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of devils.

And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. Listen, they just saw a sign from heaven. I mean, it's kind of like, what do you people want? I mean, if I was Jesus, that's what I would say.

Thank goodness I'm not. But that's kind of what's going on here. And we really see in verse number 15, we see this kind of this hostile explanation. So mainly these are going to be the Pharisees.

[16:50] We see it in the other accounts of Scripture. They can't deny the miracle. These type of situations frustrate the ever-living daylights out of them. Because Jesus does these miracles.

He doesn't do them in a corner. Remember what Paul says? These things weren't done in a corner. No, Jesus kind of just does it in broad daylight in front of everybody. And they're thinking, great. Again? Because they can't say, well, that's not a real miracle.

Because everybody knew this guy. I think sometimes we think of these cities as the metroplex of Dallas-Fort Worth. No, these are one-stop, one-dairy queen type of little villages where everybody knows everybody's business.

Everybody knew who this man was. And they knew he hadn't been able to speak for who knows how long. So they're thinking, well, we can't deny the miracle. Here's what we need to do. We need to change the source.

We need to explain how he's doing this. It's the only way that we have. So anybody have any ideas? How about Beelzebub? What is that?

[17:52] Well, really, it's just a title that was associated with Satan. Kind of goes back to the Old Testament. You see Baal and they referred to him as the Lord of Flies. Kind of just this demonic entity that had no goodness about him whatsoever.

So really what they're doing in verse 15, they're saying, listen, Jesus did this. Because he's in league with Satan. That's the only explanation for this miracle.

You think to yourself, why would they do that? Why are they so dead set against denying that maybe God has shown up? That God has changed the life?

Well, I think when you really study out the Pharisees, and we've seen it already in our study of Luke's gospel, is they were more worried about themselves than they were about God. What they're really doing here is they are trying to preserve their influence.

Because you know what they were really upset about Jesus? When Jesus showed up, he started taking away their followers. He started taking away their kind of authority. Because the Pharisees were the type of people that had their thumb on everybody.

[19:01] And you do it the way we say. And you worship the way that we say. And you follow all the 613 laws that we tell you to. Well, Jesus shows up and he's a little different.

He's full of love and compassion. He's full of truth. He calls us to live a different life. But because of that, guess what? Many were following Christ. Many were going after him.

I think another reason they're doing this is they don't want to repent. They're comfortable in their life. They're comfortable in their sin.

They may look real good on the outside, but Jesus calls them out later and says, Listen, you're just full of dead men's bones. You're like a widened sepulcher. You look real pretty on the outside. But listen, there's nothing real in your life.

And I think what they're trying to do, and we see it even in our day and age, they're trying to redefine truth to protect their position. Listen, we don't have the ability to do that.

[19:56] Here's truth. This is the truth that we are to follow, and God reminds us of that. And what we see here in verse 15 is this is just what hardened unbelief looks like.

They want to keep living life the way they want to live life, and nobody to interfere with it, nobody to mess with them with it, especially this rogue carpenter from Nazareth, this rabbi that, where is he

even from?

And the truth was threatening their lies. So here's what they did. They just relabeled truth as evil. Sound familiar? See, the enemy doesn't really have new taxes.

He just recycles them. And we see it in the society that we live in. And let me just remind you, they're not confused. They're just resistant. That's the Pharisees.

They knew the Old Testament backwards and forwards. And they knew that Jesus was sent from God. We see Nicodemus in John 3 says, we know that thou art a teacher sent from God.

[20:58] You can't do the things you're doing unless you came from him. But they're saying, you know what? We don't want that. We don't like it. It doesn't really fit our life.

It doesn't really fit our agenda. And let me just remind you that unbelief is rarely about lack of evidence. It generally boils down to this, the refusal to surrender authority.

Anybody like to be in control? We know you do. I like to be in control. But here's what God tells us to do. Lay it down. Liz, you really want to live, you've got to lose your life.

You've got to lay it down. Paul tells us to be a living sacrifice. That we're to lay our life down on the altar and say, Lord, whatever you want, I'll do. See, sometimes we look at our culture even today that we live in, and we try to live by the Bible.

Listen, if you're a Christian, you should try to live by the Word of God. That's how we're commanded to live that way. But you know what our society says that is? Judgmental. Now, let's just be honest.

[22:09] Sometimes Christians take that mindset, and they live it out. We're not to be judgmental, but we are to live by the Word of God. We are to stand firm on the truth.

We're not standing on our opinions. We're standing on what the Lord has said. And we need to make sure, listen, we need to make sure it's what He said. Because sometimes people are like, you know what the Bible says?

And they quote something, and I'm thinking, I'm pretty sure that's not in the Bible. That's like a sign above your grandma's toilet. That has nothing to do with the Word of God. I don't know where that came from.

Must have been the Lord. Listen, we live in a world where faithfulness is dismissed as brainwashing. That we're faithful to follow the Word of God.

We're faithful to come to church and say, man, these people are just brainwashed. No, you know why I'm here at church? Because Jesus Christ changed my life. And I remember who I used to be.

[23:15] And I'm thankful for what I am now because of God. And I just want to be around God's people. I want to sing God's songs. I want to be around His Word. I want my life to continue to be more and more like Him. That's the goal.

Obedience to Scripture is called extreme and is called outdated. I want to remind you the Bible is not outdated. It is settled forever in heaven. It's timeless. Listen, every issue you're facing right now in 2026, doesn't matter if it's in your workplace, in relationships, parenting.

Listen, the Word of God speaks directly to it. I'm thankful we have a God that loves us like that. And many times a transformed life is just reduced to some religious guilt or emotional manipulation.

No, no, that's not how Jesus operates. No, the truth, when you hear the truth and you accept it, it will set you free. But not everyone took this hardline stance of the Pharisees.

We saw in verse 16, there's these people that were trying to be neutral. They weren't hostile. They were very respectable. They were tempting Him. It wasn't, they weren't being mean.

[24:21] They were just saying, listen, we've, okay, we saw that, but we need a little more evidence. We need to put a little bit more things together. They appear reasonable. They're curious.

But I do want to remind you that curiosity is not faith. There's a lot of people who say, well, I'm God curious. I'm Jesus curious. Hey, it might start there, but here's what Jesus reminds us.

We can't live there. We can't just be interested in the things of God. That we have to be all in, that we have to follow, that we have to believe. Because there's a lot of people, a lot of people say, listen, the Sermon on the Mount is some really good moral teaching.

Jesus did not come to be a moral teacher. He came to be your Savior. And He's reminding them of that. Here's the problem with this mindset.

Hey, we saw what you did is good, and we just need a little bit more. Here's really what they're saying. We'll follow you, but we want to make sure it's on our terms. We want to make sure you're the kind of Jesus that we need, that we can follow, that's really going to help us.

[25:28] They wanted more proof before obedience. They were the people that bought into the seven-day trials all the time. I'll be honest, I've signed up for a lot of seven-day streaming trials this past week.

Because I don't really want to pay, I'm like, they want how much for this, a month? Like, where do these people work? I want just a little bit, I want to watch that one show I want to watch, and then I want to cancel it.

You know what I'm saying? Yeah. Some of you are like, man, I need to cancel that. You're welcome. But that's not how you follow Jesus. We don't follow Jesus when our life's falling apart. We want to get some things together. Well, let me try this out, let me see if I can get in here a little bit, and he can fix me up. And when he fixes me up, man, I'll just kind of go on my way. Thanks, man. That's not how we follow Christ. That's not what he's calling us to do.

Scripture consistently teaches that that type of sign-seeking, that type of, hey, you know, have it your way, Christianity, it's not faith. It's just delay. And God doesn't submit to human timelines for obedience.

[26:35] Delayed obedience is just disobedience disguised. Because I do want to remind us, I think we see it in our text, we've seen it in Luke already, that you can be close to Jesus without being committed to Jesus.

There's one in this group named Judas, as close as any of them. But here's the difference. He wasn't committed. He liked all the benefits of being around Jesus.

He liked all the miracles. I mean, they were cool to see helping people and doing all that stuff. But Judas was more about, how does this benefit me? How can I be involved here? See, curiosity can mask resistance, and it can really disguise just disbelief.

Sometimes in our own life, we may say things like this, well, I just need more time. I understand what people are saying there. Some might say, well, you know, maybe have you placed your faith in Christ?

Well, I'm just, I'm still trying to figure it out. Hey, listen, I'm still trying to figure it out. But I know this, that Jesus loves me. That he came to this earth, he lived a perfect sinless life, died on the cross of Calvary, rose again for my sins.

[27:41] I can't explain everything to him in the Bible, but I know this, God loves me, and I'm going to give my life to him. But just kind of pushing it off and saying, well, I just want to learn more before I commit. You can commit your whole life to learning this book, and you still won't touch the hem of the garment.

That's just an excuse many times. That I believe in God, but here's really what we're saying. I'm just not ready to change those certain things yet. Because we're comfortable with these things in our life, even though we know they're not supposed to be there, but we're going to keep them around. I'd rather have that in my life than Jesus. That is an awful trade. That is going to be a horrendous outcome for your life. Simply put, Jesus knows their hearts.

He knows they're hard. He knows they're selfish. But now what we see in verse 17 through 22, Jesus kind of begins to dismantle their way of thinking. He shows us his logic and his authority of how he's able to do what he's doing.

Because they have all these opinions that Jesus says, why don't I just tell you? Why don't you just let me inform you of what's actually taking place? We see in verse number 17, the Bible says this, Here's what Jesus is doing.

[29:12] He's appealing to common sense. And apparently, they had the same problem that we have in 2026. Sense was not that common back then. You know, we need to make sense common again.

But really, he's being very logical. He's not going some deep theological rabbit hole and he's trying to have everybody figure it out.

He just says this, listen, Satan is not chaotic. I think sometimes we have this picture in our mind that Satan just runs around and he's causing havoc. He's like some Tasmanian devil and he runs here and he runs there.

No, no. Let me remind you. He's very strategic. He knows what he's doing and he is extremely effective in what he's doing. He's been doing it for a long time.

And Jesus is kind of playing to that. And he's saying, why would he undermine his own rule? Why would he undermine his own kingdom building, so to speak? Jesus is simply saying, if I was empowered by Satan, then I'd be destroying my own kingdom.

[30:14] That doesn't make sense. I mean, just think about it logically, guys. And we see in our own life, we see in our world that evil is not self-destructive in that sense.

It's self-serving, which ends up being destructive. Evil is not trying to sabotage everything. It's trying to get what we want. And that's what ends up destroying.

And so Jesus' logic, it exposes the emptiness of their accusation. I mean, they've thought this out really well. And Jesus just shuts it down like that. See, Jesus wasn't worried about what they said because truth doesn't fear examination.

He knew what he was doing. He knew how he was doing it. And he was showing others how it was done. But lies, here's what happens, lies collapse when they're exposed. And this house of cards the Pharisees had built is starting to kind of fall apart.

And it just reminds us in our own life that God didn't call you to win every argument. He didn't. But he did call you to stand for truth. God doesn't expect for us to panic when Scripture is questioned.

[31:23] No, here's what we do. Just stand on the truth. He's given us this opportunity that we don't have to respond harshly when your faith is challenged. Because, man, they come after him over and over and over. You know what he does?

He just responds with the truth. That God didn't call you to just go guns a-blazin'. No. He's given you a weapon. He's given you the ability to reason. He's given you the truth of the Word of God. And he's just reminding us to keep pressing on, to keep trusting him, to keep sharing his gospel. That's what he tells them in verse number 20. But if I, with the finger of God, cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God has come upon you.

I mean, they're trying to get God out of this in every way. And Jesus is saying, listen, he's here. I'm right here in front of you. And when he says this phrase, the finger of God, you know what these hearers would have immediately thought of, especially the Pharisees?

Exodus. They would have known the Exodus very, very well, and they would have seen it. And you remember there when all the magicians of Pharaoh were trying to do the miracles that Moses and Aaron were doing?

[32:27] They said, listen, Pharaoh, there's no other explanation except this is the finger of God doing this. This is somebody that we can't compete with. And Jesus is just simply saying, listen, the same God who defeated Egypt is at work right in front of you right now.

That he's here. And I am him. And he says it all throughout the Gospels. We mentioned a few weeks ago in our study of Luke, the kingdom of God is not geographic.

The kingdom of God is this. It's where God is at rule, where his authority is on display. And that's what's taking place here. That's what Jesus is showing. He's showing that he came to rule in men's lives and not to allow darkness to have all this victory.

You see, Jesus didn't come to improve your life. Jesus is not into home improvement. You know what he's into? Complete restoration.

That that's what he came for. The finger of God is still at work in lives today. It shows up in freedom from addiction. Listen, you know, sometimes you can do self-discipline and you can do some steps.

[33:37] And there's a time and there's a place for it. But you want real freedom? Here's where it comes from. Jesus Christ. That he can change everything. He can change your desires. He can change your mind. And peace. He can give you peace and grief when circumstances don't change.

Because here's what you're going to find in life. Sometimes your circumstances won't change. But God can give you a peace that passes all understanding. The world can't offer that. You can't find that by just being a good person and turning over a new leaf.

The finger of God is at work in your life when forgiveness replaces that long-held bitterness in your life. That grudge. See, when God works in your life, he gives you a new direction.

Not just better habits. Better habits help you. But what he really is intending for you to do is to move towards him. And he gives this illustration. And we won't read it for the sake of time in verse 21 and 22.

But he's reminding, the reason I was able to do this, because I'm stronger. He said Satan, he's not diminishing. Here's what he describes Satan as strong.

[34:40] And I know we've said it already, but you need to be reminded of that too. Satan is very strong. He is very capable. But he is not supreme. He does not have final say of your life.

If you allow the stronger man, which is Jesus, to come in, then he can change things. See, you weren't wondering. You weren't confused.

You weren't improving. You were lost. You were enslaved. You were captive. You didn't need somebody to help you out. You needed rescue.

That's what Jesus is reminding. He said, listen, this man didn't need me to help him out a little bit. He needed complete rescue. Rescue. And the reason I was able to do that is because I'm the stronger man.

Because Satan, he had everything bound up and he was protecting. He was kind of manipulating this situation at all costs. But when Jesus showed up, he spoke and everything changed. Why? Because he's the stronger man.

[35:39] And when you remember where you were and you remember who you were, it should produce humility in your life. It should produce gratitude.

And you begin to maybe look around and, you know, we need to see this world as the same way Jesus does. Sometimes we look at people and think, man, what is their deal?

Well, I don't know if you remember, but you were there too. You were in that pit. You were in that miry clay. And Jesus reached way down when he got you.

And he picked you up. And he set your feet on a rock. He established your goings. He put a song in your heart. Don't forget where God brought you from. Don't forget that you didn't get yourself out of that hole.

You didn't pull yourself up by your bootstraps. Jesus Christ changed your life. Why? Because he was the stronger man. You needed his help. You needed his rescue. We're not here to boast in our morality and our discipline and the fact that, hey, we're good Christian people.

[36:38] No. We're sinners saved by grace. Grace. Jesus showed up and changed lives. Now that he's shown his power and he's established his authority, Jesus now presses for a verdict.

And I know we're running out of time, but you've been trapped in your house all week long. We're going to go five extra minutes. It's going to be okay. Okay. Just making sure. We're still going to get out before everybody else, I think. Notice verse 23.

The Bible says this. He that is not with me is against me. Listen, Jesus didn't pull punches. Jesus is letting them know how it is.

And what he's doing is he is eliminating the middle ground. He's reminding those in the crowd and he's reminding us here this morning there is no spiritual fence sitting.

That we can't play it both ways. It doesn't matter if you're diametrically opposed like the Pharisees or you're just kind of curious like those in the crowd. You cannot delay allegiance to Christ.

[37:37] You can't say, well, I'm a follower of Christ but not really committed to him. Maybe you're avoiding certain things and God's pressing you to get more plugged in and involved and to join the church. I don't know what God is calling you to do.

It could be to lead your family in a certain way. You say, well, I'm just not going to do that. Maybe God is wanting you to share your faith at work and you'd rather just keep it private because you don't want to ruffle feathers too much.

Maybe sometimes we want to hold on to certain pet sins while claiming that we love the Lord and we believe in him. Listen, he's not calling for us to be perfect. But he's saying, listen, what side of this are you on?

Because if you're not for Christ, if you're not living your life for him, he makes it very clear, you're against me. That's some hard words. That's a hard truth to swallow.

And Jesus kind of explains it in this illustration. We won't take down and walk through it. It seems like a weird illustration. But what he's showing us is there's a danger of empty reformation.

[38:39] What he's kind of explaining is the unclean spirit. Jesus cast his spirit out. And he goes around and he's looking for a place to go. He's looking for a life to ruin. This man that was possessed by this demon, he cleans his life all up, fixes it, tidies it all up, but puts nothing back in.

And so this demon's walking all around and he says, well, I can't find anything better than the place I was at the first time. So why don't we go back here? Man, he's got more room. Let's just fill his life up more. That's kind of what Jesus is saying.

And here's the point of those verses, of that illustration about sweeping the house and all that. That if Christ doesn't fill your heart, something else will. Listen, you can get every bad habit, every sin out, but if you don't put something in, it doesn't matter who you are, man, woman, boy, or girl, without replacing it with Christ, it is a dangerous place to be.

Because moral behavior is not transformation. Self-discipline is not salvation. That quitting bad habits without surrendering your heart, replacing sin with busyness instead of obedience, becoming moral but not prayerful, stop doing wrong things and not do discipleship.

If you don't do those things, your life's not going to change. And any sin and any perversion is possible. Because Jesus is showing this, a vacuum must be filled with something.

[40:10] And if it isn't his spirit, no telling what it could be. That's what he's saying. That's what he's showing. That's what he's reminding us. And as we close this text, we see in verse 27, 28, Jesus kind of redefines what blessedness looks like, what a blessing looks like.

He says this, but he said, yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. I think by the time Jesus got done speaking in verse 26, the crowd was just like, I don't know what to say. You ever been in a room like that? Like, I'm not sure what to say. Well, this lady said a great thing. She said, listen, blessed is the womb that bore you.

Blessed is Mary that had the opportunity to raise you. And let me remind you, Mary was blessed because of that. That Mary was chosen, and the Bible says that she'll be loved by all generations. That she is an example of a heart that is completely yielded to God. And that was a great honor and a great blessing that she had to raise Jesus as her son.

[41:19] But Jesus didn't disagree with that, but here's what he said. But here's the greater blessing Mary had, that she heard the word of God and obeyed it. Because Mary, just like me and you, needed a Savior.

She needed the word of God, and she heard it, and she believed it. Because blessing is not about the association. It's not about being in church. It's not about admiring God. No, here's where blessing comes from.

Obedying his word. We need to be the wise man that builds his house on the rock. Now, don't misunderstand what Jesus is saying, what I'm trying to explain here in a short period of time. Obedience is not the cause of salvation. But it is always the evidence of it. See, the word of God must be heard and kept. It's easy to nod and agree in a church setting.

But here's what God wants you to do. Take it home and apply it to your life. Apply it to your family. Apply it in your work situations. When you have an opportunity to speak life and to speak truth and to share the gospel, do it.

[42:22] Because that's what God tells us to do. Here's what it looks like in your life, forgiving when you'd rather hold a grudge. Sometimes, if we're just going to be real carnal, it's more fun to hold a grudge than to forgive somebody.

Because they deserve it. Well, you know what we deserve? Death and hell. But he forgave us. He reminds us how much he loves us.

You know when you're really blessed? When you obey God? When it costs you comfort and reputation? Sometimes when you're trying to live for the Lord, not everybody's going to understand it. And they're going to have all kinds of opinions on what you're doing wrong and what you're not doing.

Here's what you need to do. Make sure you do what the Lord wants you to do and go forward. That's what he's called you to do. It looks like aligning your priorities and your schedule and your finances with the word of God.

That's where blessing comes from. You're blessed when you live by this. That's what he's showing us in his word. As we saw here in the text this morning, Jesus showed his power.

[43:29] A man who couldn't speak, spoke. And yet, Luke shows us something very sobering. Not everyone that saw the miracle believed.

Some accused. Some delayed. Some admired, but they refused to obey. I think this text is recorded like it is because I think God wants us to see this.

Who are we in the crowd? Which group do we find ourselves in? Do we find saying, well, I'm not sure about that. That's just a phase. Hey, maybe you're here just trying to get some things in order so you can kind of get your life going again.

No, it all starts with Christ. See, the question of this text isn't what did they do with Jesus. I think it's this for us today. What are you doing with Jesus?

Because you know what I imagine? You've seen God's power revealed. Maybe in your life. Maybe in your friend's life. Maybe in a co-worker. God showed up in a way that is just undeniable.

[44:30] Somebody had awful cancer. They went to the doctor and said, we don't know where it went. God's still the great physician, by the way. And they're going to try to explain it away and all these things.

And, well, we just did the test wrong. No, no. You know what it is sometimes? Maybe God's saying, hey, that's me. I'm here. I'm real. And sometimes we're saying, God, give me a sign. He has given us a sign after a sign after a sign after a sign.

What are you doing with him? There's no spiritual middle ground. You can't be Switzerland spiritually. You have to choose.

What do you believe about Jesus? Before we rush out this door, slowly, Luke is really inviting us just to slow down and ask this.

Am I explaining Jesus away instead of surrendering to him? You may know Christ as your Savior, and you can still try to explain some things.

[45:30] Maybe he's calling you to get more involved, to do more for him. And you're like, well, he doesn't really mean that because if he knew my schedule, God knows exactly where you are. Am I delaying obedience under the banner of needing more time?

Have I cleaned up parts of my life without letting Christ truly fill them? You can come to this altar and say, Lord, I need help with this and this and this. But you do nothing with it. Invite Christ then.

Am I hearing God's word but not keeping it? Because hearing without obedience is not blessing.

And if you try to clean yourself up without Christ, that's not real transformation.

Jesus' power can work in your life like nothing else can. And maybe you're just on the fence about it. Get it settled today.

Would you stand with your heads bowed, with your eyes closed? Thank you.