

Luke 4:31-44

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- [0 : 0 0] in the life of God's anointed. Three scenes are before us. The first one, Jesus in the synagogue, verses 31 through 37.
- The second, Jesus in Simon's house, verses 38 through 41. And thirdly, Jesus in a solitary place, verses 42 through 44.
- Here we get a glimpse of the pattern of Jesus' life and ministry. He ministered publicly and privately.
- He ministered through his words as well as his works. He spent time alone, prayerfully and reflectively. He ministered locally and he ministered regionally.
- But we also see the responses of the people to him. Some embraced him. Some rejected him. Others wanted to co-opt him for themselves.
- [1 : 0 7] Such is the big picture that we see. Let's look at the pieces, if you will. Huh? Huh? Huh? Ah, Jesus had escaped from the religious gangbangers in his own town, Nazareth.
- Huh? They were challenged to see Jesus as nothing more than Joseph's son. Huh? His announcement that he was God's anointed and his rebuke for their lack of unbelief were more than they could handle.
- Huh? Huh? So they rejected him. They rejected him and they rejected his claims. Huh? But this week we find him at Capernaum.
- Huh? There we see Jesus in the synagogue. Huh? Capernaum. A seaside Galilean town. Roughly a thousand people that lived there.
- 25 miles, a little to the north and east of Nazareth. Huh? Now, this is where Jesus was teaching them. He was teaching them on the Sabbath day.
- [2 : 1 4] And what a day in the house of God it was. Ah, the gathering was in a synagogue. The synagogue, likely a building there, but also the synagogue could just be the gathering of the people.
- They were there on the Sabbath day, this day that was set aside for rest, that went from sundown on the sixth day to sundown on the seventh day. And had you gone to the synagogue in Capernaum on that day, you would have seen some things like this.
- You would have seen a synagogue ruler. He was the overall administrator of this place. You would have seen a synagogue attendant. He was the one who, among other things, was responsible for taking out and storing the different scrolls that were there.
- Because there was no permanent professional teacher, the ruler would call upon some competent one to either preach or teach in the service. The order of service, the liturgy, if you will, would go something like this.
- Prayer, the reading of the scriptures, and then the explanation of the scripture. Not totally unlike what you would see and have seen even today among us.
- [3 : 2 9] But as we see in the text, look there, Jesus was the teacher on that day, wasn't he? Look at verse 31. He went down to Capernaum, a Sea of Galilee, and he was teaching them on the Sabbath.

Scripture would have been read, and then he proceeded to explain it. We know what his text was in Nazareth. We don't know what his text was in Capernaum.

But what we do know from this particular text that the impact of Jesus' words were quite clear. You see them there? Three words say it all.

In verse 32, they were astonished. They were blown away. Lightning had struck.

Jesus had spoken, and they were astonished. So what was it that was so unique or astonishing about Jesus' ministry of the word?

[4 : 31] Were there not other teachers in that day? Certainly there were. We think about the parallel of this, Mark's parallel to this in Mark chapter 1.

It says that Jesus taught them not as the scribes. So there was a contrast with the teaching and the ministry of Jesus with the scribes, the religious leaders, the professionals of that day.

These men were trained in interpretation and application of the law. But they had varied from the truth of God's word and had diluted and polluted God's word with their particular tradition.

The rabbis then were given to explanation, often majoring in things that were actually of minor importance, a rehash of the authorities who had preceded them.

There was a disconnect in their teaching from those that they were actually teaching. Perhaps it went around them or went over their heads, but it was not really going to the heart.

[5 : 38] And thus Jesus steps on the scene. On any given day in a Sabbath, on the Sabbath in Jesus' day, there were probably those who were much like those of us who would gather here on this morning.

People of various ages and stages of life. People who have come face to face with the challenges of life even this week and the changes of life.

People who needed to hear a word on earth from the God of heaven. People like us today, they found themselves with the bitter and the sweet of life, wrestling with the beauty and the ugly of life, the tragedy and the comedy of life.

And we know about such things. And Jesus met them at the point of their need. Prior to Jesus' ministry in the synagogues of Galilee, people were hearing very little, if anything, from heaven.

But all of that changed with the ministry of Jesus. When they went to a service where Jesus was preaching, the light of heaven beamed down in their lives and into their souls.

[7 : 01] That was the nature of Jesus' teaching. It was like fresh bread. Yes, fresh bread from my wife's oven, still warm, stimulating to the soul's palate and nourishing to the soul.

That's what Jesus' teaching was like. It was nourishment unto them. So much so that they were astonished. They were awestruck by Jesus' teaching.

Jesus' teaching really demonstrates the kind of preaching that we need today. The hour of the day, the hour of our day, demands that those of us who are ministers of the word give ourselves to it in a way that the preaching that we put forth is Bible-based.

Its authority is scripture. It's not in the elevation of the voice or the charisma of the preacher. It's because it's Bible-based.

It is authoritative. That is where the authority is. It's in God's word. But not only that teaching that is life-touching, it deals with the things of life, the simple things of life, how to live amongst one another.

[8 : 25] It deals with things like how a husband should treat his wife, or how children should honor their parents. God's word deals with simple things of life.

But also it deals with the complex things of life, the complex things that cause us to ask God hard questions, where we don't have the answers, and sometimes God is silent when we want him to speak complex things of life.

But nonetheless, God's word deals with those kinds of things, meaning us, yes, you, yes, me, right where we are. But it also deals with earthly things as well as eternal things.

It's life-touching. God's word. And that was the nature of Jesus' ministry. We'll see it a little later in Luke as far as some of the details.

But Jesus' teaching was also transformative. It was not simply for information or for entertainment. Teaching that leads to life change.

[9 : 37] Do you apply God's word to your own life? Or do you, after the service, do you just shake hands with the preacher? Nice sermon, pastor. What happens after all of that?

God's word wants to mold and to shape your thinking and my thinking and our living. But this kind of Jesus' preaching was also accessible.

It wasn't so you had to tip your toes or to get down. Well, it was accessible. A child could understand it. As a matter of fact, you remember what Jesus said.

Hey, suffer the little children coming to me. I got a little something for them too, huh? It's accessible to the hearer. But, oh, Jesus' teaching was also kingdom-revealing.

Teaching that reveals what life looks like when God is in charge. When God is ruling. When God is reigning. The authority of Jesus' words.

[10 : 45] Powerful words, huh? The authority of his words was visualized in the count that we see in verses 33 through 36, huh? Here was the showdown in the synagogue, if you will.

In that crowd that day was a person in need of deliverance that Jesus came to bring. And this was the first time, the first miracle that we see in Luke.

This was the first time that Luke records this kind of encounter. But, friends, it would not be the last kind of encounter, huh? So, here was this person in whom an evil spirit dwelled that was challenging the authority of Jesus.

In the text, there was a man who was indwelt by an unclean demon, huh? The man was indwelt by a distinct being that was different from himself.

And it taken possession of him, controlling him, huh? The coming of the Son of God into this world was like a light being turned on. And if you've ever been around vermin, you know what happens to vermin, pest, when the light comes on.

[12 : 02] They start to scatter, whether they're bugs or rodents of various kinds, they begin to scatter. That's what happened when Jesus came, huh? This first incident was a preview of the kind of encounters that Jesus was going to continue to face, huh?

But also, what we do see here, we get a look at the victory that would characterize the very life and ministry of Jesus. Huh? So, residing in this man's inner being, there was a spirit of unclean demons.

Now, understand that in the minds of those in the Greco-Roman world, there were good and bad spirits or demons that could occupy a person. So, Luke, writing to this broader kind of audience, he made sure that his audience understood the nature of the spirit being that had indwelt this man.

It was an unclean demon, if you will. Well, so Jesus confronts this man who was spiritually diseased, huh? Diseased, he was a demon-possessed man.

This kind of malady was not uncommon in Jewish circles of that day. And there were Jewish exorcists who, through various means, would bring relief to those who were so possessed.

- [13 : 26] Now, understand that, first of all, you see a contrast with the way Jesus taught and the religious leaders, but there was also a contrast with the way that Jesus delivered those who were so bound in that particular day.
- Look at verse 34. Ha! In other words, whoa! Leave us alone! What do we have in common?
- Hey, certainly, they were on different teams representing different kingdoms. Evil spirit recognized Jesus' unique relationship with God.
- You see it there? The Holy One of God, huh? His dominance over demonic forces. We have, in this dominance, we have a preview of his dominance.
- Oh, and victories over all the powers of evil. Look at verse 35. Notice what Jesus does. In a word.
- [14 : 25] He rebuked him. Notice his word. Look down in verse 39. There is that word again. So he rebukes this demon. In verse 39, he rebukes this fever.
- In verse 41, he rebuked other demons. That word that were in those who were possessed by them. The exorcists of that day, what they did, they used incantations, spells, and magic.
- There was even one reference that said that they would put something that was really offensive or stinky up a person's nose, and hopefully through that way would drive the demon out.
- They had their ways of working. But notice what Jesus does here. A word. An authoritative word.
- Through that, he expels the demon, not without resistance, but the spirit left the man. Here's Luther's word. One, what? Little word shall fail him.
- [15 : 36] Huh? The impact of Jesus' ministry of deliverance was the same as the response to his teaching. Huh? They were amazed. They were flabbergasted.
- Huh? Stunned, if you will. Huh? See the results in verse 37. The word gets out. There's a lot of buzz about Jesus and Galilee. The social media system was working.
- Huh? The word got out. Huh? Through Jesus' ministry of the word, he addressed from the Bible the varied issues of life.
- Through his ministry of deliverance, he demonstrated his authority in the spiritual realm over demonic power. Huh? These things, these two things in tandem, both the words of Jesus as well as the works of Jesus, validated the testimony of the Father.
- This is my son, Luke 3.22. And it validated Jesus' own interpretation of Isaiah 61. He's the anointed one.
- [16 : 42] He's the one who comes bringing liberating power, bringing, reclaiming battered humanity. Jesus in the synagogue.
- Chalk one up for Jesus in the synagogue. Huh? But guess what? Huh? The ministry of Jesus didn't end when he left.
- Huh? Well, 12 o'clock or so, we're going to leave here. Huh? The benediction is going to be given.
- We're going home. Huh? But even though the benediction was given that day in the synagogue, the ministry of Jesus did not end there. Huh? Huh? We see that clearly in the verses that follow.
- What about his ministry? What about the capability or the capacity of his power? Was it limited by venue? Huh? Did Jesus take off the ministry mantle when he left the public arena?

[17 : 49] Was he merely a professional? Or was he more? Huh? And so much more. So we go from Jesus at the synagogue to Jesus at Simon's house.

You see that in verses 38 through 41. Huh? His mother-in-law, perhaps a widow, resided with Peter. Look at what the verse said. He arose, left the synagogue, and entered Simon's house.

Now, Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever. And they appealed to him on her behalf. She was gripped by a high fever.

And the fever itself was thought to be the illness and not a symptom of another illness. Huh? You know, we've had fever before. Huh? Sweaty.

Tired. Drained. Hot. Temperature climbs. It soars over 100 and sort of gets into that zone there that's called high fever zone.

[18 : 59] Huh? They're signs. So they bring the matter to Jesus. They intercede on her behalf. And the same person who rebuked the spirit in the synagogue, here he is rebuking a fever in Simon's house.

Huh? A fever left her. And her conduct and manner demonstrated it as such. Huh? You see that there in verse 39. He stood over her, rebuked the fever and left her immediately.

But she rose and began to serve them. I mean, I don't know how many have had colds and fever during this season, but you just don't spring up.

You just don't get up unless Jesus is. Dr. Jesus gives you a house call. Such was the case here. This was a house call indeed.

Huh? House call night like none other. Huh? But notice also what happens in the text. Sabbath day ends. Huh? And they know the law about Sabbath.

[20 : 10] Huh? So, soon as the sun was down, they made a trail to Simon's house.

Huh? Dear ones who were plagued with various diseases. That's what it's called in the text. Can you sort of get a picture of those that were there?

Can you perhaps get a picture of the line and those making their way on the road? And they've heard that Jesus, the synagogue preacher, is in Simon's house and he's still ministering there.

It's Simon's house, huh? Can you picture them? Perhaps some were limpy. Some crumbled over. Some were leading.

Others were being led. Huh? Men and women and children. Huh? Some perhaps deemed beyond hope. Others, maybe as good as dead. Ah, but they came.

[21 : 15] Hmm? They came to Jesus. Ah. Ah. The needy come to the Savior. God's anointed, the one who brings, who affects both liberation and reclamation, reclaiming damaged humanity.

They come. They come. Oh, isn't that, doesn't that sort of picture, picture it, picture it with me. Those who come to him through the cross. Huh? Damaged humanity.

Those of us who have been ruined by the fall. Ah. Those of us who have committed various and sundry kinds of sins.

Some of us come leaping, having been stained and crippled. We're walking with a limp, but we're coming, all of us coming to Jesus. And God's anointed through his person and work.

He brings deliverance. He does what we see here in the text in a redemptive, spiritual kind of way. By making things right so they come.

- [22 : 26] Did you notice the summary of what we see there? The disease, various diseases. Diseases, that's the term. Again, this sort of all lumped together. Now, later on, we're going to see specific ones come.
- We'll see a leper. We'll see a paralytic. We'll see a people with withered hands. But the note here is various diseases. It seems like, again, we're getting a summary of what Jesus can do.
- Huh? They're brought to him. And they are healed. Huh? The anointed one is at work here. Huh? It's a clear indication.
- It's a new day. He's doing what he said he was going to do in Luke chapter 4 and verse 18. The liberator had indeed come.
- The liberator has come could have been the cry of that day. It was that very cry that Tom Skinner gave at the end of his 1970 Urbana address.
- [23 : 31] It was a historic event. Historic for several reasons. It was the first time in the history of this triennial event, and many of you are familiar with it, that there was a sizable African-American contingent, about 500 people, 500 African-Americans that were there.
- It was also significant because Tom Skinner, an African-American, he was a keynote speaker, 27 years old, and he was on the platform with people like John Stott and Leighton Ford and different ones.
- But Tom's powerful talk that evening was based on Luke 4 and 18. And it's still remembered by those who were in attendance how actually stunned that they were.
- Comments like, it was incredible. It was like heaven on earth. Several people, another said, were shaken to their very foundations that night.
- Bill Pennell, professor at Fuller Seminary, had this to say, it was the most powerful moment that I've experienced at the conclusion of a sermon. Skinner's concluding words were these.
- [24 : 42] Proclaim liberty to the captive. Go into the world and tell men who are bound mentally, spiritually, and physically, the liberator has come.
- People on that day in Capernaum experienced just that. The liberator had come. And in the text, the setting of the home, demons came out of many, acknowledging the relationship of the Son to God.
- Notice what it says there. In verse 41, the demons also came out of many crying, you are the Son of God. Huh? And he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak because they knew that he was the Christ.
- Huh? They knew who he was. But he did not need their dubious, questionable witness. He didn't need exposure or advertisement from them, so he silenced them.
- He muzzled them. Huh? His own words and works would point to him. That was the witness that he needed. Huh? They knew that he was the Christ. And guess what?
- [25 : 53] Others eventually would know also. Huh? The same Jesus that administered powerfully in the synagogue, here he is in Simon's home, and he's ministering with equal power there.
- Is there not some application here for us? That we, we should intercede and intervene on behalf of others?
- Folks brought other people to Jesus. Huh? Huh? Are needy people welcome in your home? Huh? They were in Simon's because Jesus was there.
- Well, the whole, another whole question is, is Jesus welcome in your home? I hope so, and that's where it should begin. Huh? Needy people finding what they need, not only in the synagogue of Capernaum, but in the households.

In the neighborhood. Huh? Is Jesus welcome? Are other people welcome? Jesus in the synagogue, Jesus in Simon's house, but notice what we have next.

[27 : 11] Jesus in a solitary place. Huh? Look at verse 42. When it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. I love Mark 1 31 in the King James.

Y'all do know there was a King James Bible. Huh? And rising up a great while before day, Jesus goes out into a solitary place, and he prays.

Huh? Great while before day. Huh? Mission got him up. Mission kept him up.

Huh? Mission put him on his knees. Huh? Huh? The time and place were right. It's early. He's up before the sun comes up.

Huh? The place is right. It's away from the crowds. He's away from the synagogue. He's away from Simon's house. He's by himself. Huh? It's a place for reflection and a place for prayer.

[28 : 13] And Jesus, and we'll see this in Luke, he's going to retreat there again. And again, we'll see him early in his ministry. We see him in the garden of Gethsemane, crying out to his father.

Huh? It was not, he didn't wait until the heat got on like there, because we see him going out, spending all night in prayer to God.

Why did he do that? He was a man. He was a man on mission. Huh? Huh? It was there that people came to him, sold him, that they would, they would keep him from leaving.

He would not leave them. In Nazareth, Jesus, get out of town. Leave us alone. Here in Capernaum, don't leave us, Jesus.

Huh? That's the course that had risen there in Capernaum. Huh? They had sent Jesus in the synagogue, and they'd seen him in Simon's house. They knew what he could do.

[29 : 13] They got a sense of the authority in his words. Huh? And they sought him. Huh? They sought him in a solitary place because they had seen him otherwise in ministry.

Oh, but underneath their request, it was likely mixed motives. They wanted him for their own purposes.

Oh, we see Jesus, Jesus, he's really excoriates them in Matthew chapter 11. Oh, Capernaum, will you be lifted up, exalted? No, you won't be exalted.

You'll be brought down for it. The miracles that were done and you have been done in Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented. Huh? Oh, so you really want Jesus? Huh? You think you want Jesus?

Huh? There's some demands that go along with that, but mission was on Jesus' mind. Did you notice what he said? I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well.

[30 : 17] Verse 43, for I was sent for this purpose. Hey, guess what? The sent in verse 43 harkens back to the sent in chapter 4, verse 18.

He sent me to proclaim and here I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns for I was sent for this purpose.

First mention of the kingdom of God in Luke's gospel. Other people needed to hear the good news, the good news of God's rule in the person and the ministry of Jesus, God's anointed.

Jesus understood his mission. That it was to be shared with many publicly and privately, locally and regionally, and ultimately globally.

and friends, while preaching his primary, his preaching was accompanied by authenticating signs, powerful acts that demonstrated the truth of his person and his message and his work.

[31 : 22] ministry friends needed to be shared and even so today. That's what he did. And he did it throughout the land of the Jews.

Luke's snapshot! of what in Jesus' ministry looked like. Here we get a day, a day in the life of God's anointed. Are we helped from this particular text on this morning?

We certainly can be. Like the people in Capernaum, you and I must seek Jesus. Like the people of Capernaum, we must come to him.

And like the people of Capernaum, we must not be selfish about Jesus. Like Jesus, we must prayerfully reflect and recognize the need for the spread of the kingdom.

Huh? Our Savior teaches us. We see here the power that's in him, resident in him. Oh, and as we think about him, now in heaven exalted high.

[32 : 29] Hallelujah. What a Savior. The same one who would come ruin sinners to reclaim. Ah, as he goes through the cross in his passion, now in heaven exalted high.

He has led the way and we follow in his train. We submit to him, we yield to him, we minister with him and for him on his behalf in this world.

What am I saying this morning? God's kingdom came near through the redemptive words and works of Jesus. Jesus. The ultimate act of redemption would come later.

But when understood, what we see in today's text prepares us for what's to come. Jesus' death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sin. He is the one through whom we can find ultimate liberation.

And that kind of liberation is yours today for the asking. The message therefore is to be shared.

[33 : 36] The liberator indeed has come as Tom Skinner said years ago. And we hope that you are experiencing his freedom or will do that.

It's yours for the asking. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we give thanks this morning. thank you for this glimpse in the life of your son, this pattern for how he would minister and what he would do.

Lord, and as we look forward to the continued unpacking of this book, may we not simply see it as an exercise in sermon delivering or preaching, but in learning and growing and seeking to know you and to savor you and to love you and to serve you.

We bless you this day. We give you praise, Lord Jesus. Be glorified in us is our prayer. Let's stand together and sing our final song.