

The Power of Jesus' Love

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 February 2021

Preacher: Nigel Anderson

[0 : 00] We consider this evening the title of our sermon, The Power, The Power of Jesus' Love. We've been reminded today very much of the whole aspect of love, but the most important love of all, the love of God towards sinners, the love of God seen in the Lord Jesus.

And three points then for us this evening. The power of Jesus' teaching, the power of Jesus' healing, the power of Jesus' preaching, the power of Jesus' love.

And I think if we have to admit to ourselves, this whole aspect of power, particularly this attribute of God, is something to our shame that we really don't dwell much on as we ought to.

Because God's power indicates God's authority. God's power indicates God's ability to conquer all, to prevail over all, to change what needs to be changed for God's glory.

And even in one of the names that we find in one of the names of God, one of the names of God tells us that God is the God of power. You've heard the name, the Old Testament name, El Shaddai, God Almighty.

[1 : 20] And it's this almighty nature of God that really tells us that God has a power, a sovereign power over all that he's created.

Everything is under his power. God has power over man. God has power over his angels. He has power over the fallen angels.

God has power over his angels. God has power over his angels. God has power over all his creation. And God has power to change hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.

It's that power that tells us of the irresistible power of God to draw sinners to himself. Because, of course, in our own power, none of us can call upon God.

None of us can come before God in our own strength, in our own power. And God's power is such that it's that power that can heal broken hearts.

[2 : 23] It's that power that can mend broken lives. It's that power that comforts the afflicted. And it's all because of the power of God's love towards us.

And it's that power, that power of God that Jesus revealed when he came from heaven to earth, when he came into the world in human form, when he came to display the power of God to change lives.

And as we read it there in the passage, that power was seen in the power of Christ's love. It's power seen in his healing. It's the power of Christ's love seen in his teaching or heard in his teaching.

And the power of Christ's love seen in his compassion and his compassion for souls. And it's the power of Christ's love seen so early in Jesus' ministry, even the very early days of his ministry there in Galilee.

That's what we're going to spend a little time looking at this evening. Because the more that we look at Christ's power, the more that you see him and discern that power, the more you're going to derive strength in yourself to trust him more and to follow him more and to seek to know his power in your life, to enable you to believe that, yes, he is able.

[3 : 45] He can and does turn darkness into light. As another psalm tells us, Psalm 107, when that psalm tells us of the storm that's changed into a calm at his command and will, so that the waves which raged before now quite are and still.

It's the power of Jesus we're going to look at in this passage that tells us of who our Lord is, who our Saviour is. So let's first of all look then at Jesus' power to teach us.

We see there in verse 31. Let's just read that verse again. And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. He was teaching them on the Sabbath.

Let's just remind ourselves just what's happening before Jesus actually goes to this place in Galilee, Capernaum. Remember that Jesus has been anointed, anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus at his baptism anointed by the Spirit. And has been anointed to embark on his ministry of preaching, teaching and healing. That ministry that's going to reach his climax on Calvary.

[5 : 00] But by his power, the power of his love, Jesus gives himself for us. And in his anointing by the Holy Spirit, Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is empowered to resist the devil's temptations.

Remember when the devil tempted him there in the wilderness, when Jesus had gone without food for 40 days, the devil tempting him to give up, as it were, his mission, Jesus' mission, bow before Satan.

No, Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, resists that temptation. And after that temptation, or the temptations, we're told, in fact, in chapter 4, verse 14, that Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And it's that power that Jesus has in his teaching, teaching others the way to life. It's that power that gives Jesus that authority to drive out evil spirits.

It's the power that gives Jesus that ability, that power to preach to others about the kingdom of God. It's that power that Jesus had to forgive sins.

[6 : 13] And, of course, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. And while we're going to consider the power of Jesus that we see Jesus exercising 2,000 years ago, we've got to remember that that power is still his to exercise for us, for you, for me.

Jesus still has that power. He has authority to do for you more than you can even ask or think. He's that power to say, power to cleanse, power to deliver, power to heal, power to teach you through his word how you are to live, so that you might live by his power, by the power of God in Christ.

That's what we're going to consider this evening when we think of the power of Jesus, that power that is relevant and there for you, for each one of us.

So let's first of all, then, as I say, look at Jesus' power to teach. As you read in the passage, Jesus is still in Galilee. He's left Nazareth. He's left his hometown.

He's left the place where he preached and fulfilling the words of the prophet Isaiah, the prophet who prophesied of Jesus, the Messiah, to come.

[7 : 30] And he's left the place, he's left Nazareth, where his own people had heard him, his own townspeople had heard him, and heard him with amazement at Jesus' words, but only for these same people to reject him.

Because Jesus wouldn't bend to their expectations of what they deemed was necessary for Jesus to reveal what he claimed to be and who he claimed to be.

And these people, because Jesus, in a sense, spurned their advances, their desires, these people would have put Jesus to death. But Jesus' time, Jesus' time for giving his life, didn't come yet.

And in that power, his power over men, Jesus passed through that lynch mob and went on his way to Capernaum, again, to people who were astonished at his teaching because his words, the words that he spoke, displayed his authority.

I mean, as we read there, the people there in Capernaum, the people had heard nothing like this before. I mean, they'd been used to the rabbis teaching, these men who had no authority, no authority in themselves.

[8 : 41] These men who had no power in their word. These men who simply rehashed what other people gave their opinions on. Jesus' teaching was different because Jesus was different.

Jesus had authority. Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, taught the word of God. And Jesus had that power. He had that authority that was so evident because he was teaching about himself.

See, Jesus' word had authority. It was what he was speaking. He was speaking of himself. He was giving the word. He is the word.

And that word of life that Jesus proclaimed, such that the people were shaken to the core as they heard Jesus proclaim the word about himself. And as these people listened, they knew that, well, this was different.

That what Jesus was saying was life-changing. Jesus was showing that dynamic power that reaches to the very soul of man itself. Now, that was the reaction of the people there in Capernaum.

[9 : 53] What about you? When you hear the word of Jesus, when he speaks to you through his word, through the word of God, even through what we've been reading this evening, how do you react to the power of that word?

Do you recognize in the word of God, do you recognize the message of the gospel, that that message has power to say? That message has power to change your life.

I mean, all who've given their lives to Jesus, you who have given your life to Jesus, you can testify to that power of his word changing your life. That power that's brought you from darkness to light.

That power that's changed you from being somebody who was so self-centered, as we've been reminded this morning, for whom your God was yourself. But you know in the power of God, that power has changed you from self being God, to God being God, to the Lord Jesus, your saviour, so that you no longer live for self.

But you're denying yourself. You're taking up your cross. And you're following Jesus, all because of that power, that power that saved you, that's brought you from darkness to light.

[11 : 13] And you're living now in that power, the power of the Lord Jesus. But listen, you're still close to that power. Well, hear the word, hear the word of God, hear the message of Jesus, and receive that message with thanksgiving.

And allow his power to change your life, to transform your life, so that you truly will know the power of God in your life, to enable you to live by faith, to grow in faith, to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and in his power, to serve him, and in his power, to love your neighbour, all because of the power of Christ's love, all because of the power of his word, that teaches you, instructs you, that directs you, how you might glorify God, not in your own power, but in the power that's given to you by faith.

But what else do we see here in the passage? We see the power of Christ to heal, verses 31 to 41. What do we see first of all here, in relation to Christ's power to heal?

Well, we see that power and authority, over the spirit world. Let's be clear before we say anything further. What we've read is the word of God.

And what we've been reading here, as we read elsewhere in scripture, this isn't fiction. This isn't some kind of sci-fi fantasy. This is the reality of the world that I cannot see, and yet we know is real.

[12 : 51] Because the demonic is real. It's not some kind of figment of medieval imagination. This is what God has shown us to be the reality, the demonic world.

And we find, particularly in the Gospels, the indication of that demonic world. In fact, very little else in scripture do we find this other than the Gospels, and for good reason.

Because, of course, in the Gospels, we read of Jesus coming to defeat the power of Satan. And, of course, for that to happen, satanic power, demonic power, is going to be seen and revealed, and the power of Jesus shown to be having authority over that lesser power.

And so, we see that demonic activity in the Gospels. But because of the power of Jesus' love, because of his authority over the spirit world, we see Jesus triumphant over that power.

And there we read there, Jesus exorcising the demon from that individual, and then later in other individuals. And that authority, that authority over the demonic was recognised by those who witnessed that power.

[14 : 10] We read there in verse 36 that the people were amazed when they saw Jesus' power to drive out evil spirits. Because they were amazed at his authority in his work as healer.

They recognised that Jesus has that power and authority over the spirit world. And if these people recognise that, then so must we, so must you. And, as we said later in verse 41, again, we see that authority, that power of Jesus exercised when Jesus rebukes the demons, demons who knew who Jesus was, they knew he was the Son of God.

Jesus exercised his power to quell evil, to silence evil. And let's be reminded, or let's never ever think, you should say, never ever think that the devil has the victory.

Yes, there are forces of evil all around. Forces of evil which seek to overcome the cause of Christ, even in our land, even in this world. That power, that lesser power, will not triumph.

because Jesus has power over evil. And so we can say, we can respond with truth, that I will fear no evil, for you are with me.

[15 : 31] But notice too, that in the passage, that Jesus has power over the physical realm. He has power over his physical creation. Because if Jesus has power over the spirit world, his power over the physical world.

And we saw that as we read in verses 38 to 40 when we read there of Jesus healing Simon Peter's mother-in-law. And remember who's written this gospel.

This is Luke, Luke the physician, Luke the doctor. And Luke the doctor tells us that Simon's mother-in-law didn't just have a fever, but a high fever.

In other words, this in many ways was a life-threatening illness. But what stands out in this account of Jesus healing is the word that Luke uses when he describes Jesus healing this lady.

It's the same word that Luke uses, or used, when he spoke of Jesus casting out the demon. It's the word rebuke. Jesus rebuked the demon and Jesus rebuked the fever.

[16 : 36] And just as the demon left that demon-possessed man, so the fever left Simon's mother-in-law and did so to show Jesus complete power and authority over the physical world.

Now, what do we understand here? What are we to understand in this act of healing, particularly healing of Simon's mother-in-law? Well, remember this.

Jesus didn't come into the world to be a medical missionary. And he didn't come into the world to heal others so that we might assume that every sickness, every illness that we have is somehow going to be healed by Jesus.

Because we know, you know, that not every sickness and not every disease is cured by permission and intervention of God. God has the divine prerogative.

God has the divine right. Difficult, though it is to say, but difficult, we know, in experience. But God has that divine prerogative to heal and to not heal in the physical world.

[17 : 43] But when we're thinking of Jesus healing, the Jesus healing ministry, we have to realize that in that healing ministry, Jesus was revealing a higher purpose in these acts of healing.

Jesus was revealing the truth that acts of healing have to be seen, above all, have to be seen as signs and proof of Jesus' power and Jesus' authority, showing that Jesus truly is the Christ.

Jesus truly is the one who is anointed by the Holy Spirit to lead others into the kingdom of God. And so the miracles of healing that we see here and elsewhere in Scripture, all pointing to Jesus as the Son of God, as the divine Savior, Jesus, the Lord, Jesus the Christ, Jesus who alone offers healing and that healing that truly matters, that healing, the healing of the person, the healing of the soul.

You see, Jesus' healing was a sign that looked beyond the physical to the spiritual. that healing that's sure that Jesus truly has that power to heal, to heal the sinner, power and authority to forgive sins.

Some of you remember the late Douglas Macmillan, a great minister who died, it was 30 years ago, 30 years ago exactly. And Douglas Macmillan puts it beautifully when he writes of the outward signs of Jesus' power, Jesus' love in his healing ministry.

[19 : 23] He says this, by the genuineness of the visible miracle, that of the invisible miracle was confirmed to men. By the genuineness of the visible miracle, that of the invisible miracle was confirmed to men.

You know, just think of the healing miracles even that we've seen in this short passage. There's Simon's mother-in-law. What do we notice? She's been completely healed.

Again, pointing to the complete healing of the sinner saved by grace. The other sick people who were brought to Jesus, again, were told in verse 40 that Jesus healed all of them, all of them on whom he laid his hands.

not one person who was brought to Jesus failed to be healed. Just as everyone who's sick in sin, who comes to Jesus and who comes seeking forgiveness, not one person is turned away.

Not one person is unable to be forgiven and received into the kingdom of God when we come to Jesus by faith and Jesus comes in his grace and love and heals us of the sickness of our sin.

[20 : 37] Remember what Jesus said? Come to me, all of you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. And that surely then should give you that complete confidence when you come to Jesus, when you're seeking forgiveness for your sins.

Know that you have full forgiveness, complete forgiveness. And yes, that he does cleanse you from all unrighteousness. and you can come before him with confidence but not confidence in yourself but confidence in the power of our Lord to forgive you your sins, to heal you from the disease of sin and take you to be with them ultimately in glory and to know that when your soul enters glory, you who have known the power of the Lord Jesus to forgive you your sins, you who have known that healing touch of the Saviour, you know that when you enter glory you have that absolute guarantee of eternal life in Christ and with him eternally.

Then finally, what do we see in the passage here? We see the power of Jesus' preaching. We might say it's this spiritual dimension, this focus on the souls of men and women that, well, Jesus ultimately addressed in his power, the power of love, the love of the Lord Jesus and seeking to bring others into the kingdom of God.

You see that from verse 42, right there on the day after the Jewish Sabbath. Well, Jesus has been busy on that Jewish Sabbath, the day of rest.

Jesus has been preaching, he's been healing, he's been healing. After sunset, after the time when officially the Jewish Sabbath was over, well, the people are free to work, people free to carry out their duties.

[22 : 44] Even then, even in the midst of all that busyness, the people bring their sick to Jesus to heal. After Jesus, as we read there, after Jesus heals them, after he shows them his compassion, well, Jesus wants to spend time with his heavenly father.

He wants to come before him in prayer. But even in that solitude, even in that space that Jesus has found for himself to come before his father, that space is invaded by the people there in Capernaum and they find Jesus and they're actually trying to keep him in the town of Capernaum.

They want him, as it were, for themselves. Jesus shows his purpose or tells his purpose for his coming to earth. He says, you know, his purpose is to preach and teach and to heal, not to the few, but to the many, so that others might hear the good news of salvation found in Christ alone.

And so we're told there that Jesus continues to preach in his journeys throughout the land. He continues to preach there in the synagogues. Again, we have to ask, what are we seeing here?

What are we reading here? Well, surely this, that Jesus has authority to bring others into the kingdom of God. Jesus has that authority, that power to give you access into the very kingdom of God itself.

[24 : 18] He has that power to give that access to all who call upon him in faith. See, Jesus has that power, he has that authority to give you entrance into his kingdom.

It's by his authority that you enter into that eternal kingdom. It's not by your power, but by his power. As we see that there in Jesus' itinerary, there all around Galilee and then into the other area, territory, Judea, he's preaching.

He's preaching the good news of the kingdom and he's showing alone and telling alone that he alone has that authority to give access into the eternal kingdom of God.

Let's remind ourselves again, none of us have that authority, that power to enter his kingdom. We don't have that authority, you don't have that authority, only by the authority of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus.

And you who know him, you who are in Christ, you who follow him, who are his, be reminded that you are his as he first loved you. You who know the love of Christ, give praise and rejoice even now because of his love towards you.

[25 : 36] And continue to be reminded of the power of his love, that power that changed you, that changed your life. That power that's transformed your life.

That power that's made it possible for you to know him as Lord and Saviour. That power that's enabled you to be his disciple. That power that's enabled you to come into his kingdom.

And be reminded that yes, he has that power to even to turn the storms of your life into that calm by his command and will as we were reminded of earlier.

And she come to him and to cry out to him, I believe, help my unbelief. A few Wednesday evenings ago at our evening midweek meeting, we were looking at the contrast between the single-minded person, the person who truly does, the believer who truly does trust in God for all things.

the contrast between that person and the double-minded man, the double-minded person who doesn't truly and fully trust in God, the person who won't wholeheartedly seek God, the one true God.

[26 : 56] What of that in relation to your trust in the power of Christ? Do you single-mindedly believe that yes, he has that power to change your life?

He has that power to perform the miracle of healing in your life, miracle of healing even to restore broken relationships, even that power to turn what is so difficult in your life and to transform that by his grace?

to believe and truly do believe that he has that power to continue to save and to continue to save and that he has that power to bring you into that deeper relationship with him because of his love towards you.

Well, take time even now, even now, take time and even after the service, take time to dwell on the power of Christ's love towards you.

Yes, dwell in it, meditate on that power and yes, cast all your cares in him, even cast all your doubts in him, even concerning his power to save.

[28 : 10] If you are doubting even that power, come before him, confess that doubting but believe that truly he has that power, that power to right the wrongs that Satan has wreaked upon your life and even upon the lives of others and in your meditating on Christ's power, call upon him to show you that power and believe by faith that yes, he is able and he is willing because of his love, willing to exercise his power in your life and the life of others for his sake, for the glory of his sake and for the sake of your souls and indeed for the sake of others and so dwell, I ask you, dwell on the power of Christ's love, the power of his teaching, the power of his preaching, the power of his healing, even that power that Jesus is still exercising in this world today.

Amen and let us pray. Lord, our God, our Heavenly Father, you who did send your one and only Son in love, may we know that love, appreciate that love, live in that love and by that love and show forth that love.

Lord, as we've been reminded of Christ's power in love, may we continue to dwell in Christ, to meditate upon him and to love you the more, to seek you the more, to follow you the more, to live for you the more in that love, that love that is the greatest love of all.

Hear us, Lord, as we continue in worship before you now and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.