

That You May Know

it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:3-4 ESV)

For I Was Sent For This Purpose

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Luke 4:38-44

Liam Thompson

Introduction:

Hello, everyone, I am Liam Thompson, and I am an intern at Cornerstone Baptist Church. I am currently studying at Heritage Bible College and working toward my Bachelor of Theology. I am excited to have the privilege of opening the Word of God with you this morning. Please open with me to Luke, chapter 4, verses 38-44.

And as you turn there, I have some important reminders from the weeks before, from Luke chapter 4. See, a few months ago, you may remember the story of Jesus in the wilderness being tempted by Satan. Jesus overcomes the temptations that Satan gives him. After he beats Satan in the wilderness, he returns empowered by the Spirit. This story marks the beginning of Jesus's ministry.

After Jesus goes and teaches at many synagogues, he returns home to Nazareth. Here at his home synagogue, Jesus reads from the scroll of Isaiah and proclaims that this prophecy from the scroll is about him. This prophecy is Jesus's first statement of his mission. He says, "***The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.***"

This is Jesus proclaiming His mission with divine authority, declaring Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled in their hearing. But when the people realized His mercy extended beyond them, to outsiders and Gentiles, their wonder turned to anger, and they drove Him out, unwilling to accept a Saviour for all.

After being rejected by His hometown, Jesus journeys to Capernaum. And there, on the Sabbath, is where our story begins. Everything that happens on this day happens in light of the mission that he announced in the previous verse. He teaches in the synagogue with authority that leaves the people astonished. His authority and power are then seen further when they witness a man possessed by a demon, and with a word, Jesus silences the unclean spirit and casts it out. No ritual, no struggle, just sovereign authority. And it is directly following this moment, in the wake of His power revealed, that we come to our passage today. This next section is all in light of Jesus's mission and authority.

Look with me now at Luke 4, verses 38 through 44.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

“38 And he arose and 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. 39 And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

40 Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And

demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, 43 but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.”

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

This morning, we’re going to ask a simple question as we consider this passage:

What Does This Story Reveal About Jesus?

First:

1. It reveals his authority

Jesus, coming straight from the synagogue where he casts out a demon, goes to Simon Peter's house. He goes from the public scene to a private one. Jesus is in someone's home. Some commentaries say Jesus may even have been living with Peter at the time because of his fleeing his hometown.

Now, Peter's mother-in-law has a fever. In our worldview, that means nothing, but around the world today, even the flu is deadly. The World Health Organization states that globally, influenza causes between 290,000 (Two hundred and ninety thousand) and 650,000 (Six hundred and fifty thousand) respiratory deaths annually. These are our numbers today, not back then, think about how severe the stakes were when no modern medicine existed. Peter looks at Jesus and asks him to do something to prevent his mother-in-law from dying. He is desperate.

Something amazing happens next. Look at the text again at verse 39.

“39 And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.”

Jesus stood over her, not far away, with fear, but right over her and rebuked the fever. And like the demon before it, it left her at his word. Jesus uses the same word that cast out a demon and with the same word casts out the sickness. One minute stuck in bed, unable to move, then Jesus comes over, tells the fever off like it's a misbehaving child, and she gets up and serves! Who is Jesus that he can do something like this? She is healed, and she doesn't take it slow to make sure she is okay. She is healed fully and notices it is almost dinner time, and makes dinner, as if she hadn't just been dying in bed a second ago.

That power that flowed out of Jesus did not just make her well, but it cast out the fever and sickness in its entirety and fully restored her. This is power that can only come from heaven. Miracles like this prove Jesus to be from God because this power over creation can only be given by God. He performs miracles like this to show his authority in the message he comes to preach. Authority that only comes from heaven.

We serve a God with this kind of authority. Do we understand that today? In the moments that we are powerless, he is powerful. Jesus shows that he has all power and authority over all things and that his message lines up with that. We get to serve God knowing that his word is reliable.

Jesus's word has the power to change worlds. Jesus says a word, and a demon trembles and sickness flees. We need to understand that the same power is at work in our hearts. Jesus has the power to change people's hearts.

Friends, do you believe those truths? Some of us have family members fighting addictions and temptations that they are enslaved to. This makes it hard to believe. I want you to know that is why Jesus came. He came to set the captives free. He came to free you from sin and does not want you to be enslaved to it.

Jesus sees that suffering and does not run from it. Just like Simon's mother-in-law, Jesus moves in close because he is filled with compassion. That's the second thing we see:

2. It reveals his compassion

Look with me again starting at Verse 40.

“40 Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.”

After the sabbath day has ended at sundown, the people carry the sick to Jesus. Jesus sees the crowd of people and instead of screaming out, “Be healed in my glorious power!” and everyone being healed instantly, he laid his hands on each and every person. Not the ones yelling the loudest, not just the person with the most money, every person who was ill was healed by Jesus's personal touch. Jesus heals them with a personal compassion for each one of them.

This same compassion moved him to heal Peter's mother-in-law. He sees the sick coming to him, and their friends and family bring them to him, then beg for help. Some of these people may have had leprosy or various skin diseases. Yet, Jesus sees all this and doesn't turn any one of them away. In a world that looked at them as unclean and cursed by God to be diseased, Jesus touches

each one personally. No power was strong enough to prevent our savior from healing. No person was turned away because they were too unclean or too sick to be healed. What a heart our savior has!

As he is healing, some of them have demons. The demons even declare who Jesus is, but he does not allow them to speak. Jesus silences them. Don't you wonder why? Would that not be good for Jesus to be identified as the Son of God? He has already proved he has authority. And Luke chapter one already points out that he is the "Son of the Most High God". Why does it matter that the news is being spread?

Jesus proved that he had God's authority through his miracles. Jesus is the creator God who can rebuke a fever to make it disappear, folks. He could have walked into Rome and taken the throne before Caesar could blink. Jesus is pointing to who he is in the way that he chooses. He does not choose to have people amazed at his power; he wants people to see the character.

Look who is the one declaring him to be the Son of God. Demons. They are not the ones who will define his message. Demons do not get to announce the coming of God's own Son. So, Jesus exercises His authority over demons and the spiritual world again, just like he did in verse 35. Jesus will have his message proclaimed by himself and later by mankind. The ones who oppose God may know him, but do not get to declare who he is.

Jesus exercises his authority in tandem with his compassion as well. These truths are not separated. Jesus not only has all authority over all things, but he also loves all God's people. The demons know that he is the Christ and know the reason he came. When Jesus loves, it is not separate from his power, he loves through his power.

Many of us have pains and hurts. These pains could be homelessness, addiction, sickness, or a broken home. The pain your pain is not as obvious as that. Maybe your pain is private and in your own heart. Maybe you are depressed. Maybe you sit here in a room full of people and feel completely alone. That pain you feel, Jesus sees it and cares deeply about it. It can be hard to see Jesus when we are lying in the darkness we are in, but I can promise you he is there, standing over you with his hand stretched out.

Jesus serves with compassion and personally. Why do we often not love others in the same way? Jesus chooses us over himself to die on the cross for us. His purpose is to preach to us the kingdom invitation that he, by dying on the cross, made a way for us to join this kingdom. This should cause us to have the same compassion and love that Jesus had for us.

Similar to Peter's mother-in-law, we should pour out the love Christ gave us and give it to others. First John 4:19 says, "We love because he first loved us." Jesus served us first. It is what we do with that that matters.

One time, I was talking with this young girl, and she was trying to understand the gospel. She asked me, "How does Christ into my heart come into my heart?" and I told her that you pray to him and he enters your heart and all the great gospel message things you tell kids. But she looked at me and said, "I know that! I mean, if God is so big and I am so small, wouldn't he just ooze out of me?" Now, that girl doesn't understand the difference between spiritual things and physical things, granted, she was like 4 years old. But in that kind of gross and disturbing analogy, she understood one thing that most adult Christians don't. If Christ is in your heart, then he should be oozing out of you!

What are the areas you don't display Christ's love? Has it become easy for you to walk past the guy starving on the street? Do we see the sins of people and think they put themselves in that position, so I'm not helping them? Or are you looking at people who are in these positions and knowing that Christ came to this earth to save everyone who would come to him.

If Jesus's mission drives us in this way, then it is even more important to fully understand the purpose for which he came. And that's the third and final thing we see in this story:

3. It reveals his purpose

Look with me again at verses 42-44.

“42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, 43 but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.”

Jesus departs from the people, and Mark's gospel records that he prays. He takes the time away from the crowds to connect with God. This is how he stayed focused on the mission at hand. We often get distracted from our mission when we forget who sent us on this mission. Looking back at Jesus is how we stay locked on the mission.

After Jesus leaves to pray, the people notice he is gone, and they all come to him begging again. Jesus doesn't respond like he did before. Jesus sees that they would prevent him from leaving, and instead of responding with healing and miracles, he tells them that he must leave, because his purpose is not to stay here in Capernaum healing.

Jesus's purpose was to bring about further healing. Remember Jesus's mission statement from 4:18-19? I want us to understand that this is what Jesus declares he is here to tell others. Jesus wants to proclaim the healing kingdom of God that he has come to bring. Jesus declares that his message is his mission because he was sent for this purpose.

All the miracles Jesus does are not contrary to the God given purpose. Jesus does this because his purpose is supported by God through the miracles. Jesus is shown to be reliable through his authority and miracles. Hebrews chapter 2 says,

“1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, 4 while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.”

Signs and miracles are God bearing witness to Jesus. And Jesus's message is very important to us as Christians. See the word “Christian” literally means “little anointed ones”. As if we were little kids following the example of our big brother, we are to follow Jesus. And preaching the kingdom is our purpose too. Jesus says as much when he says in Matthew,

“...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The last point is not to forget the mission that we have. If we are to imitate Christ in all that we do, then our focus and purpose should be to preach about the kingdom of God. The same message that Christ came to preach. The kingdom that is here in our midst. It is here in every believer. We are all no longer just citizens of this world, or even Canada. We are citizens of God's kingdom, and we not only show what that redeemed kingdom is here on earth, but we tell them of the fully restored kingdom to come.

When Christ returns, he will restore the kingdom fully! And that is such great news for us who are in Christ. For those who are of the kingdom of this world, it is not good news. Because the kingdom of this world is doomed to perish with the world. We need to be laser-focused on the mission of Christ. So, we must preach his kingdom to all who will hear, and that should be our purpose as well.

If you are here this morning and don't know Jesus, this is not by chance. Jesus has you here to finally come to him. See, you are sicker than you know and that sickness will lead to death. Jesus came to give you a way out of the sickness that we call sin. Will you seek him? Don't ignore the tug on your heart. Be freed from slavery to sin and become a citizen of God's kingdom.

Let us pray.