

Disarming Demons & Disease

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: 17 December 2023

Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] Bibles with me, please, and turn to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 4. We pick up where Luke left us, that was leaving Nazareth.

Remember, Jesus went to Nazareth, his hometown, and was rudely welcomed. It went from, isn't he a nice boy, too?

Let's kill him pretty quickly. So, then, leaving there, now we come in Luke, chapter 4, to verse 31, through the end of the chapter, and Luke gives us a day in the life of Jesus.

After, in verse 31 and 32, kind of summarizing things, he picks up a day where Jesus is in the synagogue dealing with a demon, a demon in the synagogue, imagine that.

And then healing right after that, and then more healing after that, and then more demons after that. And, tired Jesus wants to get away, and the crowds won't let him.

[1 : 12] A long day. But it's not just about a day in the life, it's about what he does in that day, and who he is.

And that is really good news for us today. It is really good news. Because just as in that day, he disarmed demons and disease, he still does that.

Okay? That's what I want you to hear. So, let's read first our text, and then we'll pray, and then we'll jump into it, or dig into it, whatever we want to call that.

So, if you're able to please stand for the reading of the Word. Luke chapter 4, verse 31. And he went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and he was teaching them on the Sabbaths.

And they were astonished at his teaching, for his Word possessed authority. And in the synagogue, there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon.

[2 : 31] And he cried out with a loud voice, Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?

I know who you are, the Holy One of God. But Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be silent and come out of him.

And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. And they were all amazed and said to one another, What is this word?

For with authority and power, he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out? And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now, Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever.

[3 : 41] And they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever. And it left her.

And immediately, she rose and began to serve them. 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. 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 or they had known that he is the Christ.

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.

[4 : 55] But he said to them, I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well. For I was sent for this purpose.

And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea. So it reads, let us pray. Father, open our eyes. Help us to see what those people saw that day.

Help us to grasp the significance of what he does with the demons and what he does with disease. And help us see why Luke and your Holy Spirit knew we needed to hear this today.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. All right.

So are demons real? Come on. Yeah? Well, you're the choir, so. Ask in our culture.

[6 : 15] See, our culture minimizes and dismisses this thought of demons as really just mental illness.

Or superstition. Or just plain ignorance. Yeah, evil's the product of our environment.

I mean, everybody knows that, right? Now, talk to some people like police officers who deal with real evil on a daily basis, and they might have a different opinion about whether it's from environment or not.

So, Lee, it begs the question about our Dr. Luke. Is he credible? Well, his diagnosis is this is a spiritual issue, not a mental issue.

He's seen, remember, he traveled for years with the Apostle Paul who was plagued by these issues.

[7 : 24] And so Dr. Luke has seen too many examples of demons that take a man down who tries to cast them out, right?

And he has already told us at the beginning of this gospel that he has investigated everything carefully.

And I would imagine as a doctor, you know, he's already a curious kind of individual. He wants to understand things. He wants to understand physical sickness and illness and those kind of things.

And it must have absolutely intrigued him, I think, to see something that was beyond medical explanation. Right? And then to see a resolution of illness in an instant?

More important than what Luke thinks is what Jesus thinks. Jesus treated the devil and demons with all seriousness.

[8 : 31] And so I want you to hear today, what is this about? If you are suffering today, if you feel held captive by the devil or by illness, by weakness, here today, Jesus delivers from weakness.

He delivers from captivity. He was sent for this purpose. The Spirit of the Lord was upon me. Or is upon me. Remember what he said?

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me and has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives.

Right? Whether you're captive to the devil or you're captive to disease or you're captive to a lifestyle, an addiction, whatever it may be.

He delivers. So, as I said, Luke tells us of a day where Jesus is disarming demons and disease.

[9 : 41] As usual, what we find Luke doing, Luke is very structured. He's very orderly. And what he has done once again is he has given us a passage where he has set up a framework.

In verses 31 and 32, he talks about Jesus' regular ministry. And then at the end of this passage, verses 42 to 44, he once again gives us the other side, the other bracket, or as my friend Dan Clawson likes to say, a sandwich.

So, the outside, the beginning and the end is the bread and then the middle is the meat. Right? So, the story's in the middle, but he's framing it. He's structuring it with, here's the ministry of Jesus.

Here's the mission of Jesus. In the middle is the story he wants to tell, but don't lose the framework. In other words, at the end of the story, he says, yes, I heal people.

Yes, I care about people. But my mission is to preach the gospel. That's the big priority.

[10 : 44] Okay? Don't miss that. So, Luke's going to tell us about these amazing healings, but in the big picture, it comes within that framework.

Okay? He starts in verse 31, says he goes to Capernaum, the city of Galilee. He's teaching on the Sabbath. And that's actually plural, Sabbaths. He's been doing that regularly.

He's been teaching them on the Sabbath in Capernaum. And they're astonished. Notice in verse 32, they're astonished at his teaching because his teaching's not normal. His teaching's not like what they're used to.

His teaching is extraordinary. His teaching is with authority. It's as if he has the right to tell them what he tells them. It's as if his interpretation is the interpretation.

He's not saying, well, Gamaliel thinks this and Hillel thinks this. He's not referring to the other scribes. He's not referring to tradition. He's not referring to anybody else but himself. It's as if his word is sufficient.

[11 : 49] And they're amazed. Wow. It's as if God himself is talking. And then we see at the end, verse 42, the crowd seek him.

As I said, verse 43, he says to them, I must preach. Here's my mission. Here's what I must do. I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well, for I was sent for this purpose.

That's the reason I came. So in the middle of this story, Luke's going to tell us about these healings. And Jesus is absolutely compassionate about healing people.

He will spend all day. He will lay his hands on every single one of them. That tells us how much he is a personal. Because he could just say, everyone be healed.

He takes the time with every individual. So that's very important. But Luke wants us to not lose the sight of the picture of that's not why he's sent. He just does that because he cares.

[12 : 52] That's just the nature of the Son of God. His real mission is to proclaim the kingdom. That's why he was sent.

Okay? That's all I want you to see. Now let's get into the central story. So in verses 33 through 37, we see a picture of Jesus dethroning or disarming demons.

And then in verses 38 to 40, we see him disarming or dethroning, rebuking fevers and diseases. So, and again, I believe this is an example or an illustration of Jesus fulfilling his calling, which we heard back in chapter 4, verse 18, when he read from Isaiah 61, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me.

He's anointed me to, right, proclaim or to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty, to proclaim deliverance, to proclaim freedom to captives.

And remember, Isaiah had those four descriptions, poor people, captive people, blind people, and then oppressed, or literally those who are broken in pieces.

[14 : 12] So it's not just about physical captivity. It's about people that are just, they're blown up in their lives. They're poor, in other words, they're so poor that they're desperate, and they're beggars, and they're blind, and they're captive, and they're just shattered.

That's who he came for. That's who he came to proclaim liberty to, to bring recovery from all of that. And so these two pictures he brings us of deliverance of somebody captive to a demon, and then somebody captive to a disease.

Just they illustrate what he has the power to do. And in his miracles, as John's gospel tells us, Jesus' miracles are signs.

They signify some. They point beyond themselves. They're pictures of the greater salvation. When he makes the blind see, it's like us when we're saved. All of a sudden, my eyes are open.

I can see Jesus. He makes the lame to walk. I can't walk. I can't do anything right. And then Jesus gives me power to start doing the, start walking.

[15 : 24] They're baby steps. They're little, but then I start walking. Right? Okay. So let's look at this. Two captives here, two kinds of deliverance.

First of all, the first captive is those captive to the demonic bondage. Jesus delivers captives from demonic bondage. This may be for you today.

So notice verse 33, this person in the synagogue. And again, that's fascinating. A man in the synagogue who has a demon. What are demons doing in the synagogue?

Synagogue, they're praying to God. In the synagogue, they're reading God's word. In the synagogue, they're talking about God's truth. And there's a demon right there. Nobody, I mean, nobody knew that, but when Jesus showed up, all of a sudden, the demon starts protesting.

Either just simply because of his presence or because the implication of verse 32 is Jesus is teaching with authority and the demon objects.

[16 : 41] We saw that in the gospel of Mark. Jesus starts preaching and demons were popping up, objecting there, and Jesus would just shut him down. So here's a demon.

He's called, Luke says, a man. There was a man who had or was having the spirit of an unclean demon.

Now, usually it's called, New Testament calls it an unclean spirit. Luke calls it both. I mean, an unclean spirit is another way of saying a demon. You know, a spirit that's unclean, corrupted, impure, in contrast with a spirit that is holy.

Right? But he's kind of, and perhaps it's because he's writing to Theophilus and he's writing to Greek thinkers and Hellenistic folk, Gentiles, right, who don't understand demons.

They think of spirits, they think of the spirit world, they could be good spirits or bad spirits. We don't know. It's the forest Luke, right? They kind of have this generic view of the spirit world.

[17 : 49] And so Luke is kind of doubling up and saying it's a spirit that's a demon, which is unclean. Okay? So that's what he's saying.

He has that. He's possessed by that. So notice the way that this, verse 34, this demon objects.

Ha! How do you translate? Ha! It's an emotional interjection. It could just mean, hey! Like he's shocked, he's surprised.

It could be like, no! And we don't know how to translate. It's just like, ha! Ha! You're messing with me. And then, what have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?

Interesting. He knows who he is. He knows he's from Nazareth. He knows exactly who he is. What have you to do with us? In other words, he feels threatened.

[18 : 48] And then, have you come to destroy us? He knows Jesus is the judge. He knows there is a day of judgment and destruction.

And he's saying, hey, I thought I had more time. He is absolutely in terror. Remember, James says, the demons believe in God.

And their belief leads them to what? What does James say? They shudder. Yeah, they know who God is. And when they think of who God is, they go.

And so, the son of God shows up, and how do they feel? This demon is a threat.

And then he says, I know who you are. You're the holy one. You're the holy one.

[19 : 52] Later, in verse 41, right? When Jesus was healing later, in verse 40, he says, and demons also came out of many, crying, you are the son of God.

They're crying out. They're confessing him. They're identifying him. They all know who he is. Isn't that interesting?

But he rebuked them, would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ. And actually, Luke uses the flu perfect. I love to say that, because he hardly ever uses flu perfect.

So, it's really exciting for grammarians. Flu perfect is the perfect tense back in the past. Right? Which means they didn't just know now.

It means they have known it from the beginning. They've always believed in the Trinity. They've always known there's a father, and there's a son, and there's a spirit.

[20 : 49] And they've always known that he's the Christ, the coming one. Because he's shown up before, by the way, right? The angel of the Lord. They know.

He rebukes them. Jesus, verse 30. So, how does Jesus deal with it, right? He rebukes them. What's that mean? I look up the word, and it can mean censure.

It can mean, you know, chide, scold. I don't think he's scolding. The way they interpret in verse 41 is, no, excuse me, the way they interpret in verse 36 is he commands the unclean spirits, and they go out.

The rebuke is a command. The rebuke is an order. In fact, Luke says he rebukes them saying two things, right?

Be silent and come out. Shut up and get out. Or literally, the word Luke uses is be muzzled. I like that better.

[22 : 01] Be muzzled. Only Jesus can do that. Be muzzled and get out of him.

Done. Now, there's no incantation. I read about the Roman Catholic Church who has a whole ministry, has a whole department, a whole division devoted to exorcism.

And the chief exorcist of the Roman Catholic Church for a long time wrote a book, and he talked about his experiences, pretty hairy experiences. But they would be long, drawn-out battles for days.

There would be readings and prayers and take a break because he's beating us now. And then we got to find out his name because if you get his name, then you can... I don't know.

None of that with Jesus. How long is the battle? About two seconds, huh? Shut up and get out. That's it.

[23 : 07] No wrestling match. No fighting. No arguing. Jesus doesn't ask his name. He doesn't need to know his name.

And so we see in verse 30, the end of verse 35, it comes out. What happens?

And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, actually hadn't thrown him down, literally, what Luke said is he threw him into their midst. In other words, kind of pushed him into the crowd. So he came out having done him no harm.

So the spirit kind of one last futile effort, you know, a little bit of a tantrum as he has to go out, you know, like... But, you know, he's got to go.

So the crowd reacts, verse 36. Obviously, they are amazed. And they say to one another, what is this word? What is this teaching? What is the message? What is the meaning of this?

[24 : 06] For with authority and power, he commands the unclean spirits. And they come out? I don't know if that's a question or a statement. But they're amazed.

And this word amazed is kind of a blending of their in awe and fear. Bush called it shock and awe, right? Awe and shock or shock and awe.

Was it shock and awe? Yeah, it's kind of like whoa and awe, right? In other words, something absolutely extraordinary happened. Oh, I forgot to put the candles on.

I was going to say. What are you going to say? Thank you. Thank you for saying. Nope, nope, nope, nope. Come on. Be gone. Rebuke. Okay. That's as powerful as I am.

Can't even put a candle out. Where were we? 36. Shock and awe, right. Okay, thank you. This is extraordinary, not the norm.

[25 : 09] I get the impression it's not just how he did it that they're amazed at. It's that it happened. If you read the New Testament, read the Old Testament, you don't see any examples of expulsion of demons.

I don't know about Jewish history, but from what I've read, I haven't seen that there's really any Jewish exorcists.

Remember when they confront Jesus later, they accuse him of being an ally with Beelzebub. He casts out demons by Beelzebub because he's on Beelzebub's side. And Jesus could have easily said if they were also exorcists, he could have said, well, then so do you.

But apparently they didn't do that. Nobody did it. All of a sudden, not only does Jesus do it, but he does it with ease. He just commands it and they obey.

What is this? And they're just absolutely blown away. He's able to command with authority and power. He acts as if he's God himself.

[26 : 15] I mean, who can do this? Who can do this? I've heard from various people that deal with demons and exorcism.

And, you know, they talk about all the different methods. You have to say not just Jesus. You have to say Jesus of Nazareth. You know, because there's other Jesuses. And then you have to know their name.

And you have to blah, blah, blah. I'm like, where are you getting that stuff? Well, it's what works. Really? Okay, great. Why don't you just ask Jesus to do it?

There's an example in Zechariah. There is an example in Zechariah 3 where there's a vision of Joshua, the high priest, right? He's standing before the Lord.

And he's filthy. He's just sinful. He's full of, you know, he needs cleansing. And the devil's there accusing him. He's like, look, you know, God, there's your guy.

[27 : 16] He's all dirty. He's all. And what happens is the Lord says to Satan, the Lord rebuke you. He doesn't say, I rebuke you.

He says, the Lord rebuke you. Which is the same thing that Michael did with the devil over Moses' body. According to Jude, I think, Jude or 2 Peter.

He didn't say, I rebuke you. He says, the Lord rebuke you. Because it's the Lord who can do that, not us. I have no power. Well, apparently the apostles did for a little while, right?

Anyway, sorry. So they say the same thing about his, in verse 36, about his ability to command demons and they come out.

He says that he does that with authority. Just like they said in verse 32, his teaching was with authority. That his word is enough.

[28 : 20] It's kind of like Luther's hymn, right? The world with devils filled and they threaten to undo us. And the devil himself who is fearful and awesome.

But what does he say? One word? What? One little word will fell him. And Luther talks about his experience with the devil.

I guess you can go to some castle somewhere and see where he threw the ink bottle at the devil. Because, you know, it was such a real thing. One little word.

Let's get to this. What about today? Okay. Does Jesus still deliver us from demonic bondage today? Does Jesus still deliver us from?

I'm not asking about deliverance ministries. I'm asking, does Jesus still deliver us from demonic bondage today? The answer?

[29 : 22] The resounding yes. Yes. Every time someone is saved is a deliverance from demonic bondage.

Listen to how John wrote, 1 John 3. John says, you know that he appeared in order to take away sins.

And in him there is no sin. So, no one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous as he is righteous. So, remember 1 John is written so that you might know that you're saved.

Remember, he gives us these tests. He gives us these things to look at in our lives to know, am I saved? Do I have these marks in my life, right? So, here he's talking about, do I practice righteousness? So, whoever practices righteousness is righteous as he is righteous.

[30 : 23] Whoever, on the other hand, makes a practice of sinning is, wait a minute, is this right? Is of the devil? Is that right? Is that what you have?

Is it right? Is that what he's really saying? Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil. For the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. What does that mean?

Next sentence. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. For God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning.

Why? Because he has been, what? Born of God. In other words, something so transforming in his life has happened that there is a major change from sinning to righteousness.

[31 : 22] Not perfection. Remember, he calls it practicing, right? We're still learning. But a major change. From he can't to now he can't.

And he does. By this is evident. By this it is evident. Who are the children of God?

Who are the children of the devil? You're either one or the other. There's no in between. You might say, oh, I'm not child devil. I don't do devil worship.

I don't follow the devil. I don't look at the devil. Not about that. It's about your source. It's about who's in control of your life. You're their child of God. You're either looking like your father, God, or you're looking like your father, the devil.

Remember, Jesus said that to the Jews. You're of your father, the devil. You're doing just what he did. I know you're of the devil because of what you do. And that's what John is saying.

[32 : 23] It's evident. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. Those born of God, John is saying, those who have been born again, those who have been born of God are no longer of the devil, which means they've been set free.

They have been delivered from bondage. They have been delivered from his, not just his influence. That's not the way scripture reads, but from his bonds.

Now, an unbeliever will find that extremely offensive. Okay? But, I get that.

They're not consciously trying to do that. I get that. But, so Jesus, John says, Jesus appeared, the son of God appeared to destroy the works of the devil, to set us free, to set captives free, to unlock your bonds.

That holds you to sin. If you do not practice righteousness, you are not of God. You are still of the devil.

[33 : 48] You are still in bondage. You are not set free. That's what John is saying. Kind of a punch in the gut. John doesn't pull any punches, though. So, here's the hope, though.

Are you captive today to sin? Do you practice sin more than you practice righteousness? Now, you might try to do good things, but basically what you lean and tend to, and are prone always to do is your own thing, not God's thing.

You're not driven by a love for God to do the right things. You're driven by guilt or somebody's watching, if we're honest. If you are captive today to sin, seek the deliverer.

There's one who sets you free. There is one who, in a moment, can set you free. That's why he came. So, there's a second captive he deals with in verse 38 to 40.

And that is Simon's mother-in-law. Simon had a mother-in-law? Who's Simon, by the way? Who's this Simon guy? Peter. Yeah, Simon was his original name.

[34 : 58] Peter's what Jesus called him. Jesus liked to give people new names. He gave Simon the name. I mean, you're the rock.

You're the rock. Not a boulder, but you're the rock. Not a huge, you know, you're a rock. Build my church on people like you. Anyway, so here, this little text, we find out, well, Peter has a house.

And he has a mother-in-law, which means he has a wife. He's married. Imagine that. How'd that work with the whole traveling thing, right?

So, but that's not the issue here. He just says, he leaves the synagogue. He goes to Simon's house. Now, Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever.

So, we see somebody who's captive to a sickness. And what we see here is Jesus delivering a captive from a physical suffering. And what the ESV says, he says the mother-in-law was ill with a high fever.

[36 : 05] What Luke literally said was she was being held by a great fever. She was being held. She was in the grip. She was captive to a great fever.

You ever been sick? Of course you've been sick. How'd you feel? Okay, were you free? You just say, I don't accept this and I just... Or were you in the grip of whatever your illness was?

I mean, you can do things, right, to get better. You're trying to get it to leave you. You ever try rebuking it? That's kind of a new thing. Maybe. That's what Jesus does.

It's an interesting depiction of illness, right? To be held captive against my own will. So what do they do? They appeal to Jesus on her behalf.

We see that in the Gospels all the time. People come to Jesus, say, I got a son who's sick. I got a daughter who's demonized. I got... Or the friends that come up through the roof, right?

[37 : 12] Right? We just got to get them to... I don't know how it's going to happen. We just got to get them to Jesus. Get them to Jesus. He'll take care of it. Right? And Jesus... What did he see when they're cutting through the roof? I don't know. The homeowner said, okay, insurance still.

But what did Jesus see when he saw their faith? Because of their faith, not because of the paralyzed man.

And here, it's not because the mother-in-law said anything. It's because probably Peter's wife said, honey, would you ask him, honey? Or maybe she was...

She's a Jewish wife, so she's like, get out of the way, Peter. I'll just talk to Jesus. I don't know. They appealed to him. Do we do that? We appealed to him?

Yeah. Yeah, she did. Right? So what does Jesus do? Verse 39. He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her.

[38 : 11] And immediately, she rose and began to serve him. Okay? This is odd, okay? Because later, he does what we normally associate with healings, where he's just laying hands on people, right?

But here, he rebukes the fever. What's that about? Is the fever like... Can a fever like hear that? Like the demon? And I mean, it's the same exact wording.

He rebuked the demon, and it left. He rebuked the fever, and it left. Same wording. Luke doesn't want us to miss that. What's the deal? Are fevers...

Beings? Beings? Does it mean that if you have a fever, you have a demon? No. No, he doesn't say it's a demon.

He says it's a fever. He did rebuke the wind and the storm, and they obey him. So he rebuked... His word has power.

[39 : 11] Period. Can I rebuke a fever? I don't know. I don't think so. Well, I can try. Go away, cold. I guess I've never tried it.

I get one hurt, but... Use your Jesus voice. Use your Jesus voice. Hmm. I don't know what a Jesus voice is. Yeah, it's how you got a name to that thing, and...

I don't know. He proclaims. Both of these are speaking miracles. He speaks to the demon, and it leaves.

He proclaims liberty to the captive. He speaks. He speaks to the fever, and it leaves. Like Anne said, he speaks to the wind and the waves, and they obey him.

What is that? That's God. Genesis 1. And God said, let there be...

[40 : 09] Okay, we got life. We got separation. We got land. We got animals. We got creepy crawlies. You know, he had to do that, didn't he? Creepy crawlies. Jesus is doing the same thing.

He just speaks. He is God. He speaks deliverance. He proclaims liberty to captives. Captives. Are you captive today? Ask him to speak to you.

Ask him to speak to your captivity. Her response, we see that she immediately gets up, rises up, and serves.

What's that about? Well, it certainly shows that she's very grateful. You know, that's appropriate. She's great. She wants to serve him. But what he's really picturing is the instant total recovery at once.

Not gradually got better. Not, oh, the fever's receding. Right? It's like instant. Gets up and starts serving. She's back to normal.

[41 : 14] That's probably who she was. He was just a servant. So, again, verse 40, we see that now the word gets out.

When the sun was setting. Now, what's significant about the sun setting? Well, if you're Jews on a Sabbath day, what's the significance of the sun setting? Sabbath ends when the sun sets.

It's from evening to evening. It's not from morning to night. It's from, remember? Day one, it was evening, and it was morning one day.

It was evening. That's how God's time works. Starts in the evening and the next day. So, the Sabbath had started on Friday evening and ended on Saturday evening.

So, this is Saturday evening. Once the sun set, Sabbath is over, and now what can you do? Now you can work. Now you can carry your loved one to Jesus. You can imagine they're all lining up.

[42 : 15] Wait, okay, is it set yet? Is it set? Can we go yet? Can we go? Is the day over? Is it Sunday yet? Yeah? So, now they're all bringing sick people with all kinds of diseases to Jesus, people who are suffering, people who are weak.

By the way, the word sick means to be weak or to be without strength. It doesn't just mean physical sickness. It can mean a weakness, a strengthlessness. He brings, they all bring, everyone with physical needs.

And then we see his personal touch, every one of them, right? How long must that have taken? He laid his hands on every one of them and healed them.

He could have just said, you know, everybody be healed. That's what I would do because I'm really selfish. He takes the time. Even though we see at the end of this text that he does have a time schedule, he needs to move on.

But today, today, everyone, I'll just take time on every single one of you. Why does he touch them? He doesn't need to. Right?

[43 : 35] He spoke to the mother-in-law, so we already know he can just say it. Why does he touch them? Because he cares. He's personal.

He's personal. He's not all business. He's a people person. Son of God. And that speaks volumes.

By the way, he healed, right, lays hands on every one of them. Jesus never held a healing service. Did you know that? People came to him.

You know, he found out where he was, and they, you know, okay, line up. Jesus never said, I'm going to be over here in such and such time, and we'll have service, you know. We'll sell tickets, and we'll hold an offering, and, you know, it'll be a good show.

That's not what Jesus did. Didn't do a show. Didn't do a service. Didn't do an offering. Didn't sell tickets. Just touched people. So what about today?

[44 : 45] Does Jesus still touch people? Does Jesus still heal people? We just prayed, right? We've been praying. We hear answers of some healings, right, that we've been praying about.

We're still praying for little Nathan. It's like, come on, Lord. Yeah, absolutely. He does heal today. But in what way?

Can we go just for a moment to the text in the New Testament that actually gives us instruction on healing when we're sick? Do you know there's a text in the New Testament for that?

You know that? It's not the Gospels. Gospels just tell us the stories of all the different ways Jesus heals, and we go, ooh, I want to be with Jesus. But James 5 tells us what to do.

So here's what James 5, 13 to 16 says. He says, is anyone among you suffering? What should you do? Pray. Okay.

[45 : 42] I guess I could have figured that one out, but thank you. Actually, I don't. Sometimes I, instead of pray, I what? I complain. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Okay.

Okay. Is anyone among you sick? Oh. And by the word sick, we mean weak without strength.

So it might be physical, might be spiritual. Okay. So don't limit it to a physical sickness. What do you do?

If you're sick, what do you do? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

In the name of the Lord. In other words, by means of or by the power of the name of the Lord.

[46 : 42] Not the elders power, but anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save, will raise up, will heal the one who is sick or weak, and the Lord will raise him up.

And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that... Okay, wait a minute.

What? So that you may be healed. Wait a minute. Confession of sin has something to do with healing? Confession of sin to one another has something to do with healing?

The prayer of the righteous person has great power as it is working. Prayer of a righteous person has great power. Like the same word for power that Jesus had when he healed.

The prayer of the righteousness... The righteous person has that same kind of power in its effectiveness. Goodness. Please note what James does not say.

[47 : 46] He does not say go to a healer. He does not say go to a healing service. He says something so mundane. Something so unexciting.

Go to an elder meeting. No, don't go to an elder. No, call the elders to come meet with you. Because you're sick. Stay home. Call the elders. Say elders, come over here.

And we will. We'll be happy to. We've done that. I think we should do it more. But we need to be asked.

Call your elders. And that they might anoint with oil. Now, oil can... Was in the first century... A medicinal was used for medical treatment at times.

That's what the good Samaritan poured oil on the wounds of the hurt person. It was a treatment. And it could refer to going to doctors. Or, I think more likely, anointing with oil is more symbolic of the power of the Holy Spirit.

[48 : 57] Since anointing... Oh, okay. But I want you to note the vital elements that James talks about. Notice what he says. Prayer. He says, prayer, prayer, prayer, prayer.

Right? Call the elders. Let them pray. Prayer of faith. Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another. The prayer of the righteous. Okay. Prayer. I think prayer is probably pretty important when you're getting healed.

Right? Okay. Prayer four times. He talks about faith. He talks about confession of sin with one another. He talks about the prayer of the righteous person. Which he mentions after the confession of sin.

After... When you confess your sin to one another so that you might be healed. That means you're back in the righteous position again. You've always been in the righteous position. But if you're not confessing your sin, then you're not walking in the light John talks about.

Right? And the place of healing is in the light. And here I think it's significant that you confess your sins to one another. Not just... I just confess my sins to God. It's not just me and God.

[49 : 57] It's me in a body. So those things. Prayer. Faith. Confession of sin. Righteousness.

Have a direct impact on your healing. So that you might be healed. One brief historical note about healing. If we read our whole New Testament and we read it in context.

We have a better understanding of... Does God heal the same way He healed in the Gospels and in Acts? By the end of the New Testament. In fact, by 62 AD.

There were less healings. We know that. Because what Paul wrote to Timothy in 1 Timothy 5. Paul told Timothy who had tummy problems.

What did he tell Timothy? Go find a healer. No. He said take a little wine for your tummy. Well, okay. Maybe that wasn't a big deal.

[50 : 56] Okay. Then let's go to 2 Timothy 4. Paul has a brother, Trophimus, who is ill. And Paul leaves him.

Ill. What's the deal? Why didn't he heal him? I mean, in Acts. I mean, his shadow just going... Right? Paul had an enormous gift of healing and miracles.

But 20 years later, no. Again, in Philippians 2. His dear friend Epaphroditus was laying sick and was at the point of death.

And Paul said, I'm worried. And you know what? He's worried. Not a word about, would you bring the healer in and touch that man?

Not a word. Why? Healing wasn't as common by the end of the New Testament. Not that nobody believed in healing. Not that nobody didn't pray.

[52 : 02] But just, it was not expected as it was early on. I mean, you expected it everywhere Jesus goes. You expected it everywhere the apostles went at the beginning. But what was the purpose of signs and wonders?

It was to verify, right? To confirm the messenger at the beginning. Later on, what happens? Well, the enemy starts copying. And you can't verify that anymore. Because the enemy can do miracles too.

Remember Egypt? Egypt. So. Okay. And then, you know, then 2 Corinthians, Paul talks about this thorn he got.

And you know, this whole thing. And God sent a devil to put a thorn in his flesh. What?

God sent the devil to put. God sent the devil to put a thorn in his flesh. And Paul prayed three times. Please take it out. Please take it out. He prayed for healing.

[53 : 04] And God said. Nope. Paul, you know, you got. You know. Your head getting way too big. You can pop that down a little bit.

You think you're a little too special. So we're going to show you how special you are. And Paul, you know, the Lord told him, you know, my power is perfected in your weakness.

And so Paul said. Yes. I'm. I'm good with that. I'm good with not having that healing. So in other words, does God still heal today?

Absolutely. Does he heal all the time? No. Sometimes he says no. There's no magic to turn that circle around.

He either says yes or no. But remember, Jesus said you have not because you ask not. So don't not ask because you think he's just going to say no. Right?

[54 : 04] Still ask. He wants us to ask. Final word.

If you're suffering today. If you feel captive. If you feel held back. Whether it's from being able to see God.

To know God. You're being convicted that this Jesus is real. But you can't really grasp him yet. You feel like you're held back from that. Would you seek the Lord in that?

Would you ask Jesus to rebuke that? Whatever that is. If you are weak today. If you're without strength. Call it sick. Call it hurting.

Call it discouraged. Would you seek him to rebuke that? Ask him to rebuke that. And heal you and give you recovery.

[55 : 08] And over. Whether. Like our brother said. Let. Pray that my faith. Right? In my weakness. Whatever happens. That my faith.

As Jesus said to Peter. That I pray that your faith will not fail. And I'm praying that you get. You get saved from the. From the problem. Because Satan is going to attack you. I'm praying that your faith won't fail.

As you're attacked. And that even if you fall. Right? That when you turn. Now from your weakness. Now you can.

Now you can help your brothers. Right? Let's pray. Father we thank you for Jesus. Oh what an amazing.

Amazing. Savior. And no wonder. He's the Holy One. He's. He's the Son of God. He's the Christ. Thank you Lord.

[56 : 08] That when he touched people. When he. When he. Delivered people. It wasn't. A show. It wasn't about building a name. In fact. He told the demons to shut up.

He didn't want their. Publicity. Thank you Lord. That it's not about that. It was about people. It was just about people. Being captive.

In his compassion. To set them free. Hear our prayer today. Oh Lord. Hear our prayer today. For each one captive. In whatever way they are held back.

Come. Speak to them. Just give the word. Because you have the authority. And the power. To set us.

Free. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.