

March 3rd 2024



**Luke 4:31-32: And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority.**

Jesus' words find acceptance and the hearers are astonished at the power and authority of His teaching. Whilst the Jewish rabbis and scribes had spoken only by appealing to the traditions of their predecessors, Jesus spoke with a unique freshness and consciousness of His calling, based on the fact that He was the Son of God and thus possessed divine authority. The authority of the words of Jesus was the authority of absolute truth. For these reasons, it was said of Him: "Never has a man spoken like this (John 7:46)" (Norval Geldenhuys, *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 169)

If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me." (John 47-50)

**Prayer:** Pray for a heart that aligns with Jesus' authority as given to us from His word. For His word is Spirit and Life (John 6:63) and pray that you will be humbled by Jesus' authority in your life.

March 4th 2024




**Luke 4:33-34: And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, 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.”**

“The question of demon possession raises some problems for moderns. Some reject the whole idea. The phenomena that the Bible ascribes to demons, they explain as the activities of persons suffering from serious mental problems. It is true that some of the behaviour of these people does resemble the actions of psychotics, yet this will not explain all of their actions. In Jesus’ day, some may have ascribed all manner of illnesses to demon possession, but the Gospel writers carefully distinguish between demon possession and ordinary diseases... Whatever conclusions we may come to about demon possession today, we cannot escape the realization that Satan and his allies are a force that must be reckoned with” (John Wade, *Dear Theophilus*, pp. 60-61)

Prayer: Satan is at work in this world. Pray that God will reveal the work of the enemy that is alive in your proximity.

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March 5th 2024



**Luke 4:35-36: 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!”**

“While I waited for an opportunity to outmaneuver security and put a bullet in the pastor’s head, something happened. As I watched Craig’s message through the closed-circuit televisions, heard the reading of God’s holy Word, and the song of praise come floating through, it hit me like a bolt of lightning through the forehead. What was protecting this church wasn’t a security detail with their firepower and video cameras. It was the Word of God being spoken aloud and the praises from His people. These were the real weapons that were protecting the church and its pastor. The words did not go void into nothingness, nor did they in my spirit. For some reason, I started to hear the message. I started to see the television. The message of the gospel began to piece my wicked heart, and Satan and his demonic lackeys were helpless against it. They had no defence against God’s power that was being projected into my life. The bulwark that Satan had successfully erected around my heart and that had blocked the prayers of many faithful saints was being dismantled, and the light of heaven began its transformative work in me.” (Michael Leehan, *Ascent from Darkness*, p. 152)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday” (Psalm 91:1-6)

Prayer: Yesterday, we prayed that God would reveal the work of the enemy in your proximity. Now we acknowledge that as powerful as Satan is, he is nothing compared to the almighty God. Pray for God to vanquish the works of the enemy in the power of Jesus’ name

March 6th 2024



## **Luke 4:37** And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding

The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. (C.S Lewis).

“The darkness that we see is not an indication of the strength of our enemy; it's a result of our own inaction. We fail to take the light into the world and as a result, it remains in darkness” (Tyler Edwards, *Zombie Church*, p. 57)

Oh, my brothers and sisters in Christ, if sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies; and if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay, and not madly to destroy themselves. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for (Charles Spurgeon)

**Prayer:** Pray that God will continue to use you to spread his message. Pray specifically for those who are in proximity to you who do not know Jesus. Pray that God will give you the opportunity and the courage to share the God news of Christ. And pray for Alpha, as maybe an opportunity to invite someone to hear the gospel.

March 7th 2024



**Luke 4:38-39** 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. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

Service is our response to Jesus' work in our lives. We are not to treat Jesus like some genie in a bottle, someone who simply works for our good and our benefit, but rather we are to see Jesus' work in our lives as a means to glorify His name, as an avenue to further serve Him. In John 4 and John 9, we see two different accounts of Jesus' healing. The lame man in John 4 sees Jesus as a means to an end and treats Him as such. But the blind man in John 9 responds to Jesus' miracle by putting himself in service to Jesus' mission as a faithful witness even to his own cost. Louie Giglio uses Joseph as an example that often our struggles are for the purpose of another person's salvation.

**Prayer:** Pray that God's power will be alive in your life, not for your own ends but for His glory. Pray in expectation that God is at work and that He desires to use you for His glory. And pray that this work will pour into you like an overflowing cup that in service you will seek to bless others.

March 8th 2024



**Luke 4:40-41** 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 that he was the Christ.

Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him; the Lord protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land; you do not give him up to the will of his enemies. The Lord sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness you restore him to full health. As for me, I said, “O Lord, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you!” My enemies say of me in malice, “When will he die, and his name perish?” And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad. All who hate me whisper together about me; they imagine the worst for me. They say, “A deadly thing is poured out on him; he will not rise again from where he lies.” Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me. But you, O Lord, be gracious to me, and raise me up, that I may repay them! By this I know that you delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me. But you have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in your presence forever. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen. (Psalm 41:1-13)

**Prayer:** Whatever it is you are carrying, bring it to Jesus. Give him your burdens, hurts and pains. Because of modern technology and science, we so often see Jesus as the last resort instead of our primary source and sustainer. Of course, we use the resources available to us, and yet pray that your heart and your needs will draw you closer to God - who is eager to heal.

March 9th 2024



**Luke 4:42-44** 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, 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.” And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 5 An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. (2 Timothy 2:2-7)

**Prayer:** Pray for God’s purpose to reign in your life. We live in the most entangled society in the world and it is all too easy to grow distracted. Pray that the urgency of God’s mission will be expressed in your day-to-day and that as we live in this world, we will be radical lights shining in the darkness of the world.