

Luke
Chapter 4 - An Unorthodox Power
The Holy Spirit
A Power with Authority (31-37)

Luke 4:31-37: And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath; and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority. In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, “Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, 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 quiet and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm. And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, “What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out.” And

the report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district.

What is this power? That's a good question, isn't it? What is it? What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit and what is the power of the Holy Spirit? We've been looking through the Gospel of Luke and what is clear is that everything about the gospel is strange, different than anything that the world has ever provided for us, and the way that God works is a lot different than the way that man would work. His ways are not our ways, as high as the heavens are above the Earth, so are His ways far greater than ours. It's hard to imagine how God would think, and in some ways, Paul addresses that particular point in 1 Corinthians 2. His fundamental point is that who could know the mind of somebody else? And how in

the world do you think you'd have the mind of God? Eye has not seen, ear has not heard nor has it entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for him. You could never imagine the things that God has prepared. Far beyond what we could ask or think, God can do. But isn't it wonderful that God has given us the Spirit to reveal these things? That's how that particular passage ends. God has actually given His spirit to reveal these things, the Spirit of God's wisdom and understanding.

So, as we come to the passage, we not only realize that God has given us of His Holy Spirit that gives us wisdom and understanding but also gives us a great power to overcome the temptations of the flesh. 1 John tells us that we shouldn't love the world, that we shouldn't love the things in the world. It then goes on to describe the things of the world that draw us; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the boastful pride of life. These things begin to draw us. How is it that we could have victory over these things? 1 John will ultimately tell us faith is the victory that overcomes the world, and he conveys very

strongly that this victory is within us, for greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. So, actually, we no longer have the excuse “the devil made me do it” because you have the Holy Spirit and greater is He that's in you, and what a wonderful power it is. So, we have the power over the flesh.

You see that at the beginning of Chapter 4, if you look in particular, Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit and all of the temptations, all of the things that could clearly draw somebody away are no problem, because the Holy Spirit is drawing them. I think what's interesting about the passage there in 1 John is it tells us that if you love the world, it uses an interesting phrase, “the love of the Father is not in you,” which really is that picture of the Spirit of God within us, the power of the Spirit of God. What is this power? It is the love for God. It is the love of God, and this power is so powerful that we can't love the world because we love Him so much, and anything that would draw us away from Him, we perceive as a threat and something that we want to avoid rather than something that we'd want to embrace. So, how is it that

we could have victory over the flesh? Well, it's really easy. WE LOVE HIM MORE. The great power that God has given us, that love constrains us and restrains us from those things, and we resist those things because we love Him too much. So, what a wonderful power it is that actually, it's a power over the flesh. It's a power over the compromise that we would tend to fall into because we're all in with the Spirit of God. He is the Spirit, as is described in John 14, 15 and 16. He is the Spirit of truth. Now, truth is not only telling us that it's not false, but truth is telling us that He is genuine, He is sincere, He's real and there's no way that you could actually say that you love somebody without being all in. The wonderful thing about our faith is that because the Spirit of God is within us, we can't love anything else. We can't love anybody else. So, it is that great power that moves within us that won't allow us to compromise. I would never compromise because I'm all in and it's that sincerity that holds us. It's that sincerity that keeps us and of course, ultimately, we have the power over doubt. God has given us not only that spirit of truth, but the spirit of fidelity and faithfulness, and we believe because we put all of our

trust in Him so that faith is in the power of the Spirit. Scripture tells us that we cannot confess Jesus as Lord, except by the Holy Spirit, and it is that power that keeps us in that realm in which we no longer doubt. When you look at the gospels, you see the disciples and how they struggle with believing. In fact, there are many occasions Jesus would come to them and go, "Oh, you that are slow of heart to believe. Why is it that you're not believing?" But after Pentecost, after the Holy Spirit comes upon them, you don't see that anymore and you see the power of the Spirit of God that sustains them. As Paul so aptly puts it, "I know whom I have believed, and I'm persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day. I know." And you can hear that, "You're not going to dissuade me. You're not going to move me." And though we are faithless, He remains faithful. He cannot deny Himself, and the power of God sustains me in this. So, clearly all of these things are evidential of the Spirit of God and the power of the Spirit of God which is not like any other power of the world. There's no doubt about that, but as we've been looking at not only does God reveal this kind of power in us that

we've mentioned, but there is a sense that we become effective in our ministry. As Jesus will call the disciples to Himself, and in John 15, He says, "The reason I called you was to bear fruit and that your fruit would remain." And you realize that where the Spirit of God is, there's actually fruit that is produced. "Every good tree bears good fruit." Jesus will say, and we realize that if in fact you have the Spirit of God, you're going to grow and you're going to influence people. You can't help it because the Spirit of God won't let you not do these things. So, we realize just how wonderful the power of the Spirit of God is that actually causes me to be effectual in the lives of others. I've actually many times ministered in my own power, trying to do my own things, and I walk away, and I go, "Ok. Nothing happened there." But there were times where I just sensed that there was the power of the Spirit of God, and because I had surrendered my life and said, "I just want to please You in all this," that you walk away, and you go, "They'll never forget that." And it's not because of anything that I've said, but it's because the Spirit of God began to move in their life. So, we know that where the power of the Spirit is, it permeates and

proliferates around us, and it begins to work in a great way. This power is both, strangely enough, gracious and lowly. How could you ever imagine that there would be a power that would be gracious? I mean, you actually don't equate the two together. It almost seems dichotomous that you would have grace with power together, and yet you realize that's what our ministry is about, and it is the power to be gracious. It's not within most of us to be gracious people, but the message of God is the power and the message of grace. In fact, the gospel itself, as Romans 1 tells us, is the power of God. Now, gospel meaning good news, which is a gracious message.

It is fundamentally what Jesus was saying as He stands up, as He quotes Isaiah 61 at the beginning of this chapter and He's there in the synagogue there in Nazareth. What does he say?

(Luke 4:18) “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.
HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES,

AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,
(Luke 4:19) TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE (or gracious)
YEAR OF THE LORD."

Certainly, it is a gracious message that we have.

As we've been going through the Gospel of Luke, it's inconceivable that God would choose the venues in which He does, but He chooses a manger to be born into, a feeding trough, and He chooses to be announced by shepherds. All the way through, as we look in the Gospel of Luke, we go, "That's an unlikely place to do this and an unlikely way to proclaim a message, and yet we see the great power of God through this sense of lowliness and humility, and we would never think to search in that particular realm.

When we come to the proclamation through the power of the Holy Spirit, just because the message itself is gracious and just because, as John would say, "We must decrease; He must increase," though we are seeking that lowly position doesn't mean that we are shy and doesn't mean that in any way we are fearful. I think sometimes people

misunderstand because their perception is that grace is you just being quiet and standing over in a corner and not messing with anybody and don't say anything about anybody and don't ever offend anybody, but that's not grace and quite frankly, it's not thinking of others.

Because if in fact you withhold that which could help somebody, even though it might be offensive to them, that would be you being selfish and thinking only of yourself. Just like a parent would not withhold discipline and punishment to their child simply because they love their child. They don't want them to continue in that particular realm. So, as we come to this, we realize that there is a fearlessness about our proclamation. As we talked about last week, where the Spirit of God is, there's great boldness. There is a great dogma about it. When you look at passages like Acts 4, you realize that when you're filled with Holy Spirit, you will speak with boldness. You will speak confidently about the things of God, and what a wonderful power that is.

We now come to a passage in which we're dealing with nefarious malevolent forces, or demonic forces, in this

passage. It's very interesting in so many ways because when we come to Luke and it shouldn't surprise us, we find some very unlikely circumstances and in particular places in which we find evil. So, we pick up in this passage in Luke 4, as we begin to deal with a power that is authoritative and you're going to see this if you look with me in Luke 4:36 as Christ reveals this great power and His proclamation within the passage.

It says this,

(Luke 4:36) “And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, “What is this message? For with authority and power...”

“What is this power that has authority?” The word that he uses in the text is “*exousia*,” which makes reference to a sense of freedom to say or to do whatever you want to do. A lot of times people are very concerned about saying anything because, well, you have to be careful about what they think or how they're going to respond, or you have to be concerned about what it's going to do to you. You might lose your job. I mean, there's 1,001 things that could go wrong, but just imagine if in fact you were so

close to God that God came and said to you, “Now, just go say this, say it from your heart. Speak it from your heart. Don't worry about what anybody else is going to say because I'm just going to reward you. I'm going to take care of you. Just go.” And there's a sense of authority that comes with you. Have you ever started talking with somebody about something and they start frowning or they start looking like, “I don't really agree with you”? You can see it on their face, and sometimes the tendency is to think, “Well, maybe I better change my tone or change the way that I'm directing this conversation, or maybe change the words that I say.” And you can just hear the Spirit of God in that particular situation going, “Keep going. Keep going.” Because there's a freedom. Where the Spirit of God is there's liberty, and that's this authority. Authority is this sense of, “I'm not afraid what people think. I know what the truth is and I know what needs to be said, and I'm going to say what needs to be said.” It goes back to 1 Peter, sanctify Christ as the Lord of your life and you'll be ready to give an answer to every man of the hope within you. In other words, who's Lord? If Christ is Lord, then I'm going to say what He wants me

to say. If they're lord, then I'll say what they want to say, but I haven't made them lord. When I set apart, sanctify, Christ as Lord of my life, then there is this sense of I know exactly what to say. I don't have to guess. I don't have to psych out the other person. That's the wonderful thing about it.

I remember when I was in college, you'd get a certain professor and you know that old saying, "You have to psych out the Prof." And what that means is figure out what the professor wants, and then you write whatever you think is the right thing. It's not necessarily what's in the book, but you have to psych out what the professor's looking for. The same thing ultimately is true with God. I just have to look and find what God wants. When I realize that, then I please Him, and I know that I'll say the right thing.

So, when we come to this passage, we're dealing with an authority, a sense of freedom to say and to do exactly what God wants us to do. Now, in the setting of this, Scripture in some way is warning us that there's an evil out there that's going to intimidate us. In fact, if you think

about it, evil is in many respects, verbose; it's aggressive, it's loud, and it's intimidating. That's what evil does.

Unfortunately, I think a lot of times Christians acquiesce to that loud declaration by the evil and unfortunately, we allow that to influence us rather than us being the influencer. But the wonderful thing about this passage is it shows us what to do as well as reminds us that we're going in the power of the Spirit, which once again is greater than he that's in the world.

John States this in 1 John 4, "They are from the world, therefore they speak as from the world and the world listens to them." It's interesting, the world is listening to each other. Sometimes you wonder, "Where did they come up with that philosophy?" Well, they must have been listening to this person or whatever, but it goes on and says, "But you have overcome them because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." Now, it's in the context of "They say this, but you don't listen to them. They listen to them, but you don't." Because there's a power and it reminds me that I'm not moved or in any way dissuaded by virtue of a group or a mass or

any kind of intimidation; that singly I can stand up for what is right, fearlessly because I'm out there pleasing God. So, when we come to this passage, we're dealing with what it means to stand up for Jesus as we sing that wonderful song.

As we come to Luke 4, there's a setting that I want to call your attention to as well as some of the things that are happening in the place that's happening and the people that are involved in the texts. When we come to this, we've just come out of an interesting scenario with Jesus going into His own hometown of Nazareth. He's handed the book of Isaiah. He opens it up to chapter 61 and He proclaims, "This has now happened." And He proclaims Himself as the One filled with the Spirit of God, coming to give wonderful news to free those that are in bondage. The question is oftentimes, "Well, what bondage are we bound by?" So, in some respects, this section begins to relate to us the bondage, and it's not always the physical, in prison, but there are prisons that we find ourselves in; many of those prisons have to do with the fear of what other people think or whatever.

As we come to this passage in verse 31, He comes out of Nazareth. Of course, interestingly enough, He was in the synagogue that He had grown up in, and simply because He pointed out the truth, which, as we talked about, was very confrontive but not combative. I just want to emphasize that. God does not call us to be combative, but He does call us to confront when things are wrong and when truth is being maligned. So, God is saying, "Speak up. No, don't be afraid." We don't have to be mean about this. We just have to be truthful. God is calling us to represent Him as we are ambassadors for Christ, as Paul will so happily put it. In that setting in His own hometown, they want to kill Him, and you think, "Well, He grew up there. He would be endeared." And He was endeared until He pointed out their sins. Everybody's going to like you until you tell them they're wrong, and then they don't like you anymore. But faithful are the wounds of a friend, right? Deceitful are the kisses of an enemy. But it is a friend that will tell you the truth. It is in His own hometown that they try to kill Him. He then evades them and I think this is an interesting point that clearly, as Jesus makes a statement, "Yeah, I could have called 10,000

angels. That's not a problem.” Of course, He didn't even need the angels, but He didn't come to eradicate. He came to save. I think sometimes we get in these wars and it's exactly what the devil wants us to do. He wants us to fight so that we're on his turf. He wants us to think in terms of, “So, we're out to kill each other off, right?” No. I mean, it's like the disciples where they go, “Ok, the Samaritans aren't letting us in. So, let's get fire from heaven and just devour them, because that's really a good idea.” And Jesus goes, “Ok, I don't think you know why I'm here.” So, the fact that He was evasive was not that He was a fearful, but that “I'm not here to destroy.” His own brothers were saying in John 7, “It's the feast of the Tabernacles. This is the time when You set up your kingdom. So, let's do it.” And He goes, “It's not time, because we need to save people before we set up a kingdom.” So, the wonderful thing that we see is that the sense of saving is always in the forefront. Though you may be confrontive, this is why you're confrontive. It's to save and it's not to be right, it's not to argue, it's not debate,

but we're trying to save these people. It is our desire to work in the nature of Christ.

So, as you come in verse 31, He now comes into Capernaum. Now, what we know is that Capernaum becomes His own hometown. So, this is the town that's really on the coast there in Galilee and probably most of His disciples lived and fish in this particular town.

Capernaum will see more miracles, and when He was in Nazareth, and when He was proclaiming to them this message, they go, "Look, if You're who You say you are, do the miracles that You did in Capernaum." You see that if you look in Luke 4:23,

(Luke 4:23) "And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'"

So, what is being said is that more miracles were probably done in Capernaum than probably any other town. The thought is of course, "That's going to bring a lot of people to the Lord because great miracles are done." No, probably the least. In fact, one of the statements that He

makes is, “Judgment would be greater for you, Capernaum, because you saw all these things.” So, it's just a good reminder that it's not the miracles or the signs that save people.

But as we come to this verse 31, He then comes to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He's teaching them on the Sabbath day, which once again was His habit, and I think it's important to say this on the onset, we have a tendency to throw out the baby with the bathwater. That is to say, are there bad churches out there, and are there people that are proclaiming bad doctrine? Absolutely. Does that mean you should stop going to church? No. Jesus continues to go on the Sabbath despite what's going on within the passage.

(Luke 4:32) “and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message...”

And here's one of the great themes of this particular passage,

“... was with authority.”

Now, once again, I just want to emphasize what they're seeing is somebody that is unafraid. Can you just imagine? I mean, they're surrounded by these with all their doctors and everything, and they're intimidated by those. If you don't think you'd be intimidated, just go over to Jerusalem and see because they have people with the garb; of course, in this day, they broaden their phylacteries. I mean, they had the badges to prove that they were superior to you. So, there's a tremendous amount of intimidation that was going on within this particular setting, and then Jesus walks in and He just starts talking, and they're going, "I was thinking that, but I didn't say that. I was feeling that, but I didn't say that."

Remember, Nicodemus that comes in John 3, and he comes to Jesus in the nighttime because he's afraid of what everybody else is going to think. Of course, he's a ruler. I mean, he's like a Sanhedrin. So, a Supreme Court Justice, why would he be afraid? He's afraid of his own peers, is what he is, and we've just come out of Chapter 2 and Jesus has turned over the money tables in the temple. I mean, we're talking about this huge building

that is intimidating in and of itself. Two football fields. I mean, it's an amazing place and He just acts like He owns the joint, and Nicodemus goes, "Nobody does this unless He's from God." And what he realized is, "This guy actually has authority. I mean, I don't know who gave it to Him, and I don't know how He got it, but He's not afraid of anything." That's what's being said within the passage. This message, what He's saying, nobody has said. They felt it. They knew it was true, and nobody has said this before.

Then it says this,

(Luke 4:33) "In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice."

I mean, that in and of itself would be scary. What we sometimes miss is where he is. He's in the synagogue. Would you mark that? In the synagogue. Now, my first question is why would a demon feel comfortable in the synagogue? "This is my home." "Welcome." Ok, this is synagogue. The point is that you're going to see this as more the rule than the exception, sad to say.

It's interesting that quoted in Mark 1:23, is the same scenario. It says he was in their synagogue. Which just that one pronoun is very interesting within the passage.

If you were to look at Mark 1:39, it will state this,

(Mark 1:39) “And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.”

Specifically, it's saying, “In all their synagogues He was casting out demons.” Very interesting point.

So, as we come to the passage, the question then ultimately arises, what is this unclean spirit? How would you define unclean spirit? In many respects, the unclean spirit in this passage is actually defined. When we think of unclean of course, obviously we think of morally, perhaps, but more specifically in this passage, it is somebody that is spiritually defiant or defiant against God. Unclean in the fact that there is a resistance and a rebellion to God. Now, we're going to hear what that rebellion is, and we're going to see what it looks like, and we're going to see why I would say a lot of times people are intimidated.

Now, the first part of this reveals to us that there is something that almost immediately intimidates people, and that's somebody that's clamorous, somebody that's loud, somebody that's noisy, somebody that's turbulent in their speech.

So, right off the bat, the way that it starts is,

(Luke 4:33) “In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice.”

Look, you get in a room with somebody that's bold and arrogant and loud, they start throwing it at you like that, and you're going, “Wait. Maybe I need to get out of here.” Because just by virtue of being loud, it's intimidating.

He then goes on, if you look at the passage and he makes some statements which once again, basically define the uncleanness of the demon. The very fact that he would be so arrogant as to be as to accost Christ with a loud voice is telling me that's an unclean spirit, because there's no sense of respect for the One that he's talking to. You wouldn't stand before a king and do that. So, what we're starting to see is this uncleanness. Not only is there a

sense of clamorous and loud and boisterous, turbulent message here within the passage, but if you look within the text, there are things that he says.

In Luke 4:34, mine reads, "Ha!" So, I guess that's the direct translation. "Ha, what do we have to do with You?" Now, it's very interesting and probably you didn't notice it, but there's a word there that you probably should pay attention to. It's the word "we". Who is the "we"? Now, what's clear is that this is not demons, plural. How do we know that? Because Jesus will cast him, singular, out. So, we know it's not demons, plural. What he's saying is, "I identify with everybody here. They identify with me." So, we're in a synagogue that is perfectly at home with this demon, and he has placed himself in the realm of this synagogue. "This is where I reside. This is where we reside, and we don't think like You." A very interesting way of putting it. Now, when you think about this, there's great intimidation in this because it really comes from what we would call an esoteric perception. That is to say, it's cabalistic, it's mystic. It's "Us four and no more. It's our group." The best way to describe it in the world that we

live in, if you've ever heard of Freemasons, or if you've ever heard of Skull and Bones. Well, what you're dealing with is a club, and in that club, there is a sense of mysticism. We're going to talk about that later. But it's a club that you have to be initiated into. In fact, we see these kinds of clubs all over; clubs in school, clubs in universities, whatever. There are initiations that you have to go through in order to join; in order to become accepted by these particular clubs. There are handshakes that you have to learn. I always think that's funny. People have all these handshakes. People down in the Bronx, they have a handshake, and everybody has a handshake, but it's their way of saying, "This is our group." And it's really counter to the gospel. It's counter to the gospel because our gospel is welcoming. "For God so loved the world." But how hurtful it is when you consider that oftentimes the church has become this exclusive place that's just for the elite or you're intimidated because you're not like them. These people are far more righteous than you are. They're walking on air, so to speak, and that's not our gospel. I mean, why would Jesus take fishermen? We keep coming back to that. So, you have

this sense of “You're not like us.” And immediately, you can feel the halls agreeing, “He doesn't belong here. He's not like us.” If you've ever been in a church where you felt like, “I just don't feel like they feel like I belong here.” You can feel the pushing. Well, this is not of God. This is of the devil, and he comes in to divide and he comes in to belittle. So, you begin to see the uncleanness of this force that is intimidating.

“So, what do we have to do with You?” And then he goes on, if you look in the passage, there's not only this sense of secret society that's exclusive, but it goes on with disparagement. Now, what I mean by disparagement is that he's trying to make the other person feel insignificant, unworthy. How would he do that?

“Jesus of Nazareth”. I mean, even Nazareth knew that they were nobodies because they've said, “Why don't you do the work that you do in Capernaum? Then we'll be somebody. You'll put us on the map.” And Capernaum saw Nazareth as basically a nobody place. When you read in Acts 4 and Peter's full of the Spirit, he goes, “Ok, let me tell you something. You know, Jesus of Nazareth? He's the

one that's the Christ." And you can hear him say, "I don't care what you think about Him. He's the guy." So, you can see the great power in that, that he's unashamed, that he's not afraid. But the demon is wanting to denigrate and demean who Jesus is. "You're just a nobody. So, what do we have to do with You?" Once again, if there's ever a place where you feel like a nobody, this is not the people of God. This is not the Spirit of God because God so loved you that He died for you and you are valuable not because of anything that you've done, but because of the price that He's paid for you and He purchased you with His precious blood. You therefore become valuable by virtue of that alone, you become valuable. So, you begin to feel this sense of "you don't belong here"; a pushing out within the passage and a clamoring that is, I would say, loud and noisy; that is intimidating in itself. It begins to belittle, and there's a sense of slanderous. Of course, Satan is the great slanderer that tears down and lies and throws out inflammatory dispersions in the things that he does.

But if you look at the passage, he goes,

(Luke 4:34) “... Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

Now, we would perceive, “Ok, well, at least he knows who He is.” Chalk up one for the demon, but this is not a good thing. First of all, you don't want the KKK to endorse you. That's the first thing. But beyond this, you have a cut, a tear down within the text, and he's coming in a sense of superiority. Now, he starts off with his superiority and puts it in the context of what is called in the Greek, “Gnosticism”. That is to say, “We know more than you do.” And this sense of superior intellect. “If only you were as smart as me, you would know everything too.”

So, what does he do? He says, “I know what You're doing.” How do you know what He's doing? Go back to 1 Corinthians 2, “Who can know the mind of God?” You can't know what He's doing. You can't know why He's here. You don't have any idea. But it is interesting when you look at oftentimes authority, they'll try to define who you are. “We know what you're here for. We know what you're doing.” You don't know anything. God knows the heart. God knows my heart.

Eli mistook in some way, when you go back into Anna's prayer as she comes before the Lord, "I know this woman is drunk." She wasn't drunk. She was praying to God. So, you understand that that man comes in his great superiority and his wisdom, and he says, "I know everything about you." You don't know. And he says, "And I know why you're here." Now, the question is, why is He here? And the answer is, "To destroy us." Now, listen once again, "us". Christ didn't come to destroy them. He came to destroy death. He came to destroy hurt. He came to destroy pain. He didn't come to destroy them, but you can hear that "This is Your message. This is why You're here, to destroy us." It's one of the ways that the world intimidates. As the world talks about Christians or sometimes even churches you come into, "We know you're here to disrupt. We know you're here to destroy." That's not why you're there. How could they know? Because they don't know our hearts. So, it is intimidating in and of itself when people begin to perceive themselves as having this sense of knowledge about yourself, and then they begin to, I would say, somehow forecast it on you. They say, "We know what you're thinking. We know

how you're feeling.” God's not here for that purpose. Our message is not for that purpose and look, if you're in a particular scenario and you're trying to minister to somebody, and they say, “You're just trying to hurt me.” Don't be intimidated by that. You may think I'm here to hurt you, but I'm not. I'm here to help you. So, don't let other people define why you're there. Have your heart right with God. Do the right thing, but don't take your cues from them; just because they say you are doesn't mean you are, but it's part of the intimidation effect within the passage.

“You've come to destroy us. I know this Holy One of God.” Now, the wonderful thing about all of this is the way that Jesus responds, and there couldn't be a simpler response. I just want to emphasize this, that Jesus is not going to debate. He's not going to try to defend in any way, because He could easily say, “Well, let Me see if I can explain this to you.” You're not going to explain anything to a demon. He already has his agenda, and he already has what he's going to do, and He's not trying to in any way dignify his perversion in this, because once He starts

getting involved in the conversation, saying, “I know what you're thinking, you know what I'm thinking,” then it's just going to dignify even his whole argument. The evil one wants to get us fighting and we're not going to do it. We're not here to fight. We're here to tell you the truth. You want to hear the truth? Here we are. If you don't want to hear the truth, I have nothing else to say.

So, in the great simplicity, Jesus goes, “Be quiet. Come out.” Now, if I read this right, that's it. It doesn't get any more complicated than that. Are you surprised? It actually worked. What Scripture is telling us is we have the power of the message. The power of the message is enough. We think oftentimes in terms that we might have to fight with them, or we might have to exaggerate in some way to combat the things that they're saying; we have to intimidate; maybe we have to entertain them; maybe we have to appease them. There are all kinds of things that are going through our head, and God says, “Just tell them the truth. Don't complicate this. Be clear. Be direct, be authoritative, be unapologetic about it. When you begin to proclaim this, be fearless.” It will be effective if you just

proclaim the power of God, which is the message, and it will be emphasized within this passage.

(Luke 4:35) “But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people...”

Which, by the way, it's interesting, what was the demon accusing Jesus of? Hurting. “You came to destroy us. You came to hurt us.” Right? Ok. No, the demon was the one hurting.

But it says this,

“... when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm.”

God protected him. Though, the demon meant to hurt him, God protected him, the very One that was accused of coming in to destroy.

(Luke 4:36) “And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, “What is this message? ...”

You can put in the word “logos,” where we get the word that literally describes Christ in John 1, “And the word became flesh and dwelt among us.” The “logos,” which is not only the word itself or the message itself, but it is the intent behind the message. So, what is amazing the people? We see His intent.

Fundamentally, it goes back to Luke 4:18,

(Luke 4:18) “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND...”

All these things, and they go, “This is the power that releases. What is this? For with authority, He's not in any way moved or motivated by the people around Him, by the threats that come around Him, but He says what is right.”

(Luke 4:36) “... He commands the unclean spirits and they come out.”

And is it effective? Well, it's influential. It's clearly effective. In fact, it's impossible to forget and to ignore. Everybody has to tell everybody, "Have you seen this?" Look, if you proclaim the message in the power of the Spirit of God it's going to be effective. Isaiah says it so clearly, "My word is not going to return void." It's going to accomplish, but it has to be His word, and it has to be in the power of His Spirit. Your heart has to be right. It has to be to please Him, to honor Him. It has to be to point to Him; it can't be to you. "Not to us, O Lord." But there is great power in this. Look, I know a lot of times people go, "Well, I don't know all these things..." You don't have to go into a great debate or great dissertation. All you have to do is say the truth, "I know my Redeemer lives." "Oh, we think this. We think..." Not true. "Let me tell you what the truth is." How hard was that? You just say what is true.

Interesting passage, as you go into Isaiah 61, which says that the Spirit of the Lord is upon him, and if you look at Isaiah 61, 62, 63, as it goes on, you begin to realize that Israel is crying out for God, "You've got to rescue us.

You've got to rescue us." And God says, "I want to rescue you, but you're not changing. Your heart's not right."

So, as it starts off in Isaiah 61, it literally is that quote in Luke 4, in which Christ says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me to proclaim release to the captives."

He says,

(Isaiah 61:6) "But you will be called the priests of the LORD..."

(Isaiah 62:1) "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent..."

I'm glad He didn't keep silent. I'm glad He spoke up. "I'm going to save. I'm going to save." All that intimidation was keeping that man from being saved. He had been so enveloped by intimidation that it possessed him. Now, he was fearful to speak anything else, but what they told him to speak, and Christ sees his heart, and He just pulls that out.

But as you come into these, you begin to realize that God is desiring salvation.

(Isaiah 62:11) “Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth,

Say to the daughter of Zion, “Lo, your salvation comes...”

(Isaiah 63:5) “So My own arm brought salvation...”

Then, in Isaiah 63:7-9, he says, “Let me tell you about the lovingkindness of the Lord and how He would be their Savior and how (verse 9) in all their affliction He was afflicted, and how He cared for you. Is this not the One?”

Then in Isaiah 64:1 they cry out, “Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come and save us.” And God says, “Boy, I’d love nothing better than that.”

The way that it ends is,

(Isaiah 64:12) “Will You restrain Yourself at these things, O LORD?

Will You keep silent and afflict us beyond measure?”

And God goes, “What, do you think I've been silent? I've been calling to you all your lives.”

The way it reads is,

(Isaiah 65:1) “I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me;

I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me.

I said, 'Here am I, here am I,'

To a nation which did not call on My name."

"You sought other sources of power, but you didn't seek Me."

There are times in your life where you're seeking a lot of other sources. God's right here. Did you talk to Him first? Did you call upon Him? "Oh, no. I had to call this source. I had to call this source." Those are other sources of power. God is saying in His word, "Here I am. Talk to Me." "No, I don't think we will."

(Isaiah 65:2) "I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people,

Who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts,

(Isaiah 65:3) A people who continually provoke Me to My face..."

"...Without fear or concern for what I'm thinking. They just do what they want to do."

“... Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks.”

They pursue man-made things, just like going back to Babylon.

(Isaiah 65:4) “Who sit among graves...”

And they go in necromancy. They'll talk to dead people instead of talking to God. It kind of goes back to this old Skull and Bones thing, doesn't it? Mysterious society.

That's why it says,

“Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places...”

That's mysterious societies. “Oh, this is really, really important because it's secret.” “What exactly is it?” “It's secret. We can't tell you.” And that's why you always think it's important because you never know what it is.

It goes on,

“... Who eat swine's flesh...”

And of course they're unclean.

But it says,

(Isaiah 65:5) “Who say, ‘Keep to yourself, do not come near me,
For I am holier than you!’
These are smoke in My nostrils,
A fire that burns all the day.”

The passage is really clarifying that since the superior mystic societies of initiations, who basically say, “We have a holiness that is better than Your holiness.” That's why when the demon says, “Holy One of God,” he’s saying, “Our holiness is superior to Yours. We have another way of thinking that's mysterious and great and very exclusive that only wonderful people can come to.” And then you have Jesus saying, “Come unto Me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Well, that couldn't be a wonderful message because anybody can come. That's the lie of the demon, “Make it exclusive.”

When you when you read in Revelation 2 and Revelation 3, you read of several churches that have influences of the synagogue of Satan and it actually uses that particular phrase. If you think in particular, the Church of

Philadelphia, they were so intimidated that they felt like they were shut out, and God says, "I'm going to give you keys and you'll open the door and then you'll lock it on those." But you could feel in that particular text that they were shutting out the church because they weren't like them. So, the emphasis throughout is if in fact you feel like an outcast and you don't feel accepted through the Gospel of Christ, then you're in the wrong place. This is a synagogue of Satan. This is not of the Lord. Does God throw out everything? No. Go and find a church that does love the Lord, that will point, that is accepting and if you're not accepted here, please talk to me because there's something wrong with somebody if that's true. But our hope is that you would feel accepted. Now, once again, we want you to feel accepted if you're doing what's right. We don't want demons coming in, saying, "You're not welcome here and you have to think like us." But you can see the power of Christ coming in very simple and very clear and very concise, and that's what our message is.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You and we give thanks to Your message of love that is so clear. I mean, you could put a 747 through it. The door is open wide to us who would believe, even though it's narrow in the sense of few will come. Your arms are open wide that You would invite us to come. For You so love the world that You would give Your Son, and all are welcome who would receive Your Son, who would follow Your Son, who would submit to the will of Your Son. It doesn't matter who you are, what your background is, what you've done, Jesus has come to save, and how freeing that is. You feel the bonds break away and you can feel the authority that says, "Don't listen to them. Listen to Me."

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, what we're asking you to do is enter into the freedom of Christ, to no

longer live under the fear of what man thinks or how he intimidates, but to think in terms of, “What would God have me do?” To listen to the voice of Christ, to make Him Lord of your life, and to speak with great freedom this message that is true; the only message really that is true; the message that people can depend on, and proclaim it in such a way that it's not only unapologetic, but also so crystal clear that it frees people. Proclaim that message, receive that message. Get out of the bondage of fear.