

“Jesus Demonstrates His Authority”
(Luke 4:31-44)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

Last week, we saw
Jesus’ battle with our enemy –
The Second Adam had to defeat
The one who destroyed us all
When he overcame our father Adam
That He might save us –

We saw how He did this –
How He saw through the devil’s lies
Because He knew God’s Word;
And how He stuck to the path
Because being filled with the Spirit
That’s what He wanted to do.

The devil is real;
He wants to destroy us;
And he does it mainly through deception:
The only way we can overcome him
Is by trusting in Jesus,
Being filled with His Spirit,
And following what He says in His Word.

We saw second, the beginning of His ministry:
His popularity in Galilee;
But the difficulty He faced in Nazareth –

How when He claimed to be the fulfillment
Of Isaiah's prophecy regarding the Messiah,
The people became a mob
And tried to throw Him off a cliff;
But how Jesus miraculously
Walked right through the crowd
And went on His way,
Because it wasn't His time.

If we follow Jesus –
If we're willing to stand out
And identify with Him –
We're also going to be hated –
But He promised He would be with us
To protect and help us to the end.

B. Preview.

This morning, we see
Jesus return to Capernaum
To continue His ministry there:

Let's consider two things:

1. His demonstration of authority (vv. 31-41);
2. And how His audience responded (vv. 42-44).

II. Sermon.

A. First, we see Jesus' demonstrate His authority in three areas:

In His teaching (vv. 31-32),

Over the demons (vv. 33-37, 41),

And over sickness (vv. 38-40).

1. First, in His teaching:

Jesus taught with authority.

Luke tells us He came to Capernaum –

Which was on the NW shore

Of the Sea of Galilee –

This is the place Jesus would make His headquarters

Throughout most of His ministry.

Again, as was His custom,

He went to synagogue on the Sabbath,

To worship and honor His Father –

Jesus didn't do this only to save us –

And it wasn't merely out of duty –

He did this because He wanted to –

It was the delight of His heart –

John reminds us:

God's commandments aren't a burden

If we love Him (1 John 5:3).

Jesus was again asked to read,

And afterward, He began to teach.

This time, Luke draws our attention

To the way He taught: “with authority” (Luke 4:32).

There were amazed –

The word means “astounded,”

Or “overwhelmed” –

Not only by His wisdom,

And His ability to make God’s truth clear,

But also because of the authority with which He taught –

When Jesus finished His Sermon on the Mount,

Matthew tells us, “The crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes” (Matt. 7:28-29).

The scribes were experts in God’s Law –

It was their job continually to make copies of it –

But they didn’t know it as well as Jesus –

He is the *Logos*:

God’s communication to us,

The One who explains Him –

The expert on what God says.

Nor could they teach it

With the clarity or the love and conviction

He had for His Word –

This was the best they had ever heard.

2. Second, Jesus demonstrated his authority over the demons (vv. 33-36, 41) –

Which shouldn’t surprise us

Since we’ve already seen His authority over their leader.

There was a man in the synagogue

Possessed by a demon (v. 33) –

Normally, our soul/spirit –

The immaterial part of us,

Where our personality is,

The part that will go to heaven when we die –

Controls our body from our brain:

The point where soul and body

Interact with each other.

In this case,

There was another spirit –

A demon –

That was controlling his body.

This man must not have been a believer –

If he had, this demon would never

Have been able to possess him.

When he saw Jesus,

He cried out,

“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!” (v. 34).

Notice the demon recognized Him immediately –

“I know who You are: the Holy One of God”;

The other demons did as well

As we’ll see in verse 41:

They called Him “the Son of God.”

He was afraid of Jesus:

“Have You come to destroy us?” –

He knew the Day of Judgment was coming

For him and the other demons

When Jesus would throw them into the lake of fire,

Along with everyone who hasn't turned from their sins and trusted Him;

He was wondering whether that day had come.

He also recognized Jesus' authority –

When Jesus told the demon

To be quiet and come out of him,

He immediately obeyed (v. 35) –

The same was true in verse 41,

“Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, ‘You are the Son of God!’ But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.”

His time hadn't come yet –

When He would be given over

To His enemies to be crucified –

And so He wanted to keep His identity a secret

So that He could complete His mission.

When those in the synagogue saw

The authority He had even over the demons,

They were again amazed:

“What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out” (v. 36).

And word about Him kept spreading.

3. Third, Jesus demonstrated His authority over sickness (vv. 38-40).

After He left the synagogue,

He entered Simon's home –

Where He was staying in Capernaum.

When He entered,

He found Simon's mother-in-law

Was suffering from a high fever,

And Simon and his wife asking Him for help.

This Simon was of course Simon Peter.

We read in Matthew's Gospel:

“When Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever” (8:14).

Sometimes we might get the impression

That none of the disciples were married.

Here we're told Peter was.

Paul seems to indicate that all of them were:

“Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?” (1 Cor. 9:5).

It may be they weren't mentioned

Because of their work/the times:

Paul, “But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none” (1 Cor. 7:28).

It's here we see Jesus' authority over sickness:

Luke writes, “And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them” (v. 39).

And he writes in verse 40, “While the sun was setting, all those who had any *who were* sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them.”

He commands disease, and it obeys Him.

Notice, the pattern we see emerging:

Jesus has authority over the devil,

Over His own life,

Over the demons,

And over sickness.

We’ll see Him shortly

Command the wind and waves;

Even the fish in the Sea of Galilee.

The only authority

Jesus didn’t yet have as the God-man

Was that of government –

That would be given to Him

As the reward of His work –

He came to rule and overrule all things

For the good of His people and His kingdom.

B. Finally, we see the people’s response:

They were attracted to this authority (vv. 42-44) –

At least for a while.

On the next day,
Jesus left the city to be alone –
Likely to refresh Himself in prayer –
Before He continued His ministry.

They looked for Him
And when they found Him,
They begged Him to stay.

But He refused,
Because He needed to preach the Gospel in other places:
That's why He was sent into the world.

It's interesting that in a short time
Jesus will reprove them for rejecting Him:

We will read in Luke 10:15, “And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!”

There were *many* who followed Jesus for a time –
When it was popular to do so –
But they later disowned Him,
Because they didn't really love Him.

C. So what can we learn from this?

First, we learn who Jesus is:

This display of authority
Was mean to show us one thing:
That He is the Christ,

The Son of God,
The One the Father has made King of the world,
Who is ruling the world,
And the One to whom
The whole world will one day give account.

Second, because He is *our King*,
We need to follow/obey Him.

The good news is: we can.

If we've turned from our sins
And trusted Jesus,
We have His Spirit:
And so the love we need
To keep His commandments for life.

But which of us can say
That we love the Father as He calls us:
As strongly as Jesus –
With all our heart, mind, soul and strength;
With our whole life,
With all we have?

What can we do about it?
We need to recommit our lives to Him –
To being what Jesus calls us to be –
We need to set aside the things that get in our way –
Everything that draws us away from Him –

And immerse ourselves in the things that draw us near:

The same things Jesus used

To draw near to His Father:

Gathering for public worship,

Spending time in the Word and prayer,

Fellowshipping with His people,

And serving others.

If we keep feeding our flesh,

And not our souls,

We'll struggle to obey.

But if we feed our souls –

If we are filled with His Spirit –

We'll grow in our obedience,

Because our love will grow stronger.

Finally, because He is the King,

To whom everyone will give an account,

We need to do what we can

To help others find Him

Before that day comes,

By sharing the Gospel,

Knowing He will help us.

That's what we'll look at this evening.