

Tommy Meador / General

The Gospel of Luke / Luke 4:31–44

Introduction

- <https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/4-year-old-girl-gets-stuck-inside-claw-machine-see-video> - Little girl influenced by her brothers to climb inside of a claw machine. Trapped!
- Have you ever been trapped? The feeling of you can't escape. You begin to panic. All of us have been trapped spiritually. Sin held us captive, but Jesus came to free us.
- Last few verses of [Luke 4](#) is a day in the life of Jesus. In the one day that Luke focuses on in these verses we see why Jesus came - Jesus came to set us free from the trap of the enemy.
- Two choices: You can choose in this life to be trapped by sin - to be held captive by the one who wants to destroy you. Or, you can choose life with Jesus.
- This morning, I want to show you what life with Jesus is like. Three truths about life with Jesus that I hope will encourage you to choose today and every day life with Him.

Life with Jesus is powerful.

- Preaching in the synagogue in Nazareth - Jesus came to proclaim a message of setting captives free - a failure of belief in Nazareth. Now in Capernaum.
- Capernaum strategic - home base of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Located on Via Maris - main trade route that connected Africa, Europe, and Asia. 70% of Jesus' ministry in Capernaum Number of people from all over the world that would witness Jesus' ministry in Capernaum. Whatever happened in Capernaum would travel to all the known world.

- Jesus preaching in synagogue in Capernaum on Sabbath. Preaching as One with authority - people astonished. People used to hearing religious leaders, scribes, Pharisees, etc. BUT, Jesus was different. Everyone else preaching about God, but this WAS God preaching.
- First recorded miracles of Jesus in Luke's Gospel. Luke has established that Jesus is the Son of God. Luke has established that there is authority in His Word - you should listen to what He says.
- Now miracles - why miracles? Validate Jesus' Word - you can believe what He says. Also, signs. (Gospel writer John calls miracles signs.) Signs point to something - Jesus' miracles/signs point to His ultimate work. Cast out demons - points to the day when Satan and his demons thrown into the lake of fire. Healing sick - points to the day when there will be no more sickness. Raising of the dead - points to the day when all followers of Jesus will be resurrected and glorified. Miracles point to what life with Jesus is supposed to be like - life of complete wholeness.
- In synagogue Jesus confronted with demon possessed man. Interesting: Satan and his demons have NO doubts about who Jesus is. ([James 2:19](#)) Satan and his demons FEAR Jesus. We live in a culture that does not fear Jesus, but the demonic forces know their fate.
- Is there demon possession today? Interesting that in OT demon possessions are rare and rarely mentioned in the NT after the Gospels. During public ministry, an intense time of demonic activity. Son of God was on the earth and an all out war by the devil to stop the work of Jesus. Jesus has come to defeat the works of darkness. Gospel writers showing us that reality.
- [1 Pet. 5:8](#). If you are a follower of Jesus, you are possessed by the Holy Spirit. You have been set free from the enemy having control over your life. You can be influenced but not possessed. If you are not a believer, it's possible to open up your life to the control of the enemy - to be deeply involved in the work of the enemy.
- Authority of Jesus - No incantations, no holy water, just His Word... "Be silent and come out of Him!" POWER! Jesus speaks and demons flee. Demons come out without hurting the possessed man.

- vs. 36 - People amazed by His authority. Jesus teaches with authority and acts with authority. His fame begins to spread. The King is here!
- We're a people who want to be in authority, but we need HIS authority. What traps us is NOT living under His authority, but you need to understand that life under His authority is powerful.
- **I need to cling to Jesus' power instead of ascribing power to the works enemy.**
 - You stay trapped because you allow the works of the enemy to have power over your life. When you give into temptation, you are allowing the enemy to have power over your life. When you are unwilling to go to war with your sin, you are allowing the enemy to have power over your life.
 - When you let sin dominate, the fruit of sin dominates. Worry, stress, fear, anxiety, brokenness in every form. Jesus has come with power to set you free from the works of the enemy.
 - I cling to Jesus' power when I give Him authority over my life - when I choose obedience instead of rebellion.
- **I need to confront the works of the enemy instead of retreating in fear.**
 - FOMO - I fear missing out on the pleasures of sin so I keep giving in.
 - Call sin what it is in my own life.
 - Call sin what it is in the lives of those I love.
 - Call sin what is in our culture.
 - BUT what you call out be willing to put to death in your own life.
 - Jesus confronts the work of the enemy by getting intimately involved in the lives of people. (And He calls us to do the same.)

Life with Jesus is personal.

- Imagine - the crowd - the fame. Jesus could have stayed in the synagogue and wowed the people with His miracles. Masses would have gathered around him, but it gets personal. **Jesus cares.**
- He enters Simon's house. Simon-Peter - not yet a disciple of Jesus ([Luke 5](#)). Don't know how Jesus knows Simon, or how Simon convinced Jesus to come into his home, but Jesus leaves the crowd to go to Simon's house where his mother-in-law is sick.
- Small, ancient home. People gathered round the bed of Simon's mother-in-law. We don't know her name, but Jesus does. Struggling with a high-fever. In a day where there wasn't Tylenol or Ibuprofen, people concerned with a high fever. Was it a virus, or something more?
- Maybe she just had the flu, and it would eventually go away. A fever just doesn't seem as serious as leprosy, blindness, or many of the other serious diseases that Jesus healed. The first healing that Luke records is healing a fever, not in front of a crowd, but in a small home with a few people gathered.
- Notice how Jesus heals. Again, no incantation, no hocus pocus. He has authority over sickness. Simply stands over Peter's mother-in-law and rebukes the fever. She gets up and begins to serve the people in her home like she had never been sick.
- News of what happens in Simon's house quickly spreads. The crowds come and Jesus heals. Notice that He lays hands on each one. Everyone who was healed got a personal touch.
- Notice that Jesus does not want the demons to speak. (vs. 41) He doesn't want the demons proclaiming who He is.
- The point: Jesus is personal. The ONE in authority of everything is personal with everyone.
- **Jesus makes a personal investment in you.** Are you making a personal investment in Him? Jesus is far more than a historical figure or a subject we study. He's your personal Savior who died and rose again for you. He invites you into a personal relationship with Him. He is at the right hand of the Father interceding for you. ([Romans 8:26-27](#)) Are you neglecting the investment that Jesus desires to make in your life?

- **Jesus calls you to make a personal investment in others.** Next chapter - first disciples called - commissioned with authority of Jesus to share the Good News and to do miracles in the name of Jesus. They'll make a personal investment. The Gospel spreads one relationship at a time when you make the time and effort to personally invest in the lives of others.
 - Investing in others is greater than personal productivity. Some of us far more concerned with our to-do list than people.
 - Don't say, "I don't want to get involved." Gospels - Jesus runs to all kinds of people - Simon's mother-in-law and the outcasts. The kind of people we want to run from. We make excuses for investing like, "I don't want to get involved." Jesus got involved in the mess of your life. Who are you to say, "I don't want to get involved?"
 - Do for a few what you wish you could do for all. Jesus is omnipresent, omni-powerful, and omniscient. I'm not. I can't be involved in every one's life, but I can be involved in the lives of those God has placed around me. We look around and see so much need we say, "I can't do anything." Not true. You can do something. You can get involved in the lives of a few people for the sake of the Gospel.

Life with Jesus is purposeful.

- **vs. 42** - The next morning Jesus goes to a deserted place. When Mark records these same events, he tells us that Jesus went to a deserted place to pray ([Mark 1:35](#)).
- Jesus needed to be alone with His heavenly Father, and we do too. Crowds were responding to Jesus. Think of the temptation that surely arose... The temptation to stay in Capernaum. Jesus was popular. Crowds were coming. He could have established First Baptist Capernaum and had the largest megachurch in town. Jesus pulled away to be with His Father. He needed fellowship with His Father. He needed to stay aligned with the purpose that Jesus sent Him for.

- If Jesus moved forward without pulling away from the crowds to be with His Father, would he be tempted to take His eyes off the Father and build His Kingdom His way?
- Jesus' response: "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns, too, because this is why I was sent." Jesus' purpose, and your purpose as well - to be used by God to make Jesus known.
- **You need to pull away with purpose.** I get it. Life is busy. Feel like there's no time to pull away. Your unwillingness to pull away and spend time with your Lord is probably evidence that your life is not aligned with His purpose. Pull away - examine. Are you in alignment with God's will? You need daily time. Seminary professor - Jim Shaddix - 4:30 a.m. every day. How do you do that? Now, I'm up every day at 5:00 a.m. because if I'm not, I won't make time in my day. 5:00 a.m. has become my favorite time of the day. Keeps me grounded in my faith.
- If living for God's purpose is the only way to really live your life, what are you doing now align yourself with God's purpose?
- **You need to move forward with purpose.** How effective can you really be in what God has called you to if you are not pulling away to realign yourself? Know the tendency of your heart to drift and constantly realign. Every day a simple prayer (J.D. Greear Gospel prayer - obviously, helpful to pray more than a sentence, but a good daily reminder: **There is nothing I have done that could make you love me less, and nothing I could do that would make you love me more. You are all I need for everlasting joy. As you have been to me, so I will be to others. As I pray, I'll do so according to the compassion you've shown at the cross and the power you demonstrated through the resurrection.**
- First time Luke mentions Kingdom of God in his Gospel - huge theme in the Gospels. Jesus came to establish His Father's Kingdom on this earth. Kingdom = rule and reign of God over His people. [Gen. 1](#) - God our King - creates citizens - invites his citizens to take dominion - to rule with Him. We want to rule apart from God - the Fall ([Gen. 3](#)). Jesus has come to establish His authority as the true King who restores everything. Good News - the true King has come to die - die in our place and rise

again so that we can be restored to God and live out the purpose God created us for.

- Have you turned from your rebellion and placed your faith in the King?

Luke 4:14-30: Embracing Jesus' Message

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Luke / Luke 4:14–30

Introduction

- https://www.huffpost.com/entry/christmas-lung-cancer-message_n_63afe91ee4b0d6f0b9f3e837 - Chaos created by receiving the wrong message.
- Jesus - came bringing the right message - but we live in chaos because we fail to embrace the right message.
- In [Luke 4:14-30](#), the first recorded sermon of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke - the first time in Luke's Gospel that we hear from Jesus since He has begun His ministry and His first message in Luke's Gospel clearly explains why Jesus came.
- His message caused a struggle in the hearts of those who gathered to hear His message. The people gathered to hear Jesus' message rejected His message. They refused to believe.
- Jesus' message might cause a struggle in your heart as well. If you find yourself struggling in your faith this morning, it may be because you have failed to fully embrace the message of Jesus in your life.
- Some of you this morning know you're struggling in your faith, I think this passage might help you to see WHY you struggle in your faith. I think this passage will also help you to see HOW you can overcome that struggle.

- This morning, two truths that you have to understand if you are going to overcome your struggling faith and embrace the message of Jesus.

You'll struggle in your faith until you see yourself as Jesus sees you.

- First part of Luke's Gospel details Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Second part of Luke's Gospel - starting at the end of [Luke 9](#) - details Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem - and ultimately His death.
- vs. 14-15 - returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. Preaching in various synagogues - Jesus is gaining popularity as He announces His Kingdom.
- Comes to His hometown - Nazareth - and on the sabbath enters the synagogue.
- Nazareth = a place where everyone knows your name. Population of about 500 in the days of Jesus. (76,000 today.) The people of Nazareth watched Jesus grow up. Now, Jesus is back. He's popular. The town is buzzing because they know Jesus has been preaching in Galilee.
- Synagogue - central to the life of first century Judaism. Synagogue functioned as a community center - and a place where children were educated. Also served as a place of worship.
- When you entered synagogue, you sat in the round. The men separated from the women, and you were assigned a place to sit based on rank and importance in your community. At the center of worship in the synagogue was the Word of God - the Torah was expounded - and then the writings and prophets. The Torah chest - where the scrolls of the Torah were kept - and then the prophets. Whoever read the Scripture, read standing up, and then sat down to give a word of explanation.
- Each synagogue had a "ruler." A man in the community who was usually well off, well known, and well respected. He made sure that the synagogue was cared for and selected men to lead in the teaching of the Scripture.

- On this day, Jesus has the responsibility of reading from the Prophet Isaiah - the scroll is given to him (vs. 17), and Jesus took the scroll and found [Isaiah 61:1-2](#). Jesus could have read any Scripture from Isaiah - He could have read [Is. 53](#). BUT... He reads [Is. 61:1-2](#). AND He stops reading mid-sentence. HE doesn't read the rest of verse 2... "And the day of our God's vengeance." Judgment coming later - but right now - in this moment - **Jesus has come to bring God's favor.**
- "The year of the Lord's Favor..." Reference to year of Jubilee? ([Lev. 25](#)) Every 50 years, all debts forgiven, all slaves released. All prisoners set free. No recording in Scripture that Israelites ever celebrated a year of Jubilee, but Jesus, in quoting this verse, saying, "I am the ONE who is bringing the GREAT RESET."
- After Jesus reads, He sits down. All eyes on Jesus. What will His message be? One sentence: "*Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled*" (vs. 21).
- [Is. 61:1-2](#) is about Jesus. He is the ONE who has come for the poor, the captives, the blind, and the oppressed. He is the ONE who has come to bring Jubilee. Jesus' first message recorded in the Book of Luke, and Jesus says, "I am the Messiah who has come to deliver you."
- AND that's what the people in the crowd were - poor, captive, blind, and oppressed. BUT, did they know that? In a sense. They knew that they were being bullied by Rome. They knew tax collectors were taking their money. They knew political oppression, but Jesus is talking about something far more than oppression from Rome. Did they know their spiritual oppression? Did they know that Jesus had come to deliver them from something far greater than Rome; sin and death?
- No. They were children of Abraham. In their minds, they were good with God but not good with Rome. Jesus came to show these Israelites, and us, our true condition - and it's far worse than we can imagine.
- **You will struggle in your faith until you see yourself as Jesus sees you.**
- **How do I see myself?**

- Mistreated (How the Jews saw themselves when thinking about Roman oppression.)
- Self-sufficient (I am able.)
- Proven (Look at who I am, what I'm done.)
- Deserving (Because of what I've done, God owes me. This world owes me. People owe me.)
- Or... you see yourself as:
- Lonely (No one cares)
- Unlovable (Because of what I've done, I will never have healthy relationships.)
- Failure (I can't)
- You have a view of yourself - and if you don't see yourself as God sees you, you will struggle in your faith.
- **How does Jesus see me?**
 - Jesus sees you as someone who is absolutely wrecked by sin. He sees your pride. He also sees your self-loathing. Jesus sees how sin has absolutely wrecked your life and Jesus knows you don't see yourself as He does.
 - Jesus sees you as someone who is poor (desperate need for Him). He sees you as a captive (enslaved to sin). He sees you as someone who is blind (can't see the truth about God without His help). He sees you as someone who is oppressed (sin weighs you down.)
 - There is no part of your life that sin has not affected. Because we are often blinded to our own sin, we fail to see that sin is the greatest problem that we have in our lives.
 - You will always struggle in your faith when you fail to see sin as the biggest problem that you have in your life.

You'll struggle in your faith until you

fully embrace Jesus' Word.

- At first, the people respond positively. Amazed by His one sentence sermon. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son? How can Joseph’s son talk with such authority? This is the same guy that built my kitchen table.”
- However, Jesus knows their hearts. Jesus knows that their initial amazement will turn to disbelief. Jesus knows they will demand more. Jesus knows they won’t believe HIS Word. Jesus, the Great Prophet, His message not accepted in His hometown.
- vs. 23 - 24 - “You want more than my word. You want miracles like I did in Capernaum. You are amazed at my word, but you won’t take me at my word.” The people wanted Jesus to PROVE His Word, but they didn’t want to TRUST His Word without proof. (Physician save yourself - physicians not trusted in those days. “Show me you can save me by taking the cure for yourself first...”)
- What Jesus does next infuriates those who heard his message. Jesus takes the people back to the Old Testament. He reminds them of the widow at Zarephath - a gentile woman who had nothing to eat because of a famine. Elijah went to her for food - she had nothing but a bit of flour and oil she was going to make for her and her son before they died of starvation. Elijah told her, “Make me a small loaf instead, and see what God does.” She took Elijah at his word ([1 Kings 17:15](#)), and THEN saw God work miraculously.
- Jesus reminds them of a poor widow and then a rich official - Naaman - a Syrian commander - hated by the Israelites - had leprosy. He went to see Elisha and Elisha told him to bathe seven times in the Jordan River. At first, Naaman refused, but then did it and was healed. He was slow to do it, but ultimately, he took Elisha at his word.
- Jesus’ point to the people in Nazareth: you fail to take me at my word.
- Jesus was on a mission, and His mission was NOT to simply perform miracles to impress and amaze the people. His mission was to set captives free. His mission was a mission of Jubilee for God’s people, but the people of Nazareth failed to take Jesus at His Word that THIS was His mission. They wanted more so they failed to take Jesus at His Word.

- They were outraged that Jesus used the stories of the widow and Naaman as a way to point out their lack of faith. They wanted Jesus dead. They attempted to throw Him off a cliff, but Jesus miraculously escaped.
- What about you? Do you fail to take Jesus at His Word? Is His Word enough for you?
- Your greatest problem is sin - your greatest need is salvation - and God has spoken to us through His Word. He has told us that if we believe in what Jesus has done for us through His death and resurrection, we will be saved. We will be delivered from our sin and given life abundant and eternal. But for some, that's not enough. We expect more.
- **What do I expect from God?**
 - Impress me - Want to see God do something big before we take Him at His Word. (He's already done something big - He gave His Son.)
 - Entertain me - That's why some of us have a hard time with being a part of a church or committing to spiritual disciplines. Not entertaining enough.
 - Help me - Some of us see God more as a Life Preserver to help us when we get in a jam rather than the King of our lives who is worthy of our surrender.
 - Bless me - Some of us see God as the One who is supposed to make our life good and prosperous rather than understanding that God is at work to make our lives sanctified.
 - Teach me - Some of us want to learn more about God. We like having the intellectual knowledge of God, but we aren't interested in that knowledge actually changing us.
- **What should I expect from God?**
 - When you see yourself as Jesus sees you, then it should radically change what you expect from God.
 - I should expect God to save me. That's it. That's His mission. That's what Jesus has come to do. And, when you see yourself as Jesus does, you'll begin to know how desperately you need Jesus to set

you free from captivity, to heal you of your spiritual blindness, and to deliver you from the oppression of sin.

- If God chooses to bless you in other ways, to God be the glory. BUT, the greatest blessing you will ever receive is the blessing of a crucified and resurrected Lord who died the death you deserve and rose again to save you from your sins.
- What do I do?
 - **Listen to Jesus.**
 - Am I tuning out or tuning in? (Looking for opportunities to hear or ignoring.)
 - Who is speaking truth into my life that I am ignoring? (God has put people in your life who are speaking truth. Who is it in yours?)
 - Am I so focused on what I want from Jesus that I'm missing what He wants for me?
 - **Cooperate with Jesus.** You are saved. You are being saved. You will be saved. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling ([Philippians 2:12-13](#)). The greatest joy in your life will be when you surrender to the work Jesus wants to do in you. How are you resisting His work now? How are you embracing His work?