

LUKE

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Luke chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Last week, in Luke chapter 3 we looked at the genealogy of Jesus through His mother Mary.

Now what we read here in Luke chapter 4 really goes back to what took place in Luke 3:21-22 where we are told, **“When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, ‘You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.’”**

Remember that Jesus was baptized to identify Himself with sinful man. He was showing us what we need to do when we come to God and receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Baptism does not save us but it identifies us with God. It shows others that we have repented of our sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and that old life was dead as we were placed in the waters of baptism and as we came out of the water it was that new life in Christ that we are now living.

And while He was praying we see the heavens open and the Holy Spirit coming upon Him and then the voice from heaven, God the Father speaking and saying, **“You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”**

Jesus began His earthly ministry with the blessing of the Father and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus, we can have the same things.

And then, in the first part of Luke 3:23 we are told that Jesus began His ministry at around the age of 30 and that is when the priests could begin their service according to Numbers 4:2-3. Why is this so important?

Because I believe it is out of the baptism, the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus and the beginning of His earthly ministry that the Devil is right there trying to thwart the plans and purposes of God. And we will see that this evening as we look at Luke chapter 4.

Just remember, as soon as a person comes to the Lord, the Devil is right there trying to stop them from serving the Lord. Thus, the lessons we find here in Luke chapter 4 will not only help new believers but it is for all of us. You see, we need to keep in mind that the Devil never stops giving up on his schemes to keep us from serving the Lord.

With that as our background, let's begin reading in Luke chapter 4, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening. Remember that Jesus has been baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, His ministry is beginning, and . . .

LUKE 4

VERSES 1-2

Listen to what one commentator had to say regarding the baptism of Jesus and these temptations in the wilderness. He wrote,

The twin themes in the story of the baptism of Jesus are taken up in the story of his temptation, so that there is no doubt that this narrative was derived from a source in which the baptism and temptation stood together. On the one hand, the story demonstrates how the Spirit, who had come upon Jesus, guided and empowered him in his new task; on the other hand, it shows how Jesus, as the Son of God, was obedient to God.

The new factor in the situation is the devil, who attempts to deflect Jesus from obedience to God and hence from the fulfillment of the messianic task laid upon him by God.

- I. Howard Marshall, Commentary on Luke, pp. 165-166

And what we see here is that Jesus is not only empowered by the Holy Spirit, but He is also led by the Holy Spirit, and that too is important for us to follow. You need to take those steps of faith even when things may seem barren, lifeless, a wilderness wandering you might say, because God is teaching you lessons of faith as we are going through those times, as we are going to see here with Jesus.

Also, the wilderness of Judea is a barren, rocky place and there Jesus is fasting for 40 days, He had reached the point where He was hungry once again. You see, after around 5 days of fasting your craving for food dissipates. Now, once your hunger returns, around 40 days and what we see here with Jesus, His body is telling Him that He is starving to death and He really needs to eat. This is where Jesus was at as He is tempted by Satan.

And what I want you to see is that Jesus has identified Himself with sinners in His baptism and now He identifies with us in His temptations. It is as Hebrews 4:15 says, “**For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.**”

So these lessons are for us to learn and apply to our lives because the Devil is going to tempt us to sin and as we look at how Jesus handled this temptation, we too can resist the Devil and not give into his temptations! These temptations by the Devil are also used by God as tests of faith and the key, who are you going to surrender to!

VERSES 3-4

Please understand that Satan didn't say "if" but "*since you are the Son of God*" for Satan knows that Jesus is God. In James 2:19 we are told, and this is from The Living Bible, "**Are there still some among you who hold that 'only believing' is enough? Believing in one God? Well, remember that the demons believe this too so strongly that they tremble in terror!**"

And Jesus is hungry, He has been fasting for forty days and now He is at the point of starvation! Doesn't that seem unfair for the Father to allow this to happen? Why would He allow this? Please understand that God will never allow us to be tempted beyond our ability to resist.

That is what Paul said in I Corinthians 10:13, "**No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.**"

And maybe you are thinking, "Wow, you don't know what I am going through right now! The temptations are beyond my control!" That may be true but God never tells you that you will win these temptation battles on your own but as you surrender to Him and as we can see, allow the Word of God and the Spirit of God to empower you to win these battles!

We see here that Jesus counters this temptation by Satan with the Word of God, quoting out of Deuteronomy 8:3. You see, the physical life is not to control us, to be fed, but the spiritual life is to be in control, and it does need to be fed, and that is done through reading and applying the Word of God to our lives.

Notice the pattern Jesus leaves us here. He is hungry, His bodily appetite is crying out, but He is filled with the Spirit which controls His actions, His life. On the other hand, many times our stomachs are full, our bodily appetites are fed, and our spirit is running on empty and we wonder why our walk is not better!

You see, too often we are poorly armed to fight off Satan's temptations because we lack the light of God's truth in our lives, we ignore them or are ignorant of them. It is as Darby put it, "A single text silences when used in the power of the Spirit. The whole secret of strength in conflict is using the Word of God in the right way."

One commentator summed it up like this in regards to the power to fight these temptations being not only at the disposal of Jesus, but they are for us as well. He wrote,

Jesus used *Scripture* to battle Satan's temptation, not some elaborate spiritual power inaccessible to us. Jesus fought this battle as a Spirit-filled, Word-of-God-filled man. He drew on no divine resources that are unavailable to us.

We effectively resist temptation in the same way Jesus did: filled with the Holy Spirit, we answer Satan's seductive lies by shining the light of God's truth upon them. If we are ignorant of God's truth, we are poorly armed in the fight against temptation.

- David Guzik

VERSES 5-8

Now as some read this they think that Satan's offer to Jesus was plain foolishness because he did not have the power or authority to give the kingdoms of this world to Jesus if He bowed down and worshiped him! But he does and it was a legitimate offer!

Now, when was all that authority given to Satan? In the Garden of Eden when Adam gave to Satan what God had given to him, dominion over the earth. When Adam sinned he lost that dominion. Thus, Satan is called “**the ruler of this world,**” John 12:31, “**the god of this age,**” II Corinthians 4:4, and “**the prince of the power of the air,**” Ephesians 2:2.

And the reason I can say that Satan has that authority is that Jesus does not challenge him on it. Thus, don't be surprised when you see wicked people in positions of authority, Satan has given it to them, for he can give it to whoever he wishes! And yes, God is sovereign, He is in control, but understand that spiritual battle that is taking place behind the scenes in people's lives.

And as you can see, Jesus once again counters the temptation of Satan by quoting the Word of God out of Deuteronomy 6:13. I find it interesting that Jesus used the same words He spoke to Peter, “**Get behind Me Satan!**” when Peter told Him that He didn't have to go to the cross, He didn't have to die.

Why? Because both Satan and Peter were telling Jesus He wouldn't have to go to the cross, and in doing that we would still be dead in our trespasses and sins. Also, you can't worship without serving, the thing is, who are your worshipping, what has control of your life?

Again, we have this summed up for us by one commentator who wrote,

Again, Jesus answered Satan with the same resource available to every believer: the Word of God used by a Spirit-filled believer. In resisting these temptations as a man, Jesus proved that Adam did not *have* to sin; there was not something faulty in his make up. Jesus faced worse than Adam did and Jesus never sinned.

- David Guzik

I am not saying it is easy but have we resisted to bloodshed these temptations to sin that are before us? I don't think so! And remember, the Word of God and the Spirit of God empowering the man of God to walk worthy of the high calling by which he has been called!

VERSES 9-12

Satan knows Scripture and he is a master of twisting it and misquoting it. Here Satan quotes out of Psalm 91:11-12. But he twists it and misquotes it. The thought is in all of God's ways, not our own ways. But don't miss the challenge, for he is saying to Jesus who has just defeated Satan twice by using the Scriptures, if you really trust God, if you really trust His Word, then throw yourself down from the top of this pinnacle to the valley below, maybe some 400 feet, and God will protect you like His Word says.

And once again, just in case we missed it the first two times, Jesus counters this temptation by using the Word of God and quoting out of Deuteronomy 6:16. You see, we are not to deliberately put ourselves in a situation and then call on God to save us, tempting the Lord to do something that may not be His will, and you will know that when you come crashing down!

Be careful! Satan twisted and misquoted the Scriptures and there are many today who buy into his lies, many Christians. Why? Because they do not know the whole counsel of God and they don't know how to rightly divide or extract the truths of God from His Word.

It is as Paul warned Timothy, **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’”** II Timothy 2:15-19.

Paul is telling Timothy to work hard, be diligent in the work he is doing. There are times when people should be ashamed at the work they are doing because it was done poorly. But that should not be the case in our service to the Lord, and as a pastor, Timothy was to **“rightly divide”** God’s Word or “to cut straight.”

The Geek word, ORTHOTOMEIO, (or-thot-om-eh’-o) was used of a craftsman cutting a straight line, or a farmer plowing a straight furrow, or a mason setting a straight line for bricks. Thus, there is a right way to teach God’s Word, to share what it means, and a wrong way!

It is always amazing to listen to the garbage some teachers are teaching and the following they have. Paul warned Timothy to shun, avoid, don’t listen to their message, why? Because it is **“profane,”** not meaning dirty words but anything that is taking away from God’s Word is not holy, it is filthy!

Because it is nothing more than “**idle babblings**” or “**vain babblings**” there is no substance to them, there is nothing substantial to them. Paul, in Colossians 2:8-10 warned, **“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”** May we be wise and understand that what God has for us will make us complete!

So Jesus passed the test and it is over. No more problems. You have seen that in your own life right? One test and then the Christian life is a walk in the park! The Christian life may be a walk in the park but that park is filled with roaring lions ready to devour us! Look at what we are told next, something we may not like but we do need to hear!

VERSE 13

Satan was defeated by Jesus because Jesus used the Word of God empowered by the Spirit of God to stand strong in the ways of God, and so should we. With these two resources in our lives we too can have victory. As it has been said: Too much Word and not enough Spirit and you puff up (in the sense of pride). Too much Spirit and not enough Word and you blow up. But, with the Word and the Spirit working together, you grow up!

And please understand this, Satan never gives up. He may leave you for a time, but he will return when your defenses are down, when you think you are strong, for then you are truly the weakest!

I am always reminded of those wild animal shows where you see that group of antelopes or whatever just eating grass or drinking water out of the pond. And the antelopes or other animals that are eaten by the lions and tigers don't think they are going to get eaten, they are comfortable, their guard is down, and they are a meal. And the same can be said of our lives if we let our guard down.

Peter put it like this in I Peter 5:8-9, **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”** May we heed the warning!

VERSES 14-15

Notice that Jesus continued to walk in the power of the Spirit, and so must we if our lives will be effective for the Lord. It is as Clarke wrote, “He who, through the grace of God, resists and overcomes temptation, is always *bettered* by it. This is one of the wonders of God's grace, that those very things which are designed for our utter ruin he makes the instruments of our greatest good. Thus Satan is ever duped by his own proceeding, and caught in his own craft.”

Now this area of Galilee was heavily populated during the time of Jesus. There were 204 cities in the region of Galilee each with a population of at least 15,000! Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that there were over 3 million people living in this region, an area smaller than the size of the state of Connecticut.

And I love what Jesus does here. All these people located in a small area and we see that Jesus would go into the Synagogues on the Sabbath day and read from the Scriptures and then He taught the people out of the Scriptures.

I hear far too often today that we are teaching God's Word too much, that we need to do this and do that! And then we wonder why so much false doctrine has entered the church, why so many Christians are living defeated lives. They are not empowered by the Word of God and the Spirit of God and they are prime targets for the enemy to attack. Why so many pastors have departed from this example of reading and teaching the Word of God I don't understand, but it truly is sad and the people are hurt by this.

VERSES 16-17

Keep in mind that the home base for Jesus is going to be Capernaum but we now see Jesus return home to Nazareth, the place where He grew up, and He enters the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was His custom, and He read and taught the people the Word of God.

It would seem that this style of worship in the Synagogue got its start when the Jews were taken captive to Babylon. They had no Temple so they would gather and read and study the Scriptures.

Then, when they were allowed to return home, they kept up this style and by the time of Jesus, it was a common practice. The order of the service went like this. They would open up with prayer and praise. Then someone would read from the Law. Then there would be a reading from the prophets. And then a teaching from what was read, usually by a visiting rabbi or teacher.

On this day Jesus is handed the scroll of Isaiah to read from, which was no accident. And Jesus opens the scroll and He begins to read . . .

VERSES 18-21

Isn't that an amazing coincidence! The day that Jesus comes into the Synagogue and as He reads it is a passage out of Isaiah, what His ministry is all about. Let me say this, there are no coincidences with God. This was the passage He was going to read from before the foundations of the world were even established!

What is interesting to me is that Jesus stops reading at a comma, He doesn't finish the sentence. Why? To answer that I want you to first listen to what He left out. The rest of that verse goes like this, the part He left out, "**And the day of vengeance of our God.**"

Why in the world did He do that? Did He just forget to read on? Absolutely not. There is a great reason He stopped there. You see, Jesus came the first time as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. It was not a day of vengeance but of forgiveness of sin.

But He is coming again as a Lion from the tribe of Judah pouring out His wrath, His vengeance upon all those who have rejected Him. Think about it, this is almost a 2,000-year comma, but don't be fooled, He is coming back. Thus, receive Him as a Lamb to take away your sins rather than a Lion coming to judge you for your sins!

Now look at what He has come to do. God the Father has placed upon the Messiah, the Anointed One, this work. First, He is to preach the Gospel to the poor, that is the Messiah is going to bring Good News to those who are spiritually impoverished.

He is to heal the broken hearted or to bring Good News to those whose hearts are broken over their sinful condition.

He is to preach deliverance to the captives or to set us free from the sin that has us captive, enslaved us.

He is to bring recovery of sight to the blind or to open our eyes to the blindness that sin has brought upon our lives, He will help to heal our spiritual and moral blindness.

He is to set at liberty those who are oppressed by sin, setting us free from sin's oppression.

He is bringing to us a period of time where the grace and mercy of God abounds to sinful man!

Yes, the Messiah will bring physical healing also, but the main issue is our spiritual healing, the forgiveness of sins by paying the penalty for our sins!

Now, as Jesus finished these words everyone looked upon Him with great anticipation of what He was going to teach them out of this text. What did it all mean? And Jesus tells them that the prophet Isaiah was writing about Him, about Jesus, and he was writing about now, the day they were living in. How did they respond? Let's read on and see.

VERSE 22

What a beautiful response they had. They saw the words of Jesus full of the grace and the goodness of God as the ministry of the Messiah was now upon them. What a warm welcome to the Messiah, but don't let that fool you, for in a minute we will see what is really in their hearts. You see, at this point it was general statements, nothing that spoke to their own heart or convicted them, but that is all going to change very quickly as we are going to see. They were amazed at what they heard but once it all sinks in, that amazement will change very quickly as we will see.

VERSES 23-27

Jesus didn't do miracles just to do miracles, but He used them to authenticate His ministry, His teaching. And Jesus is pointing to the fact that they will not be interested in His teaching, just His miracles that He is doing in places like Capernaum. They wanted to be entertained! They wanted Jesus to *prove* His claims with miraculous signs.

Don't we see that today? You bet we do! People running around here and there for this miracle show, for this person who can make a leg grow, to that person who can increase your money, and in the end, they are starving to death spiritually speaking. The Word of God is not part of their diet or if it is it is only a snack!

Paul warned Timothy, a young pastor, of this very thing when he said in II Timothy 4:2-5, **“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

No matter what the people want, Paul told Timothy to give them what they need, the Word of God. And we are going to see this over and over again in the ministry of Jesus, where He is feeding them and not entertaining them.

And think about it. Would you let a small child dictate what kind of food he wants? Of course not, because, chances are, it would not be healthy for them. So as parents, we give them what they need to help them to grow, to be well nourished, instead of what they want.

And as a pastor, I guess I do the same. I don't let the people dictate what I do, but I teach the Word of God, and it may not be what they want, but it will be what they need, and I am confident of that!

And then Jesus gets them where it hurts, their pride. They were proud to be Jewish, to be the children of God and yet, with these two examples, Jesus shows the grace and mercy of God towards Gentiles.

And this was hard for any Jew to swallow but it was the Word of God. You see, in the Jewish mind the Gentiles were only created to fuel the fires of Hell. And here, in what Jesus is saying, people they felt were undeserving of God's favor are recipients of it and those they thought should receive it, were left out! Ouch!

In this case Jesus gives them two Gentile examples of God's grace and mercy being extended. One was during the time of Elijah and how the famine was severe and it effected all. And God sent Elijah not to the house of Israel, to His people, but to a widow, a Gentile. And not just a Gentile but a woman! And this woman who lived in Sidon was provided with food for her and her son. And when her son died, Elijah stepped in, prayed, and God raised him from the dead. All the widows in Israel did not receive this, but this Gentile widow did. And understand that this is coming out of the Scriptures, from I Kings 17.

The second example that Jesus uses is during the time of Elisha the prophet as he heals a Syrian commander, a Gentile, who has leprosy. He did not go to the lepers in Israel, which there were, but to this Gentile! And again, this is coming out of the Scriptures, from II Kings 5.

It truly is the sovereignty of God. Jesus was saying that both Jew and Gentile need to be saved by the grace of God, there was no special dispensation for the Jews even though they thought father Abraham stood at the gates of Hell to pull out any Jew, even an unbelieving Jew! Jesus is saying, “Not so!” You see, being a Jew didn’t get you into heaven, nor does being a Catholic, or a Lutheran, or a Baptist, or a Calvary Chapelite, you need to receive the grace of God through Jesus Christ and that does make people angry when they hear that. How did the people of Nazareth respond to the words of Jesus that came from their own Scriptures? They were excited at first but now, as we read on you will see how they responded!

VERSES 28-30

Now I have never had a response like this from a sermon I gave, at least not everyone in the church at the same time. There have been a few individuals at times, but here everyone is upset with Jesus to the point that they want to put Him to death! Why? Because people love when they hear things that make them feel good but when the truth accuses them, they hate it!

R. Kent Hughes summed it up for us like this,

The fine citizens of Nazareth had heard enough. It was bad enough to be told that they were poor and blind and captive and oppressed, but now to be told they were less spiritual and less wise than the *Gentiles*, both Naaman and the widow, was just too much! In fact, they did not even sit through the rest of the synagogue service – the Aaronic benediction and the Amens. Rather, “All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff” (vv. 28, 29).

Think of it! They had seen Jesus grow up from infancy to manhood. Even though they had never dreamed he was God, they certainly knew his character firsthand. They had never seen him do anything wrong. He had never lied, never disobeyed, never been unkind. In fact, he was the most loving, thoughtful, winsome person they had ever known. He was undoubtedly locally famous for his acts of mercy. He was the most lovely being they had ever encountered.

But when Jesus cut through their comfortable religious façade, they tried to lynch him – and on the Sabbath too! He would have been tossed off the cliff and then stoned had he not “walked right through the crowd and went on his way” (v. 30). This was divine protection.

If there ever was proof of Paul’s later dictum, “The sinful mind is hostile to God” (Romans 8:7a), this was it!

- R. Kent Hughes, Luke Volume One, p. 145

I think he hit the nail on the head on that one! And people today are no different. They want to hear those gracious words of Jesus, which are rich and deep, but when anything is said that exposes their sin, their heart, when there is any accountability placed upon their life, they get angry and walk out.

They edit the Word of God to fit their lifestyle. Today we have the seeker friendly churches that make people comfortable about living in sin. You can’t use words that are judgmental, you can’t say “*sin*” because it is a dirty word, and it is! And we are seeing this in the Purpose Driven churches, the Emergent churches, those who have moved away from the Words of God!

Think about this for a minute. When you look at the prophets, did they hold back or speak the Words of God fully, completely, telling it like it is? They just spoke forth and many times the people did not like it.

And look at Jesus, He would be kicked out of a seeker friendly church and many of the churches today for His negative words. Jesus did not water down His message or tailor His message so it would be easier for them to swallow, more enjoyable for them to hear. And folks, I think we must also do the same. I am not saying be unloving or cold, but speak the truth in love and then it is up to each individual to apply it to their lives. They will either receive it or reject what you say, and I think you will know which one it is!

Again, the people are angry, all of them and they lead Jesus to the cliff of the city to throw Him down, again, on the Sabbath day. Go figure! Now pushing someone off a small cliff was often the first step in the process of stoning. Once the victim fell down, they were pelted with rocks until dead. So as they try to push Jesus off the cliff, He passes through this angry crowd. They wanted a miracle, here it was, but it truly wasn't what they wanted. And from what we can gather from the Scriptures, Jesus never returned to Nazareth because of their rejection of Him. His home will now be Capernaum, as we will see as we move on. This will be His base camp.

VERSES 31-32

First of all we are told that “**He went down to Capernaum**” which is not accurate when you think about it. Capernaum was in the upper northwest area of the Sea of Galilee so how could Jesus go down, He had to go up, right?

Keep in mind that Luke is very detailed in his writings and that is what we see here. What do I mean by that? Nazareth was some 1,200 feet above sea level and Capernaum was 686 feet below sea level. So Jesus did go down to Capernaum just as Luke said. Not a mistake but very accurate!

And we see here that Capernaum is now His base camp, the home of Peter, Andrew, James and John. And notice again that Jesus is teaching the people, what an example for us to follow.

And they were astonished, “struck out of their senses” because He spoke with authority. You see, the religious teachers spoke by quoting other rabbis and teachers, experts of the Law.

These Jewish religious leaders did love their quotation marks and it was not the authority of the Scriptures, but the authority of other teachers that they held up.

Let me give you this example to show you what I mean. R. Elieser affirmed in the Talmud, “Nor have I ever in my life said a thing which I did not hear from my teachers.” You might say “from authorities” and not “with authority!” That is how we should teach, with the authority of the Scriptures in the power of God’s Spirit!

Remember what Paul said in Hebrews 4:12, “**For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**”

How do you keep people from growing in the Lord, maturing in the Lord? Keep them from the Word of God or give them a diet that is unhealthy for them. And we see this happening in churches at alarming rates today where the authority of men supersedes the authority of God’s Word!

Paul, in II Timothy 3:16-17 tells us, **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

The Word of God has come from God Himself and the words of men, well, they are the words of men! Why do we want to listen to what man has to say when we can listen to the living, the powerful Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God that will transform our lives? It is crazy when you think about it.

And this troubles me because I do hear people say that there is just too much Bible teaching and they give no Scripture reference that we should limit the Bible teaching but it is something that they have come up with.

But what does the Word of God have to say? Now we have read these Scriptures already but right after Paul spoke of the Word of God coming from the lips of God he then encourages Timothy to, **“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”** II Timothy 4:2-4.

I believe we are living in the days where many don't want to hear sound doctrine but they do want to have their ears tickled, they do want to feel good. And yes, God's Word gives to us correct doctrine, and that is wonderful, it is needed. God's Word reproves us when we are wrong and yes, that conviction can hurt but out of that hurt, if we obey, is healing. God's Word corrects us or it shows us where we need to walk. And God's Word gives us instructions in righteousness, or it tells us how we should walk.

Is the Word of God needed today? It absolutely is and many of the problems we see in the church, and maybe I should say all of the problems we see in the church today is a result of unhealthy or unsound doctrine being taught!

Remember what I said regarding what we should be teaching. Many teach "from authorities" or what others have said and not "with authority" or what God has said! That is how we should teach, with the authority of the Scriptures in the power of God's Spirit!

Please understand this. If the church is to have any authority today, it must teach on the authority of God's Word! You see, in our day, in the church today, many are not interested in sound doctrine, like I have said. They are interested in feelings and look at what that has done. It is destroying lives, relationships and this is not of God. The church must stand upon God's Word and if it doesn't, like it or not, it has no authority, none at all!

Now notice what happens when Jesus is teaching the truths of God from the Word of God.

VERSES 33-37

Now this is kind of interesting to me. How can a man who has a demon be allowed in the Synagogue? That is not kosher! It is forbidden!

Could it be that no one knew and he felt right at home? There was no light, no exposure, to the Word of God, the things of God until Jesus came in and brought this demon to his feet. And what brought this demon to his feet was the teaching of God's Word with authority!

And isn't it amazing that the demon recognizes that this is God, Jesus is God, while the people rejected it. His hometown friends wanted Him dead for what He was saying!

Many today are comfortable in churches because there is no light, they can go on and live in sin and there is no conviction because the Word of God is not being taught. May our light shine so bright that none of us will ever be comfortable living in sin!

Remember what David said in Psalm 119:9-11, "**How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.**" May we learn the lesson and not only read God's Word but apply God's Word to our lives!

And as this demon is speaking, Jesus tells him to "**Be quiet, and come out of him!**" Did you notice the authority Jesus has over this demon? No elaborate rituals, no holy water, He commands the demon to come out of this man and he does!

Again, the people were amazed, they never saw anything like this before. Not only His teaching was with authority, but He had authority over the spirit world also! They didn't have a telephone system, or fax machines, or E-mail, no cell phones but word spread very quickly about this man named Jesus who is the Christ!

VERSES 38-39

Make no mistake about it, Peter had heard of Jesus before this and he probably was in the Synagogue with Jesus when He healed this man of demon possession.

So Peter invited Him home and as they arrive his mother-in-law is very sick. In fact, Dr. Luke tells us that it was a “**great fever**” or she was on fire, burning up with this sickness.

And Jesus comes and heals her. And what does she do? Did she sleep it off till she got her strength back? No, she immediately got up and served. What an example for us to follow. You see, Jesus has touched our diseased, sin filled lives and healed us, and thus, we should be serving Him, doing the Lord’s work.

One other point before we move on and I am not trying to offend anyone or pick on anyone here, but Peter was married. That is how you get a mother-in-law. Now some may say that she died before Peter was a disciple of Jesus, but that is not true.

You see, an early Christian writer, Clement of Alexandria said that Peter’s wife helped him in ministry by meeting the needs of other women. Now, according to the Roman Catholic Church, according to their standards, Peter could not be a priest, nor could he be the first Pope if he was married!

Do you see how the traditions of man negate the Words of God! Be careful. Why don’t we read anything further of Peter’s wife? Because she was a servant and humbly served the Lord. Think about it, look at the millions of servants of God who we know nothing of and yet their work is vital for the body of Christ to function properly.

That is true today, we all can't be up front, but there are those behind the scenes that are vitally needed in the local body of Christ and on a national level. Don't ever think your work is not important, for God looks at the heart, why you are doing something for Him, and He will honor you for your service to Him for He is a debtor to no one!

VERSES 40-41

As the sun set the Sabbath was over and the people brought their sick family members and friends to Jesus to heal them, and Jesus did just that, He healed them physically but unless they came to Him and received the forgiveness of sin, they would die apart from Him, eternally separated from God. It is as Paul said in Romans 6:23, **“For the wages of sin is death, but the (free) gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Now why didn't Jesus allow the demons to confess who He is? Because He doesn't want Satan or his workers doing His advertising. Who does God use for His advertising? You and me for we are living epistles that people can read and learn about God as they look at our lives, what we say and what we do.

Think of our lives like a big movie screen that people are watching and as they do, what are they seeing? Are they being drawn to God by what they see or are they being pushed away from God by what they are seeing? You are His witnesses, don't forget that!

VERSES 42-44

I do find it interesting some of the things that people place high on their priority list of the things that Christians must do. We might read this and think that miracles need to be high up on that list!

But what was the main reason that Jesus came? To bring the Good News to people lost in their sins. To preach and teach the people the things of God. And you know what, ***“for this purpose I have been sent”*** to teach you the things of God, and every pastor should have that as the focus of his ministry. ***“PREACH THE WORD!”***

I pray that as you leave here this evening that you have a desire to know Jesus more deeply, more intimately and that as you read God’s Word, as you dig into God’s Word you allow the Spirit of God to open it up to your lives and that you would walk accordingly as you draw closer to Him!