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Luke
Chapter 4 - An Unorthodox Power
The Holy Spirit
Power Over the Flesh (vs. 1-4)

Luke 4:1-4: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.’”

This marvelous passage, recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, recorded in the Gospel of Mark that now recorded in the Gospel of Luke as well. It's a magnificent passage, because it's really demonstrating God in the flesh and what He would come as. How would He come?

How would He approach? if in fact, God came to earth, what would you expect?

In the Old Testament, Isaiah 64:1, it reads this way as God's people would cry out to God,

“Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down,
That the mountains might quake at Your presence—
(Isaiah 64:2) As fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes
water to boil...”

It's an interesting picture, isn't it? Amos would tag on to that in Amos 5:18,

“Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD,
For what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you?
It will be darkness and not light.”

(Amos 5:20) “... Even gloom with no brightness in it?”

Sometimes we don't know what we're asking for, do we? If God were to come to earth in all of His great power, what would we expect?

Well, Malachi would read this way,

(Malachi 4:1) “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff...”

So, are you ready for Him to come? “Come.” I’m not, and “of every evildoer,” that’s me. Not of the arrogant. I mean, I have my moments. The point of the matter is that if in fact He were to come as a burning fire, eradicating every evil, every evil, none of us would live. It is the grace of God that we see the Christ coming in a manger as Luke would record, and as He is standing with John the Baptist coming up out of the water, a dove comes upon Him, and it says it is the Spirit of God coming upon Him, not with great fire or great wrath, but it is a graciousness of God.

Scripture tells us that no man has in any way ever seen God, but that Christ has explained Him, and it goes on and says that the only begotten of the Father, that is Christ, came in grace and truth. God could have come with great fury and fire, but He came to earth in grace and truth, and how thankful I am that He came in such a way.

1 Kings 19, there is an incident in which the Prophet Isaiah is very upset with the way things are going with Ahab and

Jezebel and false prophets and all these things. It's just a horrific thing. He dared the false prophets to have a showdown, and obviously, Elijah won. God revealed Himself and had fire come down and consumed the altar. Everybody saw the power of God and I think in many ways Elijah was feeling pretty good about that and then he hears that Jezebel is out and actually, has probably devised a hit on him. So, all these people are now hunting for Elijah and Elijah, I think to some degree was thinking, "We destroyed all the evil people. Everything should be ok now." Do you ever have one of those moments of great victory? Ok. Now, everything is good." And God goes, "No, evil still exists. You can't destroy evil with evil. It's never going to win. It's going to keep going." So, when he hears this message that they're out, he begins to run. The whole interesting story is that he runs literally hundreds of miles without even eating. I mean, this is one amazing prophet. The Scripture tells us 40 days and 40 nights, which is going to kind of parallel to what we're talking about. So, we have this picture and then finally it gets to this point and God goes, "We need to put something in you." And He sends an angel to feed him,

and he's still very angry. He's angry perhaps with God; he's very angry with himself because he feels like he let God down by running. So, God continues to pursue him.

It is in this text that I want you to see in 1 Kings 19 that as he went forth and let me just say that he went on Mount Sinai; I think he was trying to somehow connect with the Moses moment. He's on the mountain, and it says this, (1 Kings 19:11) “So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces...”

Could you imagine seeing something like that? I mean, it's got to be a pretty strong wind, breaking mountains to pieces.

“... the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.

(1 Kings 19:12) After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing.

(1 Kings 19:13) When Elijah heard it (the gentle blowing) he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out...”

But what the text is saying is that the great power of God can't bring the heart of man out. It's going to have to take grace to move the heart of man. That's a great picture, isn't it? So, you see the power of God being displayed in a very unique way, and it's one of the themes that we believe that the Gospel of Luke is really about because you're seeing good news for the unlikely and you're seeing the good news in very unlikely ways. You would never perceive the Messiah being born in a manger. You would never see the shepherd's being the first to hear the message. You would never understand that God would really forego all of the great dignitaries of the world and have some guy that stranded up in the mountains come and announce the good news. There is nothing about any of this that shouts normalcy, but we're going to see clearly that with the inconceivable announcement and the most unusual advent and the different kind of authority that God uses, we're going to see a different power that He begins to use. And it really is unorthodox in

the sense of it's not a kind of power that you would expect, because once again, the kind of power that we would expect would be maybe stars falling from the sky or the earth moving and everything like this. Just to reiterate, God had done that not only in the revealing Himself to Elijah, but we saw that with the children of Israel.

Just take a moment while we're at it and turn to Exodus 20. In Exodus 20, you're going to see how it works when you have fearful stuff happen. Haven't you ever thought yourself, "Well, God should just come in all His glory. Wow. That would be really convincing." Yeah, but who would survive? And the Israelites began to understand this because God was meeting Moses on the mountain. So, what are they seeing? Well, lightning, thunder, and things are moving under their feet. This is more a synopsis than anything, but in this Exodus 20:18, it reads this way, "All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance."

Well, I guess that's telling me that it's not bringing them closer to God. The great power of God is not bringing them closer.

(Exodus 20:19) “Then they said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die.”

You see this if you look back in Chapter 19 as well,

(Exodus 19:16) “So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.”

This is not something that you would want to be a part of. It's a great show, but you're so afraid that you can't enjoy a moment of it. Once again, it's not drawing you closer to the Lord.

(Exodus 20:20) “Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.”

That's a very interesting statement. So, the point is that if you're afraid you won't sin. Well, that's true for a short time. The problem with fear is it's not sustainable. In other words, you'll be afraid right now, but if Moses stays up in that mountain just a little bit longer, we're going to make a golden calf, and we're going to start being immoral, and we're just going to do whatever we want to do, and you're going, "How could somebody have such a short memory?" I mean, the moment that they were scared to death, they're going, "Oh, oh." And then just a short time after that, he's still up in the mountain, he still hasn't come down and they're doing all this stuff. What Scripture is revealing to us is the Law can't make you be righteous. It can cause you out of fear for a moment, but it can't change your heart, and that's what Paul will state, in particular in Romans 8, and he'll state what the Law could not do weak as it was, God did by sending His Son.

As that wonderful chapter starts off,

(Romans 8:1) "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

What a wonderful thing that He has taken the fear out and we have the Christ coming with a different kind power. Now, it is that power that we're focusing on as we come to Luke 4, and it is the power of the Holy Spirit. We know that the Spirit of God moves in wonderful and great ways, but the Holy Spirit seems to be a clear and distinct difference. There seems to be a distinction in all of this, and what God is doing is He's revealing the word "holy" literally means "not like anything else". So, what you're saying is that this is consecrated; this is different; this is not like anything else. So, what's different about the Holy Spirit? And with clarity, I think in some ways we've kind of defined the difference and that is He is coming with grace and truth.

Galatians 4:6, and once again, you don't need to turn to the passage, but in that particular text, it refers to the fact that we have the Spirit of Christ within us, and it uses this phrase basically, that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God's Son, which cries out "Abba! Father!" What we know according to that particular passage, and Paul will make reference to this as well in Romans 8 that we've not been

given the spirit of fear again under bondage, but we've been given the spirit of adoption whereby we cry out, "Abba! Father!" What he's conveying is that there is a very different Spirit coming through the person of Jesus Christ, and that is the Spirit of grace and in truth. There is a power that then therefore draws us to God rather than repels us from Him. The Law is glorious. There's nothing wrong with the Law, but it's our sinfulness that cause us to be repulsed by judgment and condemnation. I mean, judgment and condemnation are no problem if you're perfect, but if you're not, we've got problems. So, the wonderful thing is that God says, "I know that you understand that I'm holy, but I'm going to send you the Holy Spirit that will reveal to you the greatest part of Me, which is love." So, we're going to see the Christ being moved literally by the Holy Spirit. This will then be proclaimed as the Spirit of God's Son as He begins to direct Him in all steps. Now, I think it's important as though Scripture will refer to the Holy Spirit as a separate entity, it is the Spirit of God's Son, and of course, we understand the three and one concept. I guess I would say that we don't understand the paradox of the three in

one, but we're good with that because we know that the incomprehensible just says that God is incomprehensible, and I'm really happy about that. If I could comprehend Him, then He wouldn't be God. So, I'm really glad that He's a lot greater than I can imagine, but what we have is not necessarily an outside force moving Jesus to do something, but an internal Spirit within Him, moving Him, and the reason why we say that is because the passage says this. It says that He was filled with the Spirit.

So, if you look, pick up with me in Luke 4, you'll see this in the passage,

(Luke 4:1) "Jesus, full..."

There's the word there. "*Plērēs*," the Greek word that is being used, is actually making reference to something that's permeating. Our English word that would probably be used would be ubiquitous, but the point of the matter is every corner, every place. It would probably be defined in the sense that there is absolutely, positively no space that's not filled. No empty space. What an interesting way to describe the Spirit. Could you imagine as Ephesians 5 encourages us, "Be filled with the Spirit"? Could you

imagine what it would be like not having one space that wasn't filled by the Spirit of God or by, as we would now define the very different Spirit of God? When you look at the world and you look at all the different kinds of spirits that people have, angry spirits, vindictive spirits, fearful spirits, and yet the Holy Spirit who comes in this very unique and different way. How wonderful it is. Could you imagine being filled in such a degree that every step you take, everything you do is actually being orchestrated by the Holy Spirit that's within you. A separate entity of course, but in us.

(Luke 4:1) “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around...”

So, what we're talking about is that it wasn't like He would just walk up to a certain place and just sit down. It seems to be the interesting picture that He was being led about from one place to the other by the Spirit. Once again, it's the Spirit moving Him and I think what's going to really be in contrast is, in contrast to the flesh. For instance, if I'm walking down the street and let's say I'm heading on a chore for my wife to pick up something for

my wife. So, I'm focused on picking up that particular thing, and as I'm walking down the street, I see a McDonald's and then I smell the french fries. So, what now is starting to take over is the flesh, and as the flesh starts taking over, I'm starting to move off my course, and I'm starting to move in a way that I shouldn't. Jesus is being moved around only by the Spirit which ultimately as we would define as we're going on, it's going to be clearer, but as we continue to define what we're going to see, is this is a desire to do everything that His Father wants. It's like going on a mission and "I just love My Dad," and He's so consumed with this that it consumes His every being, and it doesn't matter what comes up or what happens. He's just going to do that one thing. So, wherever He goes, it's for that purpose. Whatever He does, it's for that sole purpose.

So, being "led around by the Spirit," and then he ends this verse in verse 1,

"... in the wilderness."

That's strange, isn't it? Why would the Spirit of God move me or move anybody to go into the wilderness? To clarify,

the word “wilderness” is referring to a place that there really is no population. The emphasis of the word is it's a lonely place, a desolate place, a place that is basically abandoned. Now, the reason for this is that I would say ultimately in everybody's life, you're going to need to be in this place, but He needs to be in a place where every conceivable way of help will be taken away. Only God, only God. So, what an interesting. As defined, the word wilderness will oftentimes refer to someone that's deprived of the aid and the protection of anyone, and this is the word that's defined here, especially friends and kindred. So, there you sit.

You go through the Old Testament, you see David in particular and you can see him wrestling with things and you realize that there were times in his life where even his own family had abandoned him. We have difficult times such as that in our lives in which those that we thought would be very supportive at particular times, “Where did they go?” And God goes, “Don't be upset. I've orchestrated that.” Remember that was the Spirit of God that was orchestrating that. I think one of the most

“desert” times in David's life was when he sinned so grossly with the whole Bathsheba thing and murdering her husband and realizing what he had done as Nathan had come before him. Out of this, he writes the Psalm 51. If you take a moment and turn there, because there's an important point. I noticed that in the Old Testament, “Holy Spirit” really is only referred to three times. Did you know that in the Old Testament? But this is one of them. That doesn't mean when it refers to “Spirit” in certain texts it's not referring to Him but actually the word “Holy Spirit” together is only mentioned three times. In Psalm 51, he writes this Psalm out of confession for that sin. You remember as he comes before the Lord, and he says, “You've got to clean me. You've got to wash me” and he's begging God because that filth begins to stick on you, and after a while it just becomes overwhelming. “I've got to get this out. I've got to get this away from me.” So, he cries unto God, and He says,

(Psalm 51:5) “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.”

(Psalm 51:6) Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being..."

"I know what You want, but how do you do that?"

He's crying in the text of verse 8, "I want to be happy again." You know things in our life can so weigh us down that we just lose all of our joy, and he goes, "Can I just be happy again?"

(Psalm 51:8) "Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

(Psalm 51:9) Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities.

(Psalm 51:10) Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me."

He knew that he couldn't make himself clean, but he knew that God could create something new.

(Psalm 51:11) "Do not cast me away from Your presence..."

Watch verse 11, one of the few places that the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Old Testament,

“... And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”

Now, in this particular passage, he's going to define the Holy Spirit; more specifically, the work of the Holy Spirit.

If you look in the passage,

(Psalm 51:12) “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation...”

That's the work of the Holy Spirit, salvation; the joy of salvation.

“...sustain me with a willing spirit.”

That's the work of the Holy Spirit. That's not something the Law could do. That's not something fear can do. You can have the spirit of fear, but it won't sustain you with a willing spirit. You'll do what's right as long as you're afraid. Once you stop being afraid, then you'll start doing the wrong thing, but the Holy Spirit can sustain you with a willing spirit, because the willing spirit is one that wants to. It is the heart of God that does what He does out of love.

Psalm 51:13) “Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.”

(Psalm 51:14) Deliver me from bloodguiltiness...”

So, deliverance is the Holy Spirit.

“... the God of my salvation...”

Once again, it's about salvation. “What do You desire? Do You desire great sacrifice?” And he goes, “I know You don't.”

(Psalm 51:17) “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart...”

That's a very interesting passage.

The other passage that is given in Isaiah 63, if you look there with me, you see the Holy Spirit being referenced. The chapter, once again to sort of catch up to snuff, is talking about the judgment of God coming, and it says, “I see Him coming from Edom and the great power of God.” I'm not trying to make fun, but it's like a station break, “Now, a word from our sponsors” and he stops right in the middle of this, and he says in verse 7,

(Isaiah 63:7) “I shall make mention of the lovingkindnesses...”

So, it's just like you have the judgment and he goes, “Wait, I know this is like too heavy.” So, he stops it, and

he goes, “Let me make mention of the lovingkindness of the Lord.”

“... the praises of the LORD,
According to all that the LORD has granted us,
And the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
Which He has granted them according to His compassion
And according to the abundance of His lovingkindnesses.”

What do you think the Holy Spirit's about? Well, we're going to see.

He goes on and says,

(Isaiah 63:8) “For He said, “Surely, they are My people,
Sons who will not deal falsely.”

So He became their Savior.

(Isaiah 63:9) In all their affliction He was afflicted,
And the angel of His presence saved them;
In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them,
And He lifted them and carried them all the days of old.

(Isaiah 63:10) But they rebelled
And grieved His Holy Spirit...”

He just defined to you the work of the Holy Spirit; the graciousness of God; the mercy of God; the compassion of God; the moving of God to tell us just how much He loves us. The lovingkindness of God just never ceases, and you can hear the Holy Spirit talking to you. Would you not give your life for Him? Would you not do everything He told you to do? When the Holy Spirit leads, He leads in such a way that it is the love of Christ that constrains us. He moves us to do the things that we do. Nobody has to tell us what to do. We do the right thing because we want to please the Father and it's our motivation. Could you imagine being filled with this kind of motivation? It doesn't matter what happens. It doesn't matter what somebody says. It doesn't matter what they do, nothing's going to take you off that target. I would say it's the greatest power that God has given us.

This is then put in the context of the testing. I use the word "testing" and not "tempted". It's actually the same word in the Greek for "testing" and "tempted". It depends on the context. So, for instance, if Satan were doing the testing, then we would call it tempting, but if it

was being done to Jesus, was He tempted? No. He was tested. Because we know that Christ was not tempted by these things by virtue of the fact that His love was for the Father. Remember you have to go back. He was being filled with the Holy Spirit.

So, go back to Luke 4; let me show you this in verse 2,

(Luke 4:2) “for forty days...”

“Forty,” that's a very interesting number, right? The same with the word “four,” “four hundred,” it's all tied together in the Hebrew in particular, and in Judaism the number four really had to do with testing and transforming, which is an interesting way of describing it. When you see throughout Scripture, whether it be 4 or 40 or 400, it's God testing and transforming. When you see the word “four,” for instance, like in Revelation 1, it talks about the four corners of the earth, it talks about the four winds, it talks about the four angels, what it's talking about of course, is the extremities. When you talk about the four corners of the earth, you're talking about the extremities of these things. What we're talking about is when you go

into 40, is the extremities of testing. When we read about Moses on the mount 40 days and 40 nights, he was being tested and when Scripture makes reference to the fact that he didn't eat, and the same thing is understood with Christ here in the text. He not only didn't eat, but He also didn't drink. Now, humanly that seems impossible, but 40 days, 40 nights we see the testing and you'll see this with Noah and the ark, 40 days and 40 nights with the rain that came down. It was obviously the testing of God and even when you consider in Deuteronomy 23, when you beat somebody, you can't go over 40 stripes because that would go over the extremity of what somebody could bear. So, what you're seeing is that God is moving Him.

Even with the testing of David, David was going to be king 40 years in his kingdom; Solomon will be tested 40 years in his kingdom. So, God is testing in all those things. When you consider that there were going to be 400 years in Egypt, and then between the Old and New Testament it's going to be 400 years, God is revealing there's this time of testing and God is testing the heart. So, the whole 40 days scene is very interesting as God begins to test the heart.

What is the test? The test is will you love and be loyal to God above all else? The test then begins within this scenario,

“... forty days, being tempted (or tested) by the devil...”

“*Diabolos*” is the person that I would say has a desire to injure by speaking lies about.

So, in the passage, the text actually kind of sets the stage,

“... He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.”

Now, that's kind of a synopsis. So, let me just put it this way, the testing was going on, but I believe this is what it's saying, the whole 40 days that He was there, He did not hunger till the end, and the point seems to be that He was so focused on pleasing God. Once again, you go to the woman at the well, and the disciples are going, “You need to eat.” He goes, “I'm not hungry.” And it is this all-consuming fervor that is guiding Him. Once again, the point is, He's so filled with the Spirit that that's what's moving Him.

“... during those days, and when they had ended...”

It actually kind of repeats in the passage. When it ended, when it was completed,

“He became hungry.”

In verse 3, you see the temptation in those forty days.

(Luke 4:3) “And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God...”

Which in and of itself is part of the insult and his name meaning “one who really slanders in some way”.

“... If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

This is more abrupt than we would perceive because I think in our minds, perhaps even the whole stone bread thing is not really clear to us. But what he's talking about is that there is something, i.e. a stone, solid; there's something that doesn't move. Then, over here, there's bread, and that's something that sustains you. It's something that gratifies you. It's something that, especially if you're hungry gives you some sort of pleasure. Will you forsake that which is stable, that which is firm and that which you know be true for your

appetite? Will you disregard the mission for your appetite?

Deuteronomy 8 is actually where this text is taken from, and Christ's response in the passage will quote out of Deuteronomy 8. So, if you look there with me in that book, you'll see here again the clarity of this temptation.

(Deuteronomy 8:2) “You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you...”

Here's that word, “led”. So, God is leading “you in the wilderness...”

So, kind of a pre-fulfillment of what was happening with Christ and the fulfillment of that.

“You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years...”

Why in the world would God lead you in the wilderness? So that you wouldn't trust in anything but Him.

Christianity is a very interesting thing in the sense that it's calling us to make Christ Lord of our lives, that it's calling upon us to put all of our trust in Him. Now, we like to kind of ride the fence and say, “Well, I am kind of believing.”

There's no such thing as "kind of believing". You either love the one or hate the other. There's just absolutely no such thing as "kind of" faith because the one who doubts is like the surf of the seas, right? I mean, look, don't expect you're going to receive anything from the Lord being double-minded and unstable in all your ways. Don't expect it. You've got to jump all the way in, and I think this is why clearly being filled with the Spirit is so important. "I love God with all my heart." You need to love God with all your heart. If you're making any decisions, if you're going anywhere in your life without Him; if you're trusting in anything, anything, let me emphasize that, *anything* other than God, whether it be your own abilities, your own prowess, the talents that you have, the resources that you have, if you're trusting in anything other than God, we've got a problem. This isn't faith.

So, the passage reads this way,

"You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years..."

Once again, the testing time.

“...that He might humble you...”

This is you saying, “It's not me that's going to get me out of this situation.” You go into the wilderness, what are you going to do, farm? There's nothing you're going to do.

“... that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.”

Are you doing what's right because it's convenient? Are you doing what's right because everything's going ok? Are you doing what's right because doing what's right is profitable at this particular juncture, because you have friends that are helping you? So, “I can trust in God because somebody helped me out and they're my family. I always have my family. I always have somebody there to help me out.” And God says, “We need to go into the wilderness because we need to define whether you're all in or not.

(Deuteronomy 8:3) “He humbled you...”

And here's the big shocker,

“... and let you be hungry...”

“God will never let me be hungry.” He’ll let you be hungry. It’s amazing how long you could actually go without food. You know, I mean, we go without a meal, and we’re going, “We're dying.”

“He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know...”

This is God supplying, and you go, “Well, that came out of the blue.” It literally came out of the blue.

“... nor did your fathers know...”

I like that being stuck in there, you know why? Because we tend to think in terms of, “Well, I wonder what my parents did?” or “There’s somebody we know, and this is the way they ministered.” That's the only thing. I like testimonies. Testimonies are wonderful. I love to hear that, but you have to understand that each testimony is different. If in fact you take a testimony, and you go, “Ok. Now, I've got to have the same testimony” you're just ruining yourself. God's not going to work in your life the

same way. So, He says, "I worked in your life and your dads never saw this. They never saw anything like this."

"...that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone..."

We think in terms of, "As long as everything's ok today and I'm sustained today and I feel full today; at least everything is ok today." And God says, "What if it's not ok today? Will you still love Me? Will you still be loyal to Me if everything's not ok?" Paul will tell Timothy, "Be ready in season, out of season." There are going to be times that it's just not going to seem to be clicking. Obviously, as we read with the Book of Jeremiah, nothing was going right, and it's not just nothing was going right for a short time, for 40 years nothing went right. Can you imagine going through something like that? That's talking about testing, right? And the very people that you grew up with, your loved ones are trying to kill you every day you wake up. Think about that. It's not like he had a group of people that surrounded him and said, "There, there, Jeremiah. Everything's going to be ok. We'll stick by you." He didn't have anybody sticking by him.

The same thing is true with Christ as He ultimately then goes to the cross, and it says all abandoned Him. Even His own disciples abandoned Him. Will you be faithful to God unto death? God's going to take you through a wilderness, and I would say it's the graciousness of God that begins to reveal these things to us because sometimes we lie to ourselves. It's like the Moabites, "We're a powerful people. We're a powerful people." God goes, "You haven't even fought yet. How is it you're bragging about how wonderful you are, and you haven't even been to war?"

As you go back to the passage in Luke 4, it'll be this text that Jesus quotes from, and it will be His response and His response, fundamentally is that "I am the Son of God, and I prove it by saying that I don't live by the physical, I live by the spiritual. It's the Spirit of God that moves me. It's not the physical appetite that I have that moves me." The question is, what are you being moved by? What leads you around? Is it your appetite? You wake up on a certain day, "Do you know what I feel like doing?" That's a bad start because what you want to be thinking is, "Is the

Spirit pleased? Is God pleased with what I'm thinking? Am I thinking in terms of putting Him first? Do I love Him with all my heart?"

There are a couple verses that I want you to write down in closing and once again, I'm running out of time but let me have you write down these verses.

One is found in 1 John 2:15. This particular passage reads this way,

"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Now, "the love of the Father," who do you think the love of the Father is? The Holy Spirit is the love of the Father. You say, "Well, it doesn't say that." Wait, I'm getting to that.

1 John 3:17 reads this way,

"But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

There it is again, “in him”. There's a love that's abiding in him and it's the love that actually delegates what he does on a given day. “I have a brother that's in need, but you know what? I don't have the time. I’ve got stuff to do” and God goes, “You're not moved by the Spirit. You're moved by your appetite.”

Paul will talk about this specifically in Philippians 3 and he talks about the fact that he literally gives up everything and he says, “I counted everything like trash; the things that in some way would gratify me that I might know Him.” And then he ends this with this interesting phrase, “But some don't do this.” And he defines them as “whose god is their appetite.” They have a god, but it's not our God. It's not the God of love. It's their appetite. Both are inside. Your cravings are inside you. That's your god, but the Holy Spirit is the love of God.

1 John 3:18 goes on and says,

“... let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.”

Of course, as John 14, John 15 will say, that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. If you were to ask Jesus before He

goes onto the mountain, “Do You really want to go up there?” He would say something like this, “Why do you think I'm doing it? I wouldn't do it if I didn't want to go.” Because the Spirit of truth was leading Him. See, this is the sincerity of God. “Do You really want to be on that cross?” “Why do you think I came? The whole reason I came was to die for you.” It wasn't the nails that was holding Him there. It was Him that was holding Him there. It was the love of Christ, the love of God, that was compelling Him to do this.

(1 John 4:12) “...if we love one another...”

Listen, I love the way the phrase goes,

“... God abides in us...”

So, where does the love come from? It has to come from God.

It goes on and says in 1 John 4:13,

“... because He has given us of His Spirit.”

Where does the love come from? The Holy Spirit. There's no doubt about.

Romans 5:5 reads this way,

“... the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

People wonder, “What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?” It means that you're bold in your love for God and in your love for others. It'll always prove out that way. You look at Acts 4, and it says, “And Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit.” And then it says, “And he spoke with all boldness about the Gospel of Christ.” It then ends in Acts 4 that the whole church began to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to proclaim the message of Christ. It's a message of God's love; for God so loved the world that you can't keep quiet about it. If in fact you're filled with the Spirit, that's what moves you; that's what motivates you; that's what sustains you; that's what causes you not to think about anything else but pleasing Him. How transforming is that?

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and it's our desire to follow into Your footsteps. What You have revealed to us is the power that we were not thinking about.

Earthquakes, lightning, fire coming down, devouring our enemies. We can latch on to that, but the love of God? Would it be so powerful as to draw all men to You? Could You transform lives this way? Would this be the way that our life would be transformed?

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I want you just to talk to God about His power and ask yourself, "Does this power reside in me?" If you confess Jesus as Lord and believed in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, Scripture says you will be saved, but Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12 that nobody can proclaim Jesus Lord except by the Spirit. Is this power in you?