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Luke

Chapter 4 - An Unorthodox Power

The Holy Spirit

Power That Permeates & Proliferates (vs.13-15)

Luke 4:13-15: When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time. And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

We come to this passage in Luke, and we realize that we're in a battle. There's a warfare going on. I remember hearing that when I was a youngster thinking, "Where are they? I'd like to fight them." Being from West Virginia, we would probably get out our shotguns. But we realize

according to Scripture that we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Now, once again, as a youngster, I remember thinking, "Well, that's kind of a cop out." But there is a greater battle going on, and there is a power and a source that wants us to get into the physical. One of the reasons why Satan is so intent on getting us physically minded is because we are destined to lose when we do that. We will find sure defeat once we get into the realm of the physical because the battle, as we quoted in Ephesians 6:12, that we're not struggling against flesh and blood, but we're actually fighting against spiritual forces of wickedness. 1 John 5:19 puts it so clearly, that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. The whole world. Now, what we're talking about is the physical; we're talking about this realm. Of course, as it goes on to say, the prince of the power of the air, even of the place that we are. The influence of the world is what draws us.

You come into a passage like Revelation 18, and you have this description of the world in kind of a microcosm of a city, and the city is called Babylon. So, the world is this humanity in this city that builds, and it draws; it calls us to

invest in the things of the world. It calls us to think worldly. It calls us to find peace in what man invents and the things that he creates, and we begin to put our trust in those things. We begin to put our thoughts into those things and everything about the world begins to consume us, so that the worries and the cares of life begin to envelope us as well as a desire for other things, as Scripture tells us, and the world begins to draw us in. What does it draw us in, and what does it draw us away from? Well, it draws us away from the spiritual. It draws us away from things that are really important, and we see this in some way in the temptation here that we are given, the testing of Christ and how He wins so majestically within the text. But as you come to this passage in Luke 4, we realize the temptation that's going on and the drawing. For instance, when he starts off and he says, "Look, if you are the son of God, tell the stone to become bread." Now, what he's doing within the passage is he's trying to get the focus away from that which is truly important. In other words, he's trying to get you to take the stone as an interesting metaphor, if I could put it this way, of something lasting. So, he's trying to get you to

think in terms of, “Why don't you give up the eternal for an immediate gratification? You're hungry, aren't you? Ok. So, why don't you let go of the eternal and embrace the temporary?” A very interesting picture, isn't it? That's what the world basically fundamentally does. It tries to get you to think in terms of the things that you need right now, and it calls you to embrace that. “This is the most important thing in your whole life, that you get a meal today” and that becomes your total focus more than anything else, and you begin to set aside the things that are really important.

The second thing that he deals with according to the passage is clearly, “Look, you have all these cities and all these wonderful things,” and you begin to realize that there's this call to value possessions more than anything else. If he could just get you to value the possessions of this world and the positions that it affords you then you stop valuing God. He wins. I mean, possessions, they're so tangible, right? But if you ask anybody, if somebody is immersed only in the stuff that he has, even the world defines him as superficial; even the world will call him

that. I mean, you have a person that they only care about the things that they have and you realize how shallow the individual is, but if he can get you to do that, he's won. You lost the battle. When you consider the temptation, if he can get you in some way to allow your fears and perhaps even your inflated ego to take the higher position instead of your faith and trust in God. You see, you think about the things of the world and so many of the issues that we deal with put us in anxiety, don't they? I mean, you read in Matthew 6 and consistently Jesus is going, "What are you worried about? What are you worried about? Why are you so anxious?" But if you think about it, the things that we're anxious about are the things of the world, right? The covering that we have or the food that we eat or the roof over our head. We're just always considering, and it's that anxiety that causes us to continue to test God. "If you really loved me, I would have more stuff or more things." And we get involved in those kinds of things and we begin to stop trusting God, which really, the most valuable thing that you could ever do is have a relationship with God. But you're so bent on having something and so worried that you're not going to

have something, and before long you're perceiving that, "Well, I am the center of the universe, aren't I? Why wouldn't I be and have all these things?" And you begin to realize that in your ego you begin to test God and say, "You should be doing this for me. You're actually my genie." Instead of submitting to Him and trusting Him and believing that He loves you and believing that He'll do better than what you could even ask or think; anything that you could imagine. We're in this battle. We're in this warfare, and unfortunately in this warfare, we try to fight the forces of this world by virtue of the physical, and we think that we can actually win that way. For instance, you might say to yourself, "Well, I'm going to win the battle just by virtue of memorizing so much Scripture," or "I'm going to win the battle just by having a cross around my neck," and we call in all the physical. I think it's one of the main purposes of the Book of Hebrews where he goes, "Stop playing with shadows," because this world is full of superficial things and that will never save you. It's your faith that's really genuine. It's your heart that God is talking about, but we begin to wrestle with those things.

As the 2 Corinthians 10:4 says so wonderfully,

“for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful...”

(2 Corinthians 10:5) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God...”

It is all those things that begin to come in and creep in and move us away from the relationship with God, things that are eternal, things that are important. If he could just get us on the temporary, if he could just get us on the physical, if he could just get us worrying, if he could just get us thinking about ourselves then he's won, and it's a powerful battle.

This passage, as we look at the very beginning, we realize that Jesus is filled in this warfare with the Holy Spirit. Just as a way of reminder, Jesus is not being pushed by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. The Scripture tells us in verse 1 you might want to read it again, that He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and He went. So, what we're seeing is that it was by His desire and design that He longed to prove Himself faithful to God, and He willingly went into

the wilderness for this purpose; as well, He wanted us to see the power of the Holy Spirit within us, to win the battle. We can win.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus calls His disciples together and He says, “Look, I'm going to send you power, and this power is going to be the Holy Spirit. When this power comes, wait for it.” And we see in Acts 2, them waiting for the power. He says, “Wait for the power, because when this power comes, you're going to have the power to defeat” and you see the evidence of power, a different kind of power. Once again, if you're thinking in terms of the physical, you've lost sight of the true power.

Let me show you an example of this. If you go with me in the Old Testament into Psalm 33. What a great text that reminds us of God's creative power, and how do you think He created stuff? Well, magnificently as it goes on, it says this,

(Psalm 33:4) “For the word of the LORD is upright,
And all His work is done in faithfulness.

(Psalm 33:5) He loves righteousness and justice;
The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD.

(Psalm 33:6) By the word of the LORD the heavens were made...

Now, what He's conveying is that all creation was made as a result of His lovingkindness, and it's by the power of His word that these things were created. So, it was the loving kindness that moved Him and He, by His word, created it. So, you see the power of His word, and look at the next phrase,

“... And by the breath...”

You could actually put it in there “by His Spirit.”

“... of His mouth all their host.”

Life began to exist. Life.

(Psalm 33:7) “He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;

He lays up the deeps in storehouses.”

(Psalm 33:8) Let all the earth fear the LORD;

Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.”

(Psalm 33:9) For He spoke, and it was done;

He commanded, and it stood fast.”

I love that phrase, “He spoke, and it was done.” When was the last time I spoke, and it was done? That would be nice, wouldn't it?

(Psalm 33:10) “The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations;

He frustrates the plans of the peoples.

(Psalm 33:11) The counsel of the LORD stands forever...”

When He counsels, it stands; when man counsels, it seems to cancel out.

“... The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

(Psalm 33:12) Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,

The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.

(Psalm 33:13) The LORD looks from heaven;

He sees all the sons of men;

(Psalm 33:14) From His dwelling place He looks out

On all the inhabitants of the earth,

(Psalm 33:15) He who fashions the hearts of them all,

He who understands all their works.

(Psalm 33:16) The king is not saved by a mighty army...”

How do you think people win wars? “Oh well, they had a bigger army.” Not what Scripture’s saying, and it's not always true. I mean, if you consider probably one of the smallest armies that really ever existed conquered the world with Alexander the Great, how did that happen? Well, I know this, that in Daniel he was prophesied to do it before it ever happened.

(Psalm 33:15) “He who fashions the hearts of them all,
He who understands all their works.

(Psalm 33:16) The king is not saved by a mighty army;
A warrior is not delivered by great strength.

(Psalm 33:17) A horse is a false hope for victory;
Nor does it deliver anyone by its great strength.

(Psalm 33:18) Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those
who fear Him,

On those who hope for His lovingkindness.”

One of our favorite verses,

(Psalm 33:22) “Let Your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon
us,

According as we have hoped (confident expectation) in You.”

Well, that would take a different spirit, and Scripture will continue to remind us of the power of the Spirit of God to cause all these hosts to become alive; the Spirit of God to actually move us into real power, real success.

So, as we come to Luke 4, what we're going to see is a great power that comes upon us as well as maybe even understanding how the power of the Holy Spirit begins to work within us because it is the nature of man to define power in terms of the physical, and that would be erroneous. Now, God is able in the physical to do whatever He wants to. I mean, He creates, He speaks, and it's done. Things are created, no doubt about that. But the greater power is Him and His Spirit, and we're going to see what that greater power is about.

As you look at verse 13, as Jesus is coming out of the testing and the temptation of the world being the draw to move away from that which is really important, that which is really eternal, that which is really valuable and into the invaluable. Christ of course defeats all of the

things, as Ephesians 6 would say, all the darts thrown at Him. Then, it goes into this interesting phrase at the end in verse 13, and we're going to pick up there.

(Luke 4:13) "When the devil had finished every temptation, he left..."

I like that phrase, "he left."

In James 4, and I'm going to have you turn to some of these passages just so that you can know them, because sometimes we go, "How do I get that devil out of my life? How do I get him to get out of here?" So, sometimes, once again, our thought is, "Well, we just tell him, "Devil, get out of here," and sometimes that doesn't work.

Actually, it doesn't work. Scripture reminds us not to revile angelic majesties because it's God's way of saying they're a lot stronger than you are. So, it's like picking a fight with a bully that's maybe 20 feet tall. You don't want to even start the fight. You don't want to throw any stones or anything like that. So, how are you going to win the battle? Well, it's a very interesting text, if you look at James 4 and really the thing that you saw Christ doing in the passage, He kept going back to the word of God; He

kept going back to wanting to please His Father. There was no doubt about where He was heading in every answer, “Man doesn't live by bread alone, but by every word, the Father says.” So, it was all about the relationship.

The passage reads this way in James 4, and it says, (James 4:6) “But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.””

Of course, the one thing that the enemy wants to do is to get you very arrogant. One of the ways that he does it is he gets you to have a lot of possessions, or he puts you in a grand position, and those are all physical things that you begin to say, “Well, I'm pretty important.” He goes, “Uh oh.” Because that's when you're going to fall.

So, it goes on, it says,

“... BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.”

(James 4:7) Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

Now the question is, how do I how do I resist him? That's what's so wonderful about this passage. It actually tells you how to resist him. Once again, it's not you going, "I resist you."

Verse 8, that's how you resist him.

(James 4:8) "Draw near to God..."

Once again, you have a bully coming after you, you just draw near to the Father, and he goes, "Oh, He's bigger than I am." And then he runs.

(James 4:8) "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

(James 4:9) Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.

(James 4:10) Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."

What is it saying? He'll cause that enemy to leave and run and He'll make you great at the proper time. So, the passage is clear that by virtue of us drawing to God, the

enemy draws away from us. He leaves. He runs, so to speak.

Now, what's also interesting about this passage in Luke 4 is not only that the devil seems to be finished, so he departs, but it seems like he's coming back. So, he's like a bad dream that just keeps recurring.

So, the passage reads,

(Luke 4:13) “When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.”

Wow. So, we actually do see an opportune time, especially with Judas in which it says the devil entered into Judas for the betrayal of Christ and we see that opportune time. The question oftentimes arises, what is the opportune time? I think it's different for different people in the sense of this world comes in and tempts us and draws us in the opportune time. It just seems like it's the Murphy's law, at the worst time possible, that's when you're going to get tempted. That's what it's literally saying within the passage, that he's looking for an opportune time. What is the opportune time? Well, let me give you a couple of examples where we actually see

Satan involved in it. Because he really kind of is a picture of not only who he is, but we have the picture of the fact that he's the ruler of this world. So, it's anything in this world that draws you away because those are his tools. The world are the tools of the evil one. So, he's using those things. I mean, he may not personally knock on your door. I don't think you're that important. But the things of this world, he's going to use to draw us out. So, what are the things of the world that he's going to be using and how will he do that? Well, what's interesting is, you go back in the Old Testament and start off with his presence, and one of the first places you see was with Eve. So, what is an opportune time? Well, here's an opportune time, when you're at the wrong place hanging around the wrong people. You see, God was very clear, "Of every tree, but this one." Now, what is she doing standing there? And that's why Scripture says, "Flee youthful lusts." An opportune time always comes when you and I are hanging around the wrong place at the wrong time. You see that in the Book of Proverbs, talking about the young man, and he's walking down the street. He just happens to be walking around at nighttime. He

happens to be walking around at bordellos at the wrong time. So, he finds himself being tempted in the wrong place. It's an opportune time.

When you consider opportune time in the Old Testament, you see passages like the temptation of, I would say Joshua in Zechariah 3, and you have Satan involved in this. Of course, he's bringing accusation against Joshua the high priest. You say, "Well, what made him vulnerable, and why is this the opportune time?" Well, the passage says, his garments were filthy. So, at the time that you're most vulnerable to guilt is when you're in filth. In other words, as you begin to surround yourself with all the wrong things, once again doing the wrong things and that becomes a part of your life, you become more vulnerable than ever before and the accuser, it actually says he stood at his right hand, and he began to accuse him, which once again he has every right to do because you're guilty. You make yourself vulnerable in these times and you're the most vulnerable in those particular moments.

Peter will make himself the most vulnerable at the time that he thinks that he can get it; he handled it, "I got it." "I won't deny You. Everybody else will, not me." That's what I would call an opportune time, and that's why Jesus says, "Satan has requested permission to sift you. It's going to happen." This is the perfect time for him to move in because it's the time that you feel the most emboldened; you feel the most confident in yourself. It is self-confidence, not confidence in the Lord, and you become the most vulnerable. Scripture says at the moment that you think you stand, that's when you need to take heed because that's when you become the most vulnerable. So, the passage is talking about those times that you become the most vulnerable. With Job, the most vulnerable time was in his suffering, and oftentimes when you're suffering and oftentimes when things just seem one thing after the other, and that's an interesting picture of Job. I mean, it wasn't just one thing. It was one thing after another, after another, after another, and it just kept getting worse, and the evil one says, "That's the perfect time." He even sends Job's wife, and his wife says, "Curse God and die." And you begin to hear the influence of the evil one by virtue of

the things, because how could your life be worth anything when everything's been taken away from you? Ok, so there's a problem there, right? Because we actually perceive our value based on what we own, not in who we are. So, the temptation comes at a very opportune time, and the passage is reminding us that the work here is not done yet, but it will always keep drawing us back to faith in God, and unless we have that faith in God, we're just going to fall because he's going to find the weakest moment. Once again, I think you might be thinking of some guy with horns coming up and coming against you, but it's the world that he's moving to come into you. I oftentimes hear people, they go, "Opportunity knocked on my door just at a time where I thought everything was crashing in." I go, "Well, who knocked on your door and what was the opportunity?" And you begin to hear money, and I'm going, "That's the wrong knock." And that's when he's going to move you. I tell people don't do anything for money. Do it because you believe this is what God wants you to do, and if you'll walk according to the Spirit, you can have the power to overcome these things. So, the battle clearly is not against flesh or blood, but it's

against the principalities and the powers and the wicked forces of spiritual that are in this world.

As you look in verse 14, it then goes on and says,

(Luke 4:14) “And Jesus returned to Galilee...”

A great text making reference to the fact that He's going back to Galilee, which is actually another word for “circuit.” And I guess one of the reasons why it has the name “Galilee” was because it was kind of a trade circuit that goes around, but it gives an interesting picture of, like Ecclesiastes, you know? Like we're in this cyclical pattern of just going around and around. It's an interesting picture of the world seemingly not going anywhere, but it ultimately becomes the circuit of Christ and His great ministry actually begins to revolve in this particular region. Galilee, as is described in the Book of Isaiah, of the Gentiles, or the world or the other nations. The unbelievers would be another way of putting it. So, Galilee of the unbelievers, not Jews, so to speak, and you begin to see Christ going to this particular ministry. Now, if you're going into that particular realm, you're going to have to have some sort of power.

So, the way it reads is,

(Luke 4:14) “And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit...”

The Scripture once again is wanting us to know not only in Luke 4:1, that He's full of the Holy Spirit and He was being led by the Spirit, but now it wants us to know that He's going in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that's what all of this is about. It's about the power of the Spirit.

So, as it reads, it goes on, it says,

“... and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

Luke 4:15) And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.”

Now, what the passage is letting us know is that there is a power of great influence, that is taking place, and the power of influence is not in the realm of the physical, because we know that Jesus did some magnificent works of miracles, healing people in the realm of physical, feeding people in that realm, but Luke wants us to understand that the greater power was the Spirit of God

moving. Once again, if we were to find the Spirit of God and the power of the Spirit of God, let's just let's just once again recap, it goes back to the temptation or the testing. So, what is the Spirit of God? It's the power to value, it's the power to embrace the eternal over the temporary. It's the power to value what is really important, not the possessions, and not the position of the world, and it's the power to put your trust in God and walk by faith rather than by virtue of either the things that you accumulate or by virtue of your anxieties in which you try to maybe work through every possible contingency to try to save yourself. It has nothing to do with that. The world will try to get you so frustrated with life that you're always coming up with formulas to try to fix something in your life. Whether it's through drugs or whether it's through methodology, we're always trying to figure out, "How can I live longer? How can I be more successful?" A word to the wise, stop it. It's not of faith. What you really want to do is you want to walk pleasing God and do what He tells you to do until He takes you home. Then, when He takes you home, it's going to be the right time, because according to Paul, "I finished the course." I mean,

you go, "Why did Paul die at that time? Why didn't Paul die when he was in a shipwreck? Why didn't he die when he was stoned? Why didn't he die...?" And you go through all these scenarios, and God says, "He wasn't finished." I mean, why didn't any of those take him? If in fact you're walking with the Lord and you're obeying Him, you are virtually invincible until He takes you home. And when He takes you home, that's when I want to go; when He tells me it's time. So, how comforting it is to know that He's going to help me finish the work. If He began a good work in me, He said He's going to complete it, and the confidence that you and I can walk in, we don't have to be afraid of anything. We don't have to be afraid of anything. We don't have to be anxious about anything. Will not God supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory? If we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, won't all these things be added to us? I mean, how many verses do we have to quote? So, as we come to this, what we're seeing is the power, and can you imagine people seeing this individual, Jesus, walk in such a way that they go, "He's not afraid of anything."

There's a passage in the Gospel of John, if you look there with me, John 3. Are you guys familiar with John 3? So, there was a Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus, who was a Sanhedrin which was a ruler of the Jews which was the Supreme Court Justice, and he was a little embarrassed to be seen with Jesus. So, he comes to Him at night. So, I suppose education can't give you a backbone.

So, this man came to Him at night in verse 2,

“... and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher...””

You're going, “How do you know that?”

And he says,

“... for no one can do these signs...””

The word “signs” there is basically “works of power”. “No one does works of power like You do. I mean, you have to come from God.” Now, what I think is very interesting is that there really is no perception at all that Nicodemus was there for the wedding, that Jesus performed the miracle of turning the water into wine. So, aside from that particular miracle, which actually happened in Chapter 2,

which we know was the first miracle that Jesus ever performed, the only sign that Nicodemus could be talking about is the sign in which Jesus went into the temple and threw over the money tables.

In fact, you see that at the end of Chapter 2 it says,

(John 2:14) “And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.”

(John 2:15) And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables;

(John 2:16) and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business.”

(John 2:17) His disciples remembered that it was written, “ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME.””

And Nicodemus, knocking on His door, “Ok, so, what gives You that power? What gives You that authority in which You could come in and You're not afraid of the very

people I'm afraid of? Because I'm coming to Your house at night. How is it that You're not afraid?" I mean, there's something that people are looking for. One of the things we noticed with the whole election thing is whether you agree with one side or the other, it doesn't really matter; what was interesting in the process of the election was how people started coming out of the woodwork when their guy started winning, and what that tells you is that people might believe something, but they're too afraid to come out with it unless they're winning. If they're winning, then they'll come out and say something, "Yay! We're really for this. We've been for it all long." Where were you? I didn't see you earlier. But what it's telling us is that we don't have the power to be bold. The Holy Spirit is so powerful in so many ways.

Let me give you another example, in Acts 4. It would only make sense that Luke would give this particular example because in Acts 4, it gives the sense of that the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, filled the Spirit of God. What is this saying? They began to speak with boldness the word of God. Of course, all these people are saying,

“We're going to kill you. We're going to kill you if you do this.” They go, “Ok.” and they just keep preaching, and the people around them are going, “Wow. I wanted to do that, but they had the power to do it.” As you come to the end of Acts 4, you read that the whole church was gathered together, and it says they began to speak with great power the things of God. Well, that was the result of, as the text says, being filled with the Holy Spirit. So, what we see is a power of great boldness, unafraid, unashamed, fearless, and this is a power that God is wanting to be within our hearts, but it's also a greater power that moves us to do things that the world can't. We live in a world of hate. People are hating. Sometimes you wonder, where do they get all these rioters? The world is full of angry people. All you have to do is gather them together. So, you have all of this hate in the world, but God has given you the power to defeat hate by loving. God has given you the power to love in the midst of hate. I mean, what a phenomenon. When you consider the phenomenon of that, even though you're surrounded by people that hate, you can respond in love. The world is full of takers. You can have the power to give. While the

world is all taking, you have the power to give. Who else has that kind of power?

I mean, so magnificent it was that as you look at a passage such as Luke 5, that Jesus begins to demonstrate this great power to Peter, Peter falls on his hands and his knees and he goes, "You've got to be who You say You are." So, what begins to happen as you begin to walk in the power of the Spirit of God is lives begin to be changed because people will start saying things like, "I've never seen this before. I've never heard this before. I've never seen anybody speak with such boldness. I don't know why you're so convinced. Where is this conviction that you have?"

We were talking the other day; we went to a restaurant and the girl that serves us was kind of a regular. So, she was talking about she got a gig down South, and they were going down South, but she says, "You know, the people there are really uppity," and things like that. She says, "They look down on you, but I go down." And I said, "So, you can be bought." And I don't think she liked me saying that, but she said, "Well, everybody has their price.

Not true. Could you imagine somebody that couldn't be bought by the religious leaders? Can you imagine somebody that couldn't care less about what they said and would welcome a woman (This is recorded in the Gospel of Luke) from the streets as she begins to weep and cry and wash His feet? And then He would turn to the Pharisee and say, "You're the sinner, not her." Could you imagine somebody doing that? Somebody having the boldness to do that, not worried about the people around you? Could you imagine in Luke 19, where Jesus would come into a city, and to the one person who was ostracized by every single Jew in the nation, would be a tax collector that was really good at it, and this guy, Jesus goes, "I'm going to come to your house." Now, what Rabbi in their right mind would go to a tax collector's house? But to have the power to do that and the fearlessness and to do that was so powerful to Zacchaeus, that he goes, "I'm selling it all. I'm giving back to people." That's powerful because what that's showing us is there's a power that can cause you to discard the tangible in this world for the real, which is faith, and you begin to see a different kind of power. That's what walking by faith is.

This is why 1 John 5 says there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water and the blood. He goes, "These three bear witness, and they're in harmony with each other." And you realize that he's talking about the heart of the Spirit of God which comes within us that is not only fearless, but is bold in proclaiming their love for God, in proclaiming what is right, unapologetic about what is true. I mean, people will go, "I know that's the right thing to say, but I don't think it's the place to say it." Say it. If it's right, it's right. If it's truth, it's truth. Now, clearly there's the whole issue of the timely word, but God will give you the power to say it, and oftentimes, I find myself saying things that I didn't even know I was going to say, but there's something inside your heart that says, "You can't be quiet about this. This is misrepresented. This is wrong. This is hurting somebody. You have to say it." And God will give you the boldness and you begin to say it and people will go, "Wow. You said what I've been thinking all along." You say, "Why haven't you been saying it?" Because they're not filled with the Spirit. There is a power that moves in such a way that it's unaffected by the things of the world. See, if Satan could

get in and he can get you infatuated with the things the world, protecting the things of the world, protecting your perception of what might save you, whether it's by virtue of your anxieties or by virtue of your methods or by virtue of the things that you do; if he can get you putting your hope in and your trust in the things of the world, he's won, but the Spirit of God is too powerful for that. How wonderful, we realize that God begins to use our lives. You want your life to be used? God will begin to use your life to such a degree that people will go, "I'm not only impressed, but I'm also drawn." And you wonder, how did this guy, born in a manger, living in Nazareth, draw so many people to Himself? He had a power and Scripture is wanting to remind us of that great power.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we ask You to work within our lives. We know that there's all kinds of forces that are pulling on us, tugging on us, telling us to give up the eternal for the temporary; telling us to value the things of this world rather than God. We can feel the tug, we can feel the pull, but You told us that You were going to send a greater power, and the power of Your Spirit is so strong within our hearts that we can't help but proclaim the truth. We are no longer afraid or ashamed of this marvelous message. We proclaim boldly, and though men might slay us, we'll just go home. We're in a no-lose scenario, Father. We believe this.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, Christ is walking a walk for us. He's revealing to us forces that can come against us, but He's also revealing for us that you don't have to lose. That in His spirit, you'll win every single time. You'll not be superficial anymore. You will not be dissuaded or persuaded by man, but you will be confident and bold, and you will be able to love when everybody is hating; you'll be able to give when everybody is taking; you'll be able to stand for what is

right when everybody else is embracing wrong. Want that power? The Bible says when you believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, you will not only be saved from an eternal damnation, but you will be saved from a life that is being delegated by the things of this world.