

The Authoritative Word of God

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 12 November 2023

Preacher: Josh Johnston

[0 : 00] We're going to turn now to our Bibles, and for our reading we're in Luke's Gospel in Chapter 4. If you need a Bible, if you don't have one, there's some at the sides, both sides, around the front here. Don't be shy, get up and grab one, and then you'll be able to see and read along with us.

Josh Johnson has been going through Luke's Gospel, beginning at Chapter 3. We're going to be going back and looking a bit at Chapter 1 and 2 in some of our Christmas services this year. But we've come in these studies to the middle of Chapter 4, and we're going to read together from verse 31 to the end of the chapter.

Luke 4 then at verse 31. And he, that's Jesus, went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and he was teaching them on the Sabbath.

And they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. And in the synagogue, there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon.

[1 : 08] And he cried out with a loud voice, Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be silent, and come out of him. And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm.

And they were all amazed, and said to one another, What is this word? For with authority and power, he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.

And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region. And he arose and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's house. Now, Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever. And they appealed to him on her behalf, and he stood over her and rebuked the fever. And it left her. And immediately she rose and began to serve them.

[2 : 16] Now, when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him. And he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

And demons also came out of many, crying, You are the Son of God. But he rebuked them, and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ.

And when it was day, he departed, and went to a desolate place. And the people sought him, and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them. But he said to them, I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well.

For I was sent for this purpose. And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea. Amen.

And may God bless to us his word. We'll do open once again to Luke chapter 4.

[3 : 22] This passage may explain to us that Jesus' words have immense authority.

Over the past three weeks, we've been seeing Luke's message about who Jesus is, and what he came to do. And the two answers that Luke gives to that, the two ways he explains these things, shape lives and shape eternity.

And yet there's such great confusion about Jesus, even in the professing church. But that shouldn't surprise us today, because that is exactly what Jesus finds in the professing church of his day.

And muddled thinking on Jesus, or determined resistance of the reality of who Jesus is, leads to terrible consequences.

Luke has been meticulous in presenting the facts of Jesus, and meticulous in presenting them in light of all that the prophets spoke of old. Meticulous history, and meticulous theology.

[4 : 33] Now, Luke chapters 3 and 4 make up a distinct section of Luke's gospel, which introduces Jesus' identity and his public ministry. And these two chapters that we've been looking at together introduce Jesus' public ministry in four episodes.

We spent the last three weeks on the first three of those episodes. Episode 1, the forerunner, John the Baptist, and his clear message of the necessity of genuine love.

And then, of course, John's ministry was cut short by Herod, who rejected his message, and preferred John to be the prisoner, not the preacher.

And then episode 2, Jesus' baptism, his genealogy, and the temptations in the wilderness. Events all held together by Jesus' identity as the divine son of God.

But Luke was also careful to show us Jesus as the second Adam. And so as the divine son, and as the representative of humanity, Jesus went on the offensive in the wilderness to unseat Satan from his throne.

[5 : 42] And then episode 3, that last week, Jesus begins to extend his victory over Satan by declaring that Isaiah's prophecy concerning the year of the Lord's favor has now been fulfilled in the hearing of the crowds in Nazareth.

Jesus proclaimed forgiveness, liberty, and recovery for those who come to him in need. But we saw last week, didn't we, that such a message provoked rage in those who don't want to be humbled, in those who don't want to see their need.

And so Nazareth rejected Jesus, and Jesus rejected Nazareth. Right from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Luke wants his readers to contend with a rather piercing reality.

Glorious good news can be easily scorned. It is as if Luke is saying to his readers, take note, are you listening? It's very easy to scorn the glorious good news of Jesus.

But then in episode 4, the passage we come to this evening, we see widespread response to Jesus. And really, episode 3 and episode 4 go together last week and this week.

[6 : 57] We can see that their book ended in verse 15 and 44, with Luke's comment that Jesus was teaching in the synagogues. And so these are two episodes, two examples of such teaching and ministry.

And so I think in these two episodes, Luke is laying before us two choices. Harden our hearts in pride, like Nazareth. Or humble ourselves in faith, like Capernaum.

Luke shows us in episode 4, the beginnings of the fulfillment of the year of the Lord's favor. He demonstrates it, he shows it, he does it. And so the first thing that Luke shows us in our passage this evening is Jesus' public conquest.

Verse 31 to 37. Jesus' public conquest. Jesus' rule vanquishes and banishes the dark influence of Satan over the Lord's people.

Luke shows us in these verses Jesus' first miracle. And it's a headline miracle. Luke's gospel is an orderly account. He's very careful in putting things together.

[8 : 10] And the first miracle he wants us to see is Jesus' victory over the demonic. And the key word in these verses is the word authority. Do you see it?

Verse 32. And then again, verse 36. Jesus' word possessed authority. And so having preached in a synagogue with real authority, verses 31 and 32, suddenly a man, verse 33, who had the spirit of an unclean demon appears.

Now, just a word on demons. Some people have a tendency to fascination with such things. Games and horror movies will depict them and even glorify them.

And some people will see demons lurking behind every corner and in every problem so that demons are to blame for everything. But the Bible as a whole doesn't have such a preoccupation with demons.

It's likely that the demons are the angels that rebelled and were thrown down along with Satan. Revelation certainly seems to say that. And so demons have Satan as their leader and they're participants in all his schemes.

[9 : 23] Demons seek to deceive, to draw people away from God, to tempt and to taunt. And they seek to oppose, disrupt and sabotage the mission of God's church. We aren't told a whole lot more than that.

But evil is at work in the world today to attempt to hinder God's unstoppable mission. We can be sure of that today. But it's also worth noting that of the 63 times the word demons used in the New Testament, four of them are in 1 Corinthians 10 about idol worship, participating with demons.

It's an evil thing. One in 1 Timothy is the deceitful teaching of demons about food and marriage.

One is in James about the demons knowing the truth.

And one is in Acts to describe someone's teaching as demonic. And Acts 19 also includes a description of evil spirits being cast out in Paul's ministry.

And then there are three more uses of demon in Revelation as part of visions. And so 53 of the 63 uses of demon in the New Testament are in the Gospels.

[10 : 35] So I take it that the regular demonic activity that we see in the four Gospels, where demons seem to commonly possess people, is fairly unique to the period of Jesus and his apostles.

It isn't the norm, but it's a heightened manifestation of evil as Jesus very pointedly battles against the darkness of Satan and as Satan attempts to fight back.

Well, back to verse 33. This man with the spirit of an unclean demon appears and look at what the demon has to say. Verse 34, Have you come to destroy us?

That's a question in our Bibles, but it could also be read as a statement. You have come to destroy us. And that is exactly what Jesus has come to do. He's here to defeat Satan and all of his schemes.

The demons know their fate. The repercussions of Jesus' victory in the wilderness ripples throughout the land. Jesus is very obviously here fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy from 418, back as we read last week, about proclaiming liberty to the captives.

[11 : 49] Those who are under the power of the evil one will know release liberty at Jesus' hand. Now, the demon refers to Jesus as the Holy One of God.

It's a fairly unique title, but in the Greek version of the Old Testament, the same phrase is used of Samson. Samson, who was again and again filled with God's spirit to defeat God's enemies. And that's what this demon recognizes about Jesus. He is the one who is suitably authoritative, suitably empowered by God's spirit to overcome God's enemies, to overcome demons.

And so Jesus rebukes the demon, verse 35, and the demon comes out of the man. He had no other choice. There isn't much fuss about this. Jesus commands it, and it happens.

Jesus' identity, after all, makes it plain that he is the one who will rescue and restore and reign. And so his words carry every authority.

[12 : 52] Now, I notice the demon asks, have you come to destroy us? And it might be that the demon is referring to other demons too, and so yes, Jesus is here to dismantle all evil powers.

Or it could be that the demon thinks Jesus would have to destroy both the man and the demon at once. Later on in Luke's gospel, we see the debilitating and crushing effects that demons have on the people they possess.

But look at the end of verse 35. No such thing happens. Jesus is the one who has come to proclaim liberty to the captives, and he can subdue the evil ones, and at the same time deliver the captives. Jesus' defeat of Satan, Jesus' dealing with evil, doesn't imperil those who've been held in its grasp. No. Jesus sets people free.

We see here a battle between the oven-clean spirit and the one upon whom the Holy Spirit descended and rested. And the power of evil is not an equivalent with the power of God.

[14 : 06] They aren't polar or equal opposites in power. God is supreme, and Satan isn't. And so Jesus really meant it when he promises to proclaim liberty for the captives.

Luke is showing us that however dark someone's past, however grim, no matter how deeply Satan's talons were in someone, with the Lord Jesus, there is rescue and freedom.

Jesus' teaching had authority, and his authority was such that at his command, the demons depart. They've got no other choice. And so this first miracle in Jesus' ministry is very public.

It's a very public display in the synagogue before the crowds. And verse 37, word spreads because of it. Jesus' first miracle makes the statement that he doesn't just settle sinners' debts.

The year of the Lord's favor isn't just about forgiving debts. He also subdues Satan's dreadful hold on people. You see, our problem isn't just that we have a profound death of sin, which we do.

[15 : 21] It wouldn't be enough to just simply have that debt settled. We're also under the rule of Satan. John says the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

But Jesus comes to prize Satan's hands off of us. Luke is making no small or incidental point here. He's making plain what is at the very heart of God's rescue.

And the rescue we need is not just from our great debt of sin, but also from the bondage to the power of sin and to Satan himself. You see, this world isn't just in a great debt of sin that we cannot repay.

Left to ourselves, we love sin. Outside of the light and life of Christ, humanity loves the darkness. That's how enslaved humanity is.

And so new salvation would be complete without both dealing with the cost of our sin, but also dealing with the captivity of our sin. But you see, where every government will feel, where every ideology, where every climate profit, where every scientist and doctor will come short, none of those things can really deal with a fundamental problem humanity faces.

[16:39] Because the greatest problem in this world lurks deeply and darkly within us. It's our sinful hearts which are under the power of the evil one and love to be there.

And so there is only one who has the authority to deal with that. And Luke shows us wonderfully and simply here that Jesus has the authority to deal with a cosmic problem.

The problem of Satan's grip on those who are enslaved by sin. And Luke shows us wonderfully and simply here that Jesus has authority to deal with a cosmic problem with the words of his mouth.

He speaks, he rebukes, he commands with complete authority. He speaks words and evil is fleeing. And so Jesus' public conquest against Satan and his demons shows us that he can be, that Jesus can both deal with sin's penalty and dismantle Satan's power.

[17:44] Well, secondly, Luke also shows us in verses 38 and 39, Jesus' personal compassion. Jesus' personal compassion, verses 38 and 39.

Jesus' power and salvation comes to individuals. He's not a far off and an aloof saviour, but one who draws near. This scene moves from the public square to the private.

Verse 38, from the synagogue, the public forum, the place where Jesus demonstrated his public conquest against Satan, from the synagogue, Jesus goes to a home, the home of Simon, who we'll meet more fully in chapter 5.

I notice the details we're given on how they show a personal interest at Simon's house. It was Simon's mother-in-law. And they ask for Jesus to help, and he does.

Luke doesn't just tell us someone random was ill. He gives us detail about an individual. This event doesn't just blend in with the crowds that are to come. Luke takes the time to tell us about this one person.

[18:50] She was ill with a high fever, and when Jesus is asked to help, he does. Verse 39, he rebukes the fever. He speaks, and at his command, the illness leaves immediately.

No waiting around, no gradual recovery, no, well, take these tablets and she'll be fine in seven to ten days. No, immediately. And so we see Christ's word and Christ's rule ultimately has authority over sickness and death, over the effects of the curse that have been writ large over this world ever since the fall.

All of these things can be undone by the Lord Jesus who has come. Jesus is supreme over even the decaying effects of death that entered the world after the fall.

And notice how complete Jesus' work is when he speaks and rebukes the fever. Immediately it leaves and she's up and about and serving.

When Jesus touches lives with his salvation, he immediately sets us off to serve him in his kingdom. No recovery and recuperation period. No, it's straight into participating in his glorious mission over the world.

[20:09] Now this little episode might seem like a slightly mundane interlude among more dramatic miracles, but I think it's worth us pausing to reflect on this.

Jesus took the time to step into the house of this woman in order to speak the wonderful words of salvation to her. You see, God isn't only interested in acts that make public his glorious works.

He isn't only in the business of making a splash on the world stage. His salvation isn't impersonal, detached from individuals. It isn't only for those people who everyone takes notice of.

Jesus even cares for mothers-in-law. Although some might say perhaps it's easier when it's not your own. Luke gives us a public demonstration of Jesus' power and authority over evil in the world.

He gives us a picture of Jesus triumphing over Satan's kingdom in a way that causes amazement. But then he also chooses Jesus' care for individuals. His personal care, his attention for individuals.

[21:18] These two verses aren't just a little throwaway. These verses assure us that little old me is not beyond the reach and attention of Jesus.

His program of salvation for the world isn't impersonal. No, he draws near. He draws near to people. He draws near to you and me if we come to him.

And in doing so, he offers wondrous salvation to individuals. Listen to Ralph Davis. For all the cosmic implications of Jesus' work in casting out a demon in verses 31 to 37, he is yet the domestic savior.

Verses 38 and 39. He is the Christ who conquers the evil one and yet the Christ who provides in the home. He works in the public place but also enters into the private need.

That's how tender the Lord Jesus is. Well, as well as showing us Jesus' personal compassion, Luke also shows us Jesus' pervasive care.

[22 : 22] Verses 40 and 41. Jesus' pervasive care. To any and all who come to Jesus conscious of their needs, he will bring salvation.

Immediately following Jesus' very personal healing of Simon's mother-in-law, we see floods of people coming to him. Verse 40. The sun is setting. That means the Sabbath is coming to an end and so people were free to be out and about and traveling.

And so they flock to Jesus. They use their freedom to travel to flock to Jesus. And emphasized in these verses is the patient and pervasive ministry of Jesus.

Do you see that verse 40? All those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus.

Do you see how comprehensive that is? Jesus' salvation is cosmic. His rule really affects this world and the spiritual realm. But his salvation and rule isn't just a public demonstration.

[23 : 27] It isn't just a cosmic thing that happens out there somewhere. No, it's a personal coming to individuals and it's pervasive, widespread, available to any and to all who come to him.

Do you see? All, any, and various come to Jesus and what does he do? Verse 40. He laid his hands on every single one of them and healed them.

Patently tending to all. Verse 41. It's... Now, many demons appear and are subdued and defeated. But notice what they say. Again, the demons recognize who Jesus is. They say, you are the son of God. Well, the last time that phrase, the son of God, was uttered in Luke's gospel was back in the wilderness by Satan.

4.3. Back then, it was, if you're the son of God. 4.9. If you're the son of God.

[24 : 36] But Jesus defeated Satan in the wilderness. And now his minions say, you are the son of God. Two implications from this.

When Jesus overcame the devil, he put all of Satan's servants and schemes into retreat. Satan was testing Jesus, putting his credentials to the test, urging Jesus to prove his identity.

But Jesus, having resisted the devil, faces his minions. And there's no testing anymore. It's a declaration. You are the son of God.

A surrender. Jesus' ministry declares his identity. He doesn't need to seek ways to prove who he is, as Satan was trying to get him to.

His ministry unmistakably demonstrates that he is the son of God. And the whole realm of darkness knew it and feel the full force of it.

[25 : 38] Second implication, notice that Jesus doesn't let the demons speak any further about his identity. Jesus rebukes them, doesn't let them speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

Christ. This is the first time in Luke's gospel where Jesus is identified as the Christ when he's there in his presence.

It's the first time that he's said to be the Christ. And it's by demons. Jesus is urging silence. Jesus' urging silence might be because this is an identity he isn't yet prepared to highlight just yet.

Or it could be that Jesus doesn't wish nefarious sources to be spreading truth about him. And there's a warning for us in that, isn't there? It's possible to know the truth, to say that Jesus is indeed the Christ, and yet not be, and yet it not be an evidence or a sign of faith.

We can know true doctrine, we can even speak true doctrine, we can even teach true doctrine, without having any share in the beautiful fruit of which true doctrine speaks.

[26 : 52] J.C. Ryle says, we may go on all of our lives saying, I knew that, and I knew that, and sink at last into hell with the words on our lips.

Demons saw and spoke of Jesus, they saw and spoke truth about Jesus, but their confession of truth was not a profession of faith. And I think that might be why Jesus didn't want them to speak any further.

Well, Jesus' salvation is pervasive, it's open to any and all who come to him in their need, and I think the key reason Luke puts this episode immediately after his rejection at Nazareth is to contrast

the two responses.

Nazareth, remember, demanded signs, they wanted proof that Jesus is the glorious bringer of the year of the Lord's favor, but how did the people in Capernaum come to Jesus?

Well, notice, first, back in verse 31, that little detail that Luke gives us, Jesus went down to Capernaum.

[27 : 59] I don't think Luke is expecting us to take episode 3 and 4 in chronological order. We know Luke shows us Jesus in Nazareth at first to give a shape to what's to come, and he even mentions in that that he'd already been to Capernaum in verse 23.

But remember, Luke's use of directional language, up and down, is very often associated with Jesus bringing down the mighty from their thrones and exalting those of humble estate.

Jesus went down to Capernaum, unlike the high and mighty in Nazareth. And what we see in Capernaum is people who are humble because people come flocking to him in their need.

After Jesus' Nazareth sermon, and the crowds rise up to kill him for he exposed their lack and they wanted none of it, after Jesus' Capernaum sermon, the crowds arose to receive from him for they knew their lack and they knew their need.

Luke is telling us that it matters how we come to Jesus. How does Jesus respond to the proud? To those who don't see their helplessness? To those who don't see Jesus' rightful claim over us?

[29 : 14] To those who come to Jesus looking for him to prove himself? Well, he rejects them. It can be tempting for us to want to be winsome and sensitive to any and all who come through our doors or who we are trying to witness to and love and there's a good and right time for that.

Being obnoxious isn't good for anyone. But it's instructive to us that those who come to Jesus wanting him to prove himself, to meet their criteria, to fit their understanding of the world, to recognize their credentials, to fit in with their progressiveness, to recognize their morality, those who come demanding Jesus prove himself.

Well, Jesus speaks very plainly and bluntly to them, doesn't he? Indeed, we saw last week that his response to them sets off violent rage. They literally tried to kill him.

Maybe some of us have brought friends to church or we've had conversations with people about the gospel and they've become very belligerent. Well, that is going to happen because the proud will ever rage against Jesus.

But Jesus was the most gracious man who ever walked this earth and fizzing rage was poured out on him. But also, Jesus was the most gracious man who ever walked this earth and yet when proud, self-justifying people came to question him and to prove him, his response wasn't charming.

[30 : 44] It was chastening. But look at the difference here. What's the difference? In Nazareth, the crowds command Jesus to prove himself.

In Capernaum, the crowds come to Jesus in their need. All who were sick come looking for healing. Friends, the beauty of Jesus is that any who come to him admitting their failure, admitting that they have sick hearts, to any who come with empty hands crying out for help, Jesus responds by proclaiming good news.

He proclaims liberty, recovery. He proclaims the year of the Lord's favor and forgiveness upon you. It's scandalous. He says, give up any pretense that we have life sorted out on our own and gain everything.

Luke, I think, rejigs events here to place Capernaum as the final episode in this introduction to Jesus' identity and ministry so that the final thing we see isn't rejection, although we're prepared that that is common, but instead the final thing we see in this section is people flocking to Jesus in need and receiving the blessings of the year of the Lord's favor.

It's a beautiful picture. Well, Luke rounds off this section of his gospel with one final event where we see Jesus' purpose clarified.

[32 : 24] Jesus' purpose clarified, verses 42 to 44. Jesus' ministry was to declare the impending victory of the kingdom of God. Now, so wonderfully was the Lord's favor proclaimed at Capernaum that they didn't want him to leave.

Verse 42, he's gone to a desolate place and even there they seek him out, they want him to stay, but Jesus says that he must move on. And we see here the culmination of a thread that holds together the whole passage that we read.

It's not just that Jesus had authority and power. It wasn't just that he could deal with Satan and sickness, demons, disease, and death. It's that he does so through his word.

The miracles that Jesus shows us here are examples of how Jesus fulfills the words from the scroll that he read in verses 18 and 19. And look back to that, verse 18, 418, the Spirit anoints Jesus to proclaim good news.

418, to proclaim liberty and recovery. 419, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. And then what do we see in our reading?

[33 : 44] Verse 31, Jesus was teaching. Verse 32, the crowds were astonished at his teaching. Verse 32, Jesus' word possessed authority.

Verse 35, Jesus rebuked. Verse 36, what is this word? For with authority and power he commands. Verse 39, Jesus rebuked the fever.

Verse 41, Jesus rebuked the demons. And so verse 43, he says, I must preach. That's what I came for.

I must preach in other towns as well. The wonderful declaration of victory was news that was to be spread far and wide. But look at what Jesus' proclamation was.

Verse 43, the good news. Good news, which means gospel, the gospel, which is the message of victory concerning the kingdom of God.

[34 : 41] God. We saw the same thing back in 418, prophecy from Isaiah, the spirit anointed him to proclaim good news, gospel, victory. And so Jesus was keen to move on to the other towns to declare the good news of the victory of God's kingdom, which brings with it the year of the Lord's favor.

It is the arrival of God's kingdom that guarantees forgiveness, liberty, and recovery forever. Jesus' preaching ministry was to declare that this great prophecy of God's salvation was here, that the great year of Jubilee has come, so that the spiritually poor have their debt of sin forgiven, so that those who have been captive to Satan are freed, so that those who have been blind of ultimate realities might see.

Jesus' ministry declared and demonstrated that such a fulfillment was a reality that was breaking into this world. Luke gives glimpses throughout the first nine chapters of his gospel of what the kingdom of God will be like.

He pictures for us what it will be like through various miracles. He pictures what the kingdom of God will be like when it's spread over this whole world in a renewed creation.

And so when we see miracles, when we see healings and demons being subdued, that is Luke showing us glimpses of the day when Jesus will wipe away tears from all faces and renew all that has been decayed and tainted by sin.

[36 : 14] And so Jesus' ministry was declaring that the great day of salvation has been inaugurated. It has begun. It has been signaled, initiated by his arrival and by his conquest of Satan.

Now, of course, God's kingdom isn't fully here, but Luke shows us the early signs of it in Jesus' ministry. Listen to James Philip on this. He writes, the miracles are evidences and tokens of the new order that Christ came to inaugurate.

The kingdom has come, albeit only in its first fruits as yet, and we await its glorious consummation. The miracles have a forward look. C.S.

Lewis illustrates this point well when he likens them to the snowdrops that appear in the early months of the year. They are the harbingers of spring. There may be storms still to come and the weather bleak and desolate, but the tokens of spring have been seen, and it is sure to come. And so the miracles tell us that grace has decisively breached this weary, sin-sick world of ours, and that a new day is about to dawn.

[37 : 25] In these works of his power, man has been privileged, so to speak, to have a brief glance at the last chapter of the story to see how it ends. God's And so Jesus was sent to declare this victory for God's kingdom, and it was a victory that was going to be unstoppable, and a victory, good news, that was to be declared far and wide.

The gospel is a declaration, a declaration of the triumph and victory of the kingdom of God. That was what Jesus was here to preach and to produce. That was what Jesus was here to declare and to demonstrate and to deliver.

I don't think that we're a church that fails to appreciate that preaching is important, or that we deny its place at the heart of our worship. But I do wonder if it can be an easy thing to take preaching for granted, to think that there will be other things that are the key to effective ministry, or the key to

effective evangelism.

But it's striking. According to Luke and to Jesus, where is the power and authority? How is it that Satan is banished from the world and from individual lives?

How is the sinner offered hope of forgiveness? How is the one who has a darkened heart and mind given eyes to see? How are the proud humbled? How is it that people are rescued from Satan's realm to Christ's?

[38 : 55] Well, it's not different today than it was when Luke was writing or when Jesus was ministering. The power and authority is in the Lord Jesus declaring his victory to his people.

And he still declares these things today as his word is opened and preached. Jesus ascends the pulpit in his church and in our midst, he proclaims good news, liberty.

Jesus' word is laden with authority and power. God's love. Maybe some of us are a bit nervous about bringing certain people to church because their worldview is so at odds with the Bible.

Will the Bible stand up to scrutiny? Will it be compelling? Friends, Jesus' word is laden with authority and power. And it really is the thing that will bring people to Jesus and show people their need and usher people into his kingdom.

freedom. That's what Jesus came to do. What is this word?

[40 : 05] For with authority and power, he commands the unclean spirits and they come out. Lord God, we marvel at the might of Jesus.

We marvel at the tenderness of Jesus. We marvel at the patience of Jesus. us. And we ask for your grace and for the help of your Holy Spirit so that we would ever cherish your mighty gospel word.

Build and rebuild our confidence in it. That we would always be happy to humble ourselves before it and pleased to hold it out to others.

For Christ's sake. Amen. Amen.