

# Breaking New Ground: Capernaum and Beyond

by Clayton Dougan

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*Breaking new ground in our lives means experiencing the authoritative power of Christ and meeting God in His Word.*

**Duration:** 51:08

**Scripture:** Psalm 46:10, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:29, Luke 4:41-43, John 6:63

**Topics:** "Venture Of Faith"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of breaking new ground in our walk with God. He acknowledges that change can be challenging and that many of us prefer routine and dislike change. However, he encourages listeners to embrace change and seek growth in their relationship with God. The speaker also highlights the significance of spending time alone with God in His Word, as it is through this quiet time that we can truly meet and know Him. He concludes by stating that the church in Canada has lost its authority and calls for believers to be real and faithful in their ministry, trusting that God will make the seed grow.

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## Transcript

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. 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 that he was the Christ. And when it was day he departed and went into 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. Thank you for that and good morning everybody.

It really is a pleasure to be here at Oakland's chapel today. I just want to before I bring you the message this morning to say thank you to you dear folk in this church for praying for Isabel and me for the past umpteen months. This is a significant Sunday for me, it's the first Sunday I have preached since last summer.

And so I'm very glad to be with you today, I want to thank you for your prayers and keep at it because on March the 13th I go back into hospital to get a new hip. So it's all happening in the Dugan household these days but never mind, the Lord is very precious and we're having a real sense of God's presence in it all. So keep praying and we bless you for your prayers today.

Keep your Bibles open then at Luke chapter 4, 31 to 44. And may I just remind you that when we're studying in Luke's Gospel, Luke's concern is to show us Jesus as the Son of Man, you've probably been told that already. So we see Jesus as a man in Luke's Gospel.

You might say that when you read through Luke you discover how Jesus felt about certain things. And in Luke's Gospel you read more about healing than in Matthew or Mark put together. You get the Doctor Luke coming through, real concern for the people and he shows us Jesus really ministering to individuals.

And in your study of Luke, that is the whole purpose of the study, we're walking with Jesus through this wonderful book in the New Testament. And we're in a section right now that runs from chapter 4, verse 14 to chapter 9, verse 50 and that section is called the Galilee ministry. And it began, I want you to notice, I just remind you, it began in chapter 4 where it says that Jesus got up in the synagogue where he had been brought up.

That's significant ladies and gentlemen. He was ministering, it began where he had been brought up. That is always the most difficult place to witness as a Christian.

Amen? It's dead easy to go to Africa and preach Christ. It's very difficult to preach Christ among the people who know you and who grew up with you and who are your neighbours and the people you work with. Jesus began his ministry where he had been brought up.

And I want you to notice that his first experience of preaching where he had been brought up was to be rebuffed, verses 28 and 29. They wanted to throw him out, they wanted to get rid of him. Now may I just say to you this morning, because this passage of Scripture has really challenged my life in recent weeks as I've been studying in preparation for today.

If you're looking forward and getting all excited about witnessing for Jesus and you go among your neighbours and your friends and the people you work with and you take your stand as a Christian and I trust and pray that by God's grace we will all do that. Please don't expect them to throw flowers at you. Amen? They won't be all over you with praise and adoration etc.

etc. You will come in for some serious rebuking and some serious challenges to your life. Now people we need to get this right.

God is calling us to be real where he has placed us. And that is a real feature of the life of Jesus. And you know what, the thing we need to keep in mind though is that when Jesus preached and ministered, things happened but when we are called to preach and minister, things will happen no matter what if we are faithful.

No matter what. Remember what Paul teaches us in 1 Corinthians 3. He says, Paul plants the seed, Apollos waters it with prayer but it is God who makes the seed grow. And he will do that.

He will do that. I remember about 100 years ago when I was a teenager there was a bunch of us who decided to run some youth coffee bars. That was the cool thing to do in those days.

You were really cool when you were in coffee bar ministry. And we were running these coffee bars and I was doing the preaching and I was just a teenage kid and there were a wild bunch that was in the area where I grew up. They were a wild bunch.

They were jumping on the tables. They were yelling and screaming. They were throwing things and all the rest of it.

And we came away from there feeling utterly, totally discouraged. Oh, I don't know how many years later, many, many years later two guys turned up at one of the local churches in that area. They came as visitors.

And it so happened that one of the elders there was a guy who had been with me as a youngster preaching in those coffee bars. And he welcomed them to the church and the two guys said, you don't know us, do you? He said, I'm not clear who you are. They said, we've come from New Zealand.

But when we were here as kids we came to some coffee bars that you guys ran. And we want you to know that we became Christians then. Amen.

Amen. You see, people, He will make the seed grow as we are faithful and as we move on in fellowship with God. But you see, it's going to involve breaking new ground.

That's when some of you want to go home, right? All of us, in some area of our lives we don't like change. Breaking new ground is a huge challenge for most of us. We're not very good at it sometimes.

We get in an enormous rut. I'm married to a woman who believes that if you do the same thing twice you're in a rut. But some of us don't like change.

We don't like our routine disturbed. It's Henry Nowen, I think, in one of his books who says that most of us live our lives at the same level as our pet dog and cat. You know, I used to have an old dog.

Four o'clock in the afternoon he went to a certain closet in our house where he knew the cookies were. Four o'clock every day. He went and stood at that door.

Most of us live our lives like that. People, we need to break new ground in our walk with God. We need to break new ground in our relationship with Him.

Stop living like dogs and cats with just pure habits, that's all. Some of us in our quiet time in the Word of God, it's almost like cleaning your teeth. You know, you read a few verses and you feel good because you've done that.

That's not what it's about, people. Getting into the Word of God is breaking new ground and meeting God. Meeting God in His Word.

Do you want a little illustration about breaking new ground? If you're right-handed, when you go to bed tonight clean your teeth with your left hand. Or if you're left-handed, do it with your right hand. And you'll see just how much we do things by habit.

We never even think about it. We need to break new ground. Do you know what the Bible says? Hosea 10, 12, God's Word says this.

God says, break up your fallow ground. Break up your unplowed ground. Why? Because it is time to seek the Lord.

And I want to tell you people today, if ever the church in Canada needed to hear that, we need it today. It is time to seek the Lord. It is time to get rid of all the shallowness and emptiness and froth and bubble and really seek God.

Break up that fallow ground. Break up those parts of your lives that God isn't allowed to get to right now. Those bits of our lives that we need plowed over, that we need the Lord to dig deep, that we need God to deal with.

It's time to break them up, people, that we might seek the Lord. Now when we come to this passage of Scripture today, and we look at these verses, I want you to notice something. This is something God has really laid in my heart as I've been preparing this message.

When we think about breaking new ground, first of all, in verses 31 and 32, we need to break new ground in the sense of focusing on the Teacher and not the teaching. Now I'm not saying that Jesus' teaching is not important, but His teaching will never do what it's meant to do in your life and mine until our focus is on the Teacher, until our focus is on Christ Himself. When you read in these verses, 31 and 32, Jesus is beginning His teaching there in Capernaum, and teaching on the Sabbath day, and they were amazed.

Why were they amazed? Because His teaching, His message, was with authority. It was with authority. Matthew 7, 29 tells us a similar thing.

His teaching was with authority. It was not as the scribes. The scribes and Pharisees did their teaching.

They didn't teach with authority. They just perpetually quoted their illustrious predecessors. I don't think any of them ever had an original thought in their lives.

They just kept quoting their illustrious predecessors. But Jesus' teaching was not like that. Jesus' teaching was with authority.

Why? Because of who He was. Because of who He is. That is what gave His teaching authority.

Because of who He is. Because He is the Son of Man. He is God in human flesh, people.

We'll see more about that later. And because of who He is, that is what gives His teaching the authority. You see, when you and I come to God's Word, the Lord Jesus tells us in John 6, He says, the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.

Oh, isn't that amazing? Doesn't that make you want to run home today and spend the whole of the afternoon in your Bible? They are spirit. They are life. And Jesus wants to infuse you and me with that spirit and with that life.

And because of who He is, He is able to He is able to speak into our hearts and into our lives. You know, there's something I've been praying more than anything else in recent months. And that is that every time I open my Bible, that God would grant me what Paul talks about in Ephesians 1, 17.

That God would grant me a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God. Now, people, when you come to your Bible, when you come to your Bible and you come to God's Word and you look into the teaching of Jesus and what the Word of God wants to say to you, we need that same spirit. We need wisdom.

You know, you don't just go to your Bible and get some verse right out of the chapter, you know, and you just stick your finger on it and say, that'll be my verse for today because you might get totally the wrong meaning. We want to apply the Word of God with wisdom. We need to take it in its context.

We need to know why that is being written in that part of the Word of God. We need wisdom from above. And as we apply those principles of studying the Word of God, like studying it in its context and so on, God by His Spirit will give us revelation, all praise His name, so that you're not filling your head with just knowledge of your Bible.

People, listen to me. It's possible to quote the Bible by the yard and not to know God. It's wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God.

And people, if I'm missing that, I am missing everything. Romans 15 talks about the encouragement of the Scriptures that we might have hope, so that it means Jesus is speaking Spirit and life into us every day through His Word and we're growing, we're rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. These things are becoming real.

And in our Bibles, in our times of quiet, we are growing, people, in the knowledge of God. We are getting to know Him. We are meeting Him.

We come from His Word. We come from a time of quiet in the presence of God and we know that we have met the Lord. There is no substitute, ladies and gentlemen, no substitute for being alone with God in His Word.

Why do I labor this this morning? I'll tell you why. Please hear me. The church in Canada today has lost her authority.

Nobody out there pays a blind bit of notice to anything that the church says anymore. Why? Because we have no authority. We have lost that authority.

We need to walk with Jesus today, people. We need to meet God in His Word. We need to meet the One whose teaching was with authority so that that authoritative Word will sink into the depths of our being and change and transform us forever.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to challenge you this first of all right now, very quickly. This first area where we need to break new ground is in our knowledge of God. But secondly, we not only need to seek the

Teacher beyond the teaching but we need to seek the Deliverer and not the Deliverance.

Verses 33 to 37. Notice three things here. Jesus was preaching in the synagogue and there was a manifestation of an evil spirit that was possessing a man who was in the congregation.

The first point I want to say to you here, as we get our focus fixed not so much on the Teacher now but on the Deliverer, as we get our focus fixed on the Deliverer, the first point is there is reality here. There is reality. When Jesus taught with authority it exposed the evil.

Are you with me? When Jesus taught with authority one of the outcomes of that was a manifestation of the presence of evil spirits. A manifestation of demonic presence. In Hebrews 2:14 it tells us there that when Jesus was crucified on the cross he was crucified on that cross that he might destroy the works of the devil and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

And when Jesus died on the cross hallelujah people, are you rejoicing in it today? He destroyed him that had the power of death that is the devil. I remember years ago I'd spent two years working with a church in England and during the course of my visitation ministry I met a lady who was involved in Satanism and so on and I spent quite a long time witnessing to this lady and she came to the church one day one Sunday and I happened to be preaching my way through the book of Hebrews at the time and it so happened that she came to the church the very Sunday that I preached from Hebrews 2 and I was preaching my little heart out and I was telling the people that when Jesus died on the cross he destroyed him that has the power of death that is the devil. And I want to tell you people as sure as I'm standing here all of a sudden when I got to that bit in the message that lady rose from her seat and she fled out of the church.

She fled. You see people when we're in the presence of the Deliverer Hallelujah! The powers of darkness have no say. Jesus Christ is Lord.

Hallelujah. And as Jesus preached the truth there was that manifestation of evil. His authoritative presence the reality of who he was caused that to happen.

Then that reality led to recognition in verse 34 and 35. That even the demons recognized who he was. This is important.

Let us alone they said. What business do we have with each other Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are the Holy One of God. But listen to me people you may be having a struggle these days.

People are telling us there is no God. The latest campaign is on the buses in England. There probably isn't a God so enjoy the rest of your life.

I'm telling you today I want to start a campaign to tell them probably isn't good enough. Probably means you don't know. Amen? Probably means there could be.

Hallelujah! And there is. But I want to tell you today the powers of darkness are in no doubt. Satan is in no doubt.

James tells us the devils believe and they tremble because they know their final destiny is in the hands of the Son of God. And people today Jesus preached with such authority that the demons recognized who he was. John tells us in 1st John 3 that the Son of God appeared to to nullify the works of the devil.

To set us free. Oh are you free today? Are you in bondage to anything today people? Jesus wants to set you free when he comes into a life with all his authoritative presence that is glorious freedom. The demons recognize that he is Lord.

When I was in Africa three years ago in African context when you preach the gospel very often all of a sudden there will be a manifestation of evil spirits. And I was preaching one day there was a young lady there just a teenage girl and she suddenly fell to the ground screaming and shrieking and so on and it was a manifestation of an evil spirit now we're in the African context now a very real thing and some pastors gathered around her and I want to tell you that kid had so much strength because of the possession of that evil spirit it took five men to hold her.

And these pastors when we prayed together and we commanded that spirit in the name of Jesus to depart from her body now remember at one stage in the proceedings I said to her I said Betty say Jesus Christ is Lord and that demon would not allow her to say it she couldn't speak those words she tried but they would not come we prayed on we commanded in the name of Jesus and that spirit left her body and all of a sudden she became completely calm I said now Betty the spirit has gone you need now to receive Jesus you need Jesus to come and take its place Amen and that kid received Christ and I said to her Betty when she had received the Lord I said Betty say it now say Jesus Christ is Lord clear as a bell ladies and gentlemen clear as a bell she said Jesus Christ is Lord I've been in touch

with that girl through another pastor since then and she's going on with God Amen I want to tell you people we need to get real with God you talk about going through Luke's gospel and following Jesus and walking with Jesus have you ever stopped to think for two minutes what that really means do you think that means you come along here and have a nice time on a Sunday and you go home and forget all about it and do your own thing for the rest of the week people if you're going to follow Jesus and take him seriously you will never be the same again you can't be because his authoritative power and presence has to come into your life the reality of it that even the demons recognize it and it leads to Revelation verse 37 verse 37 it says 36 it says for with authority and power he commands the

unclean spirits and they come out the people were recognizing it was revealed to them who he was he commands the tense of that word means he was doing it habitually every time he did it the evil spirits had to command had to leave praise God ladies and gentlemen today if we need to break new ground in the area of our knowledge of God we also need to break new ground in the area of authentic or authoritative rather authoritative Christ like living it dawned on me on a new way recently how that Paul's teaching in 2 Corinthians 4 says the God of this world now have you got it firmly embedded in your mind at the moment the Bible tells us this whole world right now lies in the power of the evil one and Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4 the God of this world has blinded what the minds of those

who believe not their eyes so don't come to the prayer meeting and say Lord open their eyes say Lord illumine their minds the God of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers and what the world needs to see people is authoritative Christ like living that will reveal to them who Jesus is authoritative Christ like living you and I need to break new ground here the people that you live beside are not interested at all at the moment in what you've got to say they'll not listen to what you want to say until they know who you really are and it's authoritative Christ like living that makes the difference people when you come to Christ when you become a Christian and you make Jesus your Saviour you don't do that just to get a ticket to heaven you don't do that to get your marriage problem

sorted out these are things that do happen praise God but when you come to Christ you come to so surrender your life to Jesus as Saviour and Lord the one who died in your place on a cross and took the judgement of God for your sin and you surrender your life to Him so that He will come by His Holy Spirit and live on the inside of you can you imagine anything more amazing come on people it doesn't get any better than this and if you want to be an authoritative Christian living in Victoria it will happen when you get the handle on this amazing truth that being a Christian is knowing Christ living on the inside of you Christ living there and do it then you lose you get over this whole thing I've got to work for Jesus I've got to do this for Jesus and then it becomes no I don't I just let

Jesus do it in me and through me amen and then it becomes a matter of you being all the just being just get on with it be hallelujah we need to break new ground in this area because ladies and gentlemen can I say this to you we will never have any power until we have authority where there is no authority there is no power and the authority comes from the presence of the living Christ in the hearts of his people point number three real quick we not only need to focus on the deliverer instead of the deliverance but we need to focus on the healer instead of the healing I know people and I try to speak sensitively right now this church here is longing for a manifestation of God's healing power and he is able to heal amen he is able to heal I know that but I want to tell you today he doesn't

always heal amen come on now people let's get honest here I'm sick to death of people who keep telling folks that if you're not healed you haven't got enough faith that is the cruelest thing you can ever say to anybody that is absolute rubbish he is the healer when I was in I don't want to get you know I don't talk about myself but when I was in jubilee hospital four months ago and I was forced to face my own mortality people I was forced to face my own mortality as never before but I want to tell you these are the moments when Jesus can be so real the Lord's presence in my heart and life through all of that experience was so wonderfully real that's where I experienced healing amen we need that vision of the healing and notice Jesus as he ministers here in verse 38 and 39 the one who had

the perfect combination of authority and power he goes to Simon Peter's home he first of all ministers with compassion to those who were close to him we might say family and neighbors that's what the category here he ministers to those close to him he rebuked it says he rebuked the fever he rebuked it the word rebuked has in its meaning again the thought of authority he was the one who passed sentence on that fever again because of who he was amen it's a wonderful picture of the closeness of Jesus communion with his father now you and I don't know when God's going to heal we can never put God in a box we don't know when God is going to heal he can heal and he does heal praise his name I'll tell you more about that in a moment but we cannot dictate to God when he's going to do that healing

he is sovereign he is lord he is the one who knows the end from the beginning praise his name you and I don't know that I remember years ago a dear friend of mine in England he said to me one day he said Clayton I believe God is going to give you a gift of healing what do you do with that amen what do you do with that I said brother thank you very much I'll take that to God and I'll see what the Lord will do and I prayed for people in hospitals and in their homes for years after that and nobody ever got healed and then I had the privilege of ministering for a month in the Philippines and I was moving around in the Philippines preaching the gospel in open air in public parks and all kinds of places and through translators and so on and in the Philippines in that context they invited people

to come to Christ and they did people responded to the gospel all the time then they invited people to come for prayer for healing now in the Philippines you don't tell people to go see a doctor that is absolutely

impossible they have no money to do it they can't do it at all it just can't happen they don't have those resources because of the poverty and I would go to people who came for prayer and somebody would tell me what they needed praying for and I would lay my hand upon their head and pray for them in the name of Jesus and the next night several people would come back and give testimony to having been healed that's the only time in my life that has ever happened to me it's never happened before or since and that gave me a new understanding of 1 Corinthians 12 where Paul speaking

about the gifts of the spirit and in the list of gifts in chapter 12 and down at verse 30 he talks about gifts of healings both words are in the plural gifts of healings I believe that's what God taught me I'm never going to claim to have a gift of healing I don't believe God ever gives anybody a gift of healing so that everywhere they go they will be healed and believe me all that hype that you see on television take most of it with a huge spoonful of salt but I do believe that there are times God will take the simplest believer the humblest believer and use them in the ministry to heal somebody else gifts of healings what does that say to me today it says to me people that I have a beautiful freedom in Jesus it says to me and to you today we need to break new ground again in the area of

being available to the Lord am I available listen to me people please let's get away from all this stuff where you leave all the ministry to the pastor and the elders one of the reasons why maybe why your Christian life or mine is so blah just now is because you are not available to the Lord as you should be but as you and I go into a new week we say Lord I want to be available to you to minister to people as you lead me and you direct my steps and wherever you are you can pray for one another you can pray for one another in the name of Jesus and allow him to work the results out amen leave it with him but all people there is joy in ministering Christ to one another we need to break new ground right there my last point we need to break new ground again by recognizing the purpose and not

popularity down at verse 42 it says when the day came Jesus left and what did he do? he went into a secluded place I don't know how I would have reacted to this kind of stuff that was happening in Jesus life you know wherever you went demons were cast out people were being healed hey guys if that were me I could have a big TV ministry amen wow just think about it for a minute I could have a big TV ministry I could be big time amen what did Jesus do? he went into a secluded place I love this I think this is a most beautiful thing Jesus went into a secluded place you see Jesus knew that the thing that was of first importance was the place of seclusion alone with his father and I want to tell you people we neglect this at our peril we neglect it at our peril Psalm 77 2 tells us that in the

day of my trouble I sought the Lord when things are going wrong in your life what do you do? do you whine and complain and moan and say why should this happen to me why should this happen to me why should it not happen to you for crying out loud who do you think you are who do I think I am do we whine and moan or do we get on our faces before the Lord and say Lord I don't understand this right now but I'm willing to learn Lord I don't know what's going on but I'm going to seek the Lord in my time of challenge and difficulty I want you to know people you seek God and He will be found by you Amen brother I can tell you from my own experience folks I've in the past got myself into unbelievable dryness and staleness spiritually because I allowed the compelling ministry to take the place of

the time of seclusion that is a terrible mistake to make to be with Jesus in the secluded place is where we get it all sorted out and we get things in perspective again and we see things from his point of view and he ministered wholeness the service was compelling look what it says there it says Jesus they said they were talking to him they said they tried to keep him from going away from them but he said I must preach the



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